

# Implementation of teacher professional ethics in Cambodia: Perceptions, barriers, and institutional strategies

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## ARTICLE INFO

### Article history

Received: October 7, 2025

Revised: November 3, 2025

Accepted: November 10, 2025

### Keywords

Ethics

Unethical practices

Teacher integrity

Professional

Teachers

## ABSTRACT

This study examines the perceptions and implementation of the teacher professional ethics (TPE) code within the Cambodian education system. The TPE code is recognized as a crucial framework for enhancing teacher professionalism, integrity, identity, leadership, and educational practices; empirical evidence regarding its perception and implementation remains limited. Therefore, this study aims to explore participants' understanding of TPE code; identify perceived barriers to its effective implementation; assess its implementation effectiveness; and propose constructive suggestions to address unethical practices. A qualitative research design was employed using in-depth interviews with 20 participants, consisting of one director, seven teacher trainers, and twelve teacher trainees at a teacher education institution in Cambodia. Data were analyzed thematically to identify key patterns and insights. The findings reveal that participants generally perceive TPE code as a set of rules, professional responsibilities, moral guidelines, and a tool for professional development and social recognition. However, its implementation is hindered by both internal factors (low motivation, limited understanding, economic pressures, and time constraints) and external factors (inadequate institutional support, social influences, and weak enforcement mechanisms). The implementation of TPE code is considered moderately effective, particularly in promoting ethical conduct, teaching practices, collaboration, and professional responsibilities. The study highlights the importance of continuous professional development, institutional support, effective leadership, and motivational strategies to strengthen ethical practices. It also recommends future research to expand methodological approaches and participant scope, as well as to explore the impact of leadership and institutional management on the successful implementation of teacher professional ethics.

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## 1. Introduction

Teaching as a profession is the body of knowledge, a set of attitudes, codes of ethics, and a technique that is applied to the service of mankind through an educated group (Göçen & Bulut, 2024; Buchanan et al., 2022). The code of ethics in the teaching profession is designed to protect the privileges of the replacements, with all substitutes requiring teachers to urgently understand their hard-working attitudes and qualities before moving toward the inside teaching (Decker et al., 2022). The educators (also known as teachers) are required to obtain professional ethics to conduct the particular classes effectively (Paschal, 2023). Since they are the assets of their institutions, they should be respected and valued by the people in their community. The code of professional ethics of the teaching profession is a prerequisite, ensuring integrity and dignity (Aki et al., 2021). Teachers are the best property in the system of education (Moorhouse et al., 2024; Devi, 2018). They added

up that teachers are the core pillars in the educational field and are related to education (Hofman-Bergholm, 2022). Generally, the ethics of the teaching profession are a set of ethical rules and principles to which the teacher should adhere to preserve the highest position of the profession in light of society. CPD of teachers covered professional ethics of teachers themselves as a core CPD element (Schwimmer & Maxwell, 2017). Since teachers are educators, their behaviors must be moral. The multinational increase in the code of teacher professional ethics has been set in the official use of teachers (Maxwell, 2017). Teaching is considered the noblest among all the professions, and the teaching personnel are always called nation builders (Thoker, 2017).

Teaching is considered an honorable and equitable career, paying the country with employment by producing capable, quality human resources; mindful people; socialized individuals; and an innovative attitude (Decker et al., 2022). A code of teacher professional ethics is, in fact, a charter of rights and duties for the protection of professional autonomy and freedom (Aki et al., 2021). It is distinguishing the differences between a law and a code of ethics. It is curious to consider that rules protect autonomy and freedom. Professionally, the codes are written by professionals themselves, not by the state. The researcher on the topic of professional ethics of secondary school teachers with special reference to the rural-urban dichotomy in India mentioned that his investigation resulted in the finding that the urban secondary school teachers had a higher level of professional ethics than the rural secondary school teachers (Setianingrum & Da Costa, 2023; Thoker, 2017). This investigation is very popular and reliable. Therefore, these are resourceful documents to be discussed and referenced here.

