

GENOCIDE RESEARCH EDUCATION IS GENOCIDE PREVENTION

“The Important of Studying History of Democratic Kampuchea 1975- 1979”

At Kampong Tralach High School, Kampong Chhnang Province

Feb 22nd, 2019

By: Phat Sela

Introduction

On 22 Feb, 2019, Documentation Center of Cambodia (DC-Cam) in collaboration with Ministry of Education Youth and Sport (MoEYS) supported by United State Agency for International Development (USAID) have conducted Classroom Forum on the Important of Studying History of Democratic Kampuchea (1975-1979) with students at Kampong Tralach high school¹, Kampong Chhnang province. This forum aim was to increase of the awareness of students about the important of studying DK history as well as encourage them to discuss and think critically about our past history. There were 95 students (60 female). Aim of Classroom forum was to illustrate to High School students about the important of studying History of Democratic Kampuchea (KR regime) and as the way to promote building peace, healing, reconciliation, tolerance and genocide prevention. The objectives included: 1) Increase the awareness of students on DK history, (2) Give opportunities to students to ask questions, and (3) Encourage discussion and critical thinking on this history.

Methodology

The classroom forum consist six different methods in order to transfer knowledge about the important of studying History of Democratic Kampuchea.

1. Pre- and Post-forum survey
2. Presentation on History content
3. Students participation through K-W-L teaching methodology
4. Opportunities to ask questions
5. Documentary film screening
6. History of Democratic Kampuchea (1975-1979) textbook distribution

These survey was aim to explore students’ knowledge about DK history before and after the Classroom forum. The questionnaire included the questions of students’ opinion of DK history; the discrimination; peace, reconciliation, healing and preventing the genocide; human rights knowledge; and students’ opinion on classroom forum (see in the appendix).

Questionnaires of both pre and post survey were collected and checked carefully to identify the invalid one. Next, the answers were interring the analysis program SPSS

¹ Photo of Activities: <https://photos.app.goo.gl/smFGUrJ4E6iW2ohU8>

version 21. Descriptive statistic and frequency analysis were used to identify the percentage of student on each answered questions. Microsoft Excel was used to create and design chart (column, bar, line).

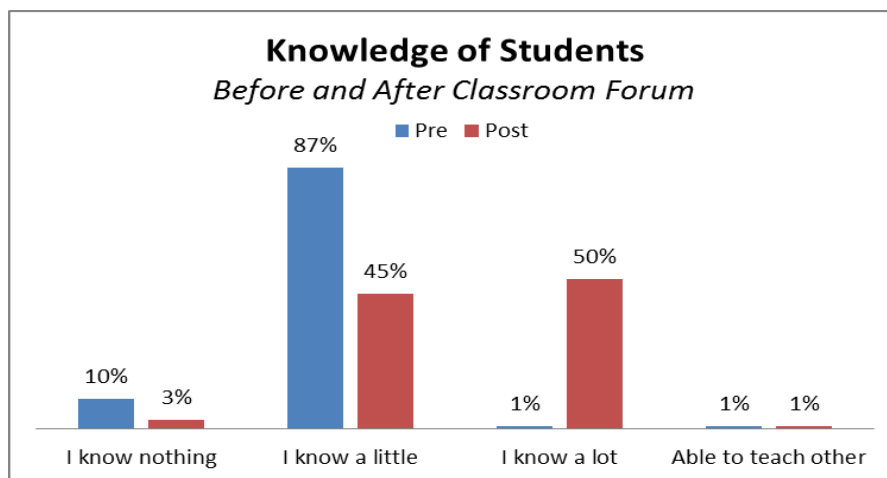
Forum

During the forum, students have learned about the important of studying DK history as well as a brief of DK history contents by the presentation of Mr. Pheng Pong-Rasy, Director of Genocide Research Education Program of DC-Cam. The presentation was based on the chronology of DK regime. Next was about important events during the KR regime such as forced transfer, KR came to power, purge/purification. Documentary film, entitle “Children of Kampuchea” was screening for students to illustrated life of Cambodia children right after the fall of KR regime (1979). Q&A session was opened to all students at the end of the lesson.

