

Cross-Border Higher Education, Social Capital Accumulation and Everyday Life Negotiation

Cambodian Students in Hanoi, Vietnam

Pichmolika Dara





Consortium of Development Studies in Southeast Asia (CDSSEA)

Publication Series

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The Consortium of Development Studies in Southeast Asia has drawn on primary postgraduate research undertaken for theses from the master's programs of Chiang Mai University's Master of Arts in Social Science (Development Studies) (MASS); Chulalongkorn University's Master of Arts in International Development Studies (MAIDS); and the Asian Institute of Technology's Master of Science in Gender and Development Studies (MGDS). With a diversity of academic approaches (gender studies, political science, social sciences), the individual works of this collection have in common a focus on the increasing interconnection and regionalization of the five mainland Southeast Asian countries (Myanmar, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam), and examine these exchanges and encounters within the context of the Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS).

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Cross-border Higher Education,
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The Regional Center for Social Science
and Sustainable Development
Chiang Mai University

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Consortium of Development Studies in Southeast Asia series
Volume 12

Copyright © 2018 Regional Center for Social Science and Sustainable Development
ISBN: xx-xxx-xxx-xxx-x

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Printed: May 2018

Price: Baht

National Library of Thailand Cataloging in Publication Data

Pichmolika Dara.

Cross-border Higher Education, Social Capital Accumulation and Everyday Life Negotiation: Cambodian Students in Hanoi, Vietnam: Chiang Mai University Press, 2016.

xxx p. -- (Critical Perspectives on Regional Integration).

1. Pa-Oh (Asian people)--Burma. 2. Burma--Social life and customs. I. Title.

305.8958

ISBN: xx-xxx-xxx-xxx-x

Copy Editor: Tanya Lutvey

Cover Photo: Vietnam National University

Layout and cover design: Jeff Moynihan

Printer: Wanida Karnpim Limited Partnership

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cmupress.cmu.ac.th, e-mail: cmupress.th@gmail.com

Series Foreword

The Regional Center for Social Science and Sustainable Development (RCSD) at Chiang Mai University has extended its publication program to include Master's dissertations from The Consortium of Development Studies in Southeast Asia (CDSSEA). The CDSSEA series covers mainland Southeast Asia: Myanmar, Thailand, Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam, and regionalization, development encounters and exchanges within the Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS).

The CDSSEA program brings together resources and expertise from three of Thailand's leading institutions offering Master's degrees in development studies: Chiang Mai University's Master of Arts in Social Science (Development Studies) (MASS); Chulalongkorn University's Master of Arts in International Development Studies (MAIDS); and the Asian Institute of Technology's Master of Science in Gender and Development Studies (MGDS). Although the Consortium's program focuses on the relationship between development studies and social sciences, each of the programs has a different emphasis. The Chiang Mai degree focuses on social sciences and anthropological perspectives, with research interests in environmental and resource management, food security and local livelihoods, labour migration and trans-border issues, ethnicity and development, health, tourism, and agrarian transitions. Chulalongkorn's program concentrates on the political dimension of development, including democratization, human rights, conflict resolution, international and civil society development organizations, community development and globalization. The Asian Institute of Technology focuses on the relationships between gender and development—including women's rights, civil society, and gender dimensions of urbanization and industrialization.

The CDSSEA program has a practical dimension, building leadership capacity in mainland Southeast Asia's regional development, bringing together postgraduate students, encouraging debate, and promoting the rethinking of development alternatives in such areas as social equality, justice and participation, environmental and economic sustainability, and community development. In this regard, a major objective is to develop the knowledge and skills of development practitioners and to enhance the quality and effectiveness of policy-making and its implementation in the region.

The publications in this series—selected from the CDSSEA Master's program—are designed to express this diverse range of interests in development studies and regionalization, and to emphasize the relationships between empirical and theoretical research, policy-making and practice.

Victor T. King, Senior Editorial Adviser,
Consortium of Development Studies in Southeast Asia series

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Abbreviations

ADB	Asian Development Bank
AIESEC	Association internationale des étudiants en sciences économiques et commerciales
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BIDV	Bank for Investment and Development of Vietnam
BTC	<i>Bộ Tài chính</i> (Ministry of Finance)
CBHE	Cross-border Higher Education
CDSSEA	Consortium of Development Studies in Southeast Asia
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CLMV	Cambodia-Lao-Myanmar-Vietnam Cooperation Framework
CPP	Cambodia People's Party
ESP	Education Strategic Plan
FUNCINPEC	<i>Front Uni National Pour un Cambodge Indépendant, Neutre, Pacifique et Coopératif</i> (the United National Front for an Independent, Neutral, Peaceful and Cooperative Cambodia)
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GE	General Education
GSKH	GlaxoSmithKline Cambodia Co. Ltd.
HEIs	Higher Educational Institutions
HRINC	HRINC Co., Ltd of Cambodia
IT	Information Technology
MOET	Ministry of Education and Training
MOEYS	Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sport

MOFA	Ministry of Foreign Affair
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NS	<i>Nor Sor</i> (letter N and S in Khmer spelling)
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
PE	Professional Education
PRK	People's Republic of Kampuchea
RKT	<i>Reach Kret</i> (Royal Decree)
RKU	Royal Khmer University
SEASREP	Southeast Asia Studies Regional Exchange Program
TT	<i>Thông tư</i> (Circular)
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
USD	US dollar
VCFA	Vietnam-Cambodia Friendship Association
VIED	Vietnam International Education Development
VND	Vietnamese Dong (As of December 31 st , 2014: 1 USD = 21,246 VND)
WTO	World Trade Organization

Acknowledgements

This book would not have been possible without the support and guidance of many people for its successful completion. I would like to thank all the people who have either directly or indirectly helped me to complete my research work.

First of all, my great thanks goes to the Consortium of Development Studies in Southeast Asia (CDSSEA) for their vital scholarship, which facilitated my Master program and English examination; as well as to the Southeast Asia Studies Regional Exchange Program (SEASREP Foundations) for their meaningful grant which enabled me to accomplish Vietnamese language study and my field research in Hanoi, Vietnam.

It is an honor for me to have received strong support from Dr. Chayan Vaddhanaphuti and Dr. Chusak Wittayapak in pursuing my studies at Chiang Mai University. I could not have imagined how I would have been able to finish my study without their strong support.

Foremost, I would like to express my sincere thankfulness to my advisor, Dr. Amporn Jirattikorn for her patience, motivation, enthusiasm and immense knowledge in continuously supporting my MA. study and research. Her thoughtful guidance helped me all while researching and writing this work. I would like to highly thank the rest of my thesis committee: Dr. Mukdawan Sakboon, Associate. Professor. Dr. Peter Vail, and Ajarn Suriya Smutkupt, for their kind encouragements, insightful comments, and constructive questions.

Last but not least, I owe my deepest gratitude to all the members of Asian Tabernacle Church, Mr. Lee Kiancheng (spiritual dad) and Mr. Phạm Trần Thăng Long for their valuable time and constant heart to consolidate and to guide me spiritually towards the completion of my study.

Pichmolika Dara

Map of the Region



Chapter 1

Introduction

Background and Justification of Research

In the era of globalization and increased consumption of overseas higher education, many countries around the world have been seeking opportunities to reform their countries' economic and educational policies so as to reduce poverty. Cambodia is no exception. It is necessary for Cambodia to strive for international cooperation and support in order to effectively improve their higher education system. Sending students to study at higher education in foreign countries is one effective strategy adopted by the Cambodian government to gain knowledge and expertise from other countries.

When it comes to overseas education, developed countries such as the United States of America, Australia, Singapore and/or European countries are often the first destinations to be considered by Cambodian students. However, in recent years, Vietnam has become another option, which has increasingly become prominent in the host list of cross-border higher education for Cambodians and other countries' nationals in the region.

Cambodia and Vietnam both have a shared history in terms of national development and education, characterized by colonial occupation and the warfare that ensued. The education systems in both countries were obliterated and their human resources reduced to stagnancy (Kiernan, 1982; Mysliweic, 1988; Ayres, 2000b; Nguyen, 2011). Upon the restoration of peaceful conditions in 1993, both countries have focused their efforts in rebuilding and developing

their respective education systems. The geopolitical importance of Cambodia has facilitated the country in receiving crucial support for the reformation of education. In particular, during the socialist period of 1979-1993, Vietnam, together with other socialist countries such as the Soviet Union, East Germany, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Cuba have availed themselves to this education reformation (Clayton, 1999). Between 1980 and 1985, there were very few studying materials available in Khmer language for learners, in particular for the courses of Economics, Mathematics and Pharmacy. When the Cambodian government underwent significant changes in their political system by moving towards democratization from 1993 onwards, its education system also shifted toward privatization and international cooperation (Chamnan and Ford, 2004). Many Cambodian students now go abroad to study their higher education in the West and other developed countries. However, Vietnam did not lose its historical link to Cambodia for education development (NGO Education Partnership, 2013). The number of Cambodian students sent to Vietnam for training with scholarships did not abate but continued to increase annually (Sok, 2009). In addition, the Vietnamese government sent their students to Cambodia to receive training in Khmer language and Cambodian culture for the purpose of serving in foreign relations between the two countries and to expand comprehensive cooperation between them.

Having established the background of the research, there are three major issues of significance. First, there is the issue of comparative advantage in learning a foreign language as a key factor in overseas education. It is a common assumption that people leave their countries to study the English language in order to be able to interact with people from different cultures and become “global citizens.” In this vein of thought, Kang illustrated that Korean mothers who choose Singapore as a destination for migration are motivated by the opportunity for their children to gain proficiency in both English and Mandarin languages (2012). In doing so, they provide support for their children to acquire social membership as “global kids” and hopefully, become “global citizens” in the future (Kang, 2012). In the case of Cambodia, English has been taught as a second language in public schools because the government hopes to attract foreign direct investment through the wide use of the English language (Koji, 2008; Vira, 2002). With this in mind, it is pertinent to ask the following questions: why do Cambodian students choose Vietnam as a destination for

their higher education even though English is not a major language there? And, what are the factors that motivate Cambodian students to make the decision to learn Vietnamese and study in Vietnam?

Secondly, it is a common understanding that an individual's hard work is the fundamental premise for achieving success in education. However, many Cambodian students studying in Vietnam believe that apart from hard work, they also need to build social networks to assist them in becoming successful. By living together as a community, Cambodian students in Hanoi can utilize the place where they live as a center to establish several extensive social networks. According to Cambodian students in Hanoi, they have restlessly created their own opportunities by using social networks as a form of social capital to seek jobs and to elevate their social status back in Cambodia. This phenomenon raises the following questions: how do Cambodian students conceptualize success during their education in Hanoi? How do Cambodian students seek to accumulate social capital in conjunction with their pursuit of higher education?

Thirdly, as neither English nor Vietnamese are the native languages of Cambodian students, they encounter obstacles in communication at times during their study in Vietnam. In addition, though the living environment in Vietnam is similar to Cambodia, Cambodian students may not fully adapt to Vietnamese culture, especially in terms of language and food. It is therefore essential to study the impact of cultural and political differences on Cambodian students during their pursuit of higher education in Vietnam.

Furthermore, Cambodian students are facing a different political ideology in Vietnam since Vietnam is a late-socialist country, which adopts Marxist-Leninist ideology (Ho Tai, 2001). The former Soviet bloc determines the quality of education through their political ideology in "social control" (Love, 2007). By the same token, Vietnam's education, which is shaped by the former Soviet bloc, is based on the values and priorities that support Marxist-Leninist centrally planned economies (Lieu, 2005). According to Cambodian students in Vietnam, they are required to study Marxist-Leninist theory during their first year at the university. Hence, this raises another question: how do Cambodian students address cultural and political differences within their study and daily living in Vietnam? On the whole, the significance of this book is summarized in two aspects. First, this study engages the involvement of social actors who come

into play in a dynamic and vibrant space in Hanoi, Vietnam. These social actors include Cambodian students, government bodies from both Cambodia and Vietnam, and the local Vietnamese community. These three groups of actors provide a holistic view of issues pertaining to the studies of cross-border higher education. For instance, through looking at the coping strategies employed by students and the complex network of relationships employed by them, the motivation of Cambodian students in Hanoi is carefully explored. Next, the research aims to uncover how Cambodian students leverage their position in Hanoi, Vietnam to promote their social status after they return to their home country. This research is set to contribute to a better understanding of the processes of adjustment and social mobility which have been largely ignored in the field of cross-border higher education (Weiss and Ford, 2011; Kang, 2012).

Conceptual Framework

During globalization and marketization, knowledge can be seen as a commodity that is exchanged from one party to another via multiple avenues. For instance, knowledge exchange can take place through crossing borders for work, higher education and technology development. Cross-border higher education is often seen within the context of internationalization and regionalization of higher education where students abroad seek to advance their studies in other countries.

Such cross-border educational flow is influenced by “push” and “pull” factors from both the sending country as well as the receiving country. The “push” factors take different forms including poor socio-economic conditions and the lack of quality education in the homeland. At the same time, the “pull” factors could be seen operating through various forms such as the opportunity to acquire a new language, higher educational qualifications, professional development, free scholarship, promise of a better career in the future, the prospect of higher economic returns and the possibility for advancement in political and social status. Therefore, such “push” and “pull” factors work together to enhance cross-border higher education.

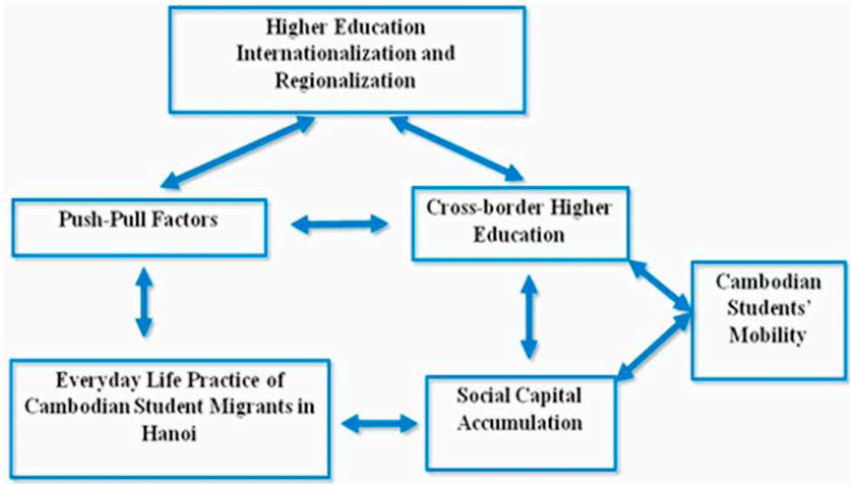


Figure 1.1: Conceptual Framework (Source: *Field Survey, 2014*)

The target group in this research is Cambodian students who are studying in Hanoi, Vietnam. This research takes a different route in contrast to the dominant literature which focuses on the acquisition of cultural capital. With a unique twist, this research aims to unravel the process of social capital accumulation, which is crucial for their upward mobility. In other words, the Cambodian students have gone beyond merely seeking to gain cultural capital to extending their social connections for the purpose of upward mobility after graduation. Finally, this research seeks to look at everyday life practices of Cambodian students in a foreign country as a flexible concept in their pursuit of social capital accumulation. Cambodian students are creative and diverse in engaging both Cambodians and Vietnamese for social connections. They are also reflexive in their application of multiple types of tactics to extend new connections, as well as to enrich their existing relationships. The conceptual framework shows the integration of these perspectives and demonstrates how these conceptualizations are linked together.

Research Methodology

This book explores the everyday adaptation of Cambodian students who are enrolled in universities in Hanoi, Vietnam. An actor-oriented approach has been employed to emphasize the insider's point of view. I applied both

emic and etic perspectives sensitively at different occasions, as I am also a Cambodian student in Thailand. However, it has been a challenging process due to existing tensions and conflicts amongst various groups of Cambodian students and between Cambodian students with Laotian and Vietnamese students.

At the early stage of fieldwork with Cambodian students in Hanoi, I tried to befriend them by exchanging stories of studying and living as I shared a room in their dormitory. I soon realized that I was still an outsider when they did not share with me actual and complete information about their backgrounds and social relationships with other Cambodian students there. To forge a closer bond with them, I learned to constantly examine myself and make necessary changes to my approach in associating with them. In this process, I have made continual adjustments to enhance my data collection.

First, during the Summer break in 2013, I applied to study the Vietnamese language for four months and arranged to live with them where I could participate in all their activities. These included cooking, chatting, studying, playing sports, preparing cultural performances and organizing parties. While having a closer proximity by staying with them, I gradually obtained more friendly and open responses from them.

Second, to secure the list of names of all the Cambodian students in Hanoi, I contacted the Chairperson of the Cambodian Students' Association. However, he hesitated to provide me with the information. In February 2014, I returned back to Hanoi to collect data. I continued to build a relationship with him. The Student Chairperson brought me to meet the Cambodian ambassador and embassy officers. Through interacting with them at the Khmer New Year party, they granted permission for the Student Chairperson to assist my field work. The Cambodian embassy officers said to us "because we are Cambodian and we need to help each other." Subsequently, the Student Chairperson crafted the name list for me and introduced me to the Dormitory Supervisor. With the Dormitory Supervisor's permission, I conducted my survey and in-depth interviews officially and smoothly.

Third, I faced some challenges because some of my previous informants had left Hanoi after their graduation. Hence, I was forced to find new informants. In the beginning, both the potential new informants and the respective dormitory supervisors were hesitant to assist me, but eventually,

they felt at ease with my presence and facilitated my fieldwork. They even participated in my fieldwork by distributing the questionnaires and collecting them from the students after they were completed.

Fourth, to gain the Vietnamese perspective, I conducted informal interviews with the neighboring community surrounding the dormitories. As a matter of cultural sensitivity, I introduced myself to the local residents as a tourist from an ASEAN country to create a more relaxed and natural environment. As a result, they provided me with the Vietnamese perception of the Cambodian students and shared their thoughts on how the students behaved in their everyday life. I found it essential to explore a wider dimension through the interaction and interconnectivity beyond the Cambodian student community. This is done so as to capture a more accurate picture; where education is acquired through daily contestation that includes their experiences as foreigners and through the process of capital accumulation and reconstruction of identities from the Vietnamese perspective.

Finally, I chose social media and validation as avenues to enhance my data collection. After I had received the completed questionnaires from the dormitory supervisors, I utilized modern communication tools including email, Facebook, Skype and mobile phone to follow-up with the students. I also regularly cross-checked the information by going back to clarify with the students directly and by discussing with other students to attest to the reliability of the information.

Research Site

My ethnographic research started from June 2012. I was traveling by bus from Ho Chi Minh City in Southern Vietnam to Hanoi in Northern Vietnam to attend the Peace Regional Meeting with my Vietnamese colleagues. On the way, I chanced upon a Cambodian I overheard speaking the Khmer language on his mobile phone. He was surprised when I spoke with him in Khmer language as he did not expect to meet a Cambodian lady traveling by bus, alone to Hanoi. Mr. Pha was 28 years old when I met him. He was studying for a Master's Degree in Network and Engineering at the University of Technology in Hanoi. When I first met him, he was just back from Cambodia on vacation. He normally flew from Ho Chi Minh to Hanoi but this time he did not book the air ticket as it was too expensive for him. Thus, he decided to travel by bus. He was the first Cambodian student who studied in Hanoi, Vietnam whom I knew. I felt so

impressed and eager to know more about the life of Cambodian students in Vietnamese society. I wanted to know the reasons that Cambodian students choose Vietnam as a place to study because of the very real historical conflicts and social prejudices that exist between the two countries. He graciously gave me his contact number and Facebook account for further connection. During 2013, I got a chance to study the Vietnamese language for four months under the support of the SEASREP foundation. I decided to contact Mr. Pha again but he had already moved to another place and could not meet me but he gave me the contact numbers of other Cambodian students in Hanoi. It was through Mr. Pha that I got to know my first field site.

For the purpose of this research, four field sites were selected. As shown in Figure 1.2, the four field sites are as follows: the Centre of International Students called A3; the Dormitory of International Students called T4; the Dormitory of Foreign Students of Hanoi University of Architecture called *Kiến Trúc*; and the Friendship school T80. All four research sites are known amongst students by their abbreviated names: A3, T4, *Kiến Trúc* and T80. The following is a brief description of the sites.

The first site is the T4 dormitory at *Trường Chinh* district. The T4 dormitory was reserved for international PhD students in the past. However, since 2005, this dormitory has been used for undergraduate male Cambodian students. The T4 dormitory consists of five floors and more than 20 rooms. Each room has one bathroom and four beds. It is surrounded by street vendors, shops and main roads. This building was built during the French colonial rule.

The second field site is the A3 dormitory. It is known as the place which houses a lot of international students from different countries. In the past, it was an abandoned Vietnamese hospital. However, during 2006, it was renovated to function as an international dormitory. There are four floors and each floor consists of 12 rooms. Each room can accommodate three students. Many international students are assigned to live at this place because of the many universities, local markets, business shops and hospitals within its vicinity. Many Cambodian students who study Economics, Medicine and Sciences are assigned to stay in this dormitory. This area is also more convenient for them to access public facilities such as the public bus, public hospital, main library and main stadium. The A3 dormitory is also known as an important site for Cambodian students to meet each other and to host many activities like sports competitions

and to organize some national events. Many student leaders of the Cambodian Students' Association stay in this area, too.

The third and fourth field sites are secondary sites where I conducted surveys without actually staying there. This is due to their vast distances from the city center of Hanoi. Besides, these dormitories are strictly restricted by their Vietnamese dormitory owners in terms that exclude outside visitors. The third field site is *Kiến Trúc*, which is located at the back of Hanoi University of Architecture. This dormitory has only three floors and each floor has six rooms. Each room can accommodate only two students and most of them are Cambodian students. The fourth field site is the Friendship School T80, which is mainly used for teaching Vietnamese language to the Cambodian and Laotian students for six months to one year, prior to their higher education. The T80 is located at *Sơn Tây* Township which is about 96 kilometers from the Hanoi Old Quarter. In this school, there are two dormitories; one is meant for Laotian students and the other one for Cambodian students. These dormitories are approximately 500 meters from the Friendship School and are surrounded by rice fields.

In summary, A3, T4 and *Kiến Trúc* are dormitories for foreign students who have already enrolled in a university in Hanoi. Both A3 and T4 are located at *Bách Khoa* District which is about four kilometers south of the Hanoi Old Quarter. T4 is an old hostel at an alley off *Trường Chinh* Street and is only for Cambodian students. A3 is on *Tạ Quang Bửu* Street, about two kilometers from T4. Being available for both male and female students, A3 consists of international students from Cambodia, Laos and other foreign countries. As of June 2014, there were 60 Cambodian students at A3 and 80 at T4. While Cambodian students at A3 and T4 come from many different faculties of different universities, *Kiến Trúc* is only for Cambodian and Lao students of the Hanoi Architecture University. This dormitory is located at the southwestern area of the city and is about 12 kilometers from Hanoi Old Quarter. All three dormitories are close to several universities, local markets, supermarkets, business shops, bus stops and hospitals.