Cambodia is a developing country in Southeast Asia (Tieng et al., 2024). Its education system is being progressively improved. Meanwhile, the teacher's professional ethics are concerning (Brandão et al., 2024). Once, it was said that the morale and ethics of human beings are down when the technology is modernized. As a result, the Royal Government of Cambodia released a sub-decree on codes of TPE in Cambodia, aiming to determine the teacher professional code of ethics in the Kingdom of Cambodia to boost the morality of teachers, increase the dignity of teachers, and efficiently advance the education quality and effectiveness (Schwimmer & Maxwell, 2017). This means TPE is significant for educators to uphold in daily conduct (Gulanes et al., 2024). Teaching is a profession, and teacher education is a process of professional preparation of teachers. Therefore, they should uphold their teaching profession effectively. The main reason for the code of teacher professional ethics is to inculcate harmonious living in the whole country. Once the people are ethical, having social morality in their daily practices and thinking processes, they would be living harmoniously in society. However, we need more effort to carry out the planned tasks to prepare people to be role models of values, self-satisfaction, and excellence in the country. Good officials must possess the qualities of official behaviors, including proactive willingness, loyalty, and professional consciousness (Ahmad & Sharma, 2023).

Contextually, trainers are the resource persons for every training entity, and especially for Cambodian schools (Phirom et al., 2022). They normally work with the learners known as the trainees. Apart from being the resource persons, they are also the role models for everyone, particularly their stakeholders in terms of students, who are greatly impacted. Additionally, the code of the TPE is the most essential value of the educators in terms of trainers and teachers (Merma-Molina et al., 2023). The research study is conducted at PTEC, which is a teacher training college located in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. A code of conduct exists to support teachers in their activities in classes working with children, and supports children as they work with their teachers (Van Nuland & Poisson, 2009). As we can see the reality in Cambodia, we are looking for the ones who are committed to efficient and ethical education since this factor is the most important one for developing the country in terms of economics and sustainability. Professional ethics isn't meant to be a burden but an important source of inspiration in the teacher's work. It could direct the relationship between the teacher and other people, and the teacher's attitude towards work and his/her duties (Freeman, 2000). This reflects on the teacher's duties and teaching quality, which they have to uphold in order to progress their daily accountable delegations.

The actions of specialized skills and knowledge are according to those who put effort into them (Freeman, 2000). They emphasized, "Lack of professional skills can't be compensated by good ethical principles." The code of teacher professional ethics indicates the ambition of the educationalists and offers standards by evaluating the tasks (Alsubaie, 2016). Particularly, the practices of TPE in Cambodia have been facing some challenges. For instance, the first challenge is

the prevalent practice of teachers openly charging money for supplementary tutoring and other contributions. It is important to locate this practice within the larger social context in Cambodia. Despite improvements in political stability, living standards, and increased educational opportunities, Cambodia has yet to recover from decades of war and conflict. It is still plagued by poverty, corruption, and violence in what writers have termed a culture of impunity. Similarly, a group of researchers confirmed that professional ethics is the application of an individual's ultimate concerns about human conduct to their professional lives (Paschal, 2023; Saxena & Upadhyay, 2020). In addition, some researchers pointed out further barriers to the practices of the code of TPE as follows: absenteeism and weak professional commitment (Silova & Brehm, 2014); private tutoring and informal payments (Bray, 2009; Dawson, 2009); misinterpretation of ethics and confusion (Bo et al., 2018); poor working conditions and system constraints (Bilderback, 2024), exploitative tutoring practices (Bray, 2009); low salary issues (García & Han, 2022); teacher reliance on secondary income sources (Hangchuon, 2018); and weak institutional environment (Ezeaku & Nebolisa, 2024). A problem frequently related to Cambodian teachers is absence (Kim & Rouse, 2011). This means, ironically, that both teachers and children have problems with attendance. Miserably, we all noticed that the teachers run private classes to earn extra profits. It is known that those who attend private classes have prepared examination questions. Students were pressured to attend tutoring sessions, which took place to indirectly leak the examination questions in advance (Samuel et al., 2023). This is a serious aspect in the Cambodian education system; we would like to shift it into transparency in the educational operational system.