Student participation was also included in this classroom forum through K-W-L teaching methodology. It was used as a tool to engage students during the presentation of DK history. K stand for *Known*, W stand for *Want to Know*, and L stander for *Learned*. First, we used flip charts (K) attached on the wall and asked students to write what they have known about KR regime. Second, attached W flip chart and asked students to write what they want to know about KR regime. Finally, flip chart (L) was used after the Mr. Rasy presentation. L flip chart was used to explore what the students have learned after the presentation of DK history. This is the effective student engaging method.

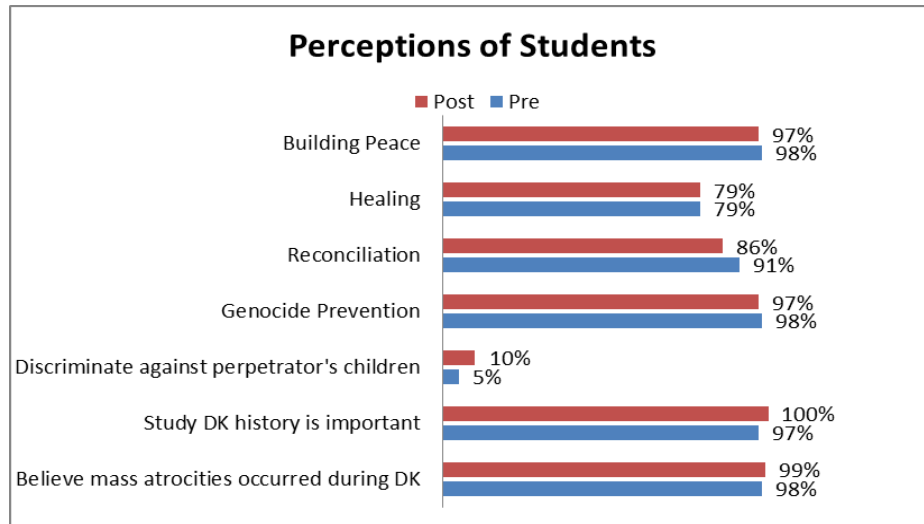
Classroom assessments were conducted at the beginning and after the presentation. The questionnaires were given to each student to complete. These questionnaires were aimed to explore and examine the students understanding about DK history and its importance, as well as the classroom forum.

VI. Results and Discussion

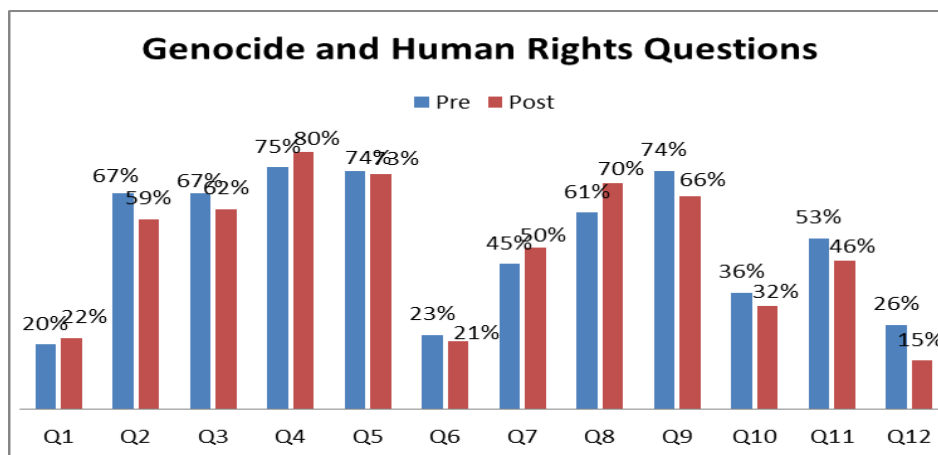


After two hours classroom forum, students were able to understand more about History of Democratic Kampuchea (DK), also known as Khmer Rouge (KR). Before started the presentation of DK history, DC-Cam team was distribute the Pre-Forum Survey in order