Figure 1.2: Research Sites, Vietnamese Friendship School and International Domitories for Cambodian students in Hanoi

(Image Sources: Google, May 2013; Angkor Asian Holiday, May 2013; Cổng thông tin điện tử Chính phủ, May 2013; field survey, January 2014)

Data Analysis

The analysis is premised on the examination of the politics of the place and space that provide opportunities for the reconstruction of foreign students’ identities when abroad. There is ample room for them to develop their critical thinking towards their conceptualization of being “regional citizens” under regional integration. I examined the socio-economic landscape of Cambodian student’s study in Hanoi, Vietnam. Data analysis in this study was conducted in two phases: questionnaire analysis and in-depth interview analysis. Then, I integrated and compared the findings from the analysis of both datasets, and developed an interpretation in order to consider whether the results supported each other or contradicted each other.

As mentioned earlier, the adaptation of the Cambodian students is not limited by bounded communities in terms of geography. Their interaction occurs at a multi-dimensional sphere taking place dynamically with local, national and regional powers. Within larger systems of power, this study focused attention at Mezzo and Macro levels that influence the education process. I analyzed the complex relationships between local communities and

larger-scale structures within which these communities were situated. Therefore, it was important to integrate local, national and regional levels of analysis. This book expounds empirically the ways in which power, policy and other development ideologies are manifested in people's everyday lives. From the student daily practice to local community and up to the national or regional levels, I analyze the manner by which power was constituted, exercised, negotiated and contested.

Chapter 2

Theoretical Perspectives on Cross-border Higher Education and Everyday Life Practice of Cambodian Students in Hanoi

Cross-border higher education is viewed as desirable by states and its individuals alike. Within this context, this chapter discusses three main concepts that are crucial in bridging and elucidating the process of cross-border higher education and the practice of daily living by Cambodian students in Hanoi.

First, development policy of cross-border higher education in the region is at the center of our discussion to emphasize student mobility as an important part of the transformation of education and society. This macro approach to the discourse of development policy helps to understand the impact of policy upon the students' decision-making in the context of internationalization, or at least, regionalization (Brooks and Waters, 2011). Second, the issue of cross-border higher education is elaborated as a process of accumulating social capital and for rewarding social mobility (Chira, 2008; Kritz, 2006; Liu, 2011). Finally, the concept of everyday life practice, which is considered as the space for accumulating social capital, will be discussed.

The Process of Cross-border Higher Education

Cross-border higher education (CBHE) has been a multi-faceted phenomenon in the general context of internationalization of higher education (Knight, 2012). There is no conclusive agreement on the definition of CBHE, which has been utilized interchangeably among other relevant concepts including borderless, transnational and offshore education. According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), a student of cross-border higher education refers to a person who has crossed international borders or is sent by institutions located in two or more countries. It is a subset of the internationalization of higher education (OECD, 2006, p. 19). In an attempt to differentiate cross-border education from similar concepts such as borderless, transnational and offshore education, Knight provided definitions for them. Accordingly, cross-border education is about the “movement of people, knowledge, programs, providers, policies, ideas, curricula, projects, research and services across national or regional jurisdictional borders” (Knight, 2012, p. 2). On the contrary, “borderless education” refers to the disappearance of all types of borders (i.e. time, disciplinary, geographic), “offshore education” is self-explanatory but is not often mentioned by landlocked countries and “transnational education” includes all types of higher education study program, or sets of courses of study, or educational services (including those of distance education) in which the learners are located in a country different from the one where the awarding institution is based (UNESCO, 2002). Nonetheless, Knight realized that there is hardly any differentiation between transnational and international education for non-native English speakers and this leads to the preference of using the term “cross-border education” (Knight, 2012, p. 3). Besides, while cross-border education is often mistakenly confused with the term internationalization, Knight suggested cross-border education should be recognized as only one part of the whole complex process of internationalization (Knight, 2012, p. 3). For the purpose of this research, Knight’s definition on cross-border education will be applied whenever the term of cross-border higher education (CBHE) is mentioned.

Scholarship is considered a crucial topic of studies on CBHE. From the perspective of globalization, the scholarship is a new development where the state absorbs and capitalizes the capacities of the student migrants beyond the state’s geographical boundaries (Kritz, 2006). Through the international

cooperation and regional collaboration among states, scholarships have been utilized by the state as a discourse of development, a tool of the state to exercise its power for market expansion in spite of the cultural, social, economic and political differences between countries.

Education policies in some newly developed countries and territories, such as Singapore and Hong Kong, exemplify how scholarships help realize the goals of market expansion and regional collaboration. In accordance with state policies, higher education through scholarship has provided a means of mobility for people across the borders of a country at the global level (Kritz, 2006). In Singapore, the government offers a comprehensive package of financial-aid to international students who wish to study in Singapore through several public channels in order to attract the most talented and knowledgeable people. The tuition fees for foreign students are only 10% above local rate (Cheng *et al.*, 2009). In addition, they can apply for whatever financial assistance schemes are open to local students, including local scholarships and tuition grants which are conditional in nature. These students are then bonded to work for a Singapore-registered company for at least three years upon graduation (Cheng *et al.*, 2009). In Hong Kong, due to its limited resources, the government has to rely more on non-state financial sources as well as service providers (including overseas academic institutions) to cater for the further development of its higher education. The most obvious example of this notion can be found in the 2007 speech by Donald Tsang, who was the then Chief Executive of Hong Kong. He explicitly stated his intention to expand the population of international students by “increasing the admission quotas for non-local students to local tertiary institutions, relaxing employment restrictions on non-local students, as well as providing scholarships” (Tsang, 2007, p. 40).

Scholarships play a critical role in the process of regionalization. Since the initiation by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and Japan Window corridor¹ in 1992, scholarships have become a part of the Greater Mekong Sub-region strategic plan (ADB, 1993). The main purpose of the scheme is to facilitate the economic flow from the Greater Mekong Sub-regional countries to China by infrastructural development and providing educational reform (ADB, 2000).

1 The Japan Window corridor refers to the transnational link between Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand, Vietnam, and Yunnan Province of the People's Republic of China (ADB, 1993: Preface).

This scheme aims to strengthen and increase the limited human resources in developing countries, such as Cambodia, Laos, and Myanmar (ADB, 2000; King, 2002).

In 2002, ADB launched a conference to invest money for the development of this region, which included infrastructural and capacity building (King, 2002). Thereafter, the Cambodia-Laos-Vietnam Development Triangle area agreement was signed in 2004 as a step towards greater economic integration in the region. However, there is a growing disparity in perspectives between the two countries. Nygren opined that Vietnam believes in the regional economic integration, which could serve to reduce poverty through development along the Vietnam-Cambodia borders, as well as the extension of their market production flows (Nygren, 2000).

Upon reviewing the literature on education opportunities and government fellowships, it can be summarized that international higher education points to the following aspects. First, during the colonial period, education and scholarships were provided in the colonies as a means to create colonial subjects. Second, education and scholarships are geared towards constructing development discourse and labor forces. Third, these labor forces help meet the demands of a transnational market.

Cross-border Higher Education as a State Propaganda Tool

Education could be seen as a form of state apparatus to reproduce the subject to support the functions of the state in this modern era. In the past century, education was an imperative apparatus for the colonialist as well as for nation state formation to encourage its people to internalize and reproduce the national ideology. According to Louis Althusser, education is a form of state apparatus to transfer state ideology, which reproduces the relations of production in such a way that this production and the relations derived from it are obscured (Althusser, 2001). Such perspective about the top-down, state-centric system of education is critically questioned in Foucault's concept of governmentality, which reveals the creation of "docile bodies" which are used in modern economic and political institutions (Foucault, 1979, p. 136). This refers to the way in which people are taught to govern themselves, shifting power from a central authority, like the state or institution, and dispersing it among the population (Simons and Masschelein, 2006). Sharing the same

negative tone in describing higher education, Bourdieu revealed the game of social power in universities where knowledge is transmitted by the traditional lecturer methods similar to schools; although universities and higher education should have produced knowledge forms by which the objective relations are made to reproduce people (Webb *et al.*, 2002, p. 128-131).

Through the working definition, cross-border higher education can be seen as higher education systems that have been influenced by the state, albeit in varying degrees. The state exercises a different form of influence on its education system, which is not necessarily aligned with market demands. Taking the former Soviet bloc as an example, since the collapse of centrally planned economies of the Soviet Union and their state alliances, each of the member countries has been transforming its state policy toward building a market-based economy (Love, 2007). Previously, higher education systems in the former Soviet bloc were rooted in Marxist-Leninist values. However, with the transformation of state policy, the management of the universities has been changed while their curriculum remains rooted in Marxist-Leninism. In other words, the state ideology continued to be the key influence in the development of higher education curriculum. Consequently, there was a lack of human resources that were able to meet the demands of the market-based economy. It exposed the problems and challenges among countries where there was a mismatch between education curriculum and the business environment. These problems and challenges resulted in the failure to produce modern subjects or citizens to fulfill the economic demands of the country.

From the colonial period to the Cold War period, international education opportunities had been employed by Western powers to transmit and reproduce to the rest of the world the notion of capitalism, as well as the ideas of superior Western knowledge and expertise. During the time of the Soviet Union, knowledge was designed to support the fundamental values and needs of Marxist-Leninist, centrally planned economies. Education fellowship for countries within the Soviet bloc could thus be seen as a tool aiming for transmission of that knowledge (Love, 2006, p. 4). However, after the end of the Cold War era and the collapse of the Soviet Union, higher education has been undertaken by these countries with the aim of development of the market economy. In other words, the curriculum of higher education should be developed in line with market requirements instead of following the ideology of the state (Love, 2007). Therefore, the state involvement with higher education

is aimed at coping with economic and political pressures. One could also posit that education be seen as the reaction of the subject toward state ideology by reproducing their own habitus.

In the case of Cambodia, it is arguable that development and knowledge discourse can influence the decision of Cambodian students going abroad. The country's higher education system has been rooted in French colonialism since 1863, which was meant to equip the country with a large number of modern and competent civil servants to support the Imperialists (Sam Rany *et al.*, 2012b). A study by Tully pointed out that national education during the colonial period faced crucial problems (Tully, 2002). The vast majority of schools suffered from poor teaching, lack of financial resources and unqualified teachers. In addition, they faced a decline in student enrolments due to misconceptions held by peasants who disliked the fact that French colonial power was in control of the public schools. Moreover, there was a clash between the traditional values of the Buddhist-teaching and the content of a new curriculum which was based on European modern thinking (Tully, 2002). As a result, there were several reforms in the Cambodian education system since the colonial period that were abandoned during the Pol Pot regime in the late 1970s. These reforms were not resumed until the peace restoration in the 1980s (Ayres, 2000a; 2000b; 2003).

After the civil war and post-war conflicts ended in 1994, the Cambodian Government had been paying much attention to rebuilding its human resources through the development of higher education within the global and regional contexts (Sam Rany *et al.*, 2012a). The Cambodian education system has been reformed and privatized to fulfill the market conditions since 1997. First, the government has allowed the private sector to be involved in tertiary education. Second, the government has authorized Public HEIs (Higher Educational Institutions) to enroll students who are subsidized by partial scholarships (Pit and Ford, 2004). These students are competitively selected by the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports on the basis of the grade 12 examination results (Pit and Ford, 2004).

However, the rapid growth of HEIs and their enrolments have led to the realization of the need to confront both the low quality of education and the fact that the large number of educated graduates may not be equally matched with market demands (Chealy, 2009). Therefore, Cambodian students may be attracted to study in other countries like Singapore, China, Australia, Korea,

Thailand, United States, and England. Typically, many students, who study abroad, aim to consume Western culture or at least to gain English proficiency in order to become a global citizen. Yet, it is interesting that the mobility of Cambodia students over the past several decades tends to be attracted towards Vietnam, which is not considered a developed country.

Education as Process of Social Capital Accumulation

By way of introduction, there are not many scholarly works that deal with education as a form of social capital accumulation. Nonetheless, this section attempts to discuss some critical and salient works pertaining to education abroad. In the discussion below, I attempt to provide my appreciation and critique with respect to my field of research. To begin with, a study by Kang explored the interplay among transnational migration, education and notions of mothering by examining young Korean students in Singapore who are accompanied by their mothers (2012). In analyzing the multiple meanings and motivations toward education in Singapore, the author discovered that this affective dimension of transnational migration leads the Korean students to re-imagine and reformulate their desired transnational subject as “Asian global.” By supporting their kids in daily living, Korean mothers also learn Singaporean culture and languages. Hence, as mediated through their discourses on emotional capital and their goals of becoming global citizens in this rapidly globalizing world, both mothers and kids could construct their identity (Kang, 2012). They integrate two cultures together in order to reproduce a new identity, called “Asian global” or to their kids as “global kids” (Kang, 2012). Here we can see how the idea of global citizen has been strongly emphasized during studying and staying abroad. Most student migrants who study in Western countries or English-speaking countries seek to gain language proficiency, as mentioned by Kang (2012). However, Kang focused on the familial relationship between mothers and their children but failed to unravel the embedded process of socialization from a broader dimension that could assist in the understanding of their negotiation with the host cultural and political systems (Kang, 2012).

Literature about higher education tends to argue that the ability to participate in the market economy and economic prosperity upon return is the main reason students engage in higher education overseas. Waters examined

the relationship between educational choice, class and international mobility as part of the strategies employed by middle-class families in Hong Kong (2006). She argued that education migration to Canada has enabled middle-class families to accumulate a more valuable form of cultural capital in the form of a “Western” university degree. International education, accordingly, is an essential component of accumulating more capital, transforming oneself into a “global economic subject” (Waters, 2006). Waters contended further that the new meanings of social capital and values of education between home and host countries are crucially reproduced by geographical locations. The names of countries, such as Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom or Australia, geographically symbolizes the possession of a whole host of cultural traits which are crucial for professional success in a global economy. In critique, Waters neglected the social aspects that facilitated the students’ subsequent utilization for their upward mobility while she tried to use the geographical lens to look at the value of upward mobility in accumulating cultural capital (Waters, 2006). In that way, the overemphasis of the acquisition of Western ideology and identity has somewhat diluted the dynamism of embedded social networking relations whose great ramifications in its nature.

Presenting a study about historical constructions of international education, Chira argued that during the colonial period, education was employed during the process of civilizing and nation-state building (2008). The mobility of students to overseas countries was associated with the colonialist ideology to serve the political purpose of imperial governments. Most students abroad were brought in by the imperial governments to study languages and culture in the imperialist countries. Having been equipped with cultures and languages, these students could help the imperialist administration to work more effectively in the country that they were colonizing (Chira, 2008). However, after the Second World War, the mobility of students was employed to support national development policy due to economic and social factors inside their home countries (Clark and Sedgwick, 2005; OECD, 2004). Nonetheless, in my critique, Chira predicated the discussion of the role of education from the state’s perspective. While Chira unveiled the significance of political ideology in nation-state building through education, he failed to explore the self-interests of the students in especial, their social capital accumulation for their personal upward mobility.

While scholarship remains an important tool for both Western countries and socialist countries to produce modern subjects, the number of students who are eager to advance their education overseas at their own expense has also increased (Clark and Sedgwick, 2005; OECD, 2004). As a result, the global market for higher education has been rapidly growing and many universities tend to invest in higher education both inside and outside of their countries (Kritz, 2006). Subsequently, the growth of overseas higher education has become an agenda of policymakers across the world, especially in China and India (Brooks and Waters, 2011). These two countries have invested heavily in their own education systems by sending their students to study abroad. These governments have high expectations for student migrants to return home after they have graduated (Brooks and Waters, 2011). At the same time, they seek to attract international students to pursue higher education in their countries (Brooks and Waters, 2011). These changes lead to the marketization of higher education systems at both national and global levels. In my opinion, the salient contribution of these articles is found in the macro perspective of education studies where there is marketization of higher education systems at global dimensions beyond the local level. It removes myopia in analysis. However, I argue that governmental policy-making at the national and global levels must take on a bottom-up approach in identifying the nuanced processes in cross-border higher education. In other words, non-economic aspects from social interactional analysis is a fundamental perspective to be undertaken in order to formulate national and global policies.

Weiss and Ford studied the aspects of transnational education which focus on students from Malaysia, Indonesia and Singapore migrating for the purpose of higher education in Australia (2011). Using the framework of development discourse, the authors have linked transnational higher education with the idea of creating “global citizens.” Similar with Weiss and Ford’s argument, Australia is chosen as geography of cosmopolitanism for its engagement with neoliberalism as well as being an English-speaking country. Weiss and Ford argued that these overseas students do not engage much in interacting with local Australian students (Weiss and Ford, 2011). These students also lack engagement with homeland politics while possessing cosmopolitan identities acquired from studying in Australia. Hence, Weiss and Ford calls these students “local cosmopolitan” which are defined as those who are better educated and better connected than the average citizen, travel more and speak more languages, while at the same time prioritizing their roots

over a supranational identity (Weiss and Ford, 2011). However, when these students return home, they can make use of their “cosmopolitan” quality as social and cultural capital to gain more status and upward mobility. I applaud Weiss and Ford’s poignant contribution in appreciating both globalizing and localizing effects on students through overseas education. In the same vein of thought, their work lends support to my research insofar as that students use cross-border higher education to enhance their social mobility through the accumulation of capital. In addition, my research resembles their approach in exploring the micro and dialectic processes of students’ social life within the specific foreign cultural and political contexts. However, my research takes a further step in examining the social capital accumulation process both in their stay abroad as well as the utilization of the social capital beyond the “cosmopolitan” quality after they have left the host country.

In sum, the above-mentioned literature review has substantially shown that education has been perceived mainly from a macro perspective and from other non-social dimensions. My critique lies in that there is a need to appreciate a social interactional dimension through cross-border higher education. How do we appreciate social interactional dimensions in cross-border higher education? In anthropology, the social networking concept has been widely used to discuss social interactions. From a traditional perspective, social network theory refers to the mechanisms and processes that interact with structures that yield individual and group outcomes (Borgatti and Halgin, 2001, p. 1). As a pioneer, George Simmel purported two inseparable elements in social phenomenon as “content”, referring to interest, purpose or motive; and “form”, referring to the mode of interaction among individuals (cited in Levine, 1971). To Elizabeth Bott, a network refers to a set of relationships which can be either “close-knit” or “loose-knit” (1971). Manuel Castells spoke about networks as fundamental to constituting new organizations (1996, p. 168). One of the most outstanding works in social networking concept can be found in Mark Granovetter’s “The Strength of Weak Ties” (1973). In this work, Granovetter sought to explain how individuals can have their strength benefitted and enhanced by their weak networks while they move beyond their existing strong networks (Granovetter, 1973). On one hand, strong ties refer to the combination of time spent together, the intensification of emotional intimacy and reciprocal services (Granovetter, 1973, p. 1361). On the other hand, weak ties refer to the feeble connection between members of two particular groups that have never known each other before but have incidentally met and sought

to establish a relationship later on (Granovetter, 1973, p. 1364). In essence, weak ties are significant and thus “strong” in that they could assist individuals to access resources beyond their existing bounded social structures (Granovetter, 1973, p. 1377). From this classic example, social networking concept hinges on the social linkages or “ties” that lack a focus on the actors’ delineation and specification of the different natures and types of resources accessed. However, in social realities, relationships are complex both in the motivational dimension as well as the dynamic values of the social assets they posit. In order to look at the different expressions of social assets, this research invokes Bourdieu’s notion of capital, which unravels the intricate processes between structures and agencies.

According to Bourdieu, “capital” can be divided into four categories: economic, cultural, symbolic and social capital where each has a relationship to class (Bourdieu, 1977; Bourdieu and Passerson, 1977; Bourdieu, 1989). The three resources of economic, cultural and social capital can be made effective when their ownership is legitimized through the mediation of symbolic capital (Bourdieu, 1986). Symbolic capital is usually embedded in social networks, has an impact on ability in the labor market and consists of elements of social structure (Lin, 1982; 1999a; 1999b; 2001; Bourdieu, 1983; 1986; Coleman, 1990). The concepts of “cultural and social capital,” however, are mere focal points in which social relations and social institutions are reproduced through specific agents. According to Bourdieu and Passerson, cultural capital includes knowledge and possessions that are reflected in books, art, and other cultural artifacts (1977). The possession of cultural capital facilitates the participation or movement of the possessor in society, thereby bringing advantages to achieve a better lifestyle or access to the valued institutions of society. Bourdieu also discussed the existence of social capital which is the total amount of a “network of relationships,” which can be mobilized to support both cultural capital and economic capital (1986). Lin argued that social capital consists of resources embedded in such invested relations, which generate expected returns in their social relations in general (Lin, 2001). These relations are dictated by the positions of the actors in the hierarchical or stratification structure and by their locations in social networks (Lin, 2001). In this research, cross-border higher education is analyzed through the lens of social capital accumulation in Bourdieu’s sense. Instead of merely looking at cultural or economic aspects, this research is unique in examining the multi-faceted expressions of social

capital accumulations and the implications on the upward mobility of Cambodian students in Hanoi.

Everyday Life Practice as Space for Social Capital Accumulation

According to Giddens, the concept of practice is a broad term used to refer to the everyday experience and activities of people (Giddens, 1979). In the activities of everyday life, Giddens mentioned that everyone has practical, tacit knowledge of their social and physical environment. Therefore, each person has their own capacity to know how to go on, improvise and innovate when necessary (Giddens, 1979). Similar to Giddens, Wenger also discussed how everyday life practice can be understood through the ways people interact with each other to cope with and adapt to internal and external influences (Wenger, 2002). A practice includes both the explicit and tacit. It includes what is said and what is left unsaid, and what is represented and what is assumed (Wenger, 2002).

The concept of practice in everyday life is also developed by Michel de Certeau who states it consists of tactics and strategies that seek a place of their own power and will (de Certeau, 1984). Michel de Certeau employed the concept of strategy from the military perspective to describe how state-controlled institutions and private business companies attempt to gain more benefits through their control of society (1984). The state institutions and business sector gain power to establish their dominant order by reinforcing the laws, language, rituals, commercial goods, literature, art, inventions, and discourses (Gardiner, 2000). In response to such dominant order, de Certeau coins the term “tactic” to refer to the ability of individuals or groups to circulate things in their own ways to sustain their power or benefits. He examined the ways in which people make distinctive mass culture, altering things, from utilitarian objects to street plans to rituals, talking, reading, shopping, and cooking, laws and language, in order to turn it into their own benefit (De Certeau, 1984; Gardiner, 2000). Therefore, “tactic” is the response of the individual or group to the imposition of rules by the state institutions and private business sector.

Similar to de Certeau’s concept of everyday life practice, Bourdieu’s theory of practice is situated in the interaction between power, agency and structure (Bourdieu, 1990). Bourdieu’s practice is that people are capable of responding

to, and altering, their activities in the face of complex and variable conditions (Webb *et al.*, 2002, p. 61). With regards to my research, such reflexivity can only be unraveled through observations of the everyday life interaction of the Cambodian students in a foreign country.

