

The good daughters of Cambodia

A perception study on Chbab Srey



2023





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RESEARCH BACKGROUND

In its latest reviews of Cambodia, the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) raised their concerns regarding the existence of Chbab Srey in formal education, since the code of conduct has been considered as perpetuating gender-role stereotype in the previous Committee's Concluding Observations.

"While noting the value of the cultural heritage of Cambodia, the Committee is concerned about strong gender-role stereotyping, in particular that reflected in the traditional code of conduct known as Chbab Srey, which legitimizes discrimination against women and impedes women's full enjoyment of their human rights and the achievement of equality between men and women in Cambodian society." [1]



For centuries, the women's code of conduct has been taught to women and girls and passed down from one generation to the next to preserve 'virtuous Khmer womanhood'. It was written and converted into a poetic style in the 19th century and was formally taught in schools nationwide until 2007. From that date, the Ministry of Women Affairs successfully lobbied the government in reviewing the school curriculum and taking off parts of the Chbab Srey that were harmful to gender equality. Therefore, to this day, Chbab Srey is partially taught at school and parts of the poem remain in Khmer literature textbooks for grades 7 to 9. In 2013, the Committee saluted the revision of the school curriculum and textbook, yet noted the everlasting influence of Chbab Srey in Cambodian society.

[1] CEDAW Concluding Observations, 2006, Art.17



"While commending the State party for its efforts to revise its school curricula and textbooks with a view to eliminating gender stereotypes, the Committee remains concerned that the Chbab Srey, the traditional code of conduct for women, is deeply rooted in Cambodian culture and continues to define everyday life on the basis of stereotypical roles of women and men in the family and in society" [2]

Moreover, some evidence shows that the full poem is still being taught informally and interwoven into the educational experience of girls [3], and this research found that some men and women teachers still deem its teachings essential to the education of young girls, without adopting a critical gender lens. In 2019, the Committee reemphasized the harmful effects of Chbab Srey in its Concluding Observations [4] for the Royal Government of Cambodia:

"...such gender stereotypes, as reflected in the Chbab Srey and the Chbab Prohh, the traditional codes of conduct for women and men, respectively, legitimise gender-based violence against women and constitute a root cause of the disadvantaged position of women in many areas, including in the labour market and political and public life." [4]



The Committee suggested to the government of Cambodia to eliminate all references to Chbab Srey in schools at all levels of education, as well as educate children on gender equality:

"Ensure that references to the Chbab Srey are fully eliminated in schools at all levels and educate teachers about the harmful effects of discriminatory stereotypes, as well as about alternative ways to teach children about gender equality and non-stereotypical roles of women and men" [5]



[2] CEDAW Concluding Observations, 2013, Art.18

[3] Anderson, Emily, and Kelly Grace, 2018, pp. 215-34.

[4] CEDAW Concluding Observations, 2019, Art. 23.b

[5] Ibid, Paragraphs 22, 23



NOTES ON METHODOLOGY

This short research aims at filling the gaps on current societal perceptions of Chbab Srey through a mixed method comprising a literature review, semi-structured interviews and an online survey conducted by the Klahaan team in both Khmer and English. [6] The interviewees included 10 fresh high school graduates, 5 former high school teachers and 5 gender advocates and/or NGO professional working in the field of education in Phnom Penh, Battambang, Siam Reap, Pursat and Kandal. The online survey was filled up by 80 people through a link shared by Klahaan on its social media platforms, therefore it mainly reached Klahaan’s audience that is constituted of a majority of young women living in the capital.[7]

Consequently, one of the limitations of this study is the size and composition of the sample for both the interviews and the surveys. **Yet, this study doesn’t claim to represent a full account of Cambodian perception on the matter. Rather, its purpose is to gather insightful recent data on perceptions and attitudes towards Chbab Srey.**

[6] see interview and survey questions in Appendices

[7] Among our survey participants, 77,5% participants were women, 57,5% of participants were under 30 and 83,8% of participants were living in Phnom Penh.



1

INTRODUCTION:

WHAT IS CHBAB SREY ?

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 WHAT AND WHY

Chbab Srey and Chbab Prohh [8] are the codes of conduct for women and men, respectively, passed down orally by tradition for centuries through the generations until they were written and translated into a poetry form in the 19th century and taught at schools in Cambodia. As of today, the codes of conduct are still parts of secondary school curriculums and instructed informally to young boys and girls.

The purpose of the women's code of conduct is to guide women and girls on how to be "proper women" through instructions on appropriate behaviors in all circumstances. According to participants of this studies, some of the main teachings range from how to respect elders, how to dress, how to talk, how to walk, how to engage with family and society, how to greet people, how to take care of housework and how to distinguish right and wrong.

The latest point raises that Chbab Srey has a moral dimension in providing guidance to the "right path". Indeed a student pointed out that without Chbab Srey "(she) wouldn't know what it is like to be a proper lady, and how to walk on the right path (...) We wouldn't know what is right and wrong, black and white and would be easily influenced by bad people." (women, student, 20 years old)

Chbab Srey tends to be associated with Khmer tradition and culture. Indeed, a teacher explained: "*it is our Khmer culture, teaching women to follow the ways of tradition (...), for women to prepare and do the household chores, how women should sleep, walk, stand, sit. Women should do all*

[8] Chbab Prohh is the code of conduct form men. It is not the focus of this research as it is not as restrictive to men as Chbab Srey is to women.



these things consistently and follow the rules in order to be considered a proper Khmer woman.” (man, teacher, 48)

Yet, the emphasis on morality and the ideal of the “proper woman” as a characteristic of Khmer culture and tradition, can make the code of conduct problematic from a feminist perspective, as it tends to both pressure women and girls to uphold strict rules and shames the ones that fail to abide. Feminists recognize the harmful effects that gender norms have on women and girl’s lives and society at large, which explains why they are critical of the codes of conduct that uphold them.

WHAT ARE CHBAB SREY TEACHINGS?

‘Chbab Srey teaches women about what they can do and what is right for them.’ (woman, student, 22)

“Be respectful towards your husband. Serve him well and keep the flame of the relationship alive. Otherwise, it will burn you. Do not bring external problems into the home. Do not take internal problems out of the home”.^[9] (interpretation of poem from lines 35 to 40)

“Even though your husband curses you, go to bed and think it over. Come back to him and use gentle words to rectify his mistake. Even though your husband admonishes you, remember to keep it to yourself. If something goes wrong, don't forget the advice that you were given. If you are not afraid and don't listen to the advice which has been given to you, (you will) create only arguments.”^[10] (interpretation of poem from line 54)

[9] Equal Times, October 12, 2016; interpretation of poem of lines 35 to 40, see Appendice

[10] Anderson, Emily, and Kelly Grace, 2018, pp. 215-34; interpretation of poem from line 54, see Appendice

1.2 WHERE AND HOW

Today, Chbab Srey is still widely taught and known across generations in Cambodia. Survey participants identified three spaces where Chbab Srey are most generally taught to women and girls: the school (77,5%), the family (70%) and the larger society including the media (75,1%) (see Figure 1).

