
Editorial

Toward global visibility: Strategic priorities for enhancing Cambodian universities' presence in the global university rankings

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Introduction

In recent years, university rankings have become a rising phenomenon among higher education institutions (HEIs) worldwide. There are various global university rankings, including the Times Higher Education (THE) World University Rankings and its associated rankings such as the THE University Impact Rankings, the THE World Reputation Rankings, and the THE Interdisciplinary Science Rankings; the Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) World University Rankings; Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU); U.S. News & World Report; World University Rankings for Innovation (WURI); and the AppliedHE University Rankings; among others. Each ranking body, however, adopts different methodological approaches and objectives with varying indicators to evaluate university performance. For example, THE World University Rankings focus on five key areas, including (a) teaching, (b) research environment, (c) research quality, (d) industry engagement, and (e) international outlook (THE, n.d.-c). The THE University Impact Rankings assess universities' performance related to their contributions to the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (Bautista-Puig et al., 2022), while the THE World Reputation Rankings evaluate universities based on their academic reputation and global prestige (THE, n.d.-b). The QS World University Rankings use a range of factors to evaluate universities, including,

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among others, “student experience, university partnerships, research activity, academic and employer reputation, and faculty qualifications” (QS, 2025). In this context, there is a need for HEIs globally to critically consider which ranking organization aligns best with the strengths and weaknesses of their institutions.

In light of the global trend toward world university rankings and the current performance of Cambodian universities in these international rankings, this editorial aims to emphasize the need to strengthen Cambodian universities' presence in global university rankings. It begins by discussing Cambodian universities' performance in international university rankings to set the scene for the urgent need to increase Cambodian universities' presence on the global stage. The editorial then explains why global university rankings matter for Cambodia before discussing key strategic priorities that Cambodian universities should consider to improve their presence and visibility internationally. It concludes with an overview of the articles included in this issue of the *Cambodian Journal of Educational Research*.

Cambodia universities' performance in international university rankings

Although a growing number of HEIs in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) have been ranked in these global rankings, relatively few Cambodian HEIs have been positioned in these systems. Five years ago, Heng (2020) noted that Cambodia, along with Laos and Myanmar, did not have their universities featured in the THE World University Rankings, while their ASEAN counterparts, such as Singapore, Malaysia, and Thailand, all had their universities listed in the THE World University Rankings. This situation has, however, gradually improved for Cambodia. Within the last few years, three Cambodian universities, namely the National University of Management (NUM), the University of Health Sciences (UHS), and the University of Puthisastra (UP), have been featured in WURI, a credible global university ranking system that emphasizes innovative programs related to education, research, and community engagement (WURI, n.d.-b). Specifically, in 2024, NUM was ranked 6th, 9th, and 32nd in the categories, such as Symbol/Promotion, Student Mobility and Openness, and Entrepreneur Spirit, respectively, while UHS was ranked 6th in Student Mobility and Openness, and UP was ranked 46th for Social Responsibility (WURI, n.d.-a). In 2025, moreover, two Cambodian universities, UP and Paragon International University, have also been ranked 41st and 45th, respectively, among ASEAN private

universities in a newly established ranking body, called AppliedHE University Rankings ([AppliedHE, n.d.](#)). Interestingly, UP was ranked in the top 10 for 'Employability' ([AppliedHE, n.d.](#)). Given its regional competition and classification of HEIs into public and private categories, this new regional ranking system tends to be well-suited for Cambodian HEIs.

