

# Students perceptions on lower secondary school dropouts education essay



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The phenomenon of high drop-out rates in developing countries is common one. Data from many countries show that the rate is especially high in the early years of primary school. Cambodia is not an exception as students in grade 1 have had low rate of promotion compared to other levels of primary school (Tarumi & Bredenberg, 2009) and dropout rates are high at levels from primary school to upper secondary school in the whole country (MoEYS, 2009).

Education statistic and indicator of Ministry of Education Youth and Sport (MoEYS) in academic year 2008-2009 indicated that 30, 281 classes were provided for 605, 707 students in lower secondary school. In 2007-2008, MoEYS EMIS (Education Monitoring

Information System) statistics demonstrate high student dropout rates for both sexes across the whole country and across all three levels of school primary school, grade 1 to 6, lower secondary school, grade 7 to 9, and high school, grade 10 to 12. Dropout rates in lower secondary school are the highest among the three levels of school. Nationwide, 8.8 per cent of children dropped out in primary school, 21.8 per cent of children dropped out in lower secondary school, and 14.4 per cent of children dropped out in high school. In Phnom Penh, dropout rates are generally lower than in other parts of Cambodia but the general trend is similar: 7.5 per cent of children drop out in primary school, 13.3 per cent in lower secondary school, and 4.6 per cent in high school. Dropping out of school which causes from many factors were founded and understood by Ministry of Education, policy-makers and other Non government organizations as the agent for preventing and abolishing dropout, but the rate of student's dropout of school remains high <https://assignbuster.com/students-perceptions-on-lower-secondary-school-dropouts-education-essay/>

in lower secondary school based on the education statistic of students dropout of school in 2007 and 2008 (MoEYS, 2009). The following table indicates the percentage of student drop outs at all levels, primary, lower secondary, and high school, in public school of Cambodia.

Table1. Education statistic of student's dropout of school both male and female in

2007-2008

Level of school

Phnom Penh

Dropout

Urban Area

Dropout

Rural Area

Dropout

Remote Area

Dropout

Whole country dropout

Primary school

7.5%

7.7%

8.8%

13.5%

8.8%

Lower secondary school

13.3%

14.2%

24.2%

20.3%

21.8%

Upper secondary school

4.6%

7.4%

20.1%

20.4%

14.4%

Over the past two decades the Ministry of Education Youth and Sport ( MoEYS) has implemented many different system reforms aimed at increasing enrolment rate and reducing repetition and drop-out rates of students in the whole country. However, the dropout rate is still high in Cambodia schools. In spite of the education sector reform of Cambodia, the country continues confronting serious issues. Research on student dropout by Velasco (2001), Badloe, Flagnagan, Hozumi, Imhof & So (2007), and NGO Education Partnership (2007) in Cambodia and Rumberger and Lim (2008) reveals many contributing factors of dropping out of students. The school factors of student dropout are identified as distant school, poor school management, unqualified teacher, not enough facilities in school, low motivation of teachers, extra informal fee from students, and poorly trained teachers. The high dropout rate continued to exist in primary schools and the problems particular cute in secondary education (MoEYS & UNICEF, 2005).

## **1. 2 Problem Statement**

Dropping of school of student in Cambodia has become a big problem in the education system for years. Based on the data of the government, the level of national drop out rate at primary school have exchanged only slightly since 1999 from a range of 12. 8% to 11. 4% in 2001. Even though the government report of drop out rate levels decrease slightly among higher grade in primary school, rates have exactly gone up among students in grade1and a study supported by the Asian Development Bank indicated that the drop out rates increase remarkably at grade 7, 15%, grade 9, 25%, and grade 12, 20%. These are not alarmingly main enrollment and dropping out points for different educational levels ( Bredenberg and Sovann, 2003).

Cambodian education system has been expanded as priority to provide more opportunity to more pupils' enrollment since the beginning of French colonialism. A lot of NGOs and donors have supported finance and techniques for education system and Cambodian education has been reformed (Courtney, 2008).