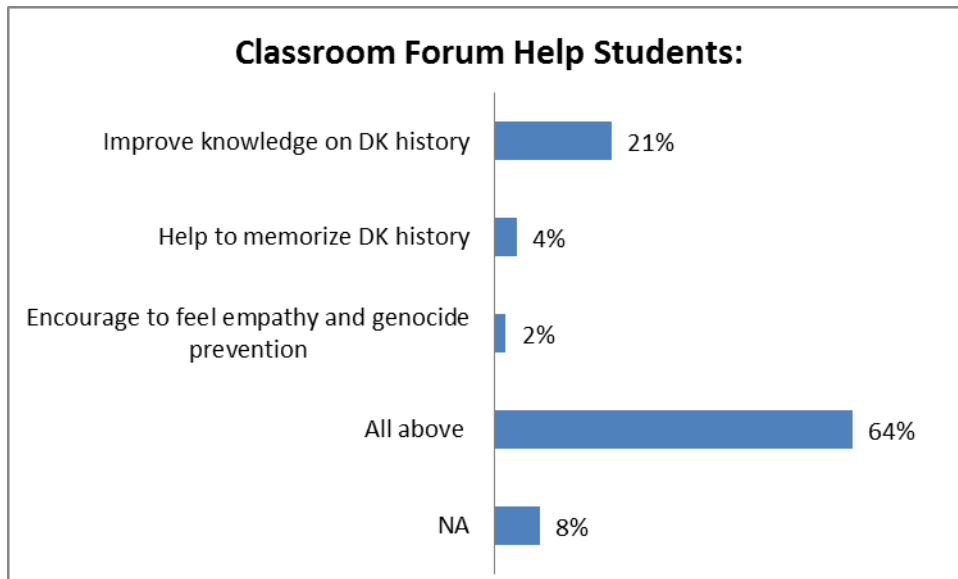
to measure their level of understanding on DK history. As we can see in the figure, 10% of students know nothing about DK history. However, its decrease to 3% after participated in this forum. Students who know little about this darkest history decrease to 45% in the post-forum while students who gain more understanding of DK history significantly increase to 50% in the post-forum survey.



The figure above illustrate, after attended classroom forum, the majorities of student believe that study of DK history could help them to think of Building Peace (97%), Genocide Prevention (97%), Reconciliation (86%), and Healing (79%). All students (99%) believe that the mass atrocities really happened during the KR regime. 100% of them believe the study of this history is essential in Cambodia society. The discrimination against children of perpetrators (10%) still happened even after the lecture.



Human Rights and genocide knowledge were included in the forum through the presentation about the violations that KR regime abuse to Cambodian in different scenarios. Figure 3 show the 12 questions about Human Rights and Genocide Definition in form of multiple choices (appendix).



21% of them believe that this classroom forum has improved their knowledge, memorize KR history (4%), encourage them to feel empathy and think of genocide prevention (2%) and 64% of students choose the three above.

Conclusion

Classroom forum at Kampong Tralach high school was successful conducted with the effort of DC-Cam team, cooperation with host school, and enthusiastic participation of students. These are the reason which Genocide Education should continue educate young people about the genocide in our country to people understand and to increase their awareness. Base on observation, students were focus on the lecture and showed the appreciation after the forum finished.

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Supported: MoEYS and USAID

Photo: <https://photos.app.goo.gl/smFGUrJ4E6iW2ohU8>

Appendix

<i>N</i>	<i>Questions</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>%</i>
		<i>Pre</i>		<i>Post</i>	
	<i>Age: 18</i>				
	<i>Male</i>	38 (40)		35 (37)	
	<i>Female</i>	57 (60)		60 (63)	
<i>History of Democratic Kampuchea Knowledge</i>					
1	<i>Would you describe your know ledge of DK period?</i>				
	<i>I know nothing</i>	10	10.5	3	3
	<i>I know a little</i>	83	87	43	45
	<i>I know a lot</i>	1	1	48	50
	<i>I know enough to teach other</i>	1	1	1	1
2	<i>Do you believe that mass atrocities occurred during DK period?</i>				
	<i>Yes</i>	93	98	94	99
	<i>No</i>	1	1	1	1
	<i>N/A</i>	1	1	0	0
3	<i>Have you ever talk about DK period with your parents or people who experience that period?</i>				
	<i>Yes</i>	62	65	71	75
	<i>No</i>	31	33	24	25
	<i>N/A</i>	2	2	0	0
4	<i>Do you think the studying of DK history is important?</i>				
	<i>Yes</i>	92	97	95	100
	<i>No</i>	3	3	0	0
	<i>N/A</i>	0	0	0	0
5	<i>If one of your friends is s son/daughter of perpetrator, would you discriminate against his/her?</i>				
	<i>Yes</i>	5	5	10	10
	<i>No</i>	88	93	85	90
	<i>N/A</i>	2	2	0	0
6	<i>Which school level that DK history should be taught in?</i>				
	<i>Primary school</i>	15	16	16	17
	<i>Junior school</i>	41	43	45	47
	<i>High school</i>	36	38	29	31
	<i>University</i>	3	3	4	4
	<i>N/A</i>	0	0	1	1
7	<i>Does the study of DK history encourage you to think of peace building in Cambodia?</i>				
	<i>Yes</i>	93	98	92	97
	<i>No</i>	2	2	2	2
	<i>N/A</i>	5	5	1	1
8	<i>Does the study of DK history encourage you to think of healing?</i>				