In the case of Cambodian students abroad, tactics are fully employed in many aspects of their everyday life in the form of negotiation. By using their geographical site of birth and their familial social status, this group of students create a common space to gain a form of identification with one another during their studies in Hanoi, Vietnam. They hang out together with their fellow Cambodian friends and they cook together using Khmer recipes. They use Cambodian language to communicate with each other. Sometimes, they invite Vietnamese friends to their dormitories. They sing Khmer and Vietnamese songs while serving their Vietnamese friends Cambodian meals. Furthermore, they also help Vietnamese students who want to learn about Cambodian customs and traditions, such as Cambodian dressing and Cambodian dance. Hence, these activities demonstrate that the Cambodian students accumulate social capital through multiple means and avenues even as they live with the host culture. With a living place provided by the Vietnamese government, A3 *Bách Khoa* is known as the geographical space belonging to the Cambodian and Laos communities.

As Knight argued, there are many challenges in terms of how this environment affects international students (Knight, 2007). These challenges include language barriers in the classroom and different kinds of learning styles (Croese, 2011). The main problems that international students usually face are language shock, culture shock, homesickness, lack of study skills, and language proficiency (Marr, 2005; Zhang and Mi, 2009). Cambodian students in Hanoi face varied difficulties relating to academic, socio-cultural, and psychological adjustments. Nonetheless, most of them are not passive as a result of these plights. On the contrary, they have different experiences in negotiating with reflexive tactics. As subjects of the state, they are shaped and conditioned by state policies. However, Cambodian students negotiate through their everyday life practice. For instance, when they are caught by the Vietnamese traffic police for riding motorcycles illegally, they negotiate by showing their student status to gain sympathy. In another example, when they are invited by the Vietnamese government to join certain cultural activities, they will organize group discussions to prepare for fielding questions and appointing a spokesperson prior to these events.

On top of merely overcoming challenges, this research takes a further step to argue that Cambodian students abroad negotiate through everyday life practice to accumulate social capital that will assist in their advancement in future life. During the course of their study, many Cambodian students in Hanoi use their status as foreign students to accumulate more social capital and networking by participating in activities organized by the Vietnamese state such as Cultural Exchange Day, Khmer New Year celebration and Cambodia Independence Day. They also seek to participate whenever there are meetings between Cambodian and Vietnamese governments. Another interesting point is that due to the social relationship forged over the years by the Cambodian alumni, the Vietnam-Cambodia Friendship Association (VCFA) also provides support for Cambodian students in terms of funding and other practical assistance whenever they are in need. In sum, Cambodian students in Hanoi negotiate to accumulate social capital within the wider community of Cambodian students abroad as well as the Vietnamese community. From the former, they foster strong relationship bonds based on their similar national identity, political affiliation, and common interest in sports and modern fashion trends. From the latter, they seek to adapt to the Vietnamese community through speaking the local language and through participating in local activities, both in formal and in informal occasions.

Summary

This chapter illustrates the shifting nature of cross-border higher education. It has revealed that CBHE is surrounded by added values that are rooted in the goals and interests of the nation-states initiation of the education exchange. The research takes a unique angle by looking at how CBHE is not primarily for cultural capital accumulation, as in the acquisition of an academic qualification. Rather, in the course of acquiring cultural capital, the students seek to accumulate social capital for negotiation with economic and political dominance and future upward social mobility upon graduation. In the following chapter, the book aims to investigate the decision and participation of Cambodian students in choosing to engage in CBHE in Vietnam where English is not their native language. In addition, there will be a historical illustration of CBHE, which links to the economic development of leading developing countries like Vietnam.

Chapter 3

Historical, Political and Socio-Economic Context of Cambodian Students' Decision for Higher Education in Vietnam

The increasing engagement of Cambodian students in cross-border higher education in Vietnam is considered a result of the historical, political and socio-economic circumstances of higher education development in both countries. Through an application of the push-pull model in the studies of higher education, Cambodian students' decisions for cross-border higher education stem from the conditions of political history and socio-economic development of Cambodia and of the destination countries (McMahon, 1992; Altbach, 1998). Moreover, such decisions can also be due to the students' own agency as inspired from a micro perspective (Li and Bray, 2007).

Accordingly, the focus in this chapter is on describing the inclusive circumstances in which Cambodian students have made their participation in CBHE in Vietnam. In the first section, I review and explore the push factors to the students' choice of CBHE, including the home country's socio-economic development and conditions of the domestic higher education system. This is followed by an analysis of pull factors, by taking the context of Vietnam into consideration. In this second section, a comprehensive examination of Vietnam as the host country for Cambodian students will offer details of the cultural,

economic and political links between the two countries as a major foundation for their collaborative higher education development. Also, the attraction of Vietnam as the host country to Cambodian students is revealed through an elaboration of the development of the higher education system in Vietnam and the unique scholarship arrangements available for Cambodian students. The third section will highlight the students' personal and human factors as a supplement to their decision of studying in Vietnam, with a focus on their network of influence and their own thought processes.

A Brief History of Cambodia and its Relationship with Vietnam

The modern history of Cambodia began with the reign of King Sihanouk in 1953. The country had been at peace until the 1970 coup d'état by General Lon Nol, who ruled the country for just a short time. By 1975, Pol Pot led the Khmer Rouge campaign to take over from the Lon Nol regime and plunged the whole country into one of its darkest periods. Over just a 5-year period, 1975-1980, the Khmer Rouge dictatorship killed at least 3.7 million people out of about 7 million in the country, including those who were highly educated. Fortunately, that terrible period eventually came to an end in 1979 when the National Liberation Front of the Cambodian people, with the assistance of the governments of Vietnam and Laos, overthrew the Pol Pot regime and founded the People's Republic of Cambodia.

The defeat of the Khmer Rouge regime and the formation of the People's Republic of Kampuchea (PRK) has marked the rebirth of this completely devastated country. Yet, civil conflicts and political unrest continued in Cambodia until the Paris Peace Accords were signed in 1991. The first free election of Cambodia took place in 1993, after the Paris agreement and with assistance rendered by the United Nations. Millions of dollars from international financial institutions and external donor agencies were invested in Cambodia during the early 1990s. However, political struggles between the two coalitions of Prime Minister Hun Sen of the Cambodia People's Party (CPP) and Prince Norodom Ranariddh of the political party named *Front Uni National Pour un Cambodge Indépendant, Neutre, Pacifique et Coopératif* (FUNCINPEC) took place and all financial aid was temporarily suspended. Another election was

organized in 1998 with the majority of votes in support for Hun Sen's party. As a result, Hun Sen has assumed the office of Prime Minister until today.

Cambodia has Vietnam as one of her three neighboring countries located in the Mekong Region of Southeast Asia. Cambodia-Vietnam diplomatic relations have lasted for hundreds of years as seen through their long and eventful history. However, sociopolitical ties between the two countries had been largely emphasized during the imposition of French colonial rule over the whole of Indo-China in the mid-Nineteenth Century. Vietnam was the capital of Indochinese Colonies and the hub for all extractions of natural resources and labor from Cambodia and Laos. Since King Sihanouk's reign over Cambodia in 1953, the country had not had any significant relations with Vietnam until the Pol Pot regime.

During the Lon Nol regime, the cross-border trade between Cambodia and Vietnam became very restricted (Morris, 1999). When the Khmer Rouge led by Pol Pot overthrew Lon Nol and his rule in 1975, there were even more hostile relations between the Khmer Rouge regime and the Vietnamese government with the border closed. Together with other socialist bloc countries, Vietnam played an important role in the two countries' diplomatic relations by backing Heng Samrin to defeat the Khmer Rouge and in forming the PRK from 1979 to 1989 (van der Kroef, 1981).

Since the second election of the Government of the Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen, the two countries have developed good political relations. This has been reflected in Mr. Hun Sen's statement that, "the bilateral relations between Cambodia and Vietnam can create an environment conducive to trade and employment". Accordingly, trade between Vietnam and Cambodia commenced from 1979, with the opening of the border and since then, the flow of people and goods between the two countries has increased remarkably. Cambodia has become a gateway for trade between Thailand and Vietnam. The greatest importance of the Vietnam-Cambodia trade relationship lies in this connection with Thailand. From 1990 to 2000, most of the products exported to Vietnam from Cambodia were second hand automobiles, pearls, gem stones, Thai clothing brands, cigarettes, and cosmetic products. On the other hand, Cambodia imported very few products from Vietnam during this time due to the small market capacity in the country. There is no statistical

evidence of the amount and profits of unofficial bilateral trade during this period (Beresfor and Phong, 2000, p. 123-129).

Since 1999, the two Governments have also initiated other forms of cooperation such as establishing a stock exchange market in Cambodia and energy cooperation in the border areas. Vietnam currently ranks the third among Cambodia's trading partners from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the sixth among countries establishing economic relations with Cambodia. Moreover, the creation of the "Development Triangle" comprising 10 border provinces of Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia is a step forward towards economic integration in the region. At a two-day meeting on trade and investment promotion into the "Development Triangle" comprising 10 border provinces of Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia concluded in Sihanoukville, Cambodia, on February 17, 2008, the leaders of the three countries have shown their commitment in a joint statement; "No stone will be left unturned so as to reach the goal for high and sustainable economic growth" (Vietnam News Agency, 2008).

In addition, border trade between Vietnam and Cambodia rose by 30% annually during the period from 2002 to 2007. The 2-way trade turnover grew by about 40% annually, with trade rising from USD 184 million in 2001 to USD 940 million in 2006. In 2007, Vietnam's total investment in Cambodia reached USD 114 million. As of 2007, Vietnamese enterprises had so far poured USD 25 million into projects in Cambodia, mostly in the production field of garments, textiles and construction materials. By the end of December 2005, Cambodian investors had already invested in four projects in Vietnam with a combined operational capital of USD 4 million. Cambodia also exported around USD 170 million worth of products, including rubber, forest products, raw materials for clothing products, tobacco leaves and other goods to Vietnam, an increase of about USD 13 million over 2005. The 2-way trade between Cambodia and Vietnam increased significantly in recent years, reaching USD 1.7 billion in 2008, up 40% compared to 2007. Under the 2012-2013 Bilateral Trade Enhancement Agreement and the agreement signed in late October 2016 on trade promotion to raise bilateral trade between Vietnam and Cambodia, Vietnam has pledged to apply a preferential tax rate of 0% to 39 Cambodian product lines including agro-products and footwear. Cambodia, meanwhile, has set a special tariff of 0% for 29 Vietnamese items being imported into the Cambodian market, such as coffee, tea and plastic bags. In 2013, the Cambodia-Vietnam bilateral trade

volume was recorded at some USD 3.5 billion. With such an historical relationship in both politics and trade, the Governments of Cambodia and Vietnam can expect to enjoy their prosperity and developmental growth with continued poverty reduction of their nations' citizens living along their countries' borders.

Overview of Cambodian Students' Higher Education Experiences in Hanoi, Vietnam

In the following section, there will be discussed an overview of Cambodian students' characteristics and experiences in Vietnam as pull factors that draw Cambodian students to study in Hanoi, Vietnam.

The Characteristics of Cambodian Students in Hanoi

There are some common characteristics of Cambodian students studying in Hanoi. According to the results of my field-based survey as illustrated in Figure 3.1, the majority of them are male; there are almost four times as many males as females. They were mostly single; only two persons were married and both were male. Being "in a relationship" is the status of just a few (5.3%) and only one of them was female. Cambodian students in Hanoi mostly (88.5%) completed their high school education before leaving for Hanoi. Yet, it is interesting to note that some (10.4%) Cambodian students in Hanoi who have obtained their Bachelor degree, have chosen to continue with another one in Vietnam. In one particular case, there is a person who chose to pursue another Bachelor degree in Vietnam even though he already had a master degree.

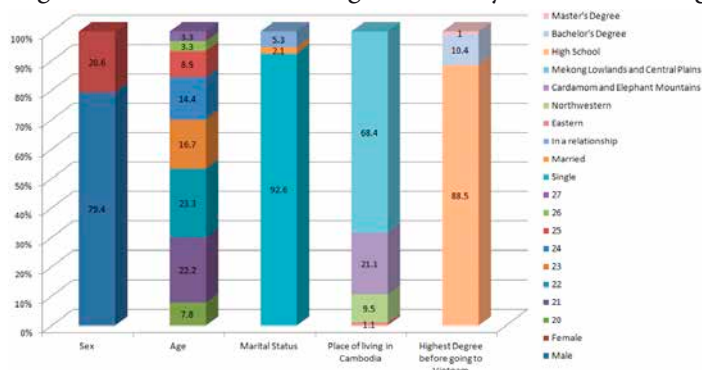


Figure 3.1: Individual Background Information of Respondents (%)
(Source: Field Survey, 2014)

The origins of living in Cambodia also show a little disparity, according to the survey to Cambodian students studying in Hanoi. More than three-fifths of respondents (68.4%) came from the Mekong Lowlands and Central Plains and just 1.1% came from the Eastern side. There are a total of 16 provinces in the country where the students have originated from. None of the students are from an ethnic minority and Vietnam is the first abroad destination of education for all of the surveyed population.

With regards to age, the university and the majors of Cambodian students in Hanoi, the respondents provided varied answers. Most Cambodian students in Hanoi are aged from 21 to 23 years old; they constitute 62.2% of the surveyed population. Every student who has received a Vietnamese scholarship must spend one year studying the Vietnamese language prior to their enrolment at a university. As such, for a 4-year Bachelor system, students have to spend a total of five years studying in the country. This also applies to those who are taking medicine as a major which requires six years for a Bachelor degree. Accordingly, the disparity in age of the students is observed with the existence of 20 as the lowest age and 27 as the highest age (see Figure 3.1).

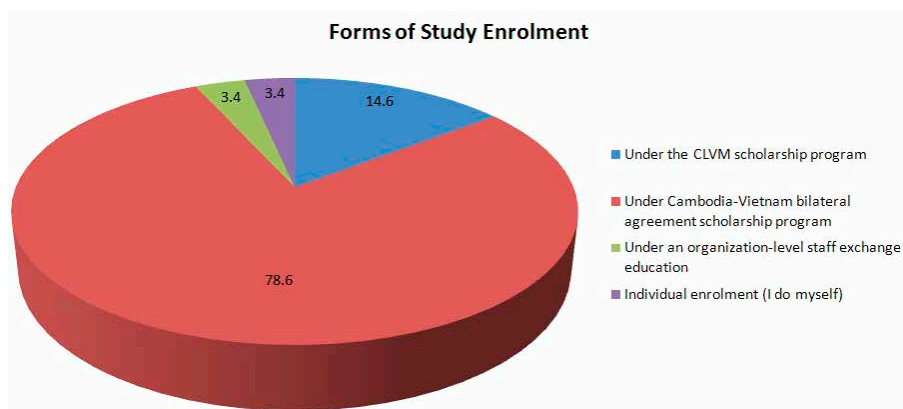


Figure 3.2: Forms of Study Enrolment of Cambodian Students in Hanoi (%)
(Source: Field Survey, 2014)

As presented in Figure 3.2, most Cambodian students are studying in Hanoi under the Cambodia-Vietnam bilateral agreement scholarship program (78.6%) or a Vietnamese scholarship through the Cambodia-Laos-Myanmar-Vietnam cooperation framework (CLMV) scholarship programs (14.6%). Others received their scholarship through several other exchange programs

for a maximum of two years duration (3.4%). A small number (3.4%) of Cambodian students in Hanoi were not recipients of any exchange program.

Self-assessment About Family Income Status			Main Source of Family Income (N = 90)		
Status	Frequency	Percent	Sources	Frequency	Percent
Above the country average	3	3.4	Farming	43	47.8
Average	68	77.3	Family Personal Business	31	34.4
Below the country average	17	19.3	Government Official	5	5.5
Total	N = 88	100	Company Staff	6	6.7
			Factory's worker	2	2.2
			Abroad remittance	0	0.0
			Teaching	12	13.3

Education Attainment of Family Members									
	Dad (N = 91)		Mother (N = 92)		Brothers (N = 68)		Sisters (N = 71)		Spouse (N = 2)
Attainment	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency
No schooling	12	13.2	15	16.3	1	1.5	1	1.4	
No degree	11	12.1	21	22.8	0	0.0	2	2.8	
Secondary school	19	20.9	27	29.3	6	8.8	14	19.7	
High school	30	33	22	23.9	15	22.1	28	39.4	
Vocational degree	8	8.8	1	1.1	1	1.5	2	2.8	
Diploma	7	7.7	5	5.4	10	14.7	8	11.3	
Bachelor's Degree	1	1.1	0	0.0	32	47.1	26	36.6	2
Master's Degree	2	2.2	0	0.0	7	10.3	0	0.0	
Doctoral Degree	1	1.1	1	1.1	4	5.9	1	1.4	

Table 3.3: Basic Information on Family Socio-Economic Conditions of Cambodian Students in Hanoi (Source: Field Survey, 2014)

The socio-economic conditions of the respondents' families are closely connected to the students' individual backgrounds. As shown in Table 3.3, there are three important indicators: (1) the status of family income as assessed by the students themselves; (2) the main sources of their family income, and (3) the highest education attainment of their family members. In the first indicator, slightly more than three-fourths (77.3%) of the answers from the students located their family at an average income status. But there is also nearly one-fifth (19.3%) who answered with the status "below the country average." This aspect regarding the economic considerations of the students in acquiring scholarships will be discussed at length later. The information about the main sources of family income can provide even more illustration to this picture. Farming and family personal businesses are the two most common sources of income, which respectively hold nearly a half (47.8%) and more than one-third (34.4%) of the total answers. There were no instances of abroad remittances stated. The third indicator is the highest education attainment of family members which indicates the interest and affordability of

education to the students' family. The presence (or absence) of family members to each student is varied.

Therefore, as shown in Table 3.3, the answers are different with respect to each family member. While parents are present for most of the students, only about two-thirds of them have brothers or sisters, including the cases of those who have more than one brother/sister. There were two students who indicated that they are married. Accordingly, the surveyed population reflects the number of family members of the students as well as their respective highest education qualification. Overall, there are very few parents (fathers, 4.4%; mothers, 1.1%) holding a qualification of a Bachelor's degree and above. On the other hand, there are much more siblings (brothers, 63.3%; sisters, 38%) who attained the same qualification. From a gender perspective, males tend to achieve a higher rate educational qualification as compared with females.

Participation in Higher Education and Living of Cambodian Students in Hanoi

Possessing those characteristics, Cambodian students obtain their higher education experiences in Hanoi in the following areas: scholarship, study of Vietnamese language, universities and study majors, sources of help for Cambodian students, and activities done before and during the academic semester. In doing so, the goal is to provide a broad understanding of how Cambodian students perceive their higher education experiences in Vietnam.

The study of Cambodian students in Vietnam, and Hanoi in particular, is fueled by scholarships. With one-fifth of surveyed Cambodian students in Hanoi having their family economic status as "below the country average" (see Table 3.3), a scholarship is considered fundamental to their effort for further study. Table 3.4 provides in detail the different sources of expenses for Cambodian students in Hanoi and a variety of items that they have acquired from utilizing their scholarship.

In order to study abroad, Cambodian students receive several means of financial support. From my survey in Hanoi, most of them stated that they have received full scholarships from the Vietnamese government (79.4%), while a few obtained only a partial Vietnamese scholarship (7.2%). Some have received full or partial scholarships from the Cambodian government. A very small number of them also indicated family financial support or scholarships

from university as their main sources of income. There were some Cambodian students in Hanoi possessing more than one source of funding. For instance, some have both family support and a partial scholarship from the Cambodian government. Although there is no official record, there are some students who have self-funded their study abroad or received funding from non-governmental institutions in Cambodia.

Source of Expenses (N=97)			Items Covered by Scholarship (N=90)		
Source	Freq.	%	Item	Freq.	%
Full scholarship of Vietnamese government	77	79.4	Medical insurance	58	64.4
Full scholarship of Cambodian government	14	14.4	Monthly allowance	45	50.0
Part scholarship of Vietnamese government	57	7.2	Accommodation	42	46.7
Some from personal savings	6	6.2	Tuition fee	41	45.5
Full support from my family	4	4.1	Language study	32	35.5
Part scholarship of Cambodian government	1	1.0	Book and supplies	28	31.1
Full scholarship of University	1	1.0	Field data collection	14	15.5
All from personal savings	0	0	Short course for my subject	2	2.2
Full scholarship of non-government institution in Cambodia	0	0	Having party with friends	1	1.1
			Sport	1	1.1
			Water and electricity (overuse = additional fees)	1	1.1

Table 3.4: Management of Expenses for Studying of Cambodian Students in Hanoi (Source: Field Survey, 2014)

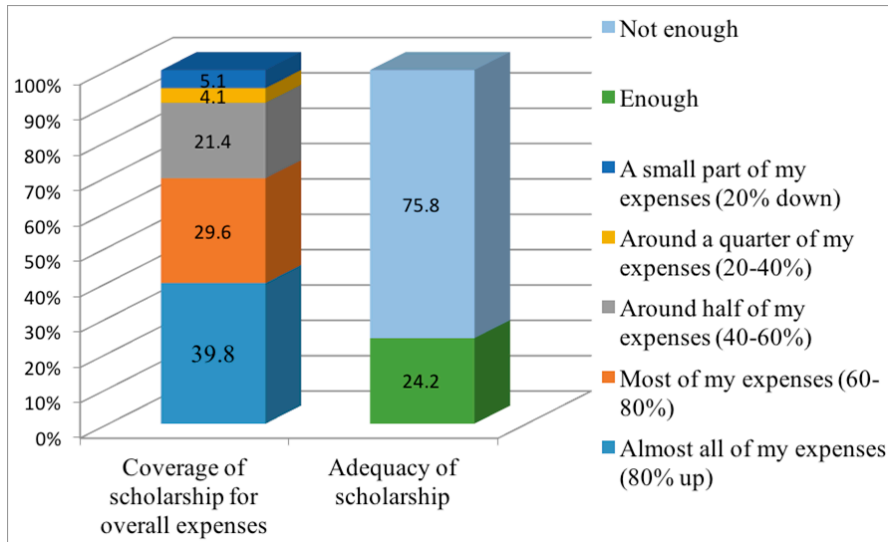


Figure 3.5: Scholarship Self-Evaluation of Cambodian Students in Hanoi
(Source: Field Survey, 2014)

Furthermore, the surveyed Cambodian students in Hanoi sometimes spoke about the shortage of scholarships. Figure 3.5 reveals 3-quarters of them did not consider their scholarship adequate for their living expenses. In detail, 30.6% of them found less than 40% of their expenses could be satisfied by the scholarship. Meanwhile, 40% of them considered their scholarship could cover almost all or up to 80% of their expenses.

Specifically, those who have received a scholarship from the Vietnamese government acknowledged that this is a major intention of the Vietnamese government towards the two countries' education and training cooperation (Hiep, 2013). Since 1999, Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) of Vietnam has stated clearly in its mission regulations for foreigners studying in Vietnam as follows.

All the students studying, researching and practicing in Vietnam have equal duties and rights in education, research, practice and other activities. (Article 21) (MOET, 1999).