Family

Cambodian families have historically educated their women and girls through the Chbab Srey teachings that were passed on from generations to generations. From the Angkor era, the practice of **Chol Mlop**, a rite of passage celebrating girls becoming women after their first menstruation, was organized by families for three to six months depending on the family's wealth. Within this practice, after receiving religious preaching and blessing, girls were isolated in a room in the presence of only women so that she could be instructed on her essential roles as a women and learn Khmer traditions and norms which included the teachings of Chbab Srey

Chol Mlop was still popular during the reign of King Norodum but its practice slowly faded since it is costly and time-consuming. It is still being celebrated

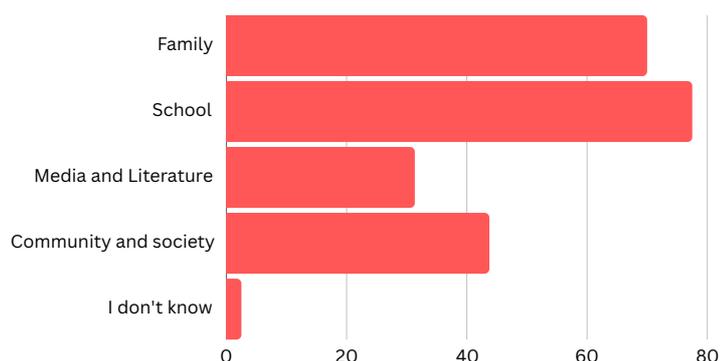


Figure 1. Where is Chbab Srey most generally taught to women and girls?

today throughout the course of a single day in rare occasions in the Sre Ambil district of Koh Kong province, the Batheay district of Kampong Cham province and in the Soth Nikum district of Siem Reap province. [11]

In modern times, according to our research participants, Chbab Srey is still being transmitted from parents, and especially mothers, to young girls as part of their day-to-day education. Other relatives, like grandparents and aunts, were recognized as figures from whom young girls learn about Chbab Srey. However, Chbab Srey is not always identified as the source of the teachings.

"my family taught me how to behave in an appropriate way like Chbab Srey but never mentioned the term Chbab Srey. I used to hear Chbab Srey from others, but I never knew what it was." (women, student, 21).

[11] Soung Sovanny, The Phnom Penh Post, 2019



Indeed, as discussed later, Chbab Srey is so pervasive within general cultural and gender norms that the origins of the teachings are not always identified as such.

"Mostly Chbab Srey is being taught to women by their mothers, or teachers in school. It could also be an aunt. They don't teach us every day, they rather speak about it whenever they want to, like once every 2-3 days. They teach us to be good, to act properly, and not choose the wrong path like doing drugs or having bad friends" (woman, student, 19)

"At home we learn it from our mothers, and at school we learn it from our teachers." (man, student, 24)

"When walking in a wooden house, when I step a bit too heavy and the floor creak, my grandma would scold me and say that we are women, we shouldn't step too heavy, we should be careful, especially if you wear a skirt, you need to walk properly. And she also mentioned how to talk and be respectful to elders. She never mentioned it to my male relatives" (woman, student, 19)

School

77,5% of research participants consider that school is the main space to learn about Chbab Srey (see Figure 1, p.8). The code of conduct used to be taught in both primary and secondary schools until it was partially removed from school curriculums in 2007 after pressures from the Ministry of Women's Affairs (MoWA). Yet it still appears in secondary school's textbooks and is still being taught informally.

Research participants shared that they were taught about Chbab Srey from grade 5 to 9, from their textbook, in classes such as Khmer language and literature and/or social studies, a class where teachers discuss morality, gender and rights. **Approaches to the teachings of Chbab Srey seem to vary from teachers to teachers.** Some briefly explain what it is; others use it to discipline students or shape the attitudes and behaviors of girls. For example, a teacher explained that only extracts of Chbab Srey are taught at schools nowadays:



"Actually, at schools, just some parts of Chbab Srey are taught to girls, not the full Chbab Srey. Those parts are considered relevant in shaping the attitudes and behaviours of women and girls. The purpose is to teach them how to educate their mind and behaviour in certain ways including how to talk, sit, stand and speak." (woman, teacher, 40)

Another teacher highlighted that Chbab Srey is used to learn about poetry:



"I think having it in the school curriculums is for students to learn about poetry, but at the same time to remind women and girls about morality and how to behave accordingly" (non-binary, teacher, 26).

Thus, the poetry verses were commonly learnt by heart or sung by students at school.

. "It is popular for people and even children to learn to read/sing Chbab Srey, even if only the most important parts were integrated into the poem." (women, teacher, 30)



HOW WERE YOU TAUGHT?

'I studied it at school. Since I was in grade 5, it was included in my textbook. At the time, I was still young, so all I know is learning it. However, I didn't think much of it. (...) In schools, we were taught by teachers from the textbook' (woman, student, 19)

'When I was studying this code of conduct, the teacher didn't really focus on Chbab Srey. We briefly went through it but that was it.' (woman, student, 19)

'In grade 8 it was in the curriculum, and the teachers taught us about it and explained and discussed it a lot. (...) After reading it, I remember the teacher said: ' if you are a woman, if you follow these rules, it will be good. (...) and we you walk the wrong path, we will disappoint them (our mothers). We will be looked down upon by men if we do improper things. I remember my teacher mentioned that very clearly' (woman, student, 19)



Community and larger society

Chbab Srey runs “deep into the roots of the people’s mindset” [12], that it is pervasive in many areas and spaces of society. As a gender advocate highlighted:

“ I noticed that the unwritten norms in this code of conduct are being practiced in our society without realizing that it is from Chbab Srey; society just expects women to follow all of those rules.” (woman, CSO worker, 26)

It is talked about at the community level, especially by the older generations:



“I first learned about Chbab Srey even before school, because it’s always been something that’s been so deeply ingrained in Cambodian society that even when I was young, I would hear people talk about it all the time. Old people would talk about it all the time and say that ‘women should do this, it’s in the Chbab Srey’, or ‘proper women would follow Chbab Srey’. They would always mention it in the daily conversations. So I heard about it before I actually learned about what it was.”(woman, gender advocate, 28)

Other research participants mentioned that they were taught about Chbab Srey at the pagoda, through the Tum Teav folk tale or within the media where images of the ‘proper woman’ are widely represented. Social media and YouTube are other platforms through which young people learn about the code of conduct.

[12] woman, CSO worker, 35

2 CURRENT SOCIAL PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS CHBAB SREY



2. SOCIETAL PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS CHBAB SREY



2.1 Positive perception

Chbab Srey is widely seen as a **useful code of conduct on good manners and virtue** by research participants. In fact, 23,8% of our relatively young survey participants believe that Khmer women should be well behaved and uphold the Khmer women's values (see Figure 2). For instance, a young student said that respecting Chbab Srey contributes to the honour of her family for being considered a 'good daughter'. Likewise, a teacher sees the instructions of Chbab Srey as a means for girls to become strong women that that knows how to conduct themselves within society. Therefore, **many agree with the rules it upholds, or at least some of them.**

*"I still don't see Chbab Srey as problematic. We read and learn about it, we can take some good points from it to live by."
(women, teacher, 30)*

Similarly, 45% of our survey respondents agree that it is important for Khmer women to learn from Chbab Srey, even if some parts limit their rights and opportunities (see Figure 2) Some students still consider the code of conduct helpful to learn how to make a difference between right and wrong or how to engage with society as a "virtuous and educated woman".