	Yes	75	79	75	79
	No	18	19	17	18
	N/A	2	2	2	2
9	<i>Does the study of DK history encourage you to think of reconciliation?</i>				
	Yes	86	91	82	86
	No	5	5	9	10
	N/A	4	4	4	4
10	<i>Does the study of DK history encourage you to think of genocide prevention?</i>				
	Yes	93	98	92	97
	No	0	0	3	3
	N/A	2	2	0	0
11	<i>How do you feel about the studying of DK history?</i>				
	Want to know and understand about this history	77	81	60	63
	Do not want to know	1	1	1	1
	Feel empathy to victims	17	18	28	30
	Boring	0	0	6	6
	N/A	0	0	0	0
<i>Human Rights Knowledge</i>					
12	<i>Which response below is the best definition of genocide as stated in the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide?</i>				
	Killing members of a political group with the intent to destroy the entire group because of their political agenda	38	40	34	36
	Arresting leaders of a religious group with the intent to undermine the practice of religion	29	31	34	36
	<u>Deliberately starving an ethnic group with the intent to destroy the people</u>	19	20	21	22
	Killing enemy soldiers who are shooting at your soldiers during war	7	7	5	5
	N/A	2	2	1	1
13	<i>Which response below reflects circumstances that support violence and possibly future genocide in community?</i>				
	Students engaged in peaceful protest against a school policy	23	24	26	27
	<u>Local leaders requirement to force members of a religious group to live separate from the rest of the community</u>	64	67	56	59
	Police arresting persons who trespass on government property	4	4	7	7
	Immigrants from another country seeking to settle in a community	4	4	5	5
	N/A	0	0	1	1

14	<i>Which response below reflects circumstances that support violence and possibly future genocide in a country?</i>				
	<u>Religious leaders who describe members of another religion as “sub-human” and “worthy of death.”</u>	64	67	59	62
	Religious leaders who encourage their members to pray for members of another religion.	5	5.3	4	4.2
	Political leaders who encourage everyone to vote.	20	21	17	18
	Individuals who petition their government leaders to adopt a policy.	3	3	9	10
	N/A	3	3	6	6
15	<i>Which response below is the best description of the impact of genocide on individuals?</i>				
	Individuals suffer as a result of lower wages and job growth.	3	3	5	5
	<u>Individuals mourn the loss of family and friends who were tortured and/or killed.</u>	71	75	76	80
	Individuals are not impacted by genocide. Genocide only affects groups of people.	7	7	4	4
	Only children are impacted by genocide by the loss of parents.	13	14	7	7
	N/A	1	1	2	2
16	<i>Which response below is the best description of the impact of genocide on families and communities?</i>				
	Individuals suffer during genocide but generally families and communities are unharmed.	3	3	1	1
	Only poor families ever suffer during genocide. Rich families never suffer during genocide.	1	1	4	4
	<u>Genocide can impact families and communities in many ways for generations.</u>	70	74	69	73
	Genocide impacts communities but families can always escape by fleeing to another country.	20	21	19	20
	N/A	1	1	2	2
17	<i>Which response below is the best description of the impact of genocide on countries?</i>				
	Countries are not impacted by genocide.	1	1	0	0
	Countries can be impacted by genocide but the world is too big to be impacted.	33	35	43	45
	Countries suffer from genocide only when it is occurring. They can rebuild quickly	38	40	28	30
	<u>Countries can be impacted by genocide for generations.</u>	22	23	20	21