They are respected and equally treated as Vietnamese citizens by department of education, students' management and

service; provided sufficient information for learning in accordance with the conditions of educational institutions; used equipment and facilities for activities such as learning, culture, sports of the department of education, students' management, service; rewarded if they have excellent results in studying and research, got allowance for careers in accordance with the current regulations of Vietnamese Government. (Article, 23) (MOET, 1999)

The content of Vietnamese scholarship is clarified by the Ministry of Finance. In the circular stipulating the training rate for Laotian and Cambodian students studying in Vietnam, it is written:

Cambodian students studying in Vietnam following the annual cooperation agreement of the two Governments receive monthly scholarship in Vietnamese currency from the first month in Vietnam to the end of the course for covering food, clothing and other subsistence allowances. (Ministry of Finance, 2014)

Accordingly, the Ministry of Finance has issued the Circular No. 120/2012/TT-BTC regulating scholarship for Laotian and Cambodian students studying in Vietnam under the bi-lateral agreement. Applied since September 1st, 2012 for the academic year 2012-2013, the scholarship is detailed at VND 2,240,000/student/month (equivalent to about USD 105) for school fees and VND 2,530,000/student/month (equivalent to about USD 119) for stipend to those who are pursuing the Bachelor's degree (Ministry of Finance, 2012). More recently, the Circular No. 140/2014/TT-BTC by the Ministry of Finance has regulated an increase of monthly stipend for Laotian and Cambodian students studying in Vietnam under bi-lateral agreement. Applied since December 1st, 2014, the stipend now stands at VND 3,160,000/student/month (equivalent to about USD 148), but the school fee remains unchanged. This update was acknowledged as an effort of the Vietnamese government to facilitate Cambodian and Laotian students studying in Vietnam (Ministry of Finance, 2014).

In practice, Cambodian students in Hanoi have spent their scholarship on many different items, as listed by ranking on cost in Table 3.4. The top of the list involves major expenses, including medical insurance, monthly allowance, accommodation and tuition fee. At the bottom of the list are

expenditures for optional activities, including short courses to supplement their major subjects, sports, parties. The usage of water and electricity is essential but has its presence at the bottom of the list for its small amount of expenses. In fact, these optional expenses are not specified in the scholarship and considered to belong to the monthly stipend.

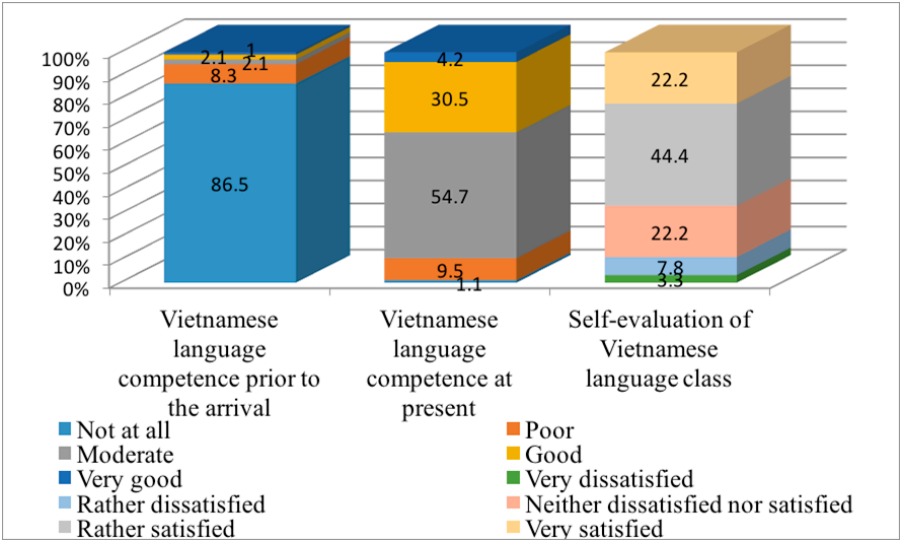


Figure 3.6: Consideration of Vietnamese Language amongst Cambodian Students in Hanoi (Source: Field Survey, 2014)

On top of scholarship considerations, Cambodian students have to consider language challenges. Apart from coping with the Vietnamese language, students are often thrown into situations where English or French are used—not their native languages. As a requirement of scholarship to study in Vietnam, they have to know Vietnamese well prior to their arrival in Hanoi, or have to study Vietnamese at Friendship school T80 for between six months to one year. Therefore, as presented in Figure 3.6, there is a significant improvement in Vietnamese language competency amongst Cambodian students, with a drastic decrease of students who rated “poor” and “not at all” level of Vietnamese language from nearly 95% to about 10%. Meanwhile, there is a significant rise from 4.2% to 85.2%, of those who rated themselves as being at a “moderate” or “good” level of Vietnamese proficiency. As each individual has a different capability of learning a language, it is understandable that there exists a variation in Vietnamese language competency amongst Cambodian students in Hanoi.

Accordingly, when they were asked to self-evaluate their Vietnamese language class in consideration of all the factors like teacher, students, learning environment, learning materials, etc., they have demonstrated divergence, with 66.6% feeling “rather satisfied” or “very satisfied” and 11.1% feeling “rather dissatisfied” or “very dissatisfied”.

Language in use	With Cambodians		With Vietnamese		With other foreigners	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Khmer	73	75.3	0	0	1	1.1
Vietnamese	1	1	66	66.7	6	7
English	0	0	0	0	59	67.8
English and Vietnamese	1	1	32	32.3	20	23
Vietnamese, English and Khmer	12	12.4	1	1	1	1.1
Khmer and English	3	3.1	0	0	0	0
Khmer and Vietnamese	7	7.2	0	0	0	0
Total	97	100	99	100	87	100

Table 3.7: Language Utilization of Cambodian Students in Hanoi
(Source: Field Survey, 2014)

The competency of Vietnamese language by Cambodian students in Hanoi is also recognized through their usage of the language with different people (see Table 3.7). In the survey, there are three groups of people with whom the students have been asked to point out which language they use to communicate with. Amongst Cambodians, Khmer is clearly the main language of communication with 3-quarters (75.3%) of the students using only Khmer. Interestingly, the remaining one-fourth of the students are using not only Khmer but also Vietnamese and English to communicate with their Cambodian counterparts. With Vietnamese people and other foreigners, the picture is promising. On average, two-thirds of Cambodian students in Hanoi use only Vietnamese to speak to Vietnamese people and only English to speak to other foreigners. With the Vietnamese people, one-third of the students use either Vietnamese or English in communication. In one exceptional case, a student

uses Khmer to speak to his Vietnamese wife. With other foreigners, there are a few cases using only Khmer or Vietnamese to communicate, while the others use either Vietnamese or English.

Next, in terms of enrolment, the institutions of Vietnam received a total of 1,167 regular and 648 specialized Cambodian students between 2006 until 2010. Cambodian students mostly enroll in the majors that include medical-pharmaceutical, agricultural, economic, architectural, and engineering and technology (Hiep, 2013).

In terms of Vietnam's education system, there were 221 public universities and colleges, 34 private universities and colleges, about 10 foreign-invested universities and colleges and hundreds of joint training programs in 2006 (Director *et al.*, 2006, p. 75). At the time of research, most of the main universities in Vietnam had Cambodian students enrolled. Specifically, during the period 2006-2010, the number of Cambodian students at specific universities included: Hanoi University of Technology (32, current; 78, graduated); Medical University (20, current); Hanoi University of Architecture (30, current); Thai Binh Medical University (230, current); University Irrigation (5, current); University of Medicine and Pharmacy of Ho Chi Minh city (77, current); University of Agriculture and Forestry in Ho Chi Minh city (51, current); University of Architecture of Ho Chi Minh city (30, current); and An Giang University (7, current).

As shown in Figure 3.8, 43.8% of Cambodian students in Hanoi have chosen Engineering as their major. The other preferred majors are Information Technology, Clinical Pharmacy, Economics/Business Administration, Banking/Accountant, Architecture and Social Sciences, etc. Each of these majors includes a variety of branches. For instance, the Engineering major comprises Civil Engineering, Electrical Engineering, Electronic Power Engineering, Hydraulics and Hydropower Engineering, Road and Bridge Engineering and Electronics and Telecommunication Engineering.

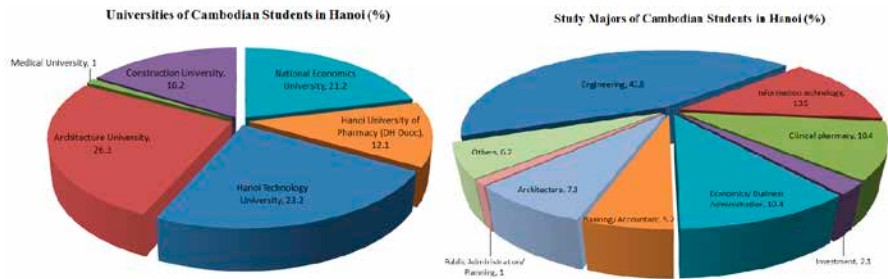


Figure 3.8: Universities and Majors of Study of Cambodian Students in Hanoi (%) (Source: Field Survey, 2014)

To study in Vietnam, Cambodian students have to comply with the country’s particular curriculum. From 1987 until present, the university curriculum in Vietnam has been reformed to adapt to the economic transformation into a market economy with a socialist orientation (Thiep and Khuyen, 2010). There are two components in this structure of the university curriculum (see Table 3.9):

- General Education (GE) including modules in six areas: Social Sciences, Humanities, Natural Sciences and Mathematics, Languages, National Defense Education and Physical Education.
- Professional Education (PE) consisting of three parts: core modules (basics of discipline or interdisciplinary knowledge), modules of main majors and supplementary modules (optional).

No.	NAME OF COURSE / MODULE
1	<div>Minimum General Education (not including Physical Education and National Defense Education)</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Principles of Marxism-Leninism• Ho Chi Minh Thoughts• Revolutionary Approach of the Communist Party• Foreign Language (English)• General Computing

2	Minimum Professional Education, including:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Basics of sectoral knowledge• Basics of discipline knowledge• Knowledge of the major (including specialized knowledge)• Additional knowledge (optional)• Professional Training and graduation examination (or graduate thesis)

Table 3.9: Knowledge Structure of the Training Program
(Source: Field Survey, 2014)

In sum, Cambodian students in Hanoi encounter difficulties in communication, learning and finances. However, several ways have been applied amongst the students to address such challenges. The following discusses the seven main options in view of the five major issues as listed in Table 3.10.

First, Cambodian students seek to talk with their Cambodian friends in Hanoi when they need help in overcoming their challenges. This is reasonable due to the ease of communication and the similar experiences they share with their Cambodian peers. Their Vietnamese friends are the next immediate option for the Cambodian students. In particular, they seek the help of their Vietnamese friends when they cannot communicate well with their other Vietnamese classmates and when they do not feel comfortable enough to participate in study groups. Third, the Cambodian students choose to talk with their family members especially when they are facing financial problems with regards to their educational expenses. Fourth, the Cambodian students take refuge with their Cambodian friends in Cambodia, in particular, when they do not feel comfortable with their study group. Fifth, the Cambodian students look for help from the Cambodian embassy, especially when they do not have enough funds. Finally, the Cambodian students will resort to assistance from the Vietnamese in general, mostly when they have communication problems with their Vietnamese classmates. Last but not least, the Cambodian students will attempt to overcome their obstacles alone; mainly, when they cannot communicate well with their Vietnamese friends. In sum, it can be observed that Cambodian students seek help from others as contingent on the different nature of the issues involved, with preference from those who share their kinship and nationality.

Difficulty Solution	Don't understand much of the lecture N = 86		Not enough support from teachers for thesis/ paperwork N = 80		Can't communicate well with Vietnamese classmates N = 73		Not comfortable with studying group N = 77		Finance shortage for education expenses N = 75	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Talk to Cambodian friends in Hanoi	46	53.5	33	41.3	34	46.6	34	44.1	20	26.7
Talk to Vietnamese friends	45	52.3	35	43.8	22	30.1	29	37.7	6	8
Talk to family	9	10.5	1	1.3	4	5.5	4	5.2	45	60
Talk to Cambodian friends in Cambodia	5	5.8	8	10	5	6.8	9	11.7	8	10.7
Talk to Cambodian Embassy	8	9.3	9	11.3	2	2.7	2	2.6	16	21.3
Talk to Vietnamese supporter	12	13.9	12	15	13	17.8	5	6.5	8	10.7
Overcome alone	15	17.4	18	22.5	22	30.1	21	27.3	10	13.3

Table 3.10: Sources of Help for Cambodian Students in Hanoi When Facing Difficulty in Studying (Source: Field Survey, 2014)

In everyday living while studying in Hanoi, the survey examines Cambodian students' experiences with transportation, assistance and being in relationship, as well as their activities at first arrival and during study periods. The experiences of Cambodian students in Hanoi are first presented in Table 3.11. For their mode of transportation, local bus is the most favorable option, followed by taxi/motorbike taxi and borrowing a motorbike/ bicycle from

Cambodian friends. These are considered the most convenient and comfortable options for them as the distance from their dormitory to the university is not too far and they often go in a small group if there are any meetings around the city. Sometimes, renting a motorbike/bicycle can also be a good choice if they want more freedom to use the vehicle for a longer period. A smaller number of them have come to the decision of buying a motorbike/bicycle. They can resell their vehicles to others upon their graduation or if they do not want them anymore. Only a few have chosen to borrow vehicles from their close Vietnamese friends.

There are eight main areas where Cambodian students require support during their cross border education. Language programs (58.9%) have proven to require the highest demand for support. This is because the students have found learning Vietnamese language as a useful tool for their study. Second, since the curriculum is taught in the Vietnamese language, Cambodian students often find it challenging and face problems in their study. As such, receiving assistance for their academic problems ranked second in importance. Third, the Cambodian students appreciate being fully informed about their academic and logistical arrangements before their first arrival. Fourth, the Cambodian students' desire to be involved in the participation of socio-cultural activities. Some respondents shared with me that they are even prepared to pay money so they can join in activities that make them feel at home. Fifth, about a quarter of the Cambodian students doing this survey have sought advice when they were having problems with their social relationships. Sixth, only 22.1% of the Cambodian students have indicated involvement in organized trips and visiting tours. Seventh, approximately only one-fifth of the respondents have sought advice concerning their housing settlement when they first arrived. This is because the scholarship program has already made the necessary arrangements for them. Finally, the least facility being utilized is the information about occupational opportunities, including part-time work. This is because the contractual agreement under the scholarship forbids them from other work commitments.

Mode of Transportation (N = 99)			Accessed Supports (N = 95)			Being in Relationship (N = 95)		
Mode	Freq.	%	Support	Freq.	%	Relationship	Freq.	%
Local bus	70	70.7	Language program	56	58.9	Connection to group/ association of Cambodian students in Hanoi	76	80
Taxi/ motorbike taxi service	57	57.6	Be assisted when having problems with study	46	48.4	Vietnamese close friend	38	40
Cambodian friend's motorbike/ bicycle	52	52.5	Be informed fully before first arrival	39	41	A Cambodian relative in Vietnam	20	21
Local people's service of motorbike/ bicycle for rent	26	26.3	Be involved in social-cultural activities	33	34.7	A contact to some abroad Cambodian in Vietnam if needed	20	21
Purchase own motorbike	19	19.2	Be advised when having problems with social relationship	24	25.3	Girlfriend/ boyfriend who is Vietnamese/ not Cambodian	7	7.4
Purchase own bicycle	19	19.2	Be involved in organized trips and visiting tours	21	22.1	Vietnamese wife/ husband	1	1
Vietnamese friend's motorbike/ bicycle	5	5	Be advised in settling down when first arrived	20	21			
			Be informed about occupational opportunities, incl. part-time work	6	6.3			

Table 3.11: Experience with Transportation, Assistance and Relationship of Cambodian Students in Hanoi (*Source: Field Survey, 2014*)

Cambodian students are active during their study in Hanoi, which can be seen in the two periods as shown in Table 3.12. The first period refers to the time when they arrived at Hanoi several days prior to the commencement of their Vietnamese class the first period, students engage in activities because they want to familiarize with the main academic program (i.e. those who had already passed their Vietnamese language proficiency).

Activities Done Prior to the First Class (N = 80)			Activities Participated In During Study Time (N = 99)		
Activity	Freq.	%	Activity	Freq.	%
Get familiar with the living conditions	48	60	Play sports	79	79.8
Get familiar with the weather	14	17.5	Visit Cambodian friends	71	71.7
Prepare for new class	6	7.5	Travel for sight-seeing	56	56.6
Follow policy of Cambodia Ministry of Education	5	6.3	Take courses at the university	51	51.5
Go shopping	4	5	Learn more about the culture of the host country	41	41.4
Visit relatives	4	5	Visit Vietnamese friends	39	39.4
Tour around the city	3	3.8	Work on your thesis/ independent study	35	35.3
Visit friends	3	3.8	Take a language course	27	27.3
Study Vietnamese language	2	2.5	Be a member of certain university's club/association	9	9.1
			Visit relatives who live in Hanoi and/or nearby province	8	8
			Do an internship	7	7.1
			Do volunteer work	5	5

Table 3.12: Activities of Cambodian Students Studying in Hanoi
(Source: Field Survey, 2014)

The second period refers to the time during their study. With regards to living conditions and the weather, as both are very different from Cambodia. Some spend this time to prepare themselves for the new semester. Some follow the regulation of the scholarship to arrive a few days earlier for enrolment procedures. Others engage in more relaxing activities including shopping, touring, and visiting relatives and friends. Only a very small proportion of them choose to study the Vietnamese language in this time. During the second period, their activities are different. The three highest rated activities are entertainment-oriented including playing sports, visiting Cambodian students and traveling for sight-seeing. Another group of activities, that are second in significance, revolves around self-improvement. These activities include taking extra courses, learning about the host culture, visiting Vietnamese friends, working on their thesis and independent self-study, and taking language courses. Finally, the last segment of activities is social-charitable in nature. Cambodian students are found to have spent the least of their time as members of a certain university's club or association, visiting relatives who live in Hanoi or other provinces, being involved in internship or offering themselves as volunteers.

Cambodian Students' Push Factors for Cross-border Higher Education

Cambodian students' aspirations for international higher education are first stimulated by the conditions of their home country. From a macro perspective, the motivation and decision to apply for CBHE is similar to that for migration, which is explained by the push-pull model (Lee, 1966; Chen, 2007). This push-pull model provides a dialectic "and/both" perspective instead of merely looking at one side. To begin with, this section examines the possible push factors influencing Cambodian students. To appreciate the "push" dimension, the following section discusses the development of Cambodian higher education through the reforms.

Cambodian higher education had been rooted in the French-designed system since 1863 through to 1953, the period of French colonial rule. There were many higher education institutions established under this mixed system between tradition and western, in order to serve the colonialists' purpose (Sam *et al.*, 2012). In 1954, Cambodia received its independence from France; since then, higher education in Cambodia has developed tremendously (Le Masson

and Fergusso, 1997). The education system during King Sihanouk's two-decade reign was significantly improved as he embarked on an ambitious plan to build many schools and universities. The overriding aim of schooling in Cambodia is the development of human capital for economic progress. In 1960, the Royal Khmer University (RKU) was established in Phnom Penh. The RKU housed five comprehensive faculties, including Law and Economics; Medicine and Pharmacy; Natural Sciences and Technology; Social and Human Sciences; and one professional school – the National Institute of Pedagogy. In 1964, the Higher Institute of Technology opened its doors, with three faculties: agriculture – forestry - veterinary medicine - fisheries; social science; and rural economics. A short time later, the People's University of Phnom Penh and the Community Colleges of Battambang, Kampong Cham, and Kampot were also established. By the academic year of 1969-70, nine institutions of higher education, with more than 5,300 students, were operating in Cambodia. In the period of the devastating war triggered by Lon Nol's coup d'état in 1970, the country's education system, including higher education, had to cease all its activities. Most of the school buildings were damaged by American bombs and artillery shells. From the beginning of the Khmer Rouge regime (1975-1979) until the peace restoration period, all schools and universities were closed (Ayres, 2000a; Ayres, 2003).

Soon after the end of the Pol Pot regime, schools and HEIs were reopened to serve the needs of the country (Sam Rany *et al.*, 2012b; Dunnett, 1993). The rebuilding of the educational system, including higher education, was one of the first priorities of this renaissance (HRINC, 2010). In December 1979, to meet the urgent needs of health care for millions of the victims of the Pol Pot regime's atrocities, the Faculty of Medicine of Phnom Penh was reopened with an enrollment of 725 of its former students. In July 1980, the Teacher Training College organized short-term training courses for the quick preparation of thousands of teachers for primary education and a literacy campaign. In February 1981, the College of Foreign Languages was founded to train the interpreters and translators necessary to receive the international assistance for the country's reconstruction. The constitution of the People's Republic of Cambodia, which passed by the Cambodian National Assembly on June 25th, 1981, has stated the determination of the Cambodian people to build a national educational system to serve the socio-economic development of the country after the devastation of the past. In September 1981, the Higher Institute of Technology reopened its doors providing engineering training in five faculties:

civil engineering, chemical engineering, irrigation, geology and mining, and electrical engineering. At the same time, the College of Economics was established with faculties in planning, finance, commerce, agricultural economics and industrial economics. In January 1985, the College of Agriculture at Chamcar Duang was also reopened with five faculties: Agriculture, Veterinary Medicine, Fisheries, and Mechanization of Agriculture. In March 1988, the Council of Ministers of the Cambodian government founded the University of Phnom Penh through the unification of the Teacher Training College and the College for Foreign Languages. This new university has 11 faculties, including six in social sciences and humanities and five in natural sciences (Sam *et al.*, 2012).

Due to the development of higher learning institutions in the global and regional contexts, the Cambodian government has been paying attention to national policies for strengthening its educational system since 1994. Several consultative meetings between the government and development partners were conducted to find out possible recommendations to reform of the Cambodian HEIs. Notably, the government implemented privatization policies in 1997. There were two important changes at that time. First, the government permitted the private sector to be involved in tertiary education. Second, the government authorized Public Higher Educational Institutions to enroll non-scholarship students on a tuition fee-paying basis to study together with government-scholarship students who were competitively selected by the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sport (MoEYS) based on their Grade 12 examination results (Chamnan and Ford, 2004). Consequently, the Norton University was established in 1997 as the first private university to provide educational services with affordable tuition fees together with other public universities.

According to a report by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport, the total annual registration rate increased dramatically; more than four times from 57,828 students to 246,069 students between 2003 and 2012. As of 2012, approximately 91% of students had paid fees in the public and private HEIs. In the academic year 2011-2012, there were 1006 doctoral students, 14,127 master students, 207,666 undergraduate students, and 23,123 associate students (MoEYS, 2012). However, the rapid growth of HEIs and their enrollment has led to the realization of the need to confront both the low quality of education, and at the same time, the fact that the large number of educated graduates may not be equally matched with market demands (Chealy, 2009). To deal with

such matters, the Cambodian parliament and government have adopted a number of national and institutional policies and regulations.

Since 2001, the Cambodian Government's Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport has published several documents that outline the government's Education Strategic Plan (ESP). At the time of research, there had been three ESPs: ESP 2001-2005; ESP 2004-2008; and ESP 2006-2010 (MoEYS, 2001; MoEYS, 2004; MoEYS, 2005). The emphasis of MoEYS on the development of human capital in Cambodia is unsurprising, given global efforts in many countries to shift their economic focus from a strategy of industrial-age production to that of innovation and enterprise (Ng and Tan, 2006). This economic strategy is about knowledge creation and exploitation and is an attitude shift from the dependence on a technological status quo to the pursuit of new opportunities to improve the status quo, or discover a new and wider application for it. It is believed that the ability of a country's citizens to enhance their know-how and market it in the global market has a direct impact on the survival and prosperity of the country (Drucker, 1993; Ohmae, 1990).