In 2022, UP, a private university established in 2007, was listed in the THE World University Rankings as a "reporter," meaning that it did not meet all the key criteria for inclusion in the rankings, one of which is to have published more than 1,000 relevant documents over the past five years, with at least 100 documents each year ([THE, 2024](#)). Although UP was only listed as a reporter, this is an achievement that should be acknowledged, considering the lack of presence of other Cambodian universities even as a reporter in the THE World University Rankings. In 2025, another Cambodian university also appears in the list, alongside UP, as a reporter in the THE World University Rankings 2025. The newly listed university is Preah Sihamoniraja Buddhist University (PSBU). The fact that PSBU, a lesser-known university in Cambodia, is listed in the prestigious THE World University Rankings table in 2025, even as a reporter, is rather surprising, while all other major or leading universities in Cambodia are not listed, even after UP, the only Cambodian university to first achieve this feat, has been listed in the THE World University Rankings as a reporter since 2022.

Among all the Cambodian universities that have been ranked in the above-mentioned international ranking systems, only UP has been ranked by THE University Impact Rankings. Specifically, UP was first ranked by THE University Impact Rankings in 2021. In 2025, UP is placed in the 1001st to 1500th band among 2,526 universities from 130 countries for their progress toward the United Nations SDGs ([THE, n.d.-a](#)). UP is the only Cambodian university that has made these impressive achievements. Its outstanding performance in these international university rankings should be a lesson learned for other Cambodian universities, particularly leading public universities, which should seek to contribute to increasing Cambodian universities' presence in the global university rankings.

Despite the presence of a few Cambodian universities in the international university rankings, it is important to note that no Cambodian HEIs out of a

total of 194 HEIs in the country ([MoEYS, 2025](#)) have yet been ranked in the top-tier global ranking systems, such as the THE World University Rankings and the QS World University Rankings. [Heng \(2020\)](#) has highlighted the lack of Cambodian universities' presence in the THE World University Rankings since 2020. To put this issue into perspective, while Cambodia has no universities ranked in these prestigious THE and QS world university rankings, its immediate neighbors, such as Thailand and Vietnam, both have universities that have achieved the global rankings. For example, in the THE World University Rankings 2025, which ranks more than 2,000 universities worldwide, 27 universities in Thailand are listed in the world university ranking table, with 20 universities ranked between 601-800 and 1501+ and seven universities listed as reporters. Vietnam has 10 universities listed in this ranking, with nine universities ranked between 501-600 and 1501+, while one university is listed as a reporter. Other ASEAN countries, except for Cambodia, Laos, and Myanmar, all have their universities ranked in the THE World University Rankings 2025, with Indonesia having 43 universities (ranked between 801-1000 and 1501+, 12 as reporters), Malaysia 27 (ranked between 201-250 and 1501+, four as reporters), the Philippines 21 (ranked between 1001-1200 and 1501+, 15 as reporters), Singapore two (ranked 17th and 30th), and Brunei Darussalam two (ranked between 501-600 and 801-1000) ([THE, n.d.-c](#)).

Related to this issue of world university rankings, [Ros and Sol \(2021\)](#) argued that "Cambodia's universities [are] less influenced by the quest for world-class universities experienced by universities in other countries" (p. 24). They further asserted that "even though Cambodian universities seem immune from the global pressure at present, it is inevitable that Cambodian universities will be further marginalized on the regional and global stage in the near future if no substantial quality improvement can be achieved" (p. 33). Thus, it is critical to start discussing the need to enhance Cambodian universities' presence in the global university rankings, such as the THE World University Rankings and the QS World University Rankings. Although Cambodian universities need to focus on improving their quality to meet the pressing local needs ([Ban & Heng, 2023](#); [Heng & Sol, 2023a](#); [Ros & Sol, 2021](#)), they also need to join the quest for world-class universities or apply for world university rankings to enhance their international visibility, competitiveness, and overall level of internationalization.