The Ministry of Education (MoEYS) has adopted a Child friendly school policy in basic education, mainly in primary education, throughout Cambodia to improve education system. The child friendly school framework is to help all types of children, particularly, children in vulnerable situation, train teachers to be skillful and qualified in their career, ensure that community people keep all children in school safe and healthy, enhance awareness in schools, communities, and families of their roles and responsibilities, and upgrade strong relationships between school and community for school improvement resource (MoEYS, 2007). The school drop out of student in lower secondary school is high level compared to primary and high school in Phnom Penh and whole country as well (MoEYS, 2009).

The students have dropped out of school in high rates, 21% in lower secondary school based on Ministry Education Statistic, especially in Phnom Penh, the students have dropped out of school high because the school factors consisting of low salary of teacher, teaching method, and lack of teaching materials and facilities in school, have still happened to Cambodian education.

### **1. 3 Research Objectives**

The study is to examine student's perceptions on why students drop out of school at lower secondary school in outskirts of Phnom Penh which contribute to more understanding the main influencing school factors of dropping out and this may help to increase understanding of the phenomenon.

### **1. 4 Research Questions**

This research aims specifically to understand student's perception about dropping out of school and the school factors-related of dropping out of school. The study aims to explore the following questions:

What reasons do students provide dropping out of school at lower secondary school?

How are school-related factors perceived by teachers and students' parents?

How do the teachers, students, and students' parents perceive dropping out of school of children influencing individual, family, and society in the future?

How do students who drop out of school perceive school experience compare to students who are still in school?

### **1. 5 Significance of Research**

Student out of school is an issue which the RGC/MoEYS and NGOs have made an effort to reduce and abolish in order to reach the Education For All (EFA) goals, and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The drop out issue still remains at an alarmingly higher level in lower secondary compared to primary and high school in Cambodia. The study will contribute to the

research on dropout; increase understanding of the phenomenon, and hopefully increase parents and teachers' involvement about dropping out of school to keep children in school to develop the country and to speed up building human resources, to contribute to pushing policy makers to be awareness of dropping out school in order to cooperate to reduce dropout factors and improve living chance of individual students and develop quality of research on dropout in Cambodia and to prevent the students who are at risk of dropping out school.

## **1. 6 Key Term Definition**

In this research, school drop-outs refer to children has not completely enrolled in schools in the 12 month prior to the survey, given he/she used to enroll in school sometime before (Thanh & Long 2004).

## **1. 7 Proposed Chapter**

This study consists of 5 chapters. First, chapter1 consists of introduction which includes background, problem statement, and research objective, significance of the study, research question and key term definition. Second, chapter 2, the literature review consists of 5 literature reviews which were conducted in Cambodia and around the world, will be used to support the whole study. And third, chapter 3 is the research methodology consisting of the sampling and participants, data collection, data analysis, ethical consideration, limitation of the study. The forth, chapter 4 focuses on research findings and the last, chapter 5 is conclusion.



## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Dropping out of school is a global issue in the world and in developing countries, like Cambodia have been concerned. Many studies of dropout have examined factors contributing to dropout of student in order to achieve the Education For all (EFA) goals and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Rumberger & Lim (2008) indicated the main factors cause student dropout in upper secondary school during 25 years of researches on 203 researches of drop out. The study showed the two factors for out-of school students: the first, factors associated with individual characteristic of student included educational performance of student- academic achievement, persistence, and attainment; behaviors of student- engagement, course taking, deviance, peers and employment; attitudes- motivation, values, goals, and a self-perception; and background- demographics, health, and past experiences. The second, factors associated with institutional characteristic of school- structure, resources, and characteristic of student; families- structure, resource, and practice; and communities- institutional resources, parental relationship, and social relationship. The second factor is related to the study. The study showed that the school characteristics influencing on dropping out; school climate, composition, relevance of curriculum, school location, quality of teachers, teacher salaries, teacher ratio, pupils expenditure, and school size.

According to Velasco (2001), why are girls not in school? Perceptions, realities, and contradictions in changing Cambodia stated six main factors

cause girls out of school in six provinces, Kompong Cham, Siem Reap, Kompong Thom, Kratie, Banteay Meanchey, and Rattanakiri. The six factors push the girls leave school: poverty of girls' family, inadequate school materials, unqualified teachers, very far school from their village, no security in community and school, bad environment in school, and parents' expectation on education.