Consequently, the three policies in education – equitable access, quality and efficiency and institutional development – were adopted in the ESP in 2006-2010. Over the past five years, there has been considerable change in exchange practices for both the faculty member and student exchange programs between HEIs, within the country and HEIs outside the country. These exchange practices include academic development and cooperation, agreement or a memorandum of understanding. This exchange is actually not only a reflection of the strengthening higher education management and quality improvement but also a reflection of massification in higher education, investment in higher education and greater mobility of students in higher education. Therefore, this output reflects efforts of the Government of Cambodia, especially the MOEYS in rebuilding human resources and improving education quality and efficiency. There are continuing efforts to standardize the Cambodian education system into the region and to integrate general learning competencies as implemented worldwide.

However, a wide range of problems still plague the Cambodian higher education system. It is considered that higher education in Cambodia is currently at its massification stage (Chealy, 2009). University education has been known to fulfill three basic functions; training, research, and providing

consultation services. The last two functions seem to be absent in both public and private higher education institutions in the country (Chanosopheak, 2009). The deficiency of research is not only a result of budget insufficiency but also of other infrastructure inadequacies such as copyright regulations, research facilities and laboratories of necessary size and scope. Despite such weakness of not having research at the university level, MoEYS has been planning to improve research infrastructure in higher education. As a result, two research departments have been established, including the Scientific Research Department and the Pedagogical Research Department at the ministerial level (UNESCO, 2006).

Quality in education has also been an emerging issue in higher education in Cambodia. According to Chealy, the Royal Decree No. NS/RKT 03/03/129 in March 2003 visualized improvement in the quality of higher education through establishing the Accreditation Committee of Cambodia which has created a new landscape for Cambodian higher education. The Royal Decree also demanded that all HEIs, local and foreign, obtain accreditation status from the Accreditation Committee of Cambodia in order to grant degrees (Chealy, 2009). Yet, with an exception of the success of the implementation of the Foundation Year Program, the Accreditation Committee of Cambodia has not executed its institutional accreditation to any single institution until now (Chapman, 2009).

There are two other problems that have impacted the institutional policy implementation and the educational quality in Cambodian HEIs. The first problem is the constraints on higher education financing, which is limited by the government's budget. The overall education expenditure accounted for only 1.6% of Cambodia's gross domestic product (GDP) and public higher education expenditure was only 0.05% of GDP (World Bank, 2012). Because of these shortages in the annual budgets, Cambodian HEIs cannot implement their institutional policies to equip modern and adequate facilities to effectively support the academic and non-academic services for student academic success such as libraries, workshops, accommodation, laboratories, and classrooms (Sam Rany *et al.*, 2012a). The second problem is the lack of human resources, teaching and research capacities. There are few full-time academics who hold doctoral degrees in Cambodian universities because of the low salaries and incentives; especially, educational experts and policy makers who are qualified

with experience and skills to restore the Cambodian educational system to meet the requirements of world class universities (Sam Rany *et al.*, 2012a).

Overall, the Cambodian education system has been lacking in infrastructure and human resources. This has dragged the country into the least developing country list. Recently, the Cambodian government has launched several policy reforms of the higher education system and requested assistance from the private sector and development partnerships. Although higher education in Cambodia has achieved certain improvements with different policies, there are still noticeable shortcomings that need to be more effectively addressed. Examples of these shortcomings are lack of funds, autonomy and academic freedom, ineffective restructuring programs and faculties, lack of strengthening research capacity and inadequate quality assurance. All these have come together as barriers to Cambodian students' motivations and decisions in applying for higher education at home. In sum, the above discussion describes the current state of Cambodian higher education, which is characterized by inadequacies in financial, academic and human capitals.

Cambodian Students' Pulling Attractions to Vietnam for Higher Education

While conditions in the home country are considered the major reasons that facilitate Cambodia to be a supply source for higher education students, it is also crucial to comprehend the pull factors that attract students to study abroad. Taking Vietnam as the host country of Cambodian students for CBHE, major components of the pull factors are the political, economic and cultural links between the two countries, the support of the Vietnamese government for Cambodian students via scholarships or other assistance, and the opportunities attached to the higher education system in Vietnam.

Vietnam's Higher Education Development

The development of higher education in Vietnam's recent history has occurred against a backdrop of war and slow economic development. Political, economic, and educational developments in Vietnam have been affected by periods of foreign occupation. China occupied the country until the tenth century and the French occupied Vietnam until the mid-twentieth century. In addition, two decades of civil war slowed the pace of development until the

1970s. Despite these challenges, higher education in Vietnam has gradually improved in quality.

In the post-war period, the national government prioritized the rebuilding of the economy from the post-war aftermath and the education system received little attention. Soon after the Declaration of Independence that demonstrated to the world the success of the Viet Minh Independence revolution in 1945, Ho Chi Minh, the country's leader, focused on improving the education system. During that time, the education system was widely reformed in urban areas across the country although, for a long period of time, the education system in Vietnam continued to be outdated and lacked status both regionally and internationally (Nguyen, 2011). However, since that time, education has been considered increasingly important to the development of the country. Subsequently, funding for education development in Vietnam has been accorded a much greater priority by the government (Vallely and Wilkinson, 2008).

In 1986, the Vietnamese National Assembly approved the implementation of the “*Đổi Mới*” policy which was a multifaceted approach to development in Vietnam. *Đổi Mới* referred to the economic reforms with the goal of creating a “socialist oriented market economy” where the state played a decisive role in the economy but private enterprises and cooperatives also played a significant role in commodity production. In the 1990s, the *Đổi Mới* facilitated a range of new international relationships as Vietnam opened the door to the West and East Asia for the purpose of establishing diplomatic relationships. The Communist Party of Vietnam has since reaffirmed its commitment to the socialist economic orientation, believing that the *Đổi Mới* economic policy also strengthens socialism (Dao, 2003).

Accordingly, economic recovery strategies have been put in place and higher education has become an important part of this process (Runckel, 2009). These moves are part of the internationalization or globalization process of the Vietnamese economy. Since the *Đổi Mới*, the country has achieved major transformations that have affected every aspect of economic and social life in Vietnam, including education. Education has been counted as one of the state projects that is needed to reshape and reflect the demand of higher education to achieve economic development growth in the region. Since the 1990s, Vietnamese higher education has been reforming rapidly in both administrative and education systems to support the Vietnamese national development strategy (Que Anh, 2009).

In particular, the role of education and higher education in increasing international cooperation as part of the development process has been demonstrated in Vietnamese education legislation. For example, the importance of a “knowledge society” was highlighted in Vietnam’s 1998 Education Law in which Article 1 and Article 15 emphasized the importance of teachers, researchers, and higher education specialists in the nation’s development. Education is also seen to play an important role in maintaining and strengthening relationships with neighboring and foreign countries. In Vietnam’s 2005 Education Law, Article 108 emphasized the need for educational cooperation with foreign countries and the importance of entering the globalized educational arena. The importance of building good international relations has also been recognized and incorporated into Vietnam’s government policy (MOET, 2009a; MOET, 2009b). For sustainable development, the government has acknowledged that Vietnam needs to strengthen long-term relationships with neighbors such as Laos, Cambodia, and Thailand. In addition, Vietnam needs to widen its international relationships with other countries around the world through establishing educational programs such as exchange programs and sponsored scholarships for international students to study in Vietnam. In this way, it is hoped that by engaging with globalization in education forums, Vietnam will have an improved capacity to maintain peaceful relationships with other countries (Thin and Phuong, 2010).

The admittance of Vietnam into the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2007 has placed greater pressure on the government to improve the quality of the higher education system and to establish a system of “world-class universities” within the country. While higher education institutions across the world compete for international student enrolments, higher education in Vietnam still needs to build on the quality of teaching and learning to compete with other educational institutions globally. The notion of the “world-class university” is now seen as a central priority in education policy in Vietnam. The first step for achieving these goals has been to encourage international students to enroll in undergraduate degrees in Vietnamese universities and to this end a system of scholarships has been established by the Vietnamese government (Que Anh, 2009).

Higher education in Vietnam has seen some significant improvements. The number of universities in Vietnam has increased to accommodate the needs of its population of 88 million (e.g. the number of HEIs has risen from

153 in 1999 to 376 HEIs by 2009) (Luu, 2011). There has been greater emphasis placed on improving the quality of teaching at universities and this can be seen most clearly in the Project of Training Staff at Foreign Training Institutions Abroad with the State Budget implemented since 2000 (which is also commonly known as the project 322) by the Vietnamese International Education Development (VIED). This academic capacity-building project enables Vietnamese lecturers to study in prestigious universities in different parts of the world. After graduating, these lecturers actively contribute to the nation's higher education development. As a result of the VIED project, the number of internationally recognized researchers working in HEIs in Vietnam has significantly increased (VIED, 2011). However, as higher education in Vietnam has become more "internationalized", problems have also emerged. Pham and Fry argued that "the quality of Vietnamese higher education is still problematic both according to the official evaluation and public opinion" (Pham and Fry, 2004, p. 211). Tran contended that the rapid increase of international students in different countries increases the pressure on academics to satisfy the diverse needs of international students (Tran, 2011). In light of these ideas, it is important that Vietnamese academics think seriously about how they might contribute to improving the academic experiences of international students who come to Vietnam to study (Tran, 2011).

Therefore, the Vietnamese Government, in pace with other socio-economic development strategies, planned a strategy until the year 2010, with steps to 2015, for its national education and training development, which is stipulated in Chapter II of the Education Law. The strategic paper reads as:

Education and training strategy play a very important part in human resources development strategy. Manpower with good knowledge is the most important resource of the modern industry. Thus, to improve the quality of human resources is the main conditions for economic growth and social development. We are developing the strategy for education and training development while the country is step by step integrating into the world. (MOET, 2001, p. 3)

Although having achieved some improvements, the education and training sector in Vietnam has not caught up with the requirement of socio-economic development and has shown its weaknesses in a number of aspects

(MOET, 2001, p. 5). The teaching method, learning assessments and evaluation practices are mainly for the purpose of driving learners to mechanical memory, paying little attention to training independent and creative thinking abilities and applying relevant knowledge and skills.

Cambodia – Vietnam Liaison and Available Scholarship Agreement of CBHE in Vietnam for Cambodians

From 1979 until 1993, Cambodia adopted socialism as its political ideology while her education system was transformed from the capitalist to the socialist system. Therefore, Vietnam together with other socialist states such as the Soviet Union and some Eastern-bloc countries were the common destination of Cambodian students. During the same period, Cambodia also received technical assistance from other socialist states which included resources in all levels of education (Ayres, 2003). According to Virak, Vietnam was ranked third, with 751 Cambodian students who travelled overseas from 1979 to 1989 through scholarship programs, after Russia topping the list with 3,730 Cambodian students and East Germany with 1,179 (Virak, 2009). Of these, Vietnam played a crucial role in supporting the reformation of Cambodian education by providing all kinds of technical support such as books, teachers and curriculum design (Clayton, 1999). Under the political ideology of socialism, the HEIs of Cambodia benefitted from the financial and technical support of socialist countries. This included receiving the first batch of professionally trained technical experts in Cambodia.

Since the 1991 Paris Peace Agreement and the 1993 elections in Cambodia, Cambodia has shifted her political orientation toward democratization. One of the key priorities was to reform the Cambodian education system from pre-school to tertiary education (Dy, 2004, p. 91). As a result, Cambodian students received international scholarships offered by the United Nations to study abroad. Many of them chose Vietnam because of the historic link between the two countries in terms of education (NGO Education Partnership, 2013). Between 1989 and 1999, Cambodia faced political turmoil, resulting in the reduction of the number of foreign scholarships for Cambodian students. Yet, Vietnam remained a main supporter of Cambodia higher education with scholarships for 797 Cambodian students during that decade (Virak, 2009).

By the year 2000, the education and training cooperation between the two countries had changed significantly. The number of Cambodian students sent to Vietnam for training had risen. There are several main explanations for this phenomenon. First of all, the Cambodian government still viewed Vietnam as a reliable training destination and continued to request of the Vietnam Government the creation of favorable conditions for Cambodian students. Second, Vietnam had signed an agreement with Cambodia's training departments since 1994. Hence, Vietnam continues to help Cambodia in training staff and employees in different fields. Since 2000, the relationship between Vietnam and Cambodia has followed the motto "good neighborliness, traditional friendship, comprehensive cooperation, long-term sustainability". In addition, for the period of 2000-2005, Vietnam agreed to receive 250 short-term training students per year in military, security and tourism sectors (MOFA, 2005).

A watershed moment came in February 2005 when the bilateral agreement between Cambodia and Vietnam was signed (MOFA, 2005). According to "the 7th Meeting between Cambodia-Vietnam Joint Commission" on February 22, 2005 and to the new plan signed between Cambodia and Vietnam in 2012, there will be 120 scholarships for Cambodian students and post-graduates to study in Vietnam under courses in science and technology, Vietnamese language and other fields. Moreover, there are 15 scholarships for Vietnamese students to have regular lessons at Cambodia's universities, together with 20 Vietnamese officials funded to learn Khmer language over a two-year period. Delegation exchanges between the two countries in different fields was also projected.

As part of the agreement, which extended until 2015, educational and human resource development has been one key area, together with trade flow and goods exchange, to heighten the cooperation between the two sides. The purpose behind the agreement was to strengthen the existing relationship and to enhance the mutual understanding between the people living on the two sides along the border area. In essence, this agreement has opened up a greater passageway for more Cambodian students to study in Vietnam. Prior to the 2005 agreement, the Vietnamese government scholarship program for Cambodian students was limited to those who worked in government offices only. But under this new bilateral agreement, the scholarship program has expanded to include non-government officers (MOFA, 2005). As a result, the

trend of higher education in Cambodia is shifting rapidly towards Vietnam according to the agreement, from 50 students to 120 students per year recently.

More interestingly, the Vietnamese government has provided lavish funds to support Cambodian students. These funds cover the students' monthly allowance, accommodation, one round-trip air ticket, and tuition fees for eight-month studies of the Vietnamese language. Scholarship agreements also continue despite lingering conflicts revolving around both land and water resources in the borderland (Amer, 1997; Sok, 2009).

Under the 2006-2010 Vietnam-Cambodia Protocol on education cooperation, Vietnam had received 1,167 Cambodian students, of which 20-25% were graduate students. For the same period, Cambodia also provided scholarships for 10 to 15 Vietnamese undergraduate students to enroll in Cambodia's universities. According to the CLMV, Vietnam has continued providing 20 scholarships for officers and students of Cambodia to study in Vietnam under short training programs and undergraduate and/or graduate degrees, commenced since the academic year 2009-2010. During the period 2006-2010, Cambodian students studying at specific universities diversified into the fields of medicine, pharmacy, architecture, agriculture and forestry in various universities in Vietnam. The purpose behind this diversification of training was to enhance Cambodian human resource development.

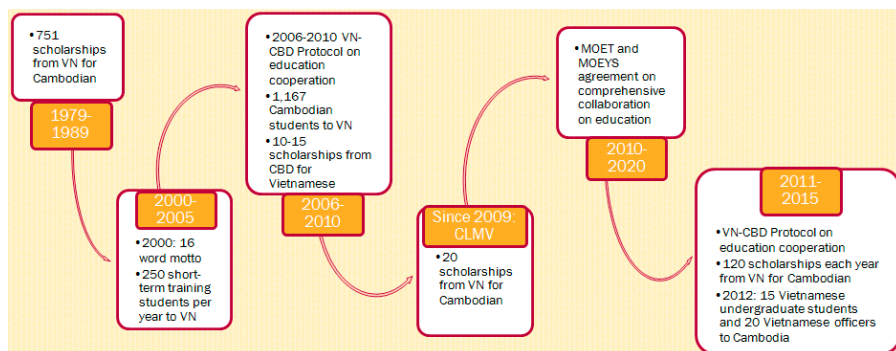


Figure 3.13: Development of Scholarship Agreement of CBHE between Vietnam and Cambodia during 1979 – 2015 (Source: Field Survey, 2015)

The Minister of Vietnam's MOET and the Minister of Cambodia's MoEYS have further reached an agreement on comprehensive collaboration in education for the period 2010-2020 that includes making annual planning and

enhancement of information exchange for more effective, international student management. On April 25, 2011, Ministers of Vietnam's MOET and Cambodia's MOEYS have signed the Protocol that states they will continue education cooperation between the two countries for the period of 2011-2015. As stated by the Vice Prime Minister of Vietnam during that period, Vietnam would provide 120 scholarships each year for Cambodian students to study in Vietnam's most needed fields such as agriculture, healthcare, and IT. Cambodia's Minister of MOEYS in his visit to Hanoi on August 31, 2010 also asserted that the reception and management of Vietnam's scholarship for Cambodian officers and students under short training programs and undergraduate and/or graduate degrees would be an emphasis from 2010 until 2015. For instance, in 2012, Vietnam received 120 Cambodian students to study at levels of undergraduate, graduate, and internships including Vietnamese language training for foreign undergraduate students. According to the former head of the Cambodian Students' Association in Hanoi, more than 2,000 Cambodian students have already graduated in Hanoi since 1980 and there were more than 1,000 Cambodian students who were still studying in Vietnam at the time of this research in 2014; most of them from the provinces in the border area. Cambodia also received 15 Vietnamese undergraduate students for university degree programs as well as 20 Vietnamese officers to learn Khmer language for a period of two years. Scholarships were offered by the Cambodian government and include tuition fees and USD 150 a month for stipend.

There are many criteria set by the Vietnamese government in receiving international students. First, each international student has to complete and submit a profile which reflects the student's place of residence and his or her past academic institutions of learning. In this profile, postgraduate students can have the option of acquiring a Vietnamese fluency certificate in substitution of English proficiency as a requirement. Second, applicants must complete at least high school level so as to ascertain a minimum level of academic performance. Third, participants of short training programs must also hold all required certificates. Fourth, the age of international students under the cooperation agreement shall be regulated according to the protocol, agreement or contract between Vietnam and other countries or international agencies; but there is no age limit for internship grantees, participants of short training courses and self-paid students. Taken as a whole, the development of Cambodian education has been heavily influenced by the Vietnamese education

system and the migrant flow of Cambodian students can be largely attributed to both governments' policies in recent years.

Having the above-mentioned criteria for the higher education system in Vietnam, it is clear that Vietnam can now gradually meet demands of both the local and regional market for higher education. To Cambodian students, this destination country is increasingly attractive due to its supportive policies, legal frameworks and infrastructure, as well as its promising opportunities as suggested by the close cultural, economic and political connections. The ambition of higher education policies in Vietnam has thus played an important role to draw the attention of Cambodian students to this potential place for CBHE.

Social Connections and Cambodian Students' Choices of Cross-border Higher Education in Vietnam

The preceding discussion has considered the macro perspective by examining the push and pull factors. This section takes on a micro-view in analyzing (1) the students' self-motivated reasons in decision-making; (2) the lack of accessibility of scholarship application, which results in the need for social connections; and (3) the students' creativity in seizing scholarship opportunities through their existing networks.

Students' Choices as Determined by Self-Motivations

At the micro level, it is crucial to examine the influences experienced by the Cambodian students and their self-constructed motivations in making decisions for CBHE. It can be shown in this section that the Cambodian students' motivations go beyond the macro perspective of "push-pull" factors. In actuality, Cambodian students are not necessarily motivated by unfavorable economic conditions but by their upward quest for social mobility.

According to Table 3.14, there are five main reasons that motivate Cambodian students in CBHE. Among these five reasons, the survey has shown that it is their interest in the program that has driven them the most. At the other end of the spectrum, they are least motivated by their family's poor economic condition and the intention to gain foreign education and knowledge.

Motivation	Male (N = 76)	Female (N = 20)	All (N = 98)
Own interest in the program (self-concerning)	56	11	68
Opportunity to work with Vietnamese in Cambodia	20	6	26
Opportunity to work in Vietnam	7	0	8
Getting the education and knowledge from foreign country	2	1	2
Economic reason (poor family, no money to study in Cambodia, save family's expense)	4	0	4

Table 3.14: Self-motivated Decision of Cambodian Students to Study in Vietnam (cases) *(Source: Field Survey, 2014)*

The self-interest of the Cambodian students can be seen in that they view education in Vietnam to be a stepping stone for their future advancement. According to a third-year male Cambodian student at Urban Development and Engineering University of Hanoi, who shared:

Do you know that our Prime Minister Hun Sen also graduated from Vietnam and some others also receive a high pay with good position in Cambodia recently? I don't know for other people thinking about students who graduated from Vietnam but for me if a place that provide opportunity to have more friends and knowledge that I could use in the future.
(Interview: March, 2014)

From this quote, it can be seen that Cambodian students attempt to emulate their national heroes by seeking educational opportunities for their future use. In terms of social economic background, this student comes from a middle-upper class family in the Cambodian system. In actuality, his family owns a construction company which has lucrative transnational business transactions with Vietnam and China. In short, he is not pushed by structurally

poor economic conditions at home. On the other hand, in terms of pull dimensions, he is not pulled by structural factors like free scholarship. He is also not motivated by the political and historical connections between the two countries. The micro view illuminates the means of acquiring opportunities through “more friends and knowledge” that can be used in the future.

In another example, here is a Cambodian student who is self-motivated beyond the structural push-pull factors. This is a second year undergraduate student from the National University of Vietnam. With regards to the motivation for studying in Vietnam, he shared: “The reason that I chose to study here is because I want to know more about the Vietnamese society and how the Vietnamese government manages the country” (Interview: March, 2014). Initially, it was not very clear about his intentions. However, when I visited his residence later, I realized that his family runs a business at Kampong Speu, Kandal Province. His family business purchases and exports Cambodian rice to Vietnam. In actuality, he is interested in studying in Vietnam because he wants to find out more about Vietnamese living conditions and trade policies so that he can be more prepared to help in the current operation and future expansion of his family business in Vietnam. Thus, through this micro perspective, I have discovered that he has gone beyond the conventional motivation under structural push-pull dimensions as he seeks specific information and connections that can advance his business interests.

In reiteration, this section delves into a more micro perspective by investigating the specific expectations of the Cambodian students. Figure 3.15 has summarized all the expectations of Cambodian students in Hanoi prior to their study there. The improvement of academic knowledge, the acquisition of education, fresh experiences and personal development are the four things that they are looking for the most. Reduction of their family’s expenses, proximity and enjoyment are the three least expected entries in their mind. These results once again strengthen the argument that Cambodian students are self-motivated in making decisions for CBHE. In reality, they are driven not just by poor economic local conditions but are motivated to enhance their future opportunities beyond mere macro structured push-pull dimensions.