The limited presence of Cambodian universities in global university rankings may stem from the fact that Cambodian universities are not ready to prepare themselves for the global stage, and they may have a limited understanding of the importance of international rankings. As [Ros and Sol \(2021\)](#) argued, “Cambodia is not readily aspired to take part in the catch-up game of building world-class universities” (p. 24). This is due mainly to the limited quality of Cambodian higher education ([Heng & Sol, 2023b; Ros & Sol, 2021](#)) and the low levels of research engagement and output among Cambodian academics and HEIs ([Eam, 2015; Heng et al., 2023b; Heng & Sol, 2021](#)). The result of Cambodian universities’ limited presence on the international stage does not bode well for the future of Cambodian higher education, particularly in an era defined by globalization, a global knowledge-based economy, and Cambodia’s own aspirations to become a knowledge-based society and a high-income country ([Heng, 2023, 2024b](#)).

Why world university rankings matter for Cambodia

[Ros and Sol \(2021\)](#) have noted that world-class universities are characterized by “global missions, excellence in research, highly qualified professors, academic freedom, self-governance, adequate facilities, and sufficient funding from different sources” (p. 25). The term ‘world-class universities,’ according to [Salmi \(2009\)](#), has become “a catchphrase” (p. 3) and is associated with “the capacity to compete in the global tertiary education marketplace through the acquisition, adaptation, and creation of advanced knowledge” (p. 4). [Altbach \(2003\)](#) has argued that when it comes to a world-class university, “everyone wants a world-class university. No country feels it can do without one. The problem is that no one knows what a world-class university is, and no one has figured out how to get one” (p. 5). This quote not only shows the significance of having a world-class university but also suggests the difficulty in developing a university with a world-class status. Despite this, [Ros and Sol \(2021\)](#) and [Heng \(2022\)](#) have noted that many countries in Asia, particularly China, Japan, South Korea, and Singapore, have strived to transform their universities into world-class universities. These efforts are chiefly driven by “the advent of the global knowledge economy and the recognition that higher education institutions (HEIs), particularly research-oriented universities” are the key drivers of relevance and competitiveness in the 21st-century knowledge economy ([Heng, 2022, p. 2](#)).

One key benefit of having world-class universities, as [Altbach \(2003\)](#) has argued, is the focus on “academic standards and improvement, and on the roles of universities in society, and of how academic institutions can fit in a higher education system within a country and in the global academic universe” (p. 8). He added that “striving for excellence is not a bad thing, and competition may spark improvement (p. 5). [Lee \(2013\)](#) has noted that the key rationale for creating world-class universities lies in the role of universities, particularly world-class ones, in driving socioeconomic development and in enhancing competition in the global higher education market, where universities compete for high-quality researchers, lecturers, and students. Likewise, as [Wang et al. \(2011\)](#) have argued, a world-class university “is regarded as a central part of any academic system and is imperative to developing a nation’s competitiveness in the global knowledge economy” (p. 33).

In the case of Cambodia, as [Ros and Sol \(2021\)](#) pointed out, Cambodian universities are “largely unaffected by the pressure to build up world-class universities” (p. 33). This is an unfortunate reality considering the growing global trend toward building world-class universities ([Altbach, 2013; Heng, 2022](#)). A lack of interest or commitment to transform Cambodian universities into world-class universities or at least research-oriented universities suggests complacency and limited international engagement, which do not bode well for the future of Cambodian higher education and the internationalization of the higher education sector. Recent research has shown that Cambodia performs poorly in terms of research productivity, with [Heng \(2021\)](#) reporting that Cambodia ranked 8th out of the 10 ASEAN countries when it comes to publications indexed in Scopus databases. Research by [Ros and Heng \(2022\)](#) has revealed that only around 20% of all Scopus-indexed publications emanating from Cambodia came from Cambodian HEIs. The majority of Scopus-indexed publications were, in fact, produced by non-HEIs and medicine-related institutions such as medical research institutes (e.g., Institut Pasteur du Cambodge or Pasteur Institute of Cambodia), the Ministry of Health of Cambodia, and hospitals (e.g., Angkor Hospital for Children) ([Ros & Heng, 2022](#)).