A study conducted by VSO showed 8 factors which push children to stop school in basic education. These include informal fees from children, low salary of teacher; poor health and malnutrition for children, and poverty; overcrowded classroom, and inadequate facilities in school, poorly trained and unqualified teachers and low level of motivation among teachers. There are 6 school related-factors, informal fees from children, low salary of teacher, inadequate facilities in school, poorly trained and unqualified teachers and low level of motivation among teachers in the findings in directing the study.

The study by Bredenberg and Sovann (2003) on Characteristics and Definitions of Student Dropout of School at Primary School Level indicated the two main factors of students dropping out of school, first supply-side factors consisting of educational quality, distance school and curricular relevance and second, demand-side factors including socio-economic status, direct costs of education, demographic location, opportunity costs of education, parental education, age, attitudes of education, and sex. This study identified the supply-side factors, distance school, school curriculum, and quality of education as causing students to drop out of school.

Another study by Badloe, Flanagan, Gore, Hozumi, Imhof, & So (2007) on universal primary education identified two main factors, supply-side factor consisting of public expenditure on primary education, pupil-teacher ratio, and school infrastructure and demand-side factor included poverty, geographic location, and ethnicity. Among these factors in finding, the poverty was critical factor which prominently influenced on the effective access to primary education.

Another study by Ides Nicaise, Pawadee Tonguthai, and Ilse Fripont (2000) in Thailand about School dropout in Thailand: causes and remedies. The study used mixed method, qualitative and quantitative, and the sampling of interview and focused group. The study indicated many causes of students dropping out of school, poverty; direct cost of education consists of uniform, meal, transportation, textbooks, course books, and other study materials; and indirect cost of education, child labor and child exploitation; attractiveness of education, school resources including not good and not enough infrastructure and equipment in school, distant school, shortage of teachers, low pay and poor working condition, teacher absenteeism, too much work for teacher; teaching method; social obstacle consists of health problem, handicapped children, drug use, disrupted family life and cultural obstacle. This study examined the school related factors of dropping out of school the infrastructure and equipment of school, distant school, shortage of teachers, low pay and poor working condition, teacher absenteeism, too much workload, and teaching method.

The study by Thanh and Long (2004) in Vietnam on " Can Vietnam achieve one of its millennium development goals?" indicated some factors which <https://assignbuster.com/students-perceptions-on-lower-secondary-school-dropouts-education-essay/>

contribute to dropping out school. The factors were child's characteristics, household economic situation, household per capita expenditure, direct cost of schooling, particularly, low quality of education, and together with the parents' incorrect perception of and the community's attitude to education values. For these factors in finding, this study examined the low quality of education influencing on schooling dropout. The low quality of education included the first curriculum and learning programs, teaching methods, and facilities for teaching and learning; and the second relates quality of teaching.

According to the literature reviews above in Cambodia and oversea, school related factors that often influence the phenomenon of school drop-outs include distant school, poor school management, unqualified teacher, not enough facilities in school, low motivation of teachers, extra informal fee from students, and poorly trained teachers, crowded classroom.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3. 1 Research Design**

A qualitative approach will be used in this study. Specifically, data will be collected through semi-structured interviews. The 6 d students out and in school, 6 parents of the students, and two teachers in school will be interviewed individually and the interview will take around 50 minutes for each participant. The study will be conducted at one lower secondary school and at homes of students who have dropped out of school.

### **3. 2 Sampling and Participants**

The study will be conducted during second semester of the year 2011. The research participants will be the students in and out school, students' parents and teachers at a lower secondary school in the outskirts of Phnom Penh in 2009-2010 and 2010-2011. Consent to participate in the research will be obtained from teachers, students' parents, and students who have dropped out of school and students who are in school prior to data collection. The researcher will use purposive sampling in this study to gain in-depth understanding of student's perceptions on factors of dropout and the main school related-factors causing them to drop out of school. Altogether 14 participants will be interviewed.

### **3. 3 Data collection**

#### **Interview**

The purpose of this study is to obtain in-depth understanding student's perceptions on school related factors on dropout. The researcher will use purposive sampling to select the participants who will be invited to participate in an interview. The researcher will contact the students who have dropped out of school, students are still in school, parents and teachers through the contact information from school and set a suitable time and safe place, at school and at home, for interview.