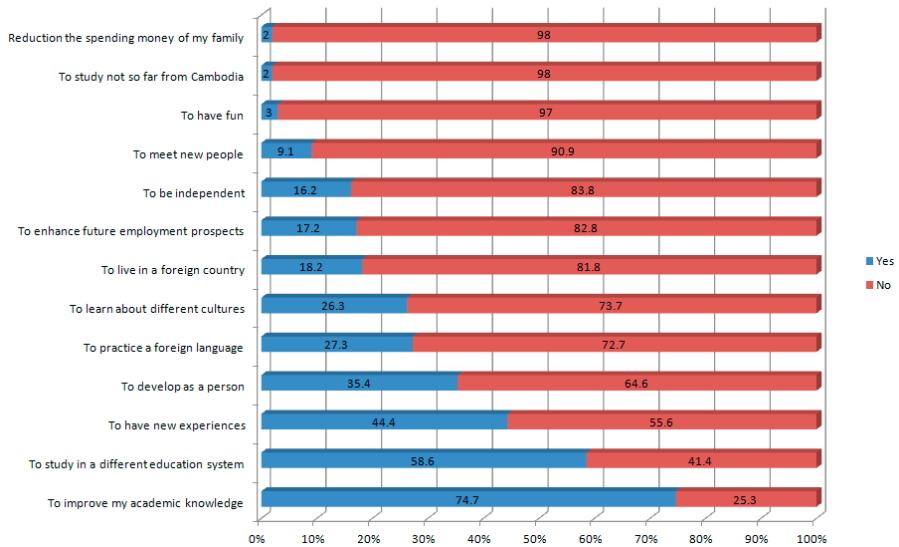


Figure 3.15: Expectations of Cambodian students in Hanoi prior to their study (%) (Source: Field Survey, 2014)

Social Connections as Response to Lack of Accessibility to Scholarship Application

While Vietnamese scholarships are available, they are relatively confined to the universities in Phnom Penh. However, the majority of students who stay in other provinces, do not enjoy the accessibility of scholarship information. Even those who are from the universities in Phnom Penh are not necessarily aware because the information is not pervasively or conspicuously made known. Therefore, the Cambodian students utilize social connections to gain access and make applications to Vietnamese scholarship. This section discusses the limited accessibility of Vietnamese scholarship information and application details. Furthermore, this section explores the different forms of social connections that Cambodian students possess.

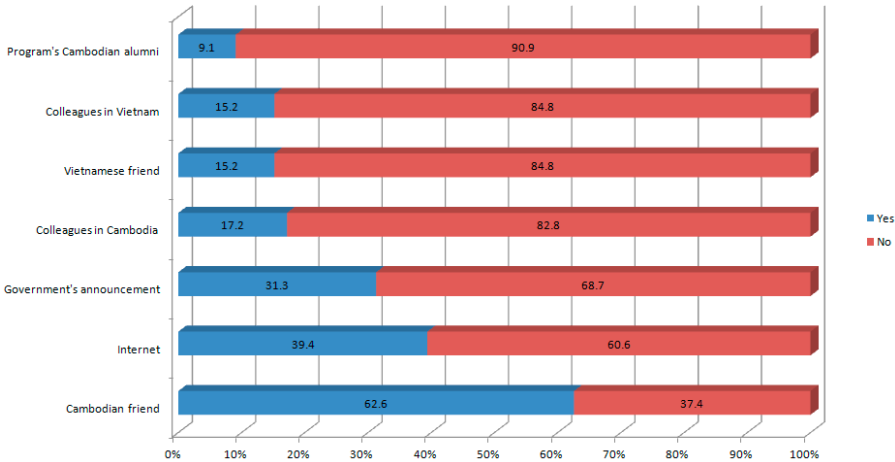


Figure 3.16: Cambodian Students’ Source of Vietnamese Scholarships in Hanoi (%) (Source: Field Survey, 2014)

As Figure 3.16 demonstrates, Cambodian students in Hanoi knew about the program mainly through their Cambodian friends (62.6%), followed by the Internet (39.4%) and by announcements from the Cambodian Government (31.3%). The respondents received information from their Cambodian colleagues and friends as soon as the Cambodian government announced the program. Meanwhile, Cambodian alumni of the program were the least referred to source of information (9.1%). Vietnamese friends and colleagues were the fifth and sixth sources of information respectively. From this statistical analysis, social connections through Cambodian friends and the Internet are the predominant means of acquiring information regarding Vietnamese scholarship.

Based on an in-depth interview, a Second Year Finance and Banking Major student from Hanoi National Economic University provided the following narration:

My parents are not educated, so for them as long as I went to school it was fine. They never had knowledge about studying abroad so they couldn't tell me about it. Until I went to study at high school at the town, I've heard of a few friends who have relatives whom have left to study in Vietnam. But I didn't know how to apply and I never thought about how to go to study Vietnam. So when I finished my high school exams,

my friends told me to apply with him. So I applied this scholarship. (Interview: April, 2013)

From the above narrative, information about Vietnamese scholarships is not wide-spread in Cambodia. Therefore, the best source of information is found in friends from within a student's existing social network. The next narrative story is from a fourth-year female student from the National Economic University of Vietnam. She shared with me about how she gained access to the information pertaining to the Vietnamese scholarship:

First, I receive information through my university friend whose father works at the education unit. She told me that there is Vietnamese scholarship for graduate students. I also think about how to pursue my higher degree abroad because I just want to learn one more language. Do you know that it is hard for me to find a job that requires only Cambodia and Thai? Now there are many business companies require English and others languages. When you go to apply job in the business company, they will ask you how many languages you can speak." (Interview: May, 2013)

Social connections are not restricted to their immediate Cambodian friends. At times, the social connections can be extended to include the family members of these Cambodian friends. Therefore, this section shows that due to the limited Vietnamese scholarship information available, social connections have proven to be an effective avenue where students obtain and access information, which facilitates their subsequent application. These social connections can come through immediate and extended personal sources, as well as through social media in the form of the internet.

Utilization of Existing Networks for Cross-border Higher Education in Vietnam

This section seeks to discuss the Cambodian students' utilization of their existing networks for CBHE in Vietnam. Judging by Table 3.17, family is one of the key sources of influence for students to make their decision for CBHE. The results of the field survey affirmed this. Furthermore, friend's advice, alumni's sharing and colleagues' recommendation are the second, third and last in their respective importance.

Motivation	Male (N = 76)	Female (N = 20)	All (N = 98)
Family's counsel	28	7	36
Friend's advice	11	4	16
Sharing of Program's alumni	4	5	9
Colleague's recommendation	3	1	4

Table 3.17: Surrounding Influences to Decision of Cambodian Students to Study in Vietnam (cases) (*Source: Field Survey, 2014*)

In addition, Cambodian students utilize their social connections in creative ways. First, they tend to utilize the collaboration of efforts between family members, neighbors and Cambodian alumni. These collaborative efforts are crucial as they seek different means to gain information, as well as to secure the Vietnamese scholarships through application. A third-year Cambodian medicine student at Hanoi “Y” university, mentioned that she first heard about the availability of a Vietnamese scholarship through her brother. Though her hometown is in the Kandal Province, her brother is working in Phnom Penh city as a government officer in the Ministry of Planning. Interestingly, her brother's wife (her sister-in-law) works at the Ministry of Education in Phnom Penh. Her sister-in-law approached another colleague who works in the Scholarship Department from the Ministry of Education. This colleague then passed the Scholarship Application Form to her sister-in-law who in turn handed it over to her through her brother. Based on this narrative, Cambodian students reach beyond their existing family-oriented networks to engage others in the facilitation of their scholarship application.

Second, there are times when students utilize both social and institutional connections. In one particular case, there was a Cambodian student whose parents know an officer who worked in the Cambodian Embassy in Vietnam (by way of background explanation, when the Vietnamese scholarship is announced annually, the Cambodian Embassy in Vietnam is the first to receive the information). Apart from releasing information to the Ministry of Education in Cambodia, officers in the Cambodian Embassy in Vietnam are given a quota of about twenty scholarship positions to be given to their friends and relatives without requiring any pre-tests. These “friends” and “relatives” might not

necessarily be related by blood and genuine relationships. In other words, acquaintances or strangers who are interested can acquire these coveted scholarship positions through payment to the Cambodian officers working in the embassy. In the specific case whom I met, the Cambodian student's parents paid USD 5,000 to the officer working in the Cambodian Embassy in Vietnam in order to secure a scholarship position. This clearly shows the interconnected linkages between social network (parents and the officer-friend) and the institutional connection (Cambodian Embassy in Vietnam) for the acquisition of a scholarship to study in Vietnam.

Summary

Decision making for CBHE is a process that results in many different dimensions situated on both the macro “push-pull” factors continuum as well as from micro perspectives. From a macro structural perspective, economic concern has been the prevailing motivation behind this issue (ADB, 1993; Cheng *et al.*, 2009). However, this chapter takes this perspective and combines it with the micro perspective to elucidate the specific interactions taking place at the connecting social and institutional dimensions. This integrative approach demonstrates how CBHE provides a partial answer to the domestic and regional needs in serving the market demand of Cambodia and Vietnam. The literature review focuses on the role of scholarship and national developments projects between Cambodia and Vietnam, which provides ways for Cambodian students to cross borders in order to gain higher education. Taking a look at the curriculum of higher education is another popular paradigm that helps to figure out Cambodian students' choice for higher education in Vietnam (Love, 2007; Sam Rany *et al.*, 2012a). Accordingly, the quality of standardization and internationalization in the studying materials and higher education system in Vietnam has been explored to clarify the mobility of Cambodia students over the past several decades towards that country. Using the CBHE between Cambodia and Vietnam as a contemporary case study, this chapter has revealed the development process of each national education system, as well as recent tendencies towards regionalization with current constructions of cross-border higher education. However, both of these considerations, which are notably implied in the push-pull model, may not be able to adequately explain the participation of Cambodian students in higher education in Vietnam (Altbach, 1998). In sum, this chapter has argued that an integrative approach be applied:

the crucial macro “push-pull” perspective should be integrated with the micro perspective, which unravels the self-interested motivations of individuals without denying the importance of social and institutional connections.

In the next chapter, the concern about the existence and roles of social connections and networking will be further examined by applying the concept of cultural and social capital (Bourdieu, 1986; Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977). It is noted that most of the literature on the difficulties of international students and teacher–student relationships is derived from western HEIs. It seems that little has been done to explore Cambodian students’ experiences when they are studying higher education in Vietnam. Holding their decision to study in Hanoi, Cambodian students seek the accumulation of social capital through the process of acquiring knowledge, skills, networks and information embedded in their individual tactics in daily life.

Chapter 4

Everyday Life Practice of Cambodian Students in Hanoi

This chapter seeks to examine the everyday life practices of Cambodian students in Hanoi, Vietnam as a process of social and cultural accumulation. In this chapter, the informal learning in daily activities, such as “informal education”, varies in structure. The avenues for informal education vary as well and include sports, events, cooking, dancing and hanging out with friends. These activities often happen on a daily basis under the Cambodian student association, creating group-ness and, along with social media and Facebook, generate the sense of belonging needed for the Cambodian students’ identity. These informal activities generate a greater sense of educational value in comparison with the formal mode of education received by the Cambodian students in Vietnam. Therefore, I will discuss five points in everyday life practice of Cambodian students in Hanoi, namely, (1) networking formulation, (2) the Student Association, Festivals and the Group-ness, (3) Social Media and Politics of Belonging, (4) Fraternity-from Senior to Junior, and (5) Experience as part of Vietnamese society and Interaction with the Vietnamese; to illustrate how the daily activities of Cambodian students in Hanoi is a process for generating social capital for future use.

Network Formulation

In Cambodian society, many Cambodians understand friendship as helping each other when one gets into trouble. “*now-phteah-mdeay-tytei-now-prei-mdeay-te-muoy*” is a popular idiom well rooted in Cambodian society. It means that although we belong to different mothers, we all share the same mother when we enter the forest. In other words, we are to help one another when we are away from home. This section serves to provide an introductory understanding of how Cambodian students establish and formulate their networks in Hanoi.

In order to highlight network formulation, I have chosen my experience with Ms. Sit as a viable illustration of how effective one can be in this aspect - it was this cultural concept that facilitated me in getting to know her.

My ethnographic story began in March 2013. A mutual friend introduced Ms. Sit to me at Che Saigon, a restaurant selling dessert near A3 dormitory, located at the corner of 23 *Tà Quang Bửu* street, *Bách Khoa* district, Hanoi. Ms. Sit was then a third-year student studying a Master's Degree in Economics and Finance at Hanoi National Economic University. Ms. Sit grew up in an extended family located in Phnom Penh city, Cambodia with three other siblings (one older brother, one younger sister and one younger brother). Ms. Sit's father was a soldier and he passed away from sickness in 2010. After her father passed away, Ms. Sit's mother rented a small shop to sell groceries in Phnom Penh. During that time, Ms. Sit had already finished her Bachelor of Arts degree in Human Resource Management at the National University of Management in Cambodia and worked for a tour agency in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. In 2011 to 2013, Ms. Sit got a Vietnamese scholarship to study a Master program in Hanoi, Vietnam.

My first impression of Ms. Sit was a kind and active person whom I could relate with. Though she had just met me, she enquired about my accommodation and even offered her place for me to stay. I rejected her offer initially because I had already arranged for other accommodation prior to meeting her. In spite of my rejection, she continued to offer her help highlighting that we were fellow Cambodians and she could provide whatever assistance I needed. In addition, she even gave me a lift on her motorcycle to visit other students in their dormitories. On her own accord, she requested my mobile number and Facebook account for further contact. Subsequently, she initiated contact through Facebook and invited me to her dormitory for a meal that she prepared. Ms. Sit offered me Cambodian-Vietnamese food along with other Cambodian

students. She enthusiastically introduced other Cambodian students to me. She constantly praised me in front of other students about my academic abilities. As a result, I felt uplifted and I wanted to get to know her more by staying with her for a weekend. I felt that she had established a social connection with me in a spontaneous and subtle manner. In addition, Ms. Sit attended to the logistical arrangement for me to stay with her and even cleaned the room for me before my arrival. All through her social connection with me, Ms. Sit was intentional, sincere, prompt and persistent in her approach. Hence, it was clear that her sincerity and sociability were instrumental in her network formulation.

Ms. Sit's formulation of networks was also characterized by her resourcefulness. During my stay with Ms. Sit, I followed her around to meet her friends. One of the friends whom I met was a classic example of how Ms. Sit utilized her resources in network formulation. Mr. Koy (not his real name) is a police officer from the Cambodian National Assembly in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. He was sent to study at the Vietnamese National Assembly School. Ms. Sit told me that Mr. Koy was her ex-classmate when she was in high school. As a committee member of the Cambodian Student Association, Ms. Sit had access from the Cambodian Embassy to the list of Cambodian students studying in Hanoi, Vietnam. On one particular occasion, Ms. Sit found Mr. Koy's name in the list of new students. Though she had last met Mr. Koy about 16 years ago, Ms. Sit was resourceful enough to re-establish her network. Hence, in order to get in touch with him, Ms. Sit contacted Mr. Koy's dormitory leader from whom she requested Mr. Koy's mobile contact. Her efforts finally paid off when Ms. Sit met him and they were able to spend their time in recounting past shared experiences. Thereafter, Mr. Koy responded to the revived friendship and introduced Ms. Sit to his other Cambodian police friends who were studying in Vietnam.

The preceding discussion has vividly captured Ms. Sit's variegated approaches towards formulating her networks. Yet, I seek to explore Ms. Sit's motivations behind her voracious attitude towards network formulation. In my interaction with her, Ms. Sit brought up her request for my help on at least three occasions. Basically, she felt that her Vietnamese language was weak and so she needed someone who could help in her Masters' thesis writing. Knowing that I had a Vietnamese boyfriend who is a lecturer in a Vietnamese University, she asked me to get him to be her informal editor to correct her Vietnamese language deficiencies. She added that she did not have the financial means to

pay for a local editor. She narrated that she came from a poor family and her father passed away when she was in high school. She emphasized her desire to secure a good job so that she could contribute to her family's financial condition since her mother is the sole breadwinner. Hence, she utilized all means in order to get to know people who could assist her in completing her studies. From my encounter with Ms. Sit, I gathered that her networking motivation is driven by her family background and her responsibility as the elder sister in the family.

Ms. Sit's formulation of network was dialectic in nature. She received both positive and negative responses as an outcome of her networking formulation. On the positive note, there were some students who felt Ms. Sit was a blessing to them. As a case in point, Ms. Kanika was a third-year Cambodian Bachelor's student who had known Ms. Sit for about two years. According to Ms. Kanika, Ms. Sit was like her big sister.

Kanika spoke about Ms. Sit as follows:

I like Sister Ms. Sit, she looks like the big sister in our team. She takes care and gives us a lot of advice about how to live with one another. Sometimes, we got conflicts among each other, especially, with the people around us and with the dormitory owner. She helps us to talk and she protects us.
(Interview: June, 2013)

Besides Ms. Kanika, there was Mr. Molin who was a 4th year Cambodian student. Mr. Molin had known Ms. Sit for about three years and he was quick to share: "Whoever does not know Sister Ms. Sit does not know A3 dormitory in *Bách Khoa*." By this, Mr. Molin was suggesting to me that Ms. Sit was like a "boss" who took the lead and shared information with others. On the other hand, there were those who did not take Ms. Sit's network formulation too well. For example, Ms. Ma (not her real name) was a third-year Cambodian student who had known Ms. Sit for about two years. Ms. Ma commented that Ms. Sit placed her emphasis on certain people whom she felt could bring her certain benefits. In Ms. Ma's opinion, Ms. Sit neglected those whom might not be deemed as significant or beneficial. Furthermore, Ms. Ma could not stand Ms. Sit's aggressive nature in approaching the opposite sex, which was against the Cambodian cultural norm. For instance, Ms. Sit would be willing to show

Cambodian males around the city alone in order to build social relationships with them. She also did not leave room for others' participation in her attempt to take the lead in many matters. To Ms. Ma, Ms. Sit was dominating others through her social actions. However, there are many students that act in the same way as Ms. Sit, but among those students, Ms. Sit is more strategic in the ways she builds a network than the others.

Student Association, Festival and the Groupness

Together with network formation, Cambodian students in Hanoi may also adapt to the Vietnamese living and studying environment by building a sense of group-ness through the Cambodian Student Association. The Cambodian Student Association in Vietnam is an informal organization set up by the Cambodian student body in 2009. Its purpose is to provide overall support for the Cambodian student community during their course of study in Vietnam. Apart from providing administrative support, the Association organizes academic assistance activities, recreational activities, cultural enrichment activities and other Cambodia-related miscellaneous activities.

To begin with, the academic assistance activities are comprehensive in approach, for they include offering new students orientation to their universities as well as assisting academically weak students in improving their grades. As a case in point, the Association's academic committee assists in organizing a study group for the weaker students and attaches a senior Cambodian student to guide them. In the course of this, they develop a close relationship with one another as they also spend time cooking and feasting together. Ms. Ram, a third-year student of Business Management at Hanoi National Economic University said that:

Here, the students need to study hard because all exams are very difficult to pass and the university will send a letter to Cambodia scholarship department to dismiss the students that can't pass exams after the end of years... Professors guide very seriously and offer students a lot of knowledge ... but it is not easy to learn in Vietnamese language. You can think about how hard Vietnamese students study, how about us? (Interview: March, 2014)

Besides academic-oriented events, the Association's provision of recreational activities greatly improves group-ness amongst the Cambodian students. For instance, the Association organizes sport activities such as basketball, volleyball, and football at least twice a week for the students. In the process, a sense of team spirit is forged as teams are often formed for friendly matches amongst Cambodians, as well as against their Vietnamese and Laotian counterparts. Through these academic-related and recreational-oriented activities, the Cambodian Student Association played a vital role in cultivating a sense of group-ness amongst the Cambodian students in Vietnam. According to Mr. Mar, leader of a student group from the Hanoi University of Technology:

It is necessary for young people like us who live in Vietnam to have student association because we have different cultures from Vietnamese society. Especially, Vietnamese climate is very cold in the winter season and very hot in the summer season. It made us have a stuffy day every day. We also can't go to live or travel to anywhere we want to stay or go, because some places are restricted by Vietnamese government and laws. We can only go to school and come back home ... if we want to travel to somewhere, we need to request the permission or inform the scholarship officer. Not everything is cheap; except education no need to pay and the distance between the university and dormitory. (Interview: May, 2013)

So it is clear that the Cambodian Student Association facilitates the sense of group-ness amongst the student community through their varied activities. Another significant contribution made by the Association in the evolving group-ness of the Cambodian student body lies in their organization of the Khmer New Year Festival. Under the cultural enrichment activities organized by the Association, the Khmer New Year Festival dominates in its scale of preparation and participation. In this Festival, there are several key performances and responsibilities including (1) Khmer Traditional Dance; (2) Cambodian Traditional Show; (3) Cambodian Traditional Game; (4) Stage Preparation Team, (5) Cooking Team, and (6) Technical Team. The sense of group-ness is cultivated across all these performances and responsibilities. First, there is a substantial amount of time spent in rehearsing and practicing for these performances. For instance, in preparing for the dance item, the Cambodians

started brainstorming for ideas in choreography at least two months before the Festival. Subsequently, they spent every night together to master the steps and refine their skills. Second, there is a sense of group identity and belonging resulting from these performances and responsibilities. For instance, the organizing members of the Cambodian Traditional Game wear a customized T-Shirt with the same logo “I Love Cambodia”. Another example can be found in the Technical Team when they often meet to improve on their collaborative efforts. Finally, the common skills and talents bind the participants as one in group-ness. For instance, when the Cooking Team members showcased their culinary skills, they felt a corporate sense of pride as international students, as well as when fellow Cambodians complimented the taste of their food. This is because they have helped to improve the taste of each other’s dishes over the course of preparation. The Cambodian Student Association acts like a small construct of a Cambodian community and provides its members with the practice space for those students, who in the future would like to work with the government. While they are seeing the Vietnamese society as the dominant structure, they use the space of the dormitory to regenerate Cambodian culture in terms of maintaining the sense of home when they are living with each other. The dormitory as “a community” provides them space for learning traditional dancing, traditional festivities and other languages. These cultural practices in this community produce the social products which are displayed and interacted with Vietnamese society and create the space for Cambodian identity.

Social Media and the Politics of Belonging

The purpose of this section is to demonstrate how social media becomes a political tool in the construction of a sense of belonging for the Cambodian students in Hanoi.

Facebook is a form of social media that shares information between users through the Internet. Many people use Facebook to share their personal photos and information with friends and family members. They use Facebook to generate the sense of belonging to their particular interests like hobbies, study groups, businesses and political interest by creating a blog and adding more members to that blog. In the case of Cambodian students, Facebook is not restricted to connecting with family and friends but they use it as a political tool to enhance their sense of belonging to each other and other groups through receiving and sharing information about political news.