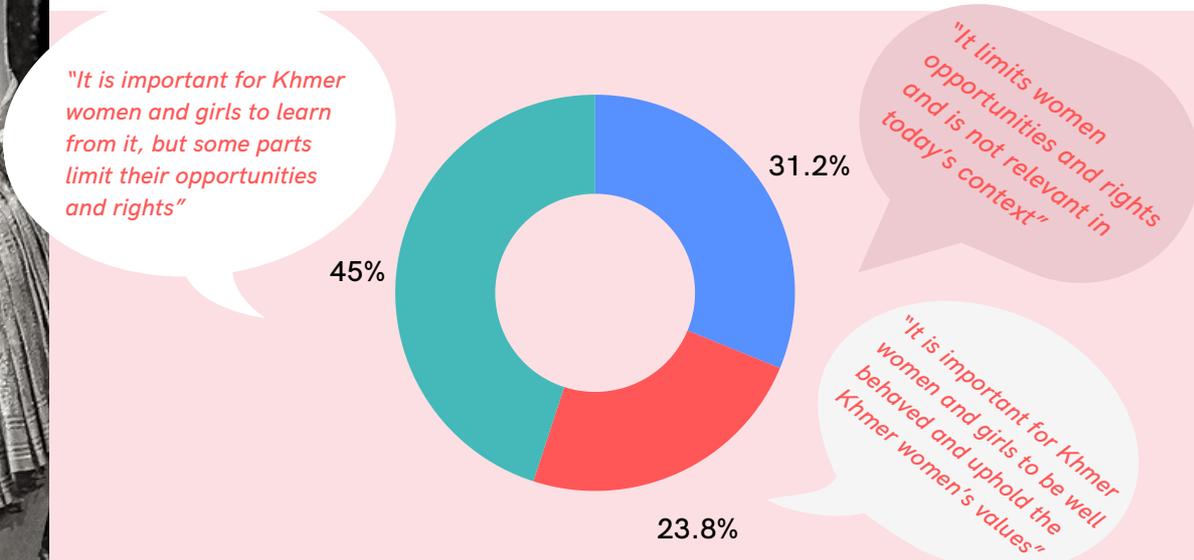


Figure 2. How do you feel about Chbab Srey?



“Some people can pick up the good points in Chbab Srey to apply to women, like telling women how to talk to their relatives, telling women to be humble, and knowing how to communicate.” (woman, student, 20)

Yet, by picking only ‘the good parts’, one does not consider the underlying pressure or shame women have to face for not complying with some other parts. Furthermore, a women’s right activist raise caution on the previous points by stating:



“If it is about respecting other people of how to be a good person by being nice to people, we don’t need a women’s code of conduct for that. It should be basic human decency. We shouldn’t say that the women’s code of conduct is good because it teaches positive things. We don’t even need to learn about those things, especially when the code of conduct comes with a lot of negative, problematic, and oppressive points to it. So by pointing out the positive points to it, we are trying to justify it by saying that it is okay to do that.” (woman, gender advocate, 28)

Another key aspect that tends to encourage the teachings of Chbab Srey is the **beauty of its poetry as well as the understanding and preservation of Khmer tradition and culture**. Even within our relatively young survey participants, almost three quarters of participants agree or slightly agree that Chbab Srey’s teachings are important to maintain the Khmer tradition and culture (see Figure 3).

There is a recurrent fear that the unique Khmer culture will be lost if Chbab Srey stops being practiced and women would lose themselves in the lack of morality and uniqueness of womanhood.

“It is important that Chbab Srey can preserve the Khmer tradition and culture, as it is unique and there is no such practice in other countries. If we start to practice Chbab Srey altogether, this practice will always remain here, but if we do not, it will be lost but only remain in the books and in the folk tales.” (woman, student, 20)

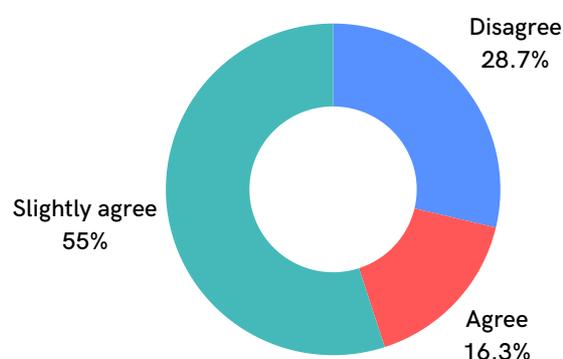


Figure 3. Is Chbab Srey’s teachings important to preserve the Khmer tradition and culture?

2.2 Negative perception

According to figure 2 (p.13), more than three quarters of our predominantly young women survey participants recognize that some parts of **Chbab Srey limit women's opportunities and rights** (see figure 2, p.8). Several interview participants shared that they question and disagree with some of Chbab Srey's teachings.

"There are some specific parts which I questioned, like why can't I do that? For example, we should sleep before our husbands and wake up before our husbands. Women cannot walk too fast and cannot wear shorts. I think it doesn't make sense at all. (...)" (woman, CSO worker, 35)

"My husband didn't even agree. The wife has to sleep early and wake up before the husband, we were like, why do we need to do that? If we live together, we can sleep together and wake up together. I'm lucky because my husband respects me, but what if I had a husband with a different mindset?" (woman, CSO worker, 26)

The majority of participants perceive the code of conduct as having both good and bad parts. Most negative perceptions towards Chbab Srey are related to the restrictive and oppressive norms it teaches to women and girls. Those norms tend to undermine gender equality by conveying the inferiority of women, silencing their voice, limiting their choices and opportunities and pressuring them to conform to high standards. The impact of

Chbab Srey on gender equality will be discussed in more detail in the next section.

Finally, upholding all the rules from Chbab Srey is perceived as too strict and unrealistic. A teacher shared that 'there are many lessons in Chbab Srey, even I myself couldn't uphold them all. So upholding the parts that are contained in the current Khmer literature textbook is already good enough for us women' (woman, teacher, 30).



"I think there are some parts of the rules women should follow; however, some parts cannot be followed, so I can say 50/50." (woman, student, 19)

3 IMPACTS OF CHBAB SREY ON GENDER EQUALITY



3. IMPACTS OF CHBAB SREY ON GENDER EQUALITY



Among mostly female youth survey respondents, 3% did not see how Chbab Srey could have a negative impact on gender equality. A few interviewees also considered that Chbab Srey is a means for girls to stand out and empower themselves through a good education. **Yet, most of the research participants agreed that some parts of Chbab Srey had a negative impact on women's and girls' lives.** (see Figure 4).

3.1 Pressure and judgement on women and girls

Our survey showed that 62% of survey respondents agree with the statement that **"women are often confronted with judgement and shamed for being an improper woman when they don't respect the code of conduct."** Indeed, according to interviewees, the pressure women have to face to comply with the teachings of Chbab Srey is significant. A teacher also highlighted that most of the responsibility to preserve Khmer tradition and culture shouldn't be carried solely by women:

*"They are many things we need to do to preserve our Khmer culture and tradition, but women and girls are not the only ones responsible for it. In fact, I disagree with the the ideas that training women and girls to be proper women (...) is the way to preserve our culture."
(non-binary, teacher, 26)*

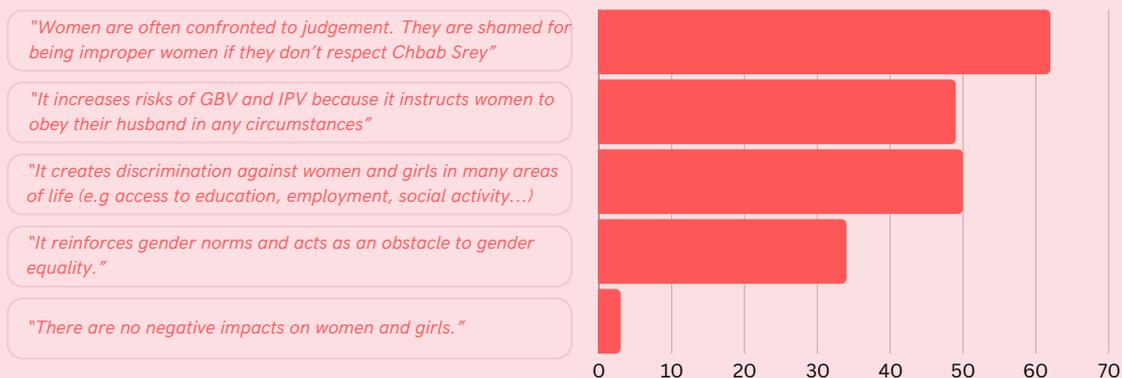


Figure 4. What are the negative impacts of Chbab Srey on women's and girls' lives?