This study was purposefully aimed at figuring out the perceptions of the most relevant stakeholders in implementing and maintaining the TPE in the Cambodian context. The results from the in-depth interviews and focus group discussions may be able to enrich more details about the foundation of the ethical basics and practices. Furthermore, the study also obtained four research questions: (1) What are the participants' perceptions of the basic understanding of the codes of the TPE? (2) What are the participants' perceptions of the barriers hindering the effectiveness of implementing the codes of the TPE? (3) What are the participants' perceptions of the effectiveness of implementing the codes of the TPE? and (4) What are the participants' perspectives and constructive suggestions for solving unethical issues, which are against the codes of the TPE in the Cambodian context? Therefore, it is an opportunity to initiate an investigation on this particular topic from the relevant stakeholders.

## **2. Method**

### **2.1. Research Design**

Responding to the investigation, the qualitative method was employed as the research design. The In-Depth Interviews (IDIs) were used to get the perceptions on the effectiveness of implementing the code of the TPE from the participants at Phnom Penh Teacher Education College (PTEC).

### **2.2. Research Participants**

Twenty research participants were selected to join the interview session of this study. Twelve trainees, seven trainers, and one director were individually interviewed at specific appointment times, one after another. Informatively, the participants were chosen due to two main reasons. The first reason was that the nature of the study is a qualitative type, which can be processed with a similar number of participants. This really means it isn't too large, nor is it too small.

### **2.3. Research Instrument**

The qualitative data were generated from the In-Depth Interviews (IDIs). The interview guide was designed to fit individual participants by following the same interview flow. Most importantly, the interviews offer the researcher (1) to be flexible in administering the interview to the particular individuals or circumstances; (2) to permit face-to-face contact with the respondents; (3) to allow the interviewer to experience the affective as well as the cognitive aspects of respondents; (4) to provide an opportunity to explore the topic being investigated in depth; and (5) to yield rich data, details, and insights. Additionally, the in-depth information was also optimistic to be discovered by conducting qualitative interviews with the mentioned target participants. The investigation was purposefully aimed at getting involved with the trainees, the trainers, and the director of PTEC, and they were asked to participate in the research study officially and respectfully. In fact, the trainees,

trainers, and director were purposefully selected by employing the purposive sampling technique that the researcher conducted to select only the needed number of them. Check the appendices for the research instruments.

#### 2.4. Data Collection Procedure

The general overview information of PTEC was asked for by the researcher. The researcher administratively requested an official letter from the research site to formally request privileged presence for research data collection at PTEC. The researcher introduced himself to the director, trainers, and trainees of PTEC, and he displayed the official research request letter to the director and the management team in order to secure the opportunity to investigate the issues regarding the topic being researched. Meanwhile, the director of PTEC officially allowed it and sent a response letter to the researcher for the data collection processes at PTEC. Secondly, the researcher began the purposive sampling process to select the targeted participants. Thirdly, the researcher made the interview schedule with the director, trainers, and trainees for the face-to-face interviews. Before starting the face-to-face interviews, the researcher read the consent forms to the participants and asked for their mutual agreement. Consequently, the researcher started the in-depth interviews with those participants.

#### 2.5. Data Analysis

The researcher followed the step-by-step process of the thematic analysis of the qualitative data. In fact, the researcher started the process of data analysis by employing the paper coding frame, which is the template that was used to code the main ideas of the themes in the text. After transcribing the data, the researcher organized and prepared the data for analysis. Then, the researcher had spent adequate time reading the transcripts wisely to figure out the common sense or ideas of the participants. With this step, the researcher had to read a lot in order to make sure that the common ideas were coherent and cohesive in the text. Particularly, the researcher started to code the data by hand using the coding frame. After this task, the researcher had the main themes. With these various themes, the interrelated themes were integrated. Finally, the researcher interpreted the themes in the findings section, which is the next chapter.