	N/A	1	1	4	4
18	<i>Which response below is the best description of an important strategy that <u>individuals</u> can do to prevent and avoid circumstances that are supportive to violence and possibly future genocide?</i>				
	Individuals can ignore violence when it occurs because there is nothing they can do	13	14	5	5
	Individuals can prevent violence by attacking their enemies before they are attacked	12	13	18	19
	Individuals can prevent violence by staying quiet and not criticizing violence	24	25	23	24
	<u>Individuals can prevent violence by speaking against such violence</u>	43	45	47	50
	N/A	3	3	2	2
19	<i>Which response below is the best description of <u>another</u> important strategy that <u>individuals</u> can do to prevent and avoid circumstances that are supportive to violence and possibly future genocide?</i>				
	Individuals can encourage violence against their enemies	2	2	3	3
	Individuals can encourage victims to be silent because speaking out against violence will only encourage more violence	24	25	16	16
	<u>Individuals can denounce violence and encourage peaceful solutions to conflicts</u>	58	61	66	70
	Individuals can encourage perpetrators to commit their violence without public attention, which only aggravates the situation	6	6	9	10
	N/A	5	5	1	1
20	<i>Which response below is the best description of an important strategy that <u>communities</u> can implement to prevent and avoid circumstances that are supportive to violence and possibly future genocide?</i>				
	<u>Communities can protect the individual rights of all community members, regardless of religion, nationality, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, political opinion or other characteristics</u>	70	74	63	66
	Communities can protect the individual rights of the majority group at the expense of minorities in order to preserve peace, order and stability	8	8	12	13
	Communities do not need to protect individual rights; rather, they must always seek to maintain peace, order and stability	11	12	11	12
	Communities do not need to protect individual	4	4	5	5

	rights because this is always a state responsibility				
	N/A	2	2	4	4
21	<i>Which response below is the best description of <u>another</u> important strategy that <u>communities</u> can implement to prevent and avoid circumstances that are supportive to violence and possibly future genocide?</i>				
	Communities can prevent violence by identifying minorities and requiring them to live separate from the rest of the community.	2	2	3	3
	<u>Communities can prevent violence by teaching youth to appreciate human diversity through education about different cultures, religions, and communities.</u>	34	36	30	32
	Communities can prevent violence by teaching youth to appreciate their own culture and identify ways to protect it from outside influence.	45	47	46	48
	Communities can prevent violence by teaching youth how to protect themselves and their communities through self-defense training	12	13	12	13
	N/A	2	2	4	4
22	<i>Which response below reflects an important strategy that <u>countries</u> can implement to prevent and avoid circumstances that are supportive to violence and possibly future genocide?</i>				
	Countries can prevent violence by censoring information and news.	7	7	13	14
	Countries can prevent violence by attacking enemies before they are attacked	7	7	2	2
	Countries can never prevent violence but they can assist in peaceful resolution.	29	31	32	34
	<u>Countries can prevent violence through education and diplomacy</u>	50	53	44	46
	N/A	2	2	4	4
23	<i>Which response below reflects <u>another</u> important strategy that <u>countries</u> can implement to prevent and avoid circumstances that are supportive to violence and possibly future genocide?</i>				
	<u>Countries can identify and publicly denounce circumstances that support genocide.</u>	25	26	14	15
	Countries should never denounce other countries because it will weaken future diplomacy.	10	11	21	22
	Countries should only denounce enemies that	21	22	23	24

	support violence or genocide. Countries should never denounce allies involved in genocide because they are allies.				
	Countries should only help people who deserve to be helped. Some genocide is necessary to preserve peace and order.	37	39	33	35
	N/A	2	2	4	4
<i>Opinion on the Forum</i>					
24	What do you think about this classroom forum?				
	Good and help develop my knowledge			92	97
	Not good, did not help anything at all			3	3
	N/A			0	0
25	What this classroom forum can help you?				
	Improve my knowledge on KR history			20	21
	Help to memorize the KR history			4	4
	Encourage to feel empathy and genocide prevention			2	2
	All above			61	64
	N/A			8	8