The above findings clearly indicate the limited research outputs of Cambodian universities, making the goal of achieving a world-class university status a distant dream for many, if not all, universities in Cambodia. However, striving

for inclusion in world university rankings should be an important strategic goal for Cambodian universities, especially large public universities, such as the Royal University of Phnom Penh, the Royal University of Agriculture, and the Institute of Technology of Cambodia. These public universities have frequently received research funds from both local and international funding bodies. They are better positioned than other Cambodian universities to aim for having their names listed in global university rankings, particularly the THE World University Rankings and QS World University Rankings.

As the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) emphasizes human capital development to achieve its vision for 2050, that is, to become a high-income economy (RGC, 2023), and considering Cambodia's aspirations to become a knowledge-based society (Heng, 2023, 2024b), it is essential to enhance the quality of Cambodian higher education. Within this context, it is also crucial to set a strategic goal for the country to have its universities listed in major world university ranking systems by a target year, such as 2030 or 2035. The government and relevant stakeholders, especially academic leaders, need to prioritize this goal alongside their continued efforts to improve higher education internationalization and raise Cambodia's academic visibility on both regional and global stages.

Key strategic priorities for enhancing Cambodian universities' presence in the global university rankings

Strengthening institutional research output and quality

While research output is an essential indicator in both regional and global university rankings, Cambodian HEIs continue to lag behind, making it challenging for them to meet the minimum requirements for ranking by major global ranking systems, such as the THE World University Rankings and QS World University Rankings. For example, as previously mentioned, one of the major inclusion criteria for the THE World University Rankings is that universities must publish "more than 1,000 relevant publications over the previous 5 years, and more than 100 relevant publications in any single year" (THE, 2024, p. 7). This specific requirement can be far beyond the capability of many Cambodian universities that have limited publication outputs, particularly those indexed in the Scopus databases (Heng, 2021; Kong & Sok, 2024; Ros & Heng, 2022). Therefore, if Cambodian universities begin to

seriously consider international rankings, there is a pressing need for them to strengthen their research and publication.

Although research outputs in Cambodia have increased in recent years (Kong & Sok, 2024; Ros & Heng, 2022), the overall volume remains very low when compared to universities in the region and other parts of the world (Barrot, 2023; Heng, 2021). In this sense, it is imperative that Cambodian HEIs promote a strong research culture among faculty members. Cambodian HEIs should dedicate funding for promoting research and improving research infrastructure to encourage Cambodian researchers to increasingly engage in research and scholarly publishing, particularly publications in top-tier journals indexed in major databases such as Scopus and Web of Science. To meet these expectations, Cambodian HEIs should establish a structured support mechanism that includes systematic capacity-building programs, mentorship, and technical assistance for faculty members in writing and publishing their work in high-impact journals.

Enhancing faculty capacity and qualifications

Improving faculty capacity and qualifications is another key priority for Cambodian HEIs to take into consideration to enhance their presence in the global university rankings. While teaching quality and academic qualifications are important assessment criteria for global university rankings, research has shown that Cambodian university lecturers have limited qualifications and professional development opportunities (Doeur, 2022; Heng et al., 2023a). Therefore, it is essential for Cambodian HEIs to recruit and retain highly qualified academic staff, especially those who possess strong teaching and research skills. To achieve this, there is a need for open, fair, and competitive recruitment and promotion processes rather than networking-based academic recruitment and promotion. Moreover, given the limited number of academics with doctoral degrees, with 2,074 (about 11%) of all higher education teaching personnel holding PhDs (MoEYS, 2025), there should be a strong and strategic push for increasing academics with PhD degrees. Investing in this area is key to enhancing faculty capacity and qualifications, which are essential for promoting research engagement and productivity (Heng, 2022).