### 3. Results and Discussion

The researcher conducted in-depth interviews (IDIs) with twenty participants from PTEC to address Research Question 1: “What are the participants’ perceptions regarding the basic understanding of the TPE code?” The findings revealed that all participants ( $n = 20$ ; 100%) were aware of the existence of the TPE code. However, differences emerged in the extent to which participants engaged with the document. Fifteen participants (75%) reported that they had read the code thoroughly, whereas five participants (25%) indicated that they had only read certain sections of the document. Regarding accessibility, six participants stated that they obtained the sub-decree and code of the TPE from NIE, while twelve participants accessed the document through PTEC. In addition, two participants reported finding the code independently through the library and online sources. These findings suggest that although awareness of the TPE code was universal among participants, the level of familiarity and depth of engagement with the document varied considerably across individuals. Such variation may reflect differences in institutional dissemination practices, personal initiative, and the participants’ respective roles within the institution.

The interview data obtained for this research question were transcribed verbatim and analyzed using a thematic coding process. Through this analysis, four major themes emerged in relation to participants’ understanding of the TPE code. To ensure clarity and confidentiality in data presentation, each participant was assigned a specific identification code based on their institutional role. The code “P1-D” refers to the director-level participant, representing the policy-making perspective within the institution. Participants coded from “P1” to “P7” represent trainers, who function at the implementation level and are directly involved in translating institutional policies into educational practices. Meanwhile, participants coded from “P1-T” to “P12-T” represent trainees, who occupy the beneficiary level as recipients of the educational and training processes. This hierarchical categorization was intentionally designed to capture the diverse perspectives of stakeholders across different organizational levels. By incorporating views from policy, implementation, and beneficiary levels, the study was able to provide a more comprehensive

understanding of how the TPE code is perceived, interpreted, and practiced within the institutional context.

Table 1 presents the demographic characteristics of the participants across five categories. The table also illustrates the hierarchical structure of participant representation, consisting of the director (P1-D) at the policy level, trainers (P1–P7) at the implementation level, and trainees (P1-T–P12-T) at the beneficiary level. This hierarchical classification provides a clearer understanding of the participants’ institutional roles and supports a more systematic interpretation of the findings across different levels of organizational involvement.

**Table 1.** Demographic information of participants

Code	Age	Position / Program	Work Experience / Study Period	Degree
P1.D	44	Director	3 years	PhD
P1	42	Full-time Trainer	2 years	Master
P2	34	Full-time Trainer	2 years	Master
P3	41	Full-time Trainer	15 years	Bachelor
P4	45	Full-time Trainer	21 years	Master
P5	33	Full-time Trainer	2 years	Master
P6	51	Full-time Trainer	25 years	Master
P7	39	Full-time Trainer	2 years	Bachelor
P1.T	20	Trainee (12+2 Teacher Training Program)	2 years	In training
P2.T	21	Trainee (12+2 Teacher Training Program)	2 years	In training
P3.T	20	Trainee (12+2 Teacher Training Program)	2 years	In training
P4.T	20	Trainee (12+2 Teacher Training Program)	2 years	In training
P5.T	20	Trainee (12+2 Teacher Training Program)	2 years	In training
P6.T	21	Trainee (12+2 Teacher Training Program)	2 years	In training
P7.T	23	Trainee (12+2 Teacher Training Program)	2 years	In training
P8.T	20	Trainee (12+2 Teacher Training Program)	2 years	In training
P9.T	19	Trainee (12+2 Teacher Training Program)	2 years	In training
P10.T	20	Trainee (12+2 Teacher Training Program)	2 years	In training
P11.T	20	Trainee (12+2 Teacher Training Program)	2 years	In training
P12.T	22	Trainee (12+2 Teacher Training Program)	2 years	In training

### 3.1. Understanding of the code of the TPE

The analysis of the interview data revealed four interconnected themes regarding participants’ understanding of the Teacher Professional Ethics (TPE) code. Across the interviews, directors, trainers, and trainees consistently described the code not merely as a formal institutional regulation, but also as a moral framework that guides educators’ professional behavior, shapes professional identity, and influences daily educational practices. The recurring similarities in participants’ responses indicated a high level of thematic saturation, suggesting that the meaning of the TPE code was widely shared among participants.