For example, during my fieldwork in 2013-2014, there was an election in Cambodia for a new political leader. Most of the Cambodian students in Hanoi got involved with the electoral campaigns by sharing information that related to the political and electoral situation in Cambodia. They created their own private blogs to express their political interests and support through a Facebook website named “Cambodian Students and Social Politics” and they made their own rules that allowed only Cambodian students to join this blog, in order to restrict the information and discussions to members of this group. There were two political party groups existing among Cambodian students in Hanoi: opposition party and pro-government party. The group of students who opposed the pro-government political party shared a lot of information and photos about how the Cambodian government were violent towards the opposition party members in their Facebook blog and they also put the political party logo as their profile photo. In addition, they were also applying this sense of belonging among their group members by asking each other where they stood when they met. One of them told me as follows:

Do you want to change or not change? Are you supporting number 7 (Cambodian National Rescue Party) or supporting number 4 (Cambodian People’s Party)? Let’s me tell you that, in this room, there is no number 4, we are all number 7.
(Interview: July, 2013)

For the group of students who were pro-government, they posted the information that related to the development and achievements attributed to the government over the past decade amongst their blogs. They also changed their profile photos on their Facebook pages to the logo of the pro-government political party. As a result of this sense of belonging and because they shared the same sentiments, some students went back home to vote and to show support for their political party and then posted their photos to show their roommates and friends. Therefore, the effect of belonging to their team translated to them returning to Cambodia in order to vote.

In addition, Cambodian students also use Facebook to post video clips that show news, such as that about the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia and how the Vietnamese government intends to control and take over the land of Cambodia. This is in order to remind themselves of their national identity and the indoctrinations prevalent among their Cambodian students’ friends. I often heard sentiments, such as:

Vietnamese people never have a good intention over our Cambodian country, they always want something in return while they do good with us. (Interview: June, 2013)

Aside from Facebook, Cambodian students in Hanoi also play a role in the political discourse, in order to paint a good picture of themselves in the public social media of both countries. When they are interviewed by the media, they tried to show the positive side of their culture and their fellow students. Contradictory to Weiss and Ford, who say that transnational students are less engaged with “a political perspective or agenda” in the host country, some of these students’ experiences are very politically engaged (Weiss and Ford, 2011, p. 240). However, many of the Cambodian students chose to align themselves primarily with groups formed for purposes of association and sociability rather than resistance or strife of any sort. In brief, through social media and information connectivity from their home country, Cambodian students in Hanoi do not live separately from the politics of their home country; they actually get closer to the state structure in order to strengthen their social memberships in their home country.

Fraternity - From Senior to Junior

In this section, I will show how Cambodian students in Hanoi use their social positions of seniority to transfer their knowledge, as well as to help the junior Cambodian students to adapt to the Vietnamese society. There are several ways Cambodian students in Hanoi use to transfer their fraternity relationship: academic support, beyond academic support, and beyond graduation.

Senior to Junior

Academic support

In this section, I will illustrate how Cambodian students in Hanoi transfer their social connectivity through helping the junior to do well in their academic performance. I will employ Ms. Mak as a case study of how to learn and quickly adapt to the Vietnamese environment when she first arrived in Vietnam. Ms. Mak is the eldest daughter among three children from a business family in Tol Kok district. Her parents have a small fruit shop at Doem Kor Market in Phnom

Penh, Cambodia. She was born and then grew up in Phnom Penh. Ms. Mak finished her high school in 2010. She went to study in Mekong University for a year, majoring in business and accounting. Then in 2011, she applied for a Vietnamese scholarship with her friends; she was selected for study but her friends were not. Currently, she studies in her third year of International Business and Management at Hanoi National Economic and Samaki University. Ms. Mak described her time while she was studying in Hanoi, Vietnam and how she could adapt to Vietnamese education society:

Vietnamese students have a very strong high school foundation, more than us. It is not easy to compete with the Vietnamese students. So I often go to ask for help from our senior students who study at the same course and major like me before my final exam started. Sometimes, we stay up all night to study. (Interview: February 2014)

This example of Ms. Mak has painted a picture of how difficult and challenging it is for Cambodian students in Vietnam due to the lack of concrete education in Cambodian high schools.

Throughout my fieldwork, I often saw Cambodian students after they returned from school; they cooked and shared among their roommates and then some students also packed to go for extra classes. This extra class is held only one or two months before the national exam days and its purpose is to help the junior students' review their course work. Mr. The, a fourth-year student at Hanoi Medical University, had enrolled in the undergraduate degree directly after graduating from high school. He planned to return to Cambodia and work for the Cambodian government after his graduation ceremony. He spoke English and Vietnamese fluently while interviewed. Mr. The had not much enjoyed his academic experiences and spoke about some of the many challenges:

I found the school subject is not fixed, some subjects require us to study only one or two weeks and we need to take exam. So it is difficult for me to follow because my Vietnamese language is not good like Vietnamese people. The teacher usually speaks fast because they treat us similar to other Vietnamese students. Now I can adapt better than the first time in class, I could not

follow as well as writing, but since I come to study with our seniors and I read more at home. I think my Vietnamese is better because I could understand more when my teacher speaks but I still cannot be the top student yet, even though, I have to study harder than other Vietnamese students. (Interview: April, 2014)

Mr. The's example shows us of the challenges that are caused by language limitations. It also provides a way for us to see how Cambodian senior students in Hanoi could connect to the junior students by supporting each other. Through their time and knowledge that these groups shared and spent, Cambodian students in Hanoi could create the sense of brotherhood by keeping and building their social connections day by day. However, this example is not found only in Ms. Mak's and Mr. The's cases but also in other students' situations, who had shared to me about how they felt encouragement from their seniors during their stay in Hanoi, Vietnam.

Beyond Academic Support

Besides academic support, the senior Cambodian students in Hanoi also help the juniors to adjust to the Vietnamese environment by giving their emotional support to in-coming Cambodian students. Ms. Mak learned how to overcome her emotional turbulence when she first arrived in Vietnam. She shared:

First, I came to study Vietnamese language in Sơn Tây for eight months before I could go to study at university. I cried nearly every night when I first came to Hanoi, Vietnam because it contradicted what I was expecting when I was in Cambodia. But I have to live in the rural area; I can see only the rice field. After 5 o'clock, I can hear only the frog crying and the dog barking at mid-night. I felt so scared and pitiful over myself. I miss home and my friends. But after I meet brothers and sisters who study in Hanoi, I feel better because they often chat and talk to me online. I feel that I have a lot of friends to share and support me while I am living alone far from my family. (Interview: March, 2014)

Another example of how senior Cambodian students in Hanoi give strategic assistance to the junior Cambodian students in Hanoi is when the latter group was arrested by the Vietnamese night street police. They shared their experience in how to avoid paying a fine to the Vietnamese night police officer. They negotiated by showing their student status as foreign students who knew little about Vietnamese traffic laws so that they could gain more sympathy. Mr. S, who is 21 years-old and studies at the third-year level of Telecommunication and Technology at Hanoi University, was one of them. He told me that he was arrested by the Vietnamese night police several times but he never paid the fine. This is because he adopted his senior's strategy by pretending that he did not know much about the Vietnamese language. It was narrated as follows:

I have been arrested by Vietnamese night police several times but I never paid any money because I heard from our seniors that if we pretend not to understand what they are talking, then they will release us. So I just pretend that I don't know much Vietnamese language and I don't know much about Vietnamese law. I just keep smiling until the policeman feels bored and allows me to go since they are tired and bored to talk with me. (Interview: February, 2014)

Also, they helped junior Cambodian students who have just arrived in Hanoi to negotiate with the dormitory manager, who had confiscated their cooking equipment. Every month, as a rule, the Vietnamese student committee members will visit Cambodians and other foreign students who have received Vietnamese scholarships in order to encourage them to finish their studies as soon as possible. So, all the international students need to prepare themselves by organizing their items. In especial, they have to keep away their cooking utensils because students who live in the foreign dormitories are not allowed to cook as it might dirty the room and the building. Therefore, many Cambodian students in Hanoi have problems with their dormitory owners as well as the committee. The juniors often called for help from the seniors, stating that since they could not cook, they were forced to go out for meals. Consequently, they could not cope with the expenditure and could not adapt well with the Vietnamese food and felt homesick. The following was an experience shared by Mr. Chan, a male, 24-year-old student in the fourth year at Finance and Banking:

Every month, the dormitory owners always come to visit us at our rooms. They come to check and see how we manage our room. Sometimes, they seized our cooking utensils when they saw them because according to the rule, we are not allowed to cook in the room. But we have to as we don't have much money to eat outside all the time and to cook home food we can also feel that we are home as well. So we normally come to ask help from Cambodia and Vietnamese supervisors to negotiate with the dorm owners. (Interview: May, 2013)

Moreover, the seniors also teach the juniors how to negotiate with the Vietnamese local people when they are going out of their rooms, especially when they go to the local market or to eat out. If they do not ask the price before they buy something, they later claim that the Vietnamese people cheat them. Ms. Mak explained as follows:

Vietnamese foods have no taste for me. So every day we have to go to the market to buy some foods to cook and we have to negotiate with the food seller to gain more ingredients like chili, garlic and lemongrass...etc., with the price that we agreed. Otherwise, they will not give us the thing that we asked for and we have to pay more to get it. (Interview: March, 2014)

This information serves as evidence for understanding how the everyday life of Cambodian students involves many forms of negotiation and tactics in order to survive. Also, we can see how Cambodian students can transfer their living skills and knowledge to another in order to survive.

Beyond Graduation

The senior Cambodian students are not only helping their juniors while they are living in Hanoi, Vietnam. They also extended their social connections toward each other after they have graduated. Many Cambodian student seniors who have graduated in Hanoi and returned to Cambodia still keep contact with the junior students by helping the juniors to find jobs before they graduate. Sometimes, they send presents and gifts back to the juniors in Hanoi, Vietnam.

Junior to Senior

Based on the relationship that the seniors offer to the juniors, it is not one-directional. In other words, the seniors get something in return such as gaining respect from the juniors and building up a strong connection with each other for the future. Many junior students celebrate their seniors' birthday parties, attend their seniors' thesis defense and arrange farewell parties for senior students. Therefore, this process is dialectic because they both benefit from each other. For instance, I noticed some dialectic interactions when I was staying with them at A3 dormitory in *Bách Khoa* district. There was a party at one Cambodian friend's room who lived in A3 dormitory and they invited their friends who live in Thai Binh City, which is far from the Hanoi city at around 109 kilometers in distance. It takes around two hours by bus to travel from Thai Binh City to Hanoi City. Nonetheless, the students at Thai Binh University came all the way to celebrate the senior's birthday party. After spending only eight hours, they returned back as they were also having midterm exams the next day. I met them when they arrived at the party at 8 a.m. in the early morning of Sunday and they returned back on Sunday night. There were ten of them in total that came from Thai Binh City. This example clearly shows how junior Cambodian students in Vietnam value their friendship with their seniors. In another example, the seniors could benefit by asking for help from the juniors to buy some products from Vietnam and then send these products to them. In sum, the fraternity from the senior to junior can be seen as a dual-directional process because both groups are recipients of benefits from each other while they study and even after they subsequently graduate.

Experience as Part of Vietnam Society and Interaction With Vietnamese

This section deals with the socialization of Cambodian students in Vietnamese society. I will discuss how daily communication with Vietnamese local culture invokes the Cambodian students' acceptance, adaptation and rejection of Vietnamese society.

Most Cambodian students in Hanoi mentioned that it is not difficult for them to accept the Vietnamese country infrastructures; especially, the ways that the government arranges the public transportation. In addition, the school study curriculum, their Vietnamese friends and their Vietnamese teachers also

make their stay in Vietnam acceptable. They said that the Vietnamese government officials and teachers really care about them and they are satisfied with the arrangements made by the Vietnamese government in their accommodation and monthly allowance. Moreover, when it comes to contact with Vietnamese local culture, some students believe that they are learning more about Vietnamese social perspectives. They state that Cambodian culture is similar to Vietnamese culture in some ways, which makes it easier to accept. For example, both cultures share similar perspectives in terms of their perceptions toward kinship, as some of the Cambodian students reflected:

I like the ways Vietnamese people live; they are not having a lot of children like our country. They value their family relationships among each other. (Interview: July, 2013)

I know a lot of Vietnamese friends when I am coming to study in Hanoi, I learn how to prepare my life in the long run, I feel that Vietnam people really care a lot about their child future. They use the word that life is always in struggle, and we need to find out and try everything new; and not to be afraid about new experiences. (Interview: April, 2014)

The above examples allow us to see how the Cambodian students can accept social value from the local Vietnamese during their stay. Also, there are many times when the Cambodian students learn to adapt to the Vietnamese society as they compromise with some of the things that they dislike. In actuality, some Cambodian students have experienced difficulties in adapting to Vietnamese food, weather and environment. Nonetheless, they are willing to adapt by learning to cook Vietnamese food to serve to their Cambodian friends and also by learning how to drink tea like Vietnamese people.

Vietnamese food had no taste for me when I came here at the first time. So every time I go to eat outside or join with Vietnamese friends, I have to ask for the shop owner to add more ingredients for me. But now I could enjoy and cook Vietnamese food but it is still in Khmer styles. (Interview: February, 2014)

However, there are also many Cambodian students in Hanoi that are less satisfied with their experiences with Vietnamese local culture. They found it hard to make friends with them and even have taken on a mode of rejection. A vivid illustration can be found in the following narration:

I don't like Vietnamese students because they are so selfish. They think only about themselves. If I cannot give any benefits to them, they don't want to be friend with me [...] Vietnamese students like to exploit Cambodian students, if we do not benefit them. They will not want to make friend with us. [...] I tell you the truth; I dislike Vietnamese culture because they like to speak loudly. If we talk to them softly or politely, they cannot understand us and disregard like we go to ask for their money, but if we talk to them loudly like we want to warn them. Most of them can understand and do it fast for us. [...] My relatives and friends told me that if I married Vietnamese boyfriend, they will cut off their relationship with me. (Interview: April, 2014)

This form of rejection is not limited to cultural traits but is also found in the socio-political dimension. Nearly all Cambodian students in Hanoi shared their anxious feelings over their political experiences in Vietnam, especially when they have to attend political events or Vietnamese history classes. Nearly all of them try to find reasons to avoid attending all kinds of political activities by sending instead the head of their student association to represent them.

These are some of the reasons that explain why some of the Cambodian students in Hanoi are not able to accept or adapt to the local Vietnamese socio-political realm. It is probably because of their lack of knowledge of local culture and their limited knowledge of the Vietnamese language that prevents them from associating with the Vietnamese people. Next, they share their rooms only with their fellow Cambodians; hence, they do not have much time to interact with Vietnamese culture, learn from their new environment or practice the Vietnamese language. This results in them not sharing their culture with the host country or other foreign students. Some said that the host country tries to create more opportunities to involve them in local affairs but the Cambodian students in Hanoi try to avoid these and do not want to join in because it is mainly about the countries' politics.

Summary

In sum, Cambodian students in Hanoi try to accumulate social capital within the wider community of Cambodian students in Vietnam, as well as with the Vietnamese community. From the former, they foster strong bonds of relationships based on their similar national identity, political affiliation, and common interest in sports and modern fashion trends. In the case of Ms. Sit, the formulation network takes place because the socio-economic background of her family forces her to extend herself into more social networks so as to finish her study expeditiously. This will enable her to secure a better job prospect after she has graduated. In this case, the social capital accumulation process is not always received as positive. This is because there are some people who dislike her ways of approaching them.

Then, under the events organized by the Cambodian Students Association, the sense of group-ness is not based solely on the events. On the contrary, it is based on the process that those Cambodian students in Hanoi have spent in terms of both time and effort to organize the event. Even though there are many people who simply attend the events, this research shows that a sense of group-ness has been cultivated in the process. This process includes elements that surface before, during and even after the events. This inevitably involves plenty of time and effort that people have poured in together through the entire journey.

Next, social media is not a static entity that is used by the State only. It has been dialectically used by the Cambodian students in Hanoi as a political tool to convey their message to the public as well as to create a sense of belonging amongst their groups. So in this case, both the State and the students have used social media to generate a sense of political belonging. Further, the fraternity from the senior to junior is a form of capital transfer from generation to generation since it is a dialectic dual-directional relationship. Finally, the triple modes of interactions including acceptance, adaptation and rejection can be seen as a link under CBHE. In the process of social capital accumulation, the Cambodian students actively seek to make sense of Vietnamese society and to accept and adapt with the Vietnamese society and culture. However, we must note that there are students who reject the Vietnamese society and culture due to the cultural and political differences in terms of ideology. Perhaps, they fear possessing these differences will have a negative impact upon their domestic relationships when they return to Cambodia.

Chapter 5

Returning Home: How the Experience of Studying in Hanoi, Vietnam Benefits the Graduate

This chapter explores how Cambodian students utilize and maintain the social capital accumulated during their study in Vietnam. There are three sections I will discuss: (1) The development and maintenance of networks by graduated Cambodian students; (2) The experiential conversion of social capital into multiple forms of capital and how Cambodian students benefit from their social capital upon their graduation; and (3) The elaboration of the conversion of social capital to cultural capital in terms of Vietnamese culture.

Network at play

This section seeks to show how networks are developed and maintained by Cambodian students beyond graduation in a foreign country. Specifically, I will discuss four networks that the Cambodian students seek to develop and maintain during their time in Vietnam, as well as in Cambodia.

The first type of network is between fellow Cambodian students in Hanoi. Even though they have already graduated and returned to find jobs at different places in Cambodia, they continue to maintain connections with one another. The communal activities in Hanoi, Vietnam, including the sharing of rooms, kitchen facilities and food, have bonded them as brothers and sisters. Hence,

when they return to Cambodia, they still stay in contact with each other nearly every day. They do so through different channels of social media (Facebook, Skype, Viber and Line) and mobile phones. They often post their personal Cambodian contact numbers through their Facebook blogs, even after they have returned to Cambodia. Some international students establish private Facebook blogs in order to maintain their relationships with their Cambodian peers who have studied with them in the same major.

In doing so, they share and exchange information with each other about their problems and the ways to resolve them. Through Facebook, this group of Cambodian students is able to share their contact numbers and job employment opportunities with each other more easily after they have graduated. A good example is taken from Avata (his nickname) who had just graduated from Telecom-Engineering and Networking in Vietnam in 2014. After he graduated, Avata applied for a job in Cambodia through some friends who had graduated before him. He got a job as an IP Core Engineer at Metfone Company in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. With regards to his networking, Avata shared the following:

I often meet Cambodian students who finished their studies in Hanoi nearly every week, we sometimes play football, join wedding party... but most of them study the same major like me or the students work in Phnom Penh city. (Interview: June, 2013)

From this example, it can be clearly seen how networks amongst fellow Cambodian students in Hanoi are sustained even in Cambodia after graduation. Another example of networks that involve such a continuing relationship is between the recently-graduated Cambodian students and their seniors who have graduated before them. For instance, a senior may recommend a recently-graduated Cambodian student to join his company in Cambodia. Having joined the company, the recently-graduated Cambodian will gather weekly to feast together with their seniors who are working in the same company. At the same time, the recently-graduated Cambodian will invite other recently-graduated peers from other companies to join them, too. In so doing, the seniors also get to know other recently-graduated students which can extend their networks as well. Such gatherings are not limited to weekly feasts but also to special occasions such as weddings, birthdays and housewarming parties.

During their meetings, they often share information about their personal relationships (family situations and businesses) and update each other about their occupations. Sometimes, they also help each other change jobs by recommending each other to older seniors who have their own business companies or directly asking them to apply to their companies. In other words, these recently-graduated students are not only strengthening their networks among their peers but are also actively expanding their connections with their seniors who have graduated before them.

The third type of network deals with the transnational relationships between graduated students who have returned to Cambodia and the Vietnamese contacts they made during their stay in Vietnam. These Vietnamese contacts include friends, lecturers and adopted parents who used to take care of them while they were living in Hanoi, Vietnam. Mr. Cha, who graduated from medical school in 2014, shared the following:

Once a year, I take my Vietnamese adopted father to visit the Angkor Wat at Siem Reap Province because I feel thankful for them that they take care of me while I was living in Hanoi, Vietnam. (Interview: February, 2014)

This is a classic example of how transnational networks are sustained even after graduation. Conversely, when their relatives fall sick, these Cambodian student graduates may bring them to Vietnam to seek medical treatment through their Vietnamese friends' assistance and recommendation. Further, there are some Cambodian medical student graduates who continue to seek the medical expertise of their Vietnamese lecturers whenever they are in doubt. This continues to take place in spite of the proximity and easy access to Cambodian doctors whom they could consult directly with in Cambodia. Mr. Char, a fourth-year medical student at Hanoi Medical University illustrated:

I told you, please do not trust the medical service in Cambodia; they just want to take money and time from you. If you have relatives who get sickness, you better go to Vietnam or other country. (Interview: May, 2013)

The fourth type of network refers to transnational romantic relationships. By this, I am referring to Cambodian students who have started a romance

with a Vietnamese student during their study in Vietnam. The strength of these courtship relationships are proven especially after graduation. The Vietnamese partners assist their boyfriends or girlfriends to seek employment in Vietnam. Such an arrangement allows them to continue their courtship in Vietnam even after they have graduated. For instance, Mr. Pha is a first-year student who just enrolled in a Master program in Information Technology and Software at Hanoi Information Technology. Mr. Pha was able to find a part-time job outside the realm of his study due to a close relationship with his Vietnamese girlfriend.

In summary, the Cambodian students in Hanoi have developed and maintained their relationships with various networks of people even after graduating and returning to Cambodia. They connect with their fellow Cambodian students, their seniors, their Vietnamese social circle, as well as their Vietnamese romantic partners. Through these networks, they exchange knowledge and constantly seek to improve their relationships. So, accumulation of social capital is an ongoing process. The process of social capital accumulation has as its objective the successful negotiation by Cambodian students in Hanoi of finding a balance between their chances and challenges. As I see it, there is an active process of growth and maturation that takes places for most of them. They are very reflective about their own development and they appreciate new qualities acquired and skills learned. However, they also learn that acquiring knowledge of the local language is the key to understanding and interacting with the local culture. Those who communicated well in the local language at the university as well as outside the university obtained higher scores of satisfaction in their contacts with local students. Second, they always shared their rooms only with their fellow nationals and mostly they had Khmer friends. So they did not have much time to exchange with the other culture or to learn from their new environment nor to practice the foreign language. Third, they were not sharing their own culture with the host country or other foreign students which is also important.

Experience Turned into Social Capital

According to Bourdieu, social capital is known as “the aggregate of the actual potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance or recognition” (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 248). He identifies social capital by the size

of network and the level of past accumulated social capital commanded by the agent (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 249). He also pointed out that profit is not necessarily economic, but it can be converted into economic profit. The actors' capacity for accumulating the social advantage and *control* of capital are differentially disseminated and it is a central notion in Bourdieu's theories of social reproduction and social space. The concept of social space is defined by the complex clustering of actor's positions (Bourdieu, 1984; Bourdieu, 1989). However, these positions cannot be rendered objectively. Any such effort will result in a very partial and misleading picture because it would conceal the complex interactions that occur between actors. These interactions make up another dimension defined by the relative distributions of resources, and the extent to which these resources can be activated. Actors are unequal in possessing and activating their resources. These inherent inequalities predispose or condition actors in differentially advantaged locations in social space, in competition for the appropriation of available scarce resources. The inequality fuelling the actors' predispositions is rooted in the differential distributions of economic, cultural, social and symbolic capital. These predispositions act to legitimize the structure of differential awards and provide the means to perceive the structure. According to Bourdieu, all forms of capital, by being organically-related to positions in social space, act in two ways simultaneously: they reproduce all forms of capital and they use these resources to embed the actor's position further. So, positions of actors are both the cause and the effect of all forms of past accumulations of capital, particularly social capital. Social capital can be seen as a credential that perpetuates social inequality by providing differential entitlements to credit (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 248-249). Therefore, social capital along with other forms of associated capitals "explains the structure and dynamics of differentiated societies" (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992, p. 119). Social capital via group memberships becomes a collective phenomenon.

