

Contributing to peace and prosperity in Cambodia

Academic development as a means to strengthen social capital

Culture and power

Discourse

Static Cambodian culture

← →

Neoliberal Western drive to modernize

Marginalizing the Cambodian experience in assessing civil society, the political system and culture and democratic institutions.

Culture and power

The essence of modernization theory is the assumption that all countries go through the same phases of development.

This process is assumed to be path-dependent and to facilitate the universal evolution of western-style democracy in developing countries (Welzel and Inglehart 2004; Przeworski and Limongi 1997; Lipset 1959).

Culture and power

Modernization theory formed in the postwar 60's era when the United States were looking for ways to shape its new world leadership (Tipps 1973: 200-10).

Normative approaches dominate the discourse.

Can we say

Development activity in Cambodia (and many other countries) has had an ethnocentric bias towards America (and the West) ?

The study of culture and power

- How can we study Cambodian society?
- How do we analyze the relationship between culture and politics?
- How do we inquire into change and reform?

Doing social research in Cambodia

Sources for research data

- CDRI
- Socio-economic Congress
- Poverty assessment World Bank
- Country reports (poverty, resources, health, education)
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Doing social research in Cambodia

Barriers

1. “ Higher education suffers from pervasive corruption. Schemes to obtain illegal payments for manipulating the deployment and promotion of teachers are common..”
(Freedom House)

Doing social research in Cambodia

Barriers

2. Difficulty in obtaining data for 1950s to 1990s
3. Contested position in world system during (post) cold war period
4. Cultural characteristics
- more?

Doing social research in Cambodia

Barriers to designing social inquiry

1. Access to data for triangulation
 2. Access to literature (books & articles)
 3. Access to digital databanks
 4. Peer review
 5. Publication of indigenous research
- more?

Doing social research in Cambodia

What is the main challenge in doing social research?

How can we turn this into an opportunity?