Participants commonly perceived the TPE code as a set of rules, laws, and moral guidelines that regulate educators’ conduct. Many participants associated professional ethics with discipline, proper behavior, and clear limitations regarding what educators should and should not do within educational settings and society. One participant described the code by stating, “The code of TPE is like the law of educators that trainers must obey” (P3, P4, P6). Similarly, another participant explained that “Professional ethics refers to the law of human beings and how to behave properly” (P2-T). These statements demonstrate that participants viewed the code as an authoritative guide that directs educators’ moral and professional responsibilities. Participants also emphasized that the code contains standards concerning communication and behavior toward trainees. One director stated, “It is about the rules to be a good educator in society... not to use rude words... not to take money from trainees” (P1.D), while another participant mentioned that “It is the standard that limits what should be done and what should not be done” (P4). In addition, participants associated the code with discipline and social manners. One trainer explained, “It is about the disciplines of how to become a good teacher” (P3.T), and another participant stated that “It is about proper behaviors, speeches, and manners in society” (P6.T). These findings indicate that participants strongly perceived the TPE code as a normative and ethical guideline for professional conduct.

Another dominant perception emerging from the interviews was the understanding of the TPE code as a foundation for role modeling. Participants believed that educators are expected to demonstrate ethical behavior because trainees often imitate their attitudes, actions, and communication styles. One director emphasized this responsibility by stating, "If trainers aren't good at modeling, how do we educate trainees to be good citizens?" (P1-D). This statement reflects the belief that educators' ethical behavior directly influences trainees' character development. Likewise, another participant stated, "Trainers are role models... trainees follow them" (P4), suggesting that educators' conduct serves as a practical example for learners. Participants also highlighted the long-term impact of educators' attitudes and behaviors. One trainer explained, "Our attitudes influence trainees' future practices" (P7). From the trainees' perspective, trainers were perceived as figures who guide learners through observable actions rather than only verbal instruction. For instance, one trainee stated, "Trainers are role models to lead and educate us" (P4.T), while another participant explained, "They guide us through their actions" (P8.T). The repeated emphasis on educators as examples for trainees indicates that participants viewed ethical professionalism as something that must be consistently demonstrated in practice.

In addition to functioning as behavioral guidance, participants also perceived the TPE code as an important source of professional value and identity. Ethical conduct was frequently associated with maintaining the dignity, credibility, and social respect of the teaching profession. One director explained that "The professional ethics... is very valuable... to maintain their value as trainers" (P1-D), indicating that ethics were seen as essential for preserving professional integrity. Similarly, another participant stated, "It preserves the value and credit of teachers" (P2). Participants also expressed concern that the absence of ethical implementation could damage the profession's image and public trust. One participant stated, "If not implemented, the value would be damaged" (P5). From the trainees' perspective, ethics contributed to public respect toward educators. One trainee explained that "It gives value and respect to the profession" (P5.T), while another stated, "It gains admiration and trust from society" (P9.T). These findings demonstrate that participants perceived the TPE code not only as a regulatory framework but also as an essential component in preserving the honor and identity of the teaching profession.