Furthermore, pressure on women and a high mental load, have a direct impact on women's and girls' confidence, mental health and well being.

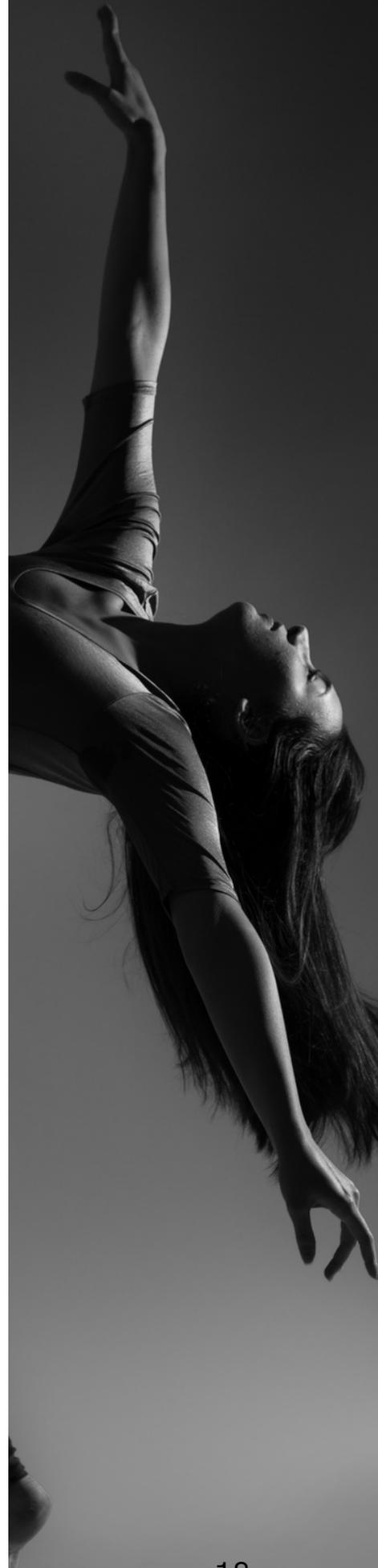
3.2 Discrimination based on gender

Half of our survey participants recognised that Chbab Srey **creates discrimination against women and girls in many areas of life such as education, employment and social activities.** Most of the discrimination described by participants are based on unequal rights and access to opportunities:

"Chbab Srey limits women and girls' chances in getting equal rights, undermines their potential and closes off some opportunities to develop themselves. It discourages women from standing up for themselves, blocks the opportunities to participate in decision-making within the community. At the family level, we cannot expect that men alone support the family financially, if women could help, it would be much better." (woman, CSO worker, 42)

Ultimately, it limits women from achieving their full potential and enjoying their human rights and autonomy. Even though a few participants believe that it is possible to achieve one's dreams and pursue higher education whilst following Chabb Srey, the majority of participants sees Chbab Srey as preventing women and girls from speaking out, expressing themselves and achieving their aspirations and goals. When it comes to education, a student shared the story of his sister: *"My sister wished to continue her study at university, but because of the pressures from our relatives on social norms, she was told to get married and not chase her dream" (man, student, 21)*

"Women cannot chase their dreams. For example, when we are old enough to study, older people always say that we don't have to study, because at the end of the day, we are all going to be wives to serve our husbands, and we cannot do what men do. Even when we pursue higher education, we will end up being wives serving our husbands." (woman, student, 22)



3.3 Gender-Based Violence (GBV)

Almost half (49%) of our predominantly young women participants also raised that Chbab Srey **increases risks of gender-based violence (GBV) and intimate partner violence (IPV) because it instructs women to obey their husbands in any circumstances**. Indeed, many participants consider Chbab Srey as the root of domestic violence. A gender advocate explained that:

'It encourages violence. It teaches women to be submissive and to accept domestic violence. Basically, the code of conduct tells women to [1] serve their husbands, to be good mothers and good daughters. But women are more than that. By limiting women's potential, saying that women are only the extension of men, if there are not men, you have no identity. It is very problematic.'
(woman, gender advocate, 28)

According to the recent Demographic and Health Survey 2021-2022, 21% of women who have ever had an intimate partner had experienced emotional, physical, or sexual violence at the hands of their current or most recent husband/intimate partner. The same survey found that 37% of women believe it is acceptable for a husband to hit his wife in specific circumstances, such as ignoring the children, going out without informing the husband, or arguing with the husband.[13]

3.4 Harmful gender norms

Finally, the **reinforcement of gender norms undermining gender equality** was identified as a negative impact of Chbab Srey by 34% of survey participants. Some rules of the code of conduct are particularly harmful and oppressive to women and girls and to gender equality as a whole, since they promote sexist norms and values, advise women to embrace and internalise gender roles and stereotypes whilst legitimizing some forms of abuse. Some participants shared that aside from affecting women's lives, the reinforcement of those norms reminds women they are the weaker vessel, which undermines their confidence.

"It teaches things like you should go to sleep after your husband and you should wake up before your husband. Even the little things add up and create this blueprint of oppression on women and as a while, it affects a lot of aspects in women's lives" (woman, gender advocate, 28)

Another key impact of the teachings of Chbab Srey is that it frames boys' and men's mindsets around the idea that they men lead and women serve: *"Chbab Srey is not only being taught to girls but also to boys, so the mindset of women being a weaker gender and please men is engraved in boys' minds. So when they grow up, they have this mindset of setting rules for women they have to follow. This is why we don't want it in school curriculums"* (woman, CSO worker, 42)

4

CHANGING TIMES



4. CHANGING TIMES

4.1 Influences of globalization, internet and social media

With the advent of internet and social media in the era of globalization, access to a wide range of information became available to women and girls. Even though several interview participants believe that globalization is a setback for the preservation of Khmer tradition and culture, most interviewees see internet and social media as a means to connect, learn and empower women and girls.

"I think women are well-educated and well-informed, especially with the usage of social media. They can connect with other people and learn from each other. So women are better at standing up for themselves compared to 20 years ago." (woman, student, 19)



More specifically, recent times brought significant progress in women's rights and discussions on gender equality in Cambodia, and in particular in cities. Transnational feminism brought a more critical and liberal approach on gender norms and expectations as well as broader patriarchal structures. As a result, women's rights movements demanded and obtained more rights and access to opportunities. A few participants highlighted that transitions in the women's condition made Chbab Srey outdated.



"In the past, women were not allowed to study, they didn't have any job or status, they only stayed at home. Now they can have a job and do business as a man. Therefore, some of the rules of Chbab Srey are out of date. This is because women in the past didn't have the same rights as women nowadays." (woman, teacher, 30)

"Nowadays most girls have the chance to enroll in education. For example, in my class at school, there are only a few boys, most of us are girls. Therefore, it means that the female education systems and the rights to education for women have now widely progressed." (woman, student, 19)

"I remember when I was in high school, I do not remember what grade, but we had to learn Chbab Srey poems in class. We had to read it out loud, we had to talk about it. I wasn't a feminist back then and feminism wasn't talked about. So all I know is I felt uncomfortable about it, and somehow it felt off to me that women were given these sorts of rules (...) but I didn't know how to put that into words.

Until later on, when I became a little bit older, I learned about feminism, I revisited the women's code of conduct, and look at it from an adult perspective and a feminist perspective, I realised how problematic it was. When I was in gender class, my professor wrote a thesis for a bachelor's degree on women's code of conduct and she gave me her book, that was when I started to really look into the issue." (woman, gender advocate, 28)

Almost half of our predominantly urban survey respondents consider that geography makes no difference, whilst slightly more than half of them agree that **women and girls in rural areas are more likely to learn and uphold the instructions of Chbab Srey** than women and girls from urban areas (See Figure 6).