The semi-structured interviews will be conducted with 14 participants individually to collect data. Each participant will spend around one hour for interview. The questions will begin with the background of students and then

the researchers go to questions on students' perceptions on why student drop out of school and school related factors of dropout.

The questions will be designed based on the research questions of this study. The questions will focus on the school related-factors cause students dropping out of school. The questions for the interview also will be conducted in the Khmer language. Each interview will be recorded by tape and transcribed by asking in advance for permission from the interviewers for data analysis. No names will be mentioned on the transcription to ensure anonymity and confidentiality. Instead, a number will be assigned to each interview.

### **3. 4 Data Analysis**

According to Gay, Mills and Airasian (2009), data analysis will be started from the initial interaction with the participants and continues the interaction and do analysis throughout the whole study. After collecting the information from the research field, the researcher will start transcribing the interview from Khmer language to English from the tape recording and data collected from research field of interview will be analyzed. The researcher will reads all data collection again and again in order to identify the concept and themes, organize and prepare all kind information from participants' response and examines deeply the data to describe the setting, activities, and participants. And the last, the researcher will classify data by categorizing and coding pieces of data and grouping them into themes.

### **3. 5 Ethical Considerations**

Applying for permission, the researcher will bring letter, research permission form, from the Director of the Master of Education Program at Royal University of Phnom Penh to seek approval from the school principal or vice principals for some information about students dropout for collecting data and bring the information for participation and consent form to all participants for interview for collecting data to whole the study.

A short explanation about the research purpose will be provided to participants and information for participation. The researcher asks permission from participants to participate the interview. After that consent form will be read in details and accepted by interviewer before interviewing for data collection. 1) The interviewees will be explained into detail that participation in the discussion is voluntary; and that Confidentiality and anonymity will be maintained. The researcher tells the participants that their personal information in the interview on this research will keep in secret at the researcher's place without knowing from anybody. 2) Participants will be asked to sign a consent form to indicate their willingness to participate in the study. During the interview, if the participants don't want to answer or decide not to participate in the interview, that is fine.

### **3. 6 Limitation of the study**

This study has some limitation. First, the researcher will only conduct this study in a lower secondary school in outskirts of Phnom Penh, but some participants for the interviewing are not in school so the researcher might have some difficulty for inviting the participants for interview. Second, I am the fresh researcher; I may meet the problem with time management for <https://assignbuster.com/students-perceptions-on-lower-secondary-school-dropouts-education-essay/>

interviewing participants during the interview because they may be shy for interview and the other participants may be slow for answering the questions. Third, the study will be conducted in a small number of students who drop out and who are in school, 2 teachers and 6 parents at a lower secondary school so the results will not generalize the reasons why students dropping out of school for all school level countrywide. The strength of this study is getting depth understanding on student dropping out school by interviewing the 14 participants including 3 students dropping out of school, 3 students in school 6 students' parents, and 2 teachers.

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## **IV. APPENDICES**

### **Appendix A: Interview protocol**

#### **Questions for students' interview**

Background

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When were you born?

In .....

Are you male or female?

Male Female

Where do you live?

.....

What grade were you in?

Grade 7 grade8 grade 9

Please tell me about your experiences in school?

What are the obstacles in your study in school?

What are the factors you think that can force you to leave school?

What subject do you prefer to learning in your school?

How do you feel when you learn the subjects that you don't like?

Do you like your teacher's teaching activities?

Do your teachers use teaching material in the class

What teaching materials do your teachers use in the class?

How do you think about teaching material for use in your school?

What do you satisfy with school facilities in your school?

How do you like your school facilities in your school?

Please tell me your experience when you were in school?

What reasons do you provide to leave school?

What school related factors do you identify?

## **Questions for parents' interview**

Background

Who are you with the student above?

What is your job?

What degree do you have?

How many members do you have in your family?

Please tell me about your living standard

What do you know about your child ( name?

What do you know about your children's school?

How does your child like school?

How do you perceive your children's learning?

What factors can keep your children in school?