Participants further described the TPE code as closely connected to daily practice and everyday conduct. Professional ethics were not only understood conceptually but also implemented through routine behaviors, communication, manners, and interactions in educational settings. One participant explained, "It reminds trainers what should be done and shouldn't" (P1), suggesting that the code serves as a continuous reminder for appropriate professional behavior. Other participants emphasized that ethical conduct influences educators' interactions with trainees. One trainer stated that "It relates to manners and attitudes toward trainees" (P6). Participants also connected ethics with daily life beyond classroom instruction. One trainee stated, "It is about behavior in daily living" (P3.T), while another participant mentioned, "It includes communication, clothing, and teaching" (P8.T). These responses suggest that professional ethics were understood as encompassing multiple dimensions of educators' personal and professional behavior. In addition, one director highlighted the importance of respectful communication by stating, "It teaches not to use rude words or behave improperly" (P1.D). Overall, the findings indicate that participants perceived the TPE code as a practical guide embedded within everyday educational interactions and conduct.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that participants understood the Teacher Professional Ethics (TPE) code as more than a formal set of institutional regulations. The code was perceived as a moral and professional framework that guides educators' behavior, strengthens their responsibilities as role models, preserves professional dignity, and shapes everyday educational practices. The consistency of participants' perspectives across directors, trainers, and trainees also indicates that ethical professionalism occupies a central position in maintaining the quality of education and professional relationships within educational environments.

To strengthen the interpretation of the interview findings, the themes generated from the coding process are summarized in Table 2. The table presents the relationships between themes, categories, keywords, and the core meanings constructed from participants' narratives regarding the Teacher Professional Ethics (TPE) code. The coding analysis illustrates how participants consistently associated the TPE code with moral regulation, exemplary behavior, professional identity, and everyday educational practice. Through this categorization process, the findings demonstrate that

participants' understanding of the TPE code extends beyond formal regulations and reflects broader professional and ethical values within educational contexts.

**Table 2.** Perceptions of the code of teaching profession ethics (TPE)

Theme	Category	Coding (Keyword)	Core Meaning
TPE as rules, law, and moral guidelines	Formal rules, professional law, and moral guidelines	Law of educators: rules to be a good educator, standards that limit the use of rude words, not taking money, and disciplining proper behaviors, speeches, and manners.	A code of ethics serves as a normative regulation governing the professional and moral behavior of educators.
TPE as role modeling	Exemplary behavior, social influence, learning by example	Role models: trainers aren't good at modeling; attitudes influence trainees and guide them through actions.	A code of ethics serves as a basis for exemplary behavior by educators that influences students.
TPE as a professional value and identity	Professional values, professional identity, public trust	Maintain value, preserve value, and credit; value would be damaged, value and respect, admiration, and trust.	A code of ethics shapes the identity and dignity of the profession and enhances public trust.
TPE as a daily practice and conduct	Daily practice, professional behavior, and social interactions	Reminds of what should be done: manners and attitudes, daily behavior, communication, clothing, teaching, and not using rude words.	A code of ethics serves as an implementable guideline for educators' daily behavior.

### 3.2. Barriers to implementing the code of the TPE

Based on the interviews, participants described various obstacles that impact the effective implementation of the Teacher Professional Ethics (TPE) code. These obstacles are not only related to internal individual factors but also influenced by the social, institutional, and environmental conditions surrounding the trainers. Data analysis revealed that obstacles to implementing the TPE code fall into two main themes: personal factors and social environmental factors. These two themes are interrelated and demonstrate that the implementation of the professional code of ethics is influenced by a combination of individual awareness and support from the surrounding environment.

The first theme relates to personal factors that influence a trainer's ability to consistently implement the TPE code. Participants explained that implementing the code of ethics is closely related to self-awareness, professional commitment, economic conditions, personal attitudes, and an understanding of the code itself. Several participants identified low professional awareness as a major obstacle to implementing the TPE code. They believe that some trainers lack moral responsibility and personal commitment to their profession. One participant stated, "Lack of conscience and personal commitment can hinder the effective implementation of the TPE code" (P1). These statements indicate that implementing the code of ethics is viewed not only as a form of compliance with formal regulations but also as a reflection of personal integrity and responsibility.