Nevertheless, it seems that rural areas have not benefitted as much from digitalization as well as urban areas, which resulted in less access to information and education on gender equality and human rights. Consequently, according to

respondents from the province, Chbab Srey is more strictly practiced in rural areas where gender norms and tradition are prevalent and school dropouts are common.

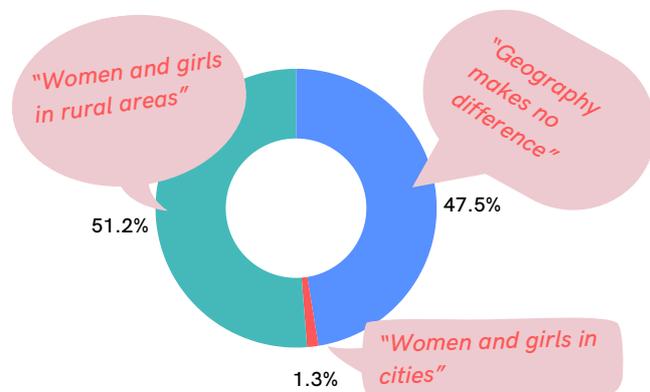


Figure 5. Who is most likely to uphold the instructions and practices of Chbab Srey?

4.2 Generational shift

Almost half of our predominantly young survey respondents consider that people over 40 years old are more likely to follow the instructions of Chbab Srey, against only 11,14% for Gen Z and millennials (see Figure 5)

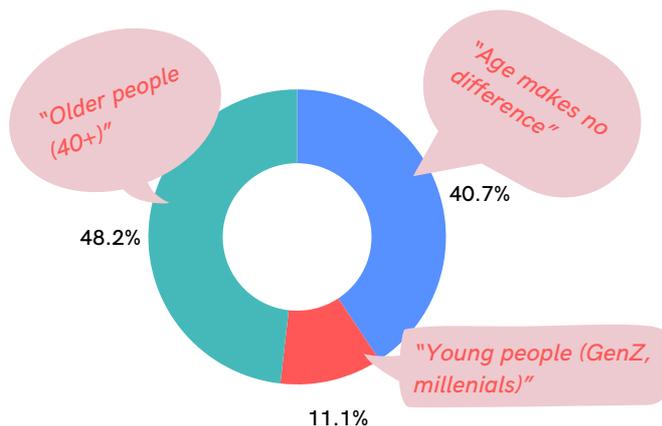


Figure 6. Who is most likely to uphold the instructions and practices of Chbab Srey?

A large proportion of respondents (40,7%) think that age is not a marker that makes

women and girls more likely to abide by the code of conduct. Geography seems to be a clearer marker (see Figure 5). Yet, if age is relevant a marker or not for the practice of Chbab Srey, participants from all ages are witnessing a generational shift in attitudes and behaviors towards its rules

When it comes to current attitudes towards Chbab Srey, 59% of survey respondents agree with the statement 'Chbab Srey is not taken extremely seriously', whilst 34,7% believe that Khmer women are still expected to comply with the code of conduct (see Figure 7). It appears that **Chbab Srey is taught and upheld, yet in a more flexible and critical way.**

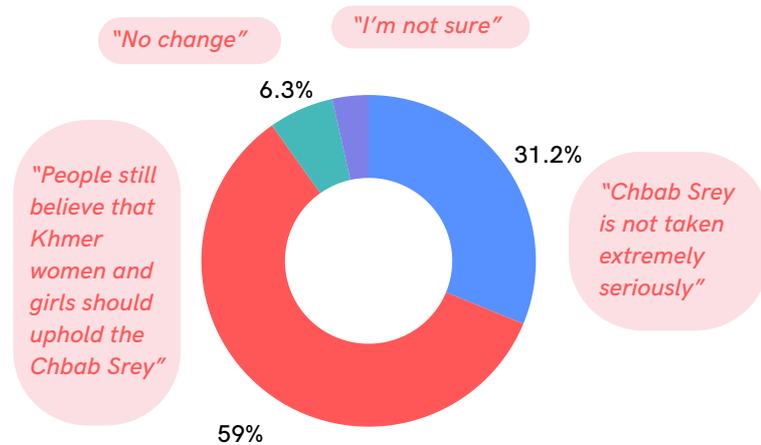


Figure 7. Have people changed their attitudes towards Chbab Srey ?



"We're in between, we know what is reasonable for us to follow. We can still apply some points of the code of conduct. I don't have any daughters but I have nieces; so I always tell them to behave as a women but in a reflective way, not strictly telling them to follow everything in the Chbab Srey"
(woman, CSO worker, 40)

On one hand, the older generations, who were taught more extensively and strictly about Chbab Srey, seem to witness and regret a change in women and girls compliance with the instructions of Chbab Srey.

"Nowadays, based on my observation, about 90% of women are NOT conducting themselves in accordance with Chbab Srey (...) they play cards during the Khmer new year festival, wear revealing clothes, drink alcohol, dance and start fights with each other."
(woman, teacher, 30)

On the other hand, younger generations who have access to more information on gender equality and human rights tend to question and challenge some of the rules, and recognize some of its problematic parts.

"In primary school, I remember learning the beginning of the song (oh, my dear daughter...). From then to now, I feel that my ideas shifted a lot compared to when I was young. When I was younger, whilst learning the Chbab Srey I thought that if it was required from us to learn it, it meant that the song must be true and that we must put it in practice. But when I grew older, I started to think and pay more attention. When I looked again at those rules, I started to realize what is right and what is wrong."(woman, student, 19)

"Luckily, my kids are not old enough to learn about this. If I teach them that, I think they will question me." (woman, CSO worker, 35)

5 DEBATE: REMOVE CHBAB SREY FROM SCHOOL CURRICULUMS?



4. CHBAB SREY AT SCHOOL

In 2007, the government of Cambodia partially removed Chbab Srey from school curriculums after the lobbying of the Ministry of Women's Affairs. Our survey shows that slightly more than half of our predominantly young women participants support this decision. (see Figure 8) Yet, the majority of participants, including teachers, were unable to explain the motivation of this change. The majority of students and CSO workers were unaware of it. In effect, the Chbab Srey is also taught informally and part of textbooks.

In 2019, in response to reports on the persistence of harmful gender norms in Cambodia, the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women advised for the full removal of Chbab Srey at school.

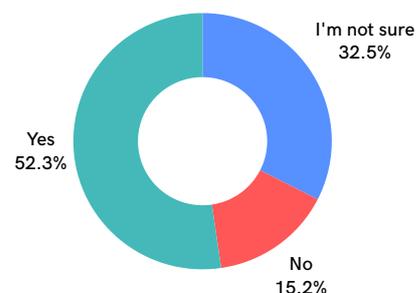


Figure 8. In 2007, Chbab Srey was partially removed from school curriculums, do you support this decision?



"Ensure that references to the Chbab Srey are fully eliminated in schools at all levels and educate teachers about the harmful effects of discriminatory stereotypes, as well as about alternative ways to teach children about gender equality and non-stereotypical roles of women and men"[14]

On this point, perception within the country are shared. Yet, **more than half of mostly female youth survey participants disagree on the full removal of Chbab Srey at school.** One of the main reasons is linked to the code of conduct being perceived to be an important part of Khmer culture.



"Impossible and I don't agree with it at all. It is like talking a part of our Khmer culture and identity from women and girls. Without this norm, we are not a country with a unique culture anymore (...) However, taking the parts that oppress women is alright, but not all. It's our identity." (woman, teacher, 30)

[14] CEDAW Concluding Observations, 2019, Art. 23.b

SHOULD CHBAB SREY BE FULLY REMOVED FROM SCHOOLS?

Among the ones that support a full removal of the code of conduct in schools, there is an **urgency to protect women and girls from harmful gender norms** in spaces like schools that should be safe spaces to learn.