If your children are out of school, how do you think the obstacles are for your children?

If your children drop out of school, how does it affect your children, family and society in the future?

## **Questions for teachers' interview**

Who are you with the student above?

How do you know your student above?

How do you understand about school environment?

How does your student like learning in school?

If your students are out of school, what are the obstacles for your student?

If your students are out of school, how does it harm your student, and society in the future?

What school factors do you know that make students drop out of school?

How do you perceive dropping out of school of children influencing individual, family, and society in the future?

## **Appendix B: Information Sheet**

### **INFORMATION FOR PARTICIPANTS- Interview**

PROGRAM: Master of Education

Research Title : Student's perception on Factors Causes Students Dropping out of School at Lower Secondary School in Outskirt of Phnom Penh.

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**Supervisor: Dr Silja Ranjander**

Researcher's name: Nhek Kosal

089 512 513

Kosal\_cam@yahoo. com

Name of participant: .....

Date of birth: ..... Location: .....

Date: ..... Time: .....

**Introduction**

You are invited to participate in Master's thesis study on the student's perceptions on factors influencing schooling dropout in lower secondary school. As mentioned early, I would like to invite you to take part in my study because I want to know your perceptions on these factors.

**The research objective**

The aim of this study is to identify students' perceptions on why students dropout at a lower secondary school. Therefore, the researcher wants to invite the students who quitted school for an interview.

**Research procedures**

The interview lasts about 90 minutes with you today. I have some interview questions regarding your background and particularly, your perceptions on factors influencing schooling dropout. You don't have to answer any question if you do not want, but I want you to participate in this study to help building

the education system and reducing the condition of dropout of school. The interviews will be initially transcribed for analysis and translated into English and themes and patterns of responses will be clustered and labeled to assist in analysis.

### **The benefits for participating**

You will receive 8000 riel for participating in the study to compensate your time and participation in this interview today. Particularly, your participation also contributes to identifying factors influencing schooling dropout in lower secondary school. The researcher stresses that taking part in the interviews is voluntary. Researcher prepares it carefully to keep your provided information confidentially and I will keep your name and address information in safe box at Royal University of Phnom Penh. There will be no identifying names used in the final thesis or any other papers produced from this research. Moreover, your participation in this study will shed light on understanding of school dropout in Cambodian education system in lower secondary school.

### **Possible risks and confidentiality**

Tape-recordings and transcription will be identified by a label in the interview. No further identifiers will be used. The code number will be used instead of the participants' name during the interviews. No any other participants' identification such as subjects and university will be identified through the process of analysis and the research report. The data will be used for this study only. However, your participation in this research can withdraw at any stage from the interview, or decide not to answer all questions.

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## Appendix C: Consent form

### INFORMED CONSENT FORM – interview

The objective of this study is to examine students' perception on why students drop out of school at lower secondary school in the outskirts of Phnom Penh. I have been clearly informed the intent and significance of this study in writing and verbally and I really understand what is wanted of me. I know that participating in this interview is voluntary and I am aware that I can have right to decline to participate and to withdraw from the research once participation has begun. I also recognize that my name and responses will be kept confidential and no one known me can have access to information. In order to compensate my time, I will be provided 5000 riel for taking part in this study.

#### With an understanding of above conditions:

I freely consent to participating in an interview for this research. YES , NO

I consent to having my interview recorded and a transcript made. YES , NO

Name: .....(printed)

**Signature (or thumb print) Date:**

.....

## Appendix D: Time Frame

Based on sufficient time of completing this research, I will spend around 8 months from April to December, 2011. From April to June, I will plan to draft



my proposal and design instruments which are necessary to gather the data. Importantly, I will carry out pre-testing instruments to get reliable and valid data in July. After testing the instrument, I will start collecting data by visiting the field setting for about three weeks during August. And then after finalizing data collection, I will need two months to analyze the data collected. In December, I will start writing the final report. Finally, I will prepare to present a report of my study before the deadline of the program.

## **Activities**

**April**

**May**

**June**

**July**

**August**

**Sept**

**Oct**

**Nov**

**Dec**

Draft research

Draft instrument

Pre-testing instruments

Data collection

Data analysis

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Writing report

Submitting for defense