Furthermore, economic conditions were also a frequently discussed issue by participants. Low monthly salaries were seen as impacting trainers' commitment to carrying out their professional responsibilities. Several participants explained that economic pressures forced some trainers to seek second or even third jobs to meet their living and family needs. This situation resulted in reduced focus, time, and commitment to their primary duties as trainers. One participant stated, "A low monthly salary makes it difficult to fully implement the TPE code" (P2). A similar statement was made by another participant, who said, "Because of financial problems, some teachers need second or third jobs, which affects their commitment" (P3.T). Some participants also linked this situation to the emergence of materialistic tendencies and a desire to improve their standard of living. One participant explained that, "Trainers sometimes focus on earning more money to improve their living conditions, which affects their teaching performance" (P3), while another added, "Some are influenced by materialism, such as wanting better cars or phones" (P2).

Time management issues were also a significant obstacle identified in the interviews. Participants explained that additional work and high workloads often impact trainers' discipline and professional responsibilities. This is evident in the habit of arriving late, leaving early, or performing less than optimally in professional duties. One participant stated, "Having additional jobs affects trainers' working hours and commitment" (P6), while another expressed, "Coming late and leaving

early are examples of poor time management" (P6.T). These findings suggest that work pressure and poor time management can hinder the effective implementation of the code of ethics.

Furthermore, limited knowledge and a lack of understanding of the TPE Code were also significant barriers expressed by participants. New trainers, those with limited educational backgrounds, or those who have not received adequate training were considered more vulnerable to engaging in practices inconsistent with the Code of Ethics. Participants assessed that the lack of training and outreach resulted in some trainers not understanding the proper implementation of the Code of Ethics in their daily practices. One participant stated, "Without proper training on the Code of TPE, teachers may easily commit unethical practices" (P4). This statement was reinforced by another participant who stated, "There is insufficient understanding of the Code of TPE among some trainers" (P4.T).

Furthermore, participants also mentioned several other personal characteristics that were considered obstacles to the implementation of the TPE Code, such as a lack of caution, a weak mindset, arrogance, impatience in learning, conflicts of interest, and behavior deemed unprofessional. Several participants explained that personal behavior outside the workplace can also impact a trainer's professional image in the eyes of students and the public. For example, behaviors such as inappropriate dress, consuming alcohol in public, or displaying an unprofessional attitude are considered to diminish students' respect for trainers. Overall, participants viewed personal factors as important, reflecting the individual's attitude, behavior, capacity, and personal circumstances in determining the successful implementation of the TPE code.

The second theme relates to social environmental factors that influence the implementation of the TPE code. Participants explained that the implementation of the TPE code is influenced not only by individual characteristics but also by work culture, institutional support, community attitudes, social norms, and the surrounding environment. Several participants emphasized that the professional environment has a significant influence on trainers' ethical behavior. One participant stated, "Some teachers follow bad examples from others in the community, while some senior teachers don't model good behavior, which discourages new teachers" (P5). This statement suggests that the behavior of colleagues and seniors can serve as negative role models that influence the implementation of the TPE code, especially for new trainers.

Furthermore, limited institutional and organizational support was also seen as a major obstacle. Participants explained that a lack of teaching materials, support from schools, and minimal community cooperation made implementing the code of ethics more difficult. One participant stated, "Lack of teaching materials and support from schools also creates difficulties; additionally, lack of support from management and limited cooperation from the community affect implementation" (P5.T). This finding indicates that implementing the code of ethics requires adequate systemic support and a working environment to run optimally.

Participants also highlighted the influence of students, parents, and the community on trainers' professional practices. According to them, students' lack of respect for teachers and parents' tendency to always defend their children often make it difficult for trainers to carry out their professional roles effectively. One participant stated, "Some students aren't respectful, and parents often defend them, which affects teachers' practice" (P12.T). This suggests that social relationships within the educational environment also influence the implementation of the professional code of ethics.