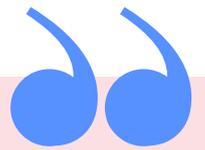
'If there is a possibility that gender inequities are reinforced through Chbab Srey, and that some of these rules could undermine girls' safety, then it is crucial to re-examine its place in education. (...) To support and encourage gendered belief, and to put girls and women at risk, counters the progress that Cambodia seeks in girls' education.' [15]

A vast majority of participants were against the full removal of Chbab Srey from schools, but for another approach to teaching it, one that **encourages students to reflect on contexts, gender equality and human rights**. Indeed, schools could be a space to look at Chbab Srey with more critical eyes.

"I think it shouldn't be removed entirely. I think it should be learned because I think it is a part of our history too. It was written in our early history, now that our society is more open to gender equality, we can still learn from it, and be able to make a differences between what is useful for us today or not." (woman, student, 19)

"It has a good side and a bad side (...) you have to make sense of it, explain it, discuss it. Let girls, boys and teachers discuss it at school with an open mind." (woman, CSO worker, 35)

"The government should include gender studies in the school curriculums and teach teachers and students about gender equality." (woman, CSO worker, 42)



"I used to think it should be completely removed, but lately, I have been having conversations about the learning of history and how we should approach it. I've been thinking about why we shouldn't just forget and ignore this. (...) We can't skip the part of history that are uncomfortable to talk about, so I think it is really important for us to discuss it (Chbab Srey)" (woman, gender advocate, 28)

6 KEY FINDINGS



6. SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

1. Chbab Srey teaches women how to be a 'proper' khmer women through a set of rules. Feminists find this code of conduct problematic as it tends to pressure women to embody and perform strict gender norms.

2. Chbab Srey is still widely taught in Cambodia at school, within families, communities and the larger society. In families, it is an integral parts of women and girls' education. At secondary schools, approaches from teachers vary but extracts of the poetic form are usually covered in classes like Khmer literature and social studies. Women and girls also learn about Chbab Srey from the older generations, the pagoda, the Yum Team folk tale, the media as well as online platforms like Facebook, Tik Tok and Youtube.

3. Our data shows that a majority of research participants support some of the rules of Chabb Srey they find useful and valuable, whilst recognising that other ones can be problematic towards women's rights and gender equality. Three quarter of our participants encourage the teachings of Chbab Srey as means to understand and preserve Khmer tradition and culture.

4. Most research participants agree that some parts of Chab Srey have a negative impact on women's and girls' lives. Among the negative impacts women and girls are facing are (1) pressure and judgement, (2) discrimination and unequal opportunities, (3) gender-based violence and (4) the effects of harmful gender norms.

5. The influence of globalisation, internet and social media as well as progress in women's rights shifted perception on Chbab Srey that is practiced with more flexibility in urban areas by the younger generations. The older generations and women and girls from rural areas are upholding the code of conduct more strictly.

6. Whilst 26,6% of research participants ask for a full removal of Chbab Srey from school curriculums, the majority of research participants prefers to keep parts of the code of conduct within the education system. A significant proportion of participants suggest to keep teaching Chbab Srey at school, yet through a more reflective and critical approach that includes insights on gender equality and human rights.



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APPENDICES

Translation of the Cbpab Srei by Trude Jacobsen

1. I here compose a komnat in the 'bhujangalila' metre, to be a cbpab for women.
2. At the time when Neang Indravati was about to leave in order to follow her husband, the yaks Pannyak,
3. Her mother, the queen Neang Vimala, spoke to her in the following manner: 'Oh beautiful child!
4. In following the path of your husband you leave our kingdom of Nag
5. To join the world of mortals; listen well, child, and learn how to behave towards your husband.
6. Fulfill your duties and tasks every day so that they do not cause him disquietude.
7. Oh my daughter, 'the master of the room' is our superior: Never mistake it!
8. Oh my dear daughter, my precious treasure, it is very difficult, my child, to apply the cbpab of women.
9. The first obstacle: A woman, ineloquent, incapable of the least soft word which pleases the family.
10. Another obstacle: A woman incapable of reason, and who, when seeing her close or distant relatives, does not invite them to take a morsel [of betel].
11. Whether she is wealthy or not, if she speaks gentle words, she will be loved by others,
12. Being neither impolite, nor vulgar, nor petty, not forgetting her obligations to all members of the family.
13. One gains wealth, rank, sokh [health] and harmony through well-born daughters.
14. When you speak, when you talk, think of your womanly reputation; do not be playful,
15. do not babble like silly girls. When young men are around, do not glance toward them,
16. Do not laugh without thinking; men are easily tempted and very bold.
17. Such a woman is called bad, without honour, self-control nor good conduct;
18. she is feckless, she loses goods through inconsistency, she loses them shamelessly.
19. She stares at men, watches them, teases them, and scoffs.
20. Such a one is bad, without dignity, she is not afraid of being compromised by acting against the rules.
21. She does not work in a manner appropriate to women.
22. She neither respects nor fulfils the wishes of her husband, she encourages other men to act against him.
23. Such a woman is called oht lakkhana [not full of virtue], without self-control nor good conduct.
24. In all deeds, you must apply yourself; in weaving, sewing and pressing, apply yourself to finish each task.
25. Do not leave anything undone for later and say 'I will finish it'; that will not work.
26. In weaving lantern-covers or flowered silk, one first readies the loom and does not begin until after that.
27. Behave like this to have a good reputation. Do not go dallying with others.
28. Guard well, my dearest, my heart, apply yourself to the tasks of your youth.
29. Once married, how do you act? You will be busy with crying children, and you will have no leisure time.
30. Your heart weary as one child after another demands food, crying.
31. Your efforts increase to find them food and calm them.
32. You will fulfill these tasks with ease; knot threads for hül designs, start a body of weaving
33. in place of leaving them tangled up in a basket: you run the risk of rendering them useless otherwise.
34. daughter dear to my heart, observe this well without a moment of distraction.
35. Try and study the Cbpab Srei, to consider your husband the master of the chamber.
36. Be particularly diligent in your deeds. Beware, o my dearest, the three hearths,
37. Kindle the fire and tend it every day, without ever forgetting it and allowing it to die.
38. Guard, on the other hand, against it spreading, do not let it grow, and burn without cessation.