Strengthening graduate education and doctoral programs

Cambodian HEIs currently have a limited number of doctoral students and programs (MoEYS, 2025), which continue to constrain their capacity to generate

research and produce research-oriented faculty members. For example, as reported in the latest Education Congress, there were only 1,404 doctoral degree students (less than 1%) out of a total of 316,105 students in higher education (MoEYS, 2025). Developing high-quality master's and PhD programs can certainly enhance Cambodian HEIs' research outputs, as vibrant graduate programs can be key drivers of research productivity (Heng, 2022). Thus, it is critical to invest in research-oriented curriculum development, supervision capacity, and international collaboration. In particular, it is important to establish partnerships with well-ranked regional and international universities that can support joint or dual-degree programs, enhance academic standards, and increase publication outputs. It is also crucial to provide competitive scholarships, research grants, and mentorship opportunities to attract and retain talented individuals to join graduate programs. This talent pool will support research projects and publication endeavors of Cambodian academics and researchers, enabling them to boost their research engagement and productivity, which in turn leads to an increase in universities' academic reputation.

Fostering internal quality assurance and institutional governance

Another important strategic priority for Cambodian HEIs to enhance their prospect of being ranked in international ranking systems is to foster internal quality assurance and institutional governance. Research has indicated both the limited quality of Cambodian higher education (Doeur, 2022; Heng et al., 2023a) and the fragmentation of higher education governance at both institutional and national levels. Thus, there is a need for structural reform to enhance the overall quality of higher education in Cambodia (Mak et al., 2019). Writing about the challenges and developments in university research in Cambodia, Heng (2024a) has, for example, called for a reform to Cambodian higher education that focuses on a range of aspects, including improving higher education governance. To improve their quality, it is important that Cambodian HEIs strengthen their internal quality assurance mechanisms, including improving the performance of their internal quality assurance units or departments, to monitor, assess, audit, and govern their internal quality to ensure that all academic and administrative operations meet the minimum standards set by the Accreditation Committee of Cambodia and strive to meet the minimum quality standards regionally (e.g., the ASEAN University Network-Quality Assurance) and internationally (e.g., International Network for Quality

Assurance Agencies in Higher Education). The internal quality unit of each Cambodian university can serve an important role in facilitating and leading the process of exploring and applying for any university ranking system that aligns well with its university's strengths and vision.

To strengthen institutional and sectoral governance, suggestions put forward by [Ban and Heng \(2023\)](#) may be worth considering. They argued that to enhance the quality of Cambodian higher education, attention should be paid to limiting political interference in appointing academic leaders, ensuring the independence and effectiveness of higher education quality assurance bodies, introducing term limits for top university leadership positions, and adopting a meritocracy-based policy for university leadership appointments, among other measures. [Bou \(2025\)](#) also argued for enforcing compliance with the accreditation requirements, with HEIs failing to “satisfy the established criteria must be given specific advice for improvement and a timeline for completing the necessary adjustments” (n.p.) or face repercussions. In addition, it is imperative to consider a call for reforms to institutional and sectional governance in Cambodian higher education by [Mak et al. \(2019\)](#). As they argued, “[s]ystemic and systematic governance and finance reforms must be taken more seriously and include well-thought-out action plans to enable implementation” (p. x). They emphasized that:

Higher education reforms are as important as any other education reforms, and given the lack of strict supervision of higher education over the past 20 years, perhaps it is high time that reforms in Cambodian higher education were taken more seriously. ([Mak et al., 2029, p. x](#))

Improving higher education internationalization

Higher education internationalization is linked to institutional reputation, a key criterion for global university rankings. Therefore, there is an urgent need to enhance Cambodian higher education internationalization to meet the criteria for international rankings. [Tran et al. \(2023, p. 1033\)](#) argued that internationalization has served as a strategic tool “to transform higher education and become a prominent trend in universities across the world in the past decades.” In Cambodia, however, higher education internationalization remains limited ([Sok & Bunry, 2021](#)). Data from [MoEYS \(2024\)](#), although such data were not clearly reported, showed that there were only 49 international

students (22 were females) who had received scholarships from the Government of Cambodia and graduated from Cambodian HEIs (the exact year of graduation was not mentioned). There were also 151 international students (61 were females) who were receiving scholarships and staying in dormitories in Cambodian HEIs. The low number of international students suggests a limited appeal of Cambodian universities, further suggesting a low level of Cambodian higher education internationalization.

