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**Abstract**

This study examines the mutuality issue in international partnership programs between Cambodian universities and universities in France, the USA, Japan and South Korea. It adopts Galtung's and Held's four aspects of mutuality as its conceptual framework and follows a qualitative case study research design. The study finds that most partnership programs between Cambodian universities and their French, American and Japanese counterparts manifested each aspect of mutuality to some degree. In those partnerships, academics from all sides had already built close relationships with each other before moving to establish formal institutional agreements. By comparison, the degree of mutuality varied among Cambodian–Korean university partnerships, mostly established with few prior people-initiated connections. The findings suggest not only a greater maturity in the international experience of French, American and Japanese universities, compared to South Korean universities, but also the importance of human agency in international academic activities. The study concludes that shaped by the patron–client practice, the concept of mutuality within the Cambodian

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context was viewed more in terms of the degree of “acceptable harmonious relationships” than as a matter of precise equality or the same degree of power dynamics, as commonly portrayed within the global/international discourse. (HRK / Abstract übernommen) Leng, Phirom, E-Mail: [phiroleng@gmail.com](mailto:phiroleng@gmail.com)