In view of that, Cambodian students in Hanoi have their social capital reproduced into academic performance through their socialization with other Vietnamese in Hanoi. In the course of my research, I have encountered two cases who successfully reapplied to study a Master Degree due to their social connections with Vietnamese people they originally met during their undergraduate studies. The first case refers to Ana, who has graduated with a Bachelor Degree in Information Technology Engineering in 2014. Through socialization with Vietnamese, Ana was subsequently able to embark on his

Masters of Business Administration in Project Management at Assumption University of Thailand. In the beginning, Ana applied to an AIESEC international (Association internationale des étudiants en sciences économiques et commerciales) internship program in Indonesia under the recommendation of his Vietnamese friends whom he had met at the Economic English Club while pursuing his tertiary education in Hanoi, Vietnam. Through this 2-month internship in Indonesia, he got to know some Thai friends who subsequently introduced him to Assumption University of Thailand where he is currently enrolled. Sophea is the second successful applicant who has continued his Master degree in medicine at Hanoi University in Vietnam, as a result of his social connections with Vietnamese. After attaining his medical degree in Thai Binh University, Vietnam in 2013, Sophea returned to work in Cambodia. There, Sophea worked at 215 Emergency, which is a clinic established by Cambodian-Vietnamese students for three years. Initially, Sophea failed several times in his reapplication to study in Vietnam. In desperation, he sought the help of his Vietnamese teachers and colleagues who knew him while he was studying in Vietnam. He prefers Vietnam as the destination of further study because he believes that it will be too challenging for him to learn new languages, make new friends and adjust to a new environment. He is also determined to pursue a Master degree because the higher degree is crucial for more promotion prospects in Cambodia. In summary, both Ana and Sophea have converted their social capital into cultural capital in the form of better education qualifications so as to improve their life chances.

Possession of a social connection can also be converted into cultural capital, then economic capital as in the case of Mrs. Sov (her nickname) who graduated with a Bachelor's degree in International Relations from the International Relations Institute in Hanoi, Vietnam in 2013. She got her current job in Bank for Investment and Development of Vietnam (BIDV) in Cambodia because of her Vietnamese friend who used to share the room with her during her studies in Vietnam. This happened partly because there are not many Cambodian students studying international relations in Vietnam as it is far from other universities in Hanoi. Hence, the Vietnamese government allows them to stay together with Vietnamese friends. Mrs. Sov was able to gain a better understanding about Vietnamese culture in terms of food, custom and ideas by her daily interactions with her Vietnamese friends; certainly more than other Cambodian students. One of her Vietnamese friends got a job in BIDV bank

which is based in Cambodia. This friend asked her to apply as a translator after her graduation. After working in the company for a year, she became a public relations officer. She said that being a translator and a public relations officer is not easy because it requires a lot of social experience in the Vietnamese context. Thus, she is thankful to her Vietnamese friend who helped her to understand more about the Vietnamese cultural context when they were living together.

Another example of conversion from social capital into economic capital is visible through the senior-junior network relationships. Sovannarith graduated from Computer Networking/IT at Hanoi University of Science Technology in 2014. He found his current job through his seniors who had graduated before him. Two weeks after his thesis defense, Sovannarith received information from his seniors that there was a job vacancy related to his field of study in Phnom Penh. It was at the Vietnamese Tele-company (Metphone), where he successfully applied. The second example is Symon. He is a 2013 graduate in Computer Programming and Software from the Hanoi University of Science and Technology. Symon got a job through his strong relationship with the Cambodian embassy officer, Nak Ming Sathan Tot, while he was studying in Hanoi, Vietnam. Symon had often offered his help to fix the computer at the Cambodian embassy in Vietnam. At the same time, Symon had often socialized through playing table tennis with the ambassador every week. After his graduation, the embassy officer introduced Symon to a Chinese company in Siem Reap province, which is the hometown of Symon. In both cases, it can be argued that social capital materialized into employment through the assistance of the Cambodian seniors.

From these above-mentioned examples, social capital that has been accumulated can subsequently be converted into different forms of capital, as acknowledged by Bourdieu (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992).

Knowing Vietnamese Culture as Cultural Capital

The earlier section discussed about how social capital could be converted into different forms of capital. This section seeks to elaborate on how social capital is specifically transformed into cultural capital that subsequently facilitates further possibilities of upward mobility. This study examines Vietnamese culture in the aspects of work ethic, language and food in daily interaction.

Work Ethic

One of the main benefits of Vietnamese culture to graduated Cambodian students after they have returned to Cambodia is the work ethic they learned in Vietnam. It helps them work more effectively after they return home. Mr. Say was born in a family with three siblings and his parents worked as teachers in Battambang Province. At the time of this interview, Mr. Say had just come to Vietnam from Cambodia in order to continue his Masters study in Civil Engineering at Université d'Architecture de Hanoi. In fact, he had earned his first master degree in Urban Planning and Development in 2013 and had become a CEO in a company named Delta Team for Construction and Engineering prior to his departure to Vietnam. Through his social networking while staying in Vietnam, Mr. Say realized how different the working habits were between Cambodian and Vietnamese workers. This cultural capital insight helped him further advance his economic capital, as he elaborates in the following:

I found a slight difference in terms of culture in my working place. As I work as an engineer, I found it so strange that in Khmer culture, people dislike taking on “small” jobs of lowly repute. In contrast, in Vietnamese culture, they do everything regardless of how insignificant their works might seem to be... By “small,” I am referring to Cambodians who dislike working as employees. They like to work as a boss if they already got some skills or high education. By “small,” I am also referring to make the roof, arrange the floor or paint the wall. Mostly, there are not many Cambodian workers who are willing to do these jobs. I normally hire Vietnamese workers to do them. This is because they do it faster and with better quality.
(Interview: April, 2014)

Language

Another example of how Cambodian students benefit from Vietnamese culture is in terms of language. Language is a cultural tool that can facilitate upward mobility. In the earlier example, Mr. Say has demonstrated his understanding of cultural capital gained from the Vietnamese culture. Mr. Say has also learned to utilize his social capital with the Vietnamese by speaking

the Vietnamese language. His Vietnamese language skills have further helped him to earn profits, while also benefiting other Cambodians for whom he has translated both his thesis as well as other Vietnamese textbooks into the Cambodian language. In this aspect, Mr. Say elaborates:

Actually, it is important for us to learn Vietnamese as it is a bridge for us to seek knowledge. It is a life skill and knowledge as there are many books which are written in Vietnamese. If we cannot read Vietnamese, then how can we know how to develop our skills? Also, if we ask about Cambodian language... how many books are written in Khmer? (Interview: April, 2014)

Apart from this, there is another Cambodian student in Hanoi who has demonstrated how knowing the Vietnamese language has helped in his upward mobility. Mr. Cha graduated with a medical degree in 2014. He then went on to start his own business at home to import medicines from different countries, including Vietnam. His story is an illustration of how his mastery of the Vietnamese language has helped him to advance his business. To begin with, Mr. Cha has a good relationship with his adoptive father in Vietnam, who he met during his migrant study. Also, his appointment as the President and Coordinator of the Cambodian Association positions him in close proximity for communicating with the Vietnamese. As a result, his social interactions enhanced his mastery of the Vietnamese language. After graduation, Mr. Cha returned to Cambodia and found a job at GlaxoSmithKline Cambodia Co. Ltd. (GSKH). He has since been working as a distributor and coordinator/representative for this company which deals with the import of medicines. Hence, Mr. Cha's knowledge of the Vietnamese language enhances his competency in understanding and purchasing medicines from Vietnam. In addition to this job, Mr. Cha has opened his own pharmacy. His Vietnamese language skills have helped him to boost its sales. With regards to this, Mr. Cha explains:

Many Vietnamese people live nearby my clinic and like to buy medicines at my clinic because I can use Vietnamese language to talk to them and it is not hard to recognize the Vietnamese people. (Interview: May, 2013)

Mr. Cha's Vietnamese language skills have become an essential cultural capital tool in facilitating his upward mobility. The final example is Ms. Sit who has been mentioned previously (see network formulation in Section 4.1). Through her social interactions with Vietnamese friends in Vietnam, Ms. Sit has gained a good grasp of the Vietnamese language. For instance, Ms. Sit makes frequent visits to a Cambodian who has married a Vietnamese wife. With this lady, Ms. Sit invests much time to cultivate a social relationship. Moreover, Ms. Sit extends her connections to the lady's entire Vietnamese family network. As a result, she vastly improves her spoken Vietnamese language skills. Having gained fluency in the Vietnamese language, Ms. Sit has become a Vietnamese language teacher back in Cambodia following her graduation. Later, she became a tour manager with a tour agency in Siem Reap Province, Cambodia. In sum, Ms. Sit's upward mobility has been enriched by the Vietnamese language skills she gained through her social connections.

Food Culture

The potential application of social capital is not limited to work ethics and language. In actuality, Cambodian students in Hanoi have experienced how their relationships with Vietnamese friends have provided them opportunities to acquire culinary skills in preparing Vietnamese food. These skills have also helped their upward mobility in Cambodia. Many of the Cambodian students who have graduated from Hanoi and returned to Cambodia have learned how to make use of their Vietnamese food knowledge in their daily living. Many of them declare that they like Vietnamese food because it provides more nutrition than some of the Cambodian food. Mr. Mal (his nickname) confesses that since he graduated from Vietnam in medical science, he has preferred Vietnamese food over Cambodian food. This is because the former is healthier and cheaper in comparison with the latter. He shared:

Vietnamese food provides more nutrition because they just boil the food and it is not complex. It is also not expensive and saves a lot of time to cook like Cambodian food. If I have a wife, I want to teach my wife to apply both Cambodian and Vietnamese cooking methods for my children. (Interview: July, 2013)

Mr. Say also shared an economic outlook towards Vietnamese food. He shared:

I sometimes cook Vietnamese food...but only when I have no money at all. So I have learnt to invent some eclectic mixture between Khmer and Vietnamese styles. (Interview: April, 2014)

In brief, a social networking connection was very much helpful for Cambodian students in Hanoi when it provided them opportunities to know Vietnamese food culture. It allowed them to save money and improve their financial sustainability, especially when times were hard abroad. It also allowed them to connect with their Vietnamese contacts both in Vietnam and Cambodia, which has provided them further economic opportunities. Vietnamese culture including work ethic, language and food provide a wider means for Cambodian students to acquire cultural capital through their social connections. These in turn benefits them even after they return to Cambodia.

Summary

In summary, Cambodian students in Hanoi creatively transform their accumulated social capital into multiple forms so as to gain greater access to upward mobility after they have graduated. Through their various social networks, they have accumulated academic, cultural, employment, physical, emotional and/or enhanced security forms of capital. These are vital accumulations that can help them adapt and thrive in their next phase of life after graduation. In particular, this chapter has chosen to expound on the conversion of social capital into cultural capital through examining the detailed forms of work ethics, language and food in Vietnamese culture. Again, these examples have shown how seemingly taken-for-granted aspects of everyday life can make an impactful difference for social upward mobility. This can be seen through the lens of social capital convertibility into cultural capital, and sometimes into economic capital. In reiteration, this chapter argues that CBHE is not just about acquiring formal degrees. It is about how people learn to manage their life through informal and non-formal learning from the society where they are situated.

Chapter 6

Conclusion and Discussion

Major Research Findings and Theoretical Discussions of the Findings

This book argues that Cambodian students are active decision makers under the push-pull forces acting upon them. In the process of accumulating cultural capital through CBHE, Cambodian students actively seek to accumulate social capital for their present and future endeavors. Using everyday life practices, this research shows that social capital accumulation and conversions are common and widespread. This book is unique in its contribution to anthropology through the examination of social capital accumulation and conversion in cross border higher education.

Push-Pull Factors in Cross-border Higher Education

To begin with, it is a common assumption that many people attempt to leave their countries to study the English language in order to be able to interact on the international stage and become “global citizens”. In a similar vein of thought, Kang illustrated Korean mothers who migrated with their children to live in Singapore so as to gain proficiency in both English and Mandarin languages (Kang, 2012). In so doing, they provide support for their children to acquire social membership as “global kids” and hopefully, become “global citizens” in the future (Kang, 2012). In the case of Cambodia, it has been similarly argued that English has been taught as a second language in public

schools because the government hopes to attract Foreign Direct Investment through the wide use of the English language (Koji, 2008; Vira, 2002). However, this research reveals a different appreciation of CBHE. Instead of gaining global citizenship through English speaking, the Cambodian students in Hanoi clearly show that there are alternative routes to elevate their social status in the regional dimension. In contrast to the socio-economic status of Korean parents who migrated to Singapore to consume education, many Cambodian parents and students in Hanoi do not have the financial means to do so. Consequently, they have found CBHE in Vietnam as the next best option for gaining academic credentials. This is far better than receiving local education in Cambodia.

On the other hand, the motivations to embark on CBHE have their fair share of pull factors. The findings from this research study show that access to higher education for Cambodian students in Hanoi is pulled by the availability of scholarship opportunities from the Vietnamese government. Besides, the growing bilateral economic relations between Cambodia and Vietnam have provided an added pull for Cambodian students in CBHE. In conclusion, this research study shows that the Cambodian students decided to select Vietnam as a study destination due to a dialectic combination of push and pull factors. These factors are embedded in family and social relationships and obligations, intense feelings of nationalism, and fear of 'western' influence and temptations.

Social Capital Accumulation as Vital in Analyzing Cross-border Higher Education

The second major research finding is that social capital accumulation is a vital dimension of consideration in the analysis of CBHE. There are many people who think that CBHE is restricted to the accumulation of cultural capital, which is a privileged access that has been granted to the middle-class family. In this vein, Waters examined the relationship between educational choice, class and international mobility (2006). Waters argued that during their study in Canada, Hong Kong students have sought to accumulate a more valuable form of cultural capital in a "Western" university degree (Waters, 2006). However, these researchers tend to focus on the production of cultural capital only. While this is understandable and reasonable given that education qualifications are a subset of cultural capital, this research has chosen to delve deeper into the analysis of CBHE.

In the case of Cambodian students in Vietnam, social capital accumulation is an essential analytic lens in addition to cultural capital accumulation. The research findings have demonstrated that both formal and informal social activities are prevalent. Instead of merely being preoccupied with their academic learning, the researcher has found a significant amount of their time devoted to eating, chatting and hanging out with both Vietnamese, as well as fellow Cambodians. Even after their graduation, the researcher found that they have maintained their relationships with their Vietnamese and Cambodian peers and seniors. Hence, this research argues that social capital accumulation as an analytic lens in addition to cultural capital accumulation.

From a career developmental perspective, social capital accumulation and conversion is shown to be crucial to the facilitation of the Cambodian students' attainment of academic credentials, employment, emotional and other practical forms of success, even after they return to their homelands after graduation. Cambodian students in Hanoi have their social capital reproduced into academic performance through their socialization with other Vietnamese in Hanoi. This practice of networking can be compared to the emphasis in the work of Waters, which examines the relationship between educational choice, class and international mobility of Hong Kong students in Canada, to argue that social networks have provided them with opportunities to enrich their family business and to secure jobs through their overseas educational qualifications (2006). Similarly, Weiss and Ford have focused on the Indonesian, Malaysian and Singaporean student migrants in Australia (2011). In their article, these student migrants have been described as "cosmopolitan locals" as they temporarily internalize cultural norms of both home and host countries so as to lift up their social positions as educated citizens when they return home (Weiss and Ford, 2011). Hence, they rely on the geographical space of esteemed Australia to enhance their success; hard work alone does not necessarily pay off.

By choosing to look through the lens of social capital accumulation and subsequent conversions, this research shows that Cambodian students in Hanoi are dynamic and divergent in going beyond conventional assumptions of CBHE. It supports Bourdieu's definition of social capital that is known as "the aggregate of the actual potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance or recognition" (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 248). Cambodian students in Hanoi try to

accumulate social capital within the wider community of Cambodian students in Vietnam as well as with the Vietnamese community. They foster strong bonds of relationships with other Cambodians there based on their similar national identity, political affiliation, and common interests in sports and modern fashion trends. They have sought to join group activities organized by Vietnamese and Cambodian governments under the umbrella of their Cambodian Student Association during their stay in Vietnam. In the process of social capital accumulation, the Cambodian students actively seek to make sense of Vietnamese society and seek to accept and adapt within the society and culture. The host country also tries to create more opportunities to involve the Cambodian students. Instead of merely acquiring cultural capital directly in the form of educational qualifications, the Cambodian students in Hanoi have fostered strong social relations between Cambodian students and the Vietnamese community, that also strengthen the two countries' bilateral political relations. Nevertheless, several Cambodian students in Hanoi try to avoid these events and do not choose to join in with the locals. Many of them have argued that they are stereotyped by peers, faculty, administrators and members of the Vietnamese community. Even so, there is no existing study about stereotyping of international students in Vietnam and just a few pieces of research that have considered mutual perceptions between Cambodian and Vietnamese students.

Social Capital Accumulation and Conversion as Everyday Life Practice in Diverse Multiple Expressions

The study of Cambodian students in Hanoi has shown that social capital accumulation is not centered in conspicuous events, institutions or fixed social structures. On the contrary, it is woven into everyday life practices; in activities such as cooking, partying, discussing about homeland politics, and socializing. These subtle modes of social capital accumulation create a sense of group-ness and belonging, which potentially produces economic capital in the future. Nonetheless, it can also be deliberate and strategic at times. This phenomenon was articulated through the examples of individuals such as Ms. Sit and Bunnak through their simple everyday life routines.

According to Michel de Certeau, the concept of practice in everyday life consists of tactics and strategies that an individual employs in seeking a place that enhances its own power and will (1984). De Certeau employed the concept

of strategy from the military perspective to describe how state-controlled institutions and private business companies attempt to gain more benefits through their control of the society (de Certeau, 1984). The state institution and business sector gain power to establish their dominant order by reinforcing the laws, language, rituals, commercial goods, literature, art, inventions, and discourses (Gardiner, 2000). In response to such dominant order, de Certeau coins the term “tactic” to refer to the ability of individuals or groups to circulate things in their own ways to sustain their power or benefits (de Certeau, 1984). He examines the ways in which people make distinctive mass culture; by altering things, they turn everything from utilitarian objects to street plans to rituals, talking, reading, shopping, and cooking, laws and language, into something that benefits them (Gardiner, 2000; de Certeau, 1984). Therefore, “tactic” is the response of the individual or group to the imposition of rules by the state institutions and private business sector. Similar to de Certeau’s concept of everyday life practice, Bourdieu’s theory of practice is situated in the interaction between power, agency and structure (Bourdieu, 1990). In sum, Bourdieu’s concept of practice is that people are capable of responding to, and altering, their activities in the face of complex and variable conditions (Webb *et al.*, 2002). With regards to my research, such reflexivity can only be unraveled through the observation of the everyday life interaction by the Cambodian students in Hanoi.

In this everyday life practice, social capital is never static in form. It can be transformed into many other forms of capital based on the creativities of the Cambodian students in Hanoi. In actuality, Cambodian students in Hanoi use different tactics to negotiate with the states for their survival, by accumulating and converting their social capital in both countries in order to lift up their social status in the future. This research has opened a new paradigm with regards to the multiplicity of forms that social capital can be utilized. Bourdieu argued that the existence of social capital, which is the total amount of a “network of relationships,” can be mobilized to support both cultural capital and economic capital (1986). In the same vein of thought, Lin argued that social capital consists of resources embedded in invested relations, which generate expected returns (Lin, 2001). In this research, these expected returns are not necessarily and linearly fixed in an economic sense. It can morph into other forms or take indirect routes to achieve multiple outcomes including academic, employment, physical and emotional returns.

In this situation, CBHE has provided the students both chances and challenges to accumulate social capital, which is considered an essential element for their future. First, it allows Cambodian students in Hanoi to have another chance to be distinguished with abroad study in Vietnam by using this particular geographical place. Then, it is normal for the developmental ties between Cambodia and Vietnam to directly influence their future advancement due to the current needs of the labor market between these two countries. Second, it also posits Cambodian students in Hanoi with challenges to sustain their “self” in two senses: they are seen as a cultural subject to present Cambodian culture *vis-à-vis* Vietnamese and their cultures; and, they are also able to be a knowledgeable subject to decide what is best for themselves. Therefore, social capital functions as a core role in both these chances and challenges. And the accumulation of social capital is an ongoing process. It is a process with the objective of negotiation by Cambodian students in Hanoi so as to balance themselves in-between these presented chances and challenges.

Research Implications

This study has several implications for future research in the arena of CBHE. First, it is recommended for the researcher to go beyond institutional and structural forms. This is because, in this case of Cambodian students in Hanoi, social capital has been revealed as a way to generate both cultural capital and economic capital through everyday life practices. The purpose of this study is to understand how Cambodia students in Hanoi use transnational higher education as a bridge to enhance their social status from lower class to middle class by utilizing social capital accumulated in Vietnam. One of the key findings of this study is that students in a foreign country use different tactics to gain social capital in various ways according to their habitus and socio-cultural resources from their families as constructs.

This study has also revealed that, in CBHE, there is the production of human capital for future market extension with neighboring countries. This is done through using scholarship as a tool to support the state’s ideology without consideration of its proper place in higher education. Therefore, it is crucial for the Vietnamese government to be mindful of the political orientation of the Cambodian students and to raise their academic standards on par with international academic performance.

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Cross-Border Higher Education, Social Capital Accumulation and Everyday Life Negotiation

Cambodian Students in Hanoi, Vietnam

Pichmolika Dara

This study is an analysis of cross-border higher education between two developing countries—Cambodia and Vietnam—in the era of English-dominant overseas study. The purpose of this study is to understand how Cambodian students use cross-border higher education as a bridge to enhance their social status from lower class to middle class by utilizing social capital accumulated in Vietnam. This study seeks to contribute to the understanding of the processes of adjustment and social mobility in the field of cross-border higher education. An ethnographic research method utilizing different data collection techniques has been employed on Cambodian students at undergraduate level in Hanoi, Vietnam during the period 2013 to 2014.

Under a combination of push and pull factors, Cambodian students are non-docile but active decision-makers seeking opportunities. Instead of gaining global citizenship through English-speaking education, the Cambodian students in Hanoi have clearly shown that there are alternative routes to elevating their social status in the regional dimension. They are active in accumulating social capital for their current and future progress during their study in Hanoi. Instead of merely acquiring cultural capital directly in the form of educational qualification, the Cambodian students in Hanoi have fostered strong social relations with both Cambodians and Vietnamese that offer them immediate and potential benefits. The everyday life practices of Cambodian students demonstrates that the process of social capital accumulation is diverse and multiple in expression. From the anthropological perspective, this thesis offers an oft-neglected but crucial dimension in appreciating the dynamism of social capital accumulation in cross-border higher education



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