In terms of research collaboration, [Kumar et al. \(2024\)](#) noted that research collaboration between Cambodian researchers and their foreign counterparts was also limited, further suggesting the limited internationalization of Cambodian higher education. To improve the situation, it is important to introduce reforms in key areas such as curricula, medium of instruction, scholarship provision, and research collaboration to attract more international students and increase international research collaboration. Building international partnerships and increasing the number of student exchange and faculty mobility programs can also provide greater opportunities to attract more international students and foreign researchers to study and work, even on a short-term basis, in Cambodian universities. This will improve the prospects of Cambodian higher education internationalization, which in turn will contribute to improving the reputation of Cambodian universities regionally and internationally.

[Aligning institutional strategic plans with global university ranking indicators](#)

It is imperative for Cambodian HEIs, especially leading institutions, to strategically align their institutional strategic plans or vision with the recognized indicators or assessment criteria of regional and global university ranking organizations such as the AppliedHE University Rankings, WURI, the THE World University Rankings, and the QS World University Rankings. Regionally, for example, the AppliedHE University Rankings use six key criteria to evaluate universities' performance, including (a) teaching and learning, (b) employability, (c) research, (d) community engagement, (e) internationalization, and (f) institutional reputation ([AppliedHE, n.d.](#)). In this respect, Cambodian HEIs should develop or revise their strategic goals or vision to enhance teaching-learning quality and promote research, including increasing research output and impact (e.g., increasing research output in high-impact or Scopus-indexed journals).

Internationally, it is unlikely that Cambodian universities can compete with globally ranked universities such as those in Southeast Asia (e.g., University of Malaya in Malaysia), Asia (e.g., University of Tokyo in Japan), or the wider world (e.g., University of Cape Town in South Africa or University of Liverpool in the United Kingdom), let alone top-ranked universities such as Harvard University or the University of Oxford. However, there is possibility and hope as long as there is a clear vision and commitment. For example, the results of the THE University Impact Rankings 2025 show that Indonesia has one university (Universitas Airlangga) ranked 9th globally in this type of ranking (i.e., university impact rankings or university sustainability rankings). Moreover, universities in Asia have claimed more than half of all places in this ranking in 2025, an impressive feat for Asian universities. There are also eight countries (half of them are in Africa, and seven are developing countries) that have made their debut in the sustainability rankings this year (THE, n.d.-a). These results suggest that it is possible for a developing country like Cambodia to aim to compete in this feasible ranking type to increase its universities' visibility on the global stage. In fact, we argue that it is highly probable for Cambodia to increase the number of its universities in the THE University Impact Rankings within a short timespan (UP has already joined this ranking since 2021) if concerned government agencies, academic leaders, and researchers or lecturers in Cambodia work together and share a common vision to have more Cambodian universities ranked in the THE University Impact Rankings.

Conclusion

This editorial has emphasized the need to increase Cambodian universities' presence in the world university rankings. It discussed the importance of global university rankings for Cambodian HEIs and put forward strategies for enhancing Cambodian universities' presence in such international rankings. Key strategic priorities included (a) strengthening institutional research output and quality, (b) enhancing faculty capacity and qualifications, (c) strengthening graduate education and doctoral programs, (d) fostering internal quality assurance and institutional governance, (e) improving higher education internationalization, and (f) aligning institutional strategic plans with global university ranking indicators.

While there are a number of regional and international university ranking systems, Cambodian HEIs should examine the specific assessment and ranking criteria to ensure that they are eligible and have a competitive advantage if their applications are submitted. It is also important for Cambodian HEIs to be strategic in their approaches to world university rankings. For example, they can start with regional university rankings, such as the AppliedHE University Rankings, to increase regional visibility and then consider WURI and the THE University Impact Rankings for a better chance to be ranked. After gaining some experience and confidence, Cambodian HEIs, especially leading public and private universities, should apply for the prestigious THE and QS World University Rankings to increase Cambodian universities' presence on the international stage.