39. Do not bring into the house fire from outside [gossip], leave only a small flame that you bring to light another.
40. If you do not pay attention, if you bring the inside fire out and fan the flames, it will burn all before it.
41. If one keeps alive and ignites anger in all, even toward children, that is wrong.
42. Be very attentive, my pretty, to guard the three hearths, and tend them always.
43. When fire is well tended by you, it will bring you high rank, above all.
44. It will bring you honour and wealth in abundance, of superior quality.
45. The first hearth to maintain is to do right toward you mother and father, cherished guardians.
46. You must respect them and not disobey your mother and father.
47. Act toward them nicely, find them dishes they like
48. And keep them only for their enjoyment; offer them this often.
49. If they give you advice, or set you certain tasks, you must listen, to avoid disappointing them.
50. The other hearth represents the master of the chamber, your husband to whom you are joined forever.
51. You owe him unwavering respect, you must avoid acting in such a way as to deceive him,
52. Support him and believe him, as you are a woman; avoid putting yourself as his equal.
53. If quarrels arise, unpleasantness created, you must continue to listen and ponder.
54. If the words of your husband are unkind, you must not go and tell your mother.
55. Resentful, if the words of the mother are whispered by you into the ears of your husband,
56. Anger will manifest and there will be harsh words exchanged and never-ending questions.
57. Tongues will wag in heated speech accompanied by arrogance.
58. The exchange of words will feed the fire, prolonging it, destroying harmony,
59. And the arguing will be heard all over the village: there will be no happiness as long as it lasts.
60. These are the three fires; I advise, dear daughter, to do all to preserve them.
61. my daughter, if the master of the chamber commits faults of any sort, I advise, dear daughter,
62. To keep them in your heart, at no point talk behind his back.
63. Do not insult him, do not be his enemy; if he is weak, impoverished or stupid, do not act against him, my daughter.
64. If he proves ignorant or feeble, guide him, and make your speech with agreeable words.
65. If your husband speaks harshly to you, if in anger reproaches you and wounds you,
66. If his anger gets worse and inflames him without respite nor wavering because his heart is full of irritation,
67. If he goes on without ceasing with insults and reproaches, because of his rancor,
68. my daughter dear, you must be patient and wait for it to pass.
69. If you are proud, and harden your heart, and make yourself the equal of he who is your superior,
70. if you get carried away and speak without thinking, you are a woman who invites trouble.
71. Do not protest or respond sarcastically to excite his anger,
72. Do not persist, do not look at him with stony eyes, do not provoke a quarrel with your lack of respect.
73. Do not address him in a way that will prolong the argument and cause discord.
74. Do not be like dogs and cats, holding forth with things that wound the heart of your husband,
75. Do not upset things you touch, knocking them over, and breaking them.
76. In place of you bringing peace through silence, it can be that you are secretly obstinate in order to beat your husband,
77. and in that case you accept peace; you will be called bad-tempered, you will see your honour gone.
78. my beloved daughter, my treasure, that is a very bad fault; do not act in such a fashion.
79. If your husband upsets you, my daughter, go away to your room and reflect.
80. When you come out, speak to him with soft words to smooth over the rift.
81. If your husband gives you advice, keep it, my daughter, and guard it in your spirit.
82. Never forget these good words so as to avoid bad deeds.
83. If you do not believe your husband or ignore him, conflict will arise;
84. Happiness will be destroyed, your reputation will suffer, discord will continue without ceasing.

85. This means you are not ladylike, but a low person, with the heart of a 'golden flower' [immoral woman or prostitute].
86. Such a one suffocates her husband, thinking herself big enough for him to listen to her and being seized with great pride.
87. Do not be like that woman who bothers her husband about his comings and goings and drives him to distraction.
88. If your husband gives you an order, my treasure, do not delay, my daughter, and do not refuse.
89. Whatever the distance, do not dilly-dally, get straight about it, in order to avoid being admonished by your husband.
90. Do not stay long with others, whether you have things to do or not, hurry home.
91. My daughter, flower of my heart, being a woman is difficult.
92. A girl may be pretty, but she is not preferable to one who knows her duty.
93. In place of respect, she will know only distresses, which are ten in number.
94. She may be a beauty; if she knows her duty, she will win the admiration of others.
95. A woman may be pretty, of fair skin, unrivalled, but unaware of the cbpab;
96. She is pretty, certainly, but poor in spirit. Others, who may be dark and dull, are renowned for their deeds;
97. Moreover, they are not discourteous, they have manners, all good conduct.
98. Only they the wise call of great beauty, full of good breeding.
99. My daughter and pretty one, I am now going to teach you of distresses and bad luck.
100. She who searches the head of her husband to search for lice without first paying her respects and informing him,
101. Is compared by poets to the bird perched above the house who causes worry and the loss of goods.
102. Walking over your husband is unlucky; done by a woman who is busy,
103. That is compared to a lalak khmouch [evil spirit], who darkens our doors with the threat of illness.
104. The third source of evil: When people repeatedly pass through a doorway without closing it,
105. Through idleness or error, if they forget to push it closed, everyone can see in:
106. This is like lighting the torch for thieves and allowing them to steal everything.
107. Fourth thing: When a woman shakes with loud laughter, so that the sound is heard very far, from three houses away;
108. That is like when the kingfisher comes into a village - a very bad omen.
109. The fifth type of woman, turns on her husband;
110. That is comparable to the evil kray serpent who glides into the house with awful consequences
111. and brings bad luck, wherein the people must stay away, without taking part in the community.
112. Another type of woman, having long hair, shakes and preens her hair
113. at the well or on the threshold of the house, like a cat who sharpens her claws;
114. Very bad luck will follow when women leave their hair loose instead of tidying it neatly.
115. Another woman walks kicking the hem of her skirt, producing a noise that can be heard throughout the land;
116. not heeding the wear on her skirt, she walks with a lot of noise like thunder,
117. she walks hurriedly, or rushes, her feet sounding on the boards of the house like a thunderclap
118. and make the three rooms of the household shake; it is as if thieves have come to take all the things away.
119. Another woman, seeing the things in her path, walks over them and goes ahead without picking them up and putting them away.
120. These things will not withstand the future, because the woman, in place of tidying them, leaves them in disorder all over the place.
121. These things will disappear apparently without reason, and arguments will bring about ruin.
122. When meal times draw near, she secretly feeds herself and munches gluttonously.
123. My daughter, please pay attention to these which are the 'calamities' of ten sorts.
124. Avoid them all, and now learn the good qualities, of which there are seven.
125. It is the Lord of extreme merit who has preached them in the form of gatha.

126. One wife is called 'mother', another 'friend', another 'brother', and another 'slave'.

127. These four are perfectly good; you must learn them and keep them in your memory.

128. She who is called 'mother wife' is the spouse who the wise place on the same level as the mother,

129. because of the three sorts of behaviour. First, she busies herself with the interests of her husband,

130. so that he will acquire status and a name of renown; in place of serving him, she works at his rank and honours.

131. After, seeing her husband in old clothes, she will change them for new, and keep the first lot for herself.

122. Good at preparation and presentation of food, she saves the best for her husband.

133. If the husband was sick, she will tire herself out tending him, finding medicines,

134. consulting doctors, the memat and kru, consult the horoscope, cure her husband by any means.

135. She who is called 'brother wife' is the good and worthy wife like an older brother.

136. She has two sorts of behaviour, as if she is brother and sister united by body and heart.

137. First, she sees to the prosperity of her husband; that is, the wealth brought by her husband, she knows how to keep.

138. Then, if people express criticism or reproach with regard to her husband,

139. bad words or slander, she protects his name and makes peace.

140. And if the husband is troubled, she works toward his happiness, and brings it about.

141. Now, the 'friend wife' is known by conduct characterized in three ways.

142. Like a friend, she is entirely devoted to her husband so that he is spared all irritation.

143. Husband and wife are like brother and sister who, although long apart, find each other again;

144. Drawn by a great love, they come together again, and avoid all troubles.

145. Of high moral character, when seeing other men, she is not at all attracted to them.

146. As for the 'slave wife', she must be, according to custom, the slave of the husband,

147. Characterised by five types of behaviour. First, she dreads the heart of her husband, from fear of being insulted or beaten.

148. She hides her feelings from others, so as to avoid her husband insulting or blaming her.

149. If her husband is seized with a terrible anger, she never speaks back to him or contradicts him.

150. In case the husband is violent and hits her during his anger, and treats her as a thief or prostitute,

151. The wife will not react, nor exchange words with him, for fear of terrible reprisals.

152. Another wife, expert in the art of cooking, when the husband goes out, will not eat alone;

153. she waits patiently for his return to join him and eat together;

154. such a one is called 'slave wife'. The Lord kindly and generously preached these lessons.

155. Consequently, the women who heard them, kept them as cbpab for all their days.

156. When their lives were over, they were reborn in the paradise of Dusit;

157. They knew peace, sweet music, lives of happiness, peace, and protected from danger.

158. As for the evil wife called 'torturer wife', she is known by four signs

159. which must never be adopted, which must be eliminated, because of the bad results of their actions.