Overall, for Cambodian universities to secure a place in the world's leading university rankings, such as the THE World University Rankings and QS World University Rankings, there is a dire need to establish a long-term national and institutional vision and genuine commitment in addition to sustained and sufficient investment in teaching, research, and community engagement. There is also a strong need for greater multi-stakeholder collaboration, increased public-private partnerships, and concerted efforts to foster a vibrant research culture in Cambodian higher education and in Cambodia at large.

Overview of this issue

Six articles are featured in this issue (Volume 5, Number 1) of the *Cambodian Journal of Educational Research* (CJER). Among them, one article is an original article involving empirical data from a survey, and five articles are review articles based on secondary data. Three articles are considered full-length articles, while two are medium-length articles. The first article, a full-length original article, was written by Vitou Tes and Saem Oeun. The article examines Cambodian upper secondary school students' perceptions of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) as a career choice. The results based on a survey of 414 students show a positive correlation between students' perceptions of TVET and their likelihood of choosing it as a career pathway. The article suggests improving students' positive perceptions of TVET to increase their enrollment in TVET programs, which will in turn increase the likelihood of them choosing TVET as a career choice.

The second article turns the attention to a topic of leadership. It was contributed by Korngleng Sear. The article argues that adding value to people is the real power of leadership. It discusses five strategies for adding value to people, including the need to value people, emphasize people, serve people, develop people, and add people. Overall, the article argues that leadership is about challenging people's lives for the better.

The third article focuses on cultural and language immersion tours as a language learning strategy. It was contributed by Jacob Munday and Nathan Polley. The article takes Laos and Cambodia as potential sites for Chinese undergraduate business English students to practice and improve their English-speaking and cross-cultural communication abilities, which ultimately enhance their English language. The article calls for collaboration from concerned stakeholders to provide opportunities for Chinese students to improve their linguistic cross-cultural communication skills.

The fourth article in this issue, written by Da Bou, discusses the challenges and suggestions for improving the quality of higher education in Cambodia. The article highlights key challenges facing Cambodian higher education, including limited funding for higher education, a lack of institutional autonomy, limited higher education access, and limited opportunities for higher education internationalization. Key suggestions center on increasing partnerships between public and private HEIs, enhancing accreditation and quality assurance systems, and encouraging a culture of collaboration and evaluation, including both self- and peer-evaluation, to enable Cambodian HEIs to learn from one another's successes and challenges.

The fifth article was written by Korngleng Sear. It discusses the topic of leadership and personal growth. The article argues for the importance of leaders' continuous growth, as it can help empower leaders themselves, their employees, and their organizations. In this article, three strategies for becoming a better leader were discussed. The strategies emphasize the principles of having the right mindset, the right practice, and the right contribution.

The sixth and final article included in this issue brings to the fore the need to empower Cambodian women to pursue advanced degrees. Contributed by Chandara Hong and Kimkong Heng, the article provides a review of barriers

and recommendations for creating a supportive and conducive environment for Cambodian women to pursue advanced degrees, especially PhD degrees. It calls for coordinated actions by concerned stakeholders, particularly government agencies and policymakers, development partners, non-governmental organizations, and HEIs, to empower Cambodian women through the attainment of advanced degrees so that they can meaningfully contribute to their respective fields and Cambodian society as a whole.

Acknowledgments

The authors would like to thank Dr. Koemhong Sol, Co-Editor-in-Chief of the *Cambodian Journal of Educational Research*, for his support in reviewing this editorial.

Conflict of interest

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

Funding

The author(s) received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this editorial.

Disclosure statement

The views expressed in this editorial are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views or positions of their affiliated institutions.

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