160. One of these women bears a grudge in her heart, is quick to answer back, and hits out at her husband.

161. In a short space of time, she reproaches him without ceasing until he is worn out, and is very proud.

162. She does not stop cutting off his replies, as she enjoys arguments so as to put herself on an equal footing with him, and even his superior.

163. The second is not inclined to do her duties, she tells her husband to do them in order to set him off;

164. knowing how, she quarrels without hesitation as she is possessed of evil inclinations.

165. The third is easily roused, and has the intense wish to fool her husband.

166. Impudent and aggressive, the fourth villain wishes to kill her husband out of love for another;

167. she makes him disappear before marrying another; she brings about the death of her husband.

168. As for the 'enemy wife', she is known by seven ways.

169. The first is not afraid of her husband; if he gives her an order, she does nothing.

170. The second is immobile and quiet; three times her husband asks her something and she does not reply.

171. The third has a husband who follows the way and teaches her all the rules of good conduct but she does not wish to hear.

172.The firth, indifferent to the success of her husband, does nothing to help him achieve a higher rank.
173.The fifth, opening her mouth, speaks arrogant words to counter her husband.
174.In the sixth case, the husband having freed a slave who serves him with devotion and obedience,
175.the wife is upset and takes against the slave, because of jealousy, and finds reasons to insult her.
176.The seventh, deceived by her husband, reveals the whole affair so that it is known by others.
177.The 'robber wife' has bad conduct known by three ways.
178.The first is always to be thoughtless of her husband's goods, instead of looking after them.
179.In the second case, the husband is good at getting wealth which he gives to his wife, but she does not keep them as she should,
180.she passes them to her parents, and when her husbands asks about them, she does not tell him the truth.
181.The third woman, lazy, not liking to work, lies and says she is busy elsewhere.
182.She lies around, drunk, and when her husband sees her, pretends to be sick,
183.covers her head and cries 'hi, hi'. The husband does not know what she is doing, because she is pretending to be dying.
184.These women are full of malice. Those who follow these ways and do not wish to reform
185.when their lives are ended, they fall into the four hells,
186.where they will endure misery and suffering. Delivered from there, they will be reincarnated as kathoey [male to female transgender].
187.They will suffer this ill luck until they are persuaded to lead good lives.
188.They act against their duty, and do not try and remember the cbpab srei.
189.This arrogance is of eight types: in the Pali of the holy law, the wise also say it.
190.A woman is arrogant because, her husband infirm and lacking in strength,
191.she is irritated, hateful, instead of assisting her husband, and looking for cures from kru and memat [mediums and folk healers]
192.for curing him quickly and for good, in place of patience, she acts ill-advisedly and hastens the death of her husband.
193.The second is arrogant because her husband is impoverished, with a family legacy.
194.She accuses him of feeding off her, and because of his laziness, he has become impoverished.
195.The third is arrogant because the husband has but little status, and she is of a famous family, of superior lineage.
196.She thinks she should be served by her husband, and when they argue, belittles his family.
197.The fourth is arrogant because the husband is not educated, or ignorant, or stupid, and lags behind.
198.She criticizes him without pity in harsh and awful terms, without any relief.
199.The fifth is arrogant because the husband is ugly, of dark and swarthy skin, his face covered in pock-marks,
200.who is heavy and shapeless, who has tangled or grey hair, a stomach like a barrel,
201.and she is beautiful, with her good, fair skin: she says her husband is a peasant.
202.The sixth is arrogant because her husband makes no effort to work, he is slow and dawdles along.
203.She seeks to hurt him with reproaches and argues with him constantly.
204.The seventh is arrogant because her husband drinks, he gets drunk and leaves his work to go strolling around,
205.and speaks in a loud voice, dances and sings, and makes the dogs bark and frightens the children.
206.She becomes angry, injures and badmouths her husband, and does whatever comes into her head.
207.Finally, the eighth is arrogant because her amorous husband caresses her,
208.pinches and tickles her. Instead of encouraging him, she puts on airs and insults him,
209.because she knows she is loved. She speaks to him impolitely,
210.she becomes aloof, acts indifferently, pretends to be angry and upset,
211.and then ruins married life; this arrogance is the eighth.
212.There, my daughter, is the Cbpab Srei. Guard it, my pretty, study it, and take in in

213.and keep it always in your spirit. Being of unparalleled merit, these rules will lead to peace and success;
214.you will be a person of merit here in this world as in the other world, and you will see your dreams come true.
215.If you take a sacca [very serious vow or undertaking] to become the mother of a Buddha, you will be held to it.
216.Your other wishes will be realized without fail; you will become blessed with lots of goods and riches,
217.you will gain renowned honours, everything you ever wished for.
218.This cbpab is the highest treasure; the women who listen to it will be the most fortunate;
219.they do not come often. When they hear it, they should remember all of it;
220.They will come to the path of paradise which is the way of merit. Remember it without fail.
221.Here ends the good words, truth in verse form, of perfection.
222.He who has had the wisdom to tell this, is myself, known as min Mai, on my oath.
223.When I had the idea of these verses my heart was clear and serene, inclined toward good.
224.In the name of the truth, I took a sacca to follow the Law, to see my ideas prosper and compose this poem.
225.If my work has imperfections, please note and correct them for me,
226.so that people do not become angry with me or ridicule me. I wish to fulfill good works in the name of our religion.
227.For this what I deem to be the cbpab finishes here, full of my thoughts.

Interview Questions

1. How did you hear and learn about Chbab Srey? What were your thoughts about the code of conduct?
2. In your experience, how is Chbab Srey generally taught to women and girls in our society?
3. It is a common saying that teaching Chbab Srey to women and girls is important to preserve the Khmer tradition and culture, do you agree with this statement? why/why not?
4. Meanwhile, it is said as well that the code of conduct is considered a major barrier to gender equality, in the sense that it prevents women from living to their fullest potential and enjoying their human rights. Do you agree with this statement? why/why not?
5. How did you feel when Chbab Srey was partially removed from school curriculums in 2007, as a teacher/student, do you support this decision? Why/why not?
6. In your opinion, what are the impacts of Chbab Srey on women's lives? Are they positive or negative or either? In what ways?
7. In your opinion, how does society perceive and put into practice Chbab Srey? Did you see an evolution compared to earlier years, before it was partially removed from high school curriculums?
8. In your opinion, should Chbab Srey be fully removed from schools? If yes, what needs to be done to achieve this aim? If No, why?
9. How do you think people's attitudes have changed towards Chbab Srey, compared to the year 2000/last ten years?
10. Do you have anything to share or suggest or your last comments on the study?

Survey Questions

1. Nationality
2. Age group
3. Current residence
4. Employment status
5. Gender
6. Where have you first heard and learnt of Chbab Srey (you can select more than one options)?
7. How do you feel about the code of conduct?
8. In our society, where do you think Chbab Srey is most generally taught to women and girls?
9. It is a common saying that teaching Chbab Srey to women and girls is important to preserve the Khmer tradition and culture, do you agree with this statement? (You can select more than one option.)
10. It is also said that the code of conduct is considered a major barrier to gender equality, in the sense that it prevents women from living to their fullest potential and enjoying their human rights, do you agree with this statement?
11. In your opinion, what are the negative impacts of Chbab Srey on women's and girl's lives?
12. Who do you think is more likely to uphold the instructions and practices of Chbab Srey?
13. Who do you think is more likely to be taught Chbab Srey and asked to conduct themselves accordingly?
14. How do you think people's attitudes have changed towards Chbab Srey, compared to the year 2000?
15. In 2007, Chbab Srey was partially removed from school curriculums, do you support this decision?
16. Do you think that Chbab Srey should be fully removed from school curriculum?
17. Do you have any general thoughts, comments or story that you would like to share?



For more information, reach out to info@klahaan.org