Furthermore, social norms and community pressure are also seen as influencing trainers' professional behavior. Several participants explained that negative practices developing in society can influence trainers' behavior in carrying out their professional duties. One participant stated, "Negative practices in society, such as informal fee collection, influence trainers" (P8.T). Meanwhile, another participant emphasized that trainers' behavior outside the workplace can also affect public respect for their profession, stating, "Trainers may lose respect if they behave inappropriately outside the workplace" (P10.T). This finding suggests that professional ethics is viewed not only as a workplace setting but also encompasses an individual's social life in society.

In addition to social factors, geographic conditions and the work environment also pose obstacles for trainers. Working in remote areas, long travel distances, social conditions, and certain living standards are seen as making it difficult for trainers to manage their time and maintain

professional behavior. One participant stated, "Working in remote areas makes it difficult to manage time and maintain professional behavior" (P2.T). This statement was reinforced by another participant who said, "There are influential factors such as social conditions, time management, and living standards that affect trainers' abilities to follow the Code" (P1).

Overall, the interview results indicate that the barriers to implementing the TPE code are complex and interrelated, involving both internal and external factors. As shown in Table 3, these barriers fall into two main themes: personal factors and social environmental factors. Personal factors relate to commitment, ethical awareness, attitudes, economic conditions, and individual competence in understanding and implementing the professional code of ethics. Meanwhile, social environmental factors relate to work culture, institutional support, economic pressure, societal influence, and environmental conditions that influence trainers' professional practice. These findings indicate that implementing the TPE code requires not only personal awareness from trainers but also a conducive social and institutional environment for optimal professional practice.

**Table 3.** General barriers to implementing the code of the TPE

Themes	Descriptions
Communication	Some participants believed that communication is lacking between the trainers.
Disciplinary action	Some of them pointed out poor disciplinary implementation.
Individual manners	Some believed that authority was overemployed inappropriately.
Time management	Some revealed that some came to work late and left early.
Lack of support	less proper attention, use of training materials, and neglecting when questioned
Hygiene	needed improvement on the hygiene of the dormitory, and together, cleaning the rooms

In response to those challenges, the participants recommended several effective strategies to improve the implementation of the TPE code. As presented in Table 4, the suggested strategies mainly focused on professional development, institutional support, and community engagement. Participants believed that strengthening these areas could help trainers implement the code of the TPE more effectively and consistently.

**Table 4.** Suggested coping strategies

Themes	Quoted Strategies	Participants
Personal and Professional Development	"Trainers should build strong personal and professional values and be ready to act as role models."	P1.D
Transparency and Fairness	"Transparency, fairness, and encouragement are key to addressing these barriers."	P2
Capacity Building and Training	"Trainers need clear training and continuous review of the code of the TPE."	P4
Practical Approaches	"Using real examples of ethical and unethical cases helps trainers understand better."	P3
Motivation and Recognition	"Praising those who follow the code of the TPE and encouraging others can improve implementation."	P10.T
Community and Institutional Support	"Schools and communities should support teachers by improving living conditions and ensuring safety." "Local authorities should help address challenges such as insecurity and distance."	P8.T P12.T
Self-Improvement and Professional Commitment	"Teachers should continue self-study and prioritize their teaching profession."	P4.T

### 3.3. Effectiveness of implementing the code of the TPE

Interview results indicated that participants had quite diverse understandings regarding the primary obligations of trainers in implementing the TPE code of ethics. In general, participants viewed trainers' duties as not limited to teaching activities but also encompassing professional responsibility, self-development, ethical behavior, and institutional responsibility. One participant emphasized that teaching is a trainer's primary obligation, but that the process goes beyond delivering material to ensure that trainees are able to achieve good learning outcomes. The participant also emphasized the importance of continuous professional development through training, workshops, and the development of new skills such as ICT and learning methodologies (P1). This view was

reinforced by another participant who stated that trainers need to prepare lesson plans and teaching materials thoroughly and be able to adapt the learning process to real-world situations (P2). Furthermore, some participants viewed maintaining and implementing the TPE code of ethics as one of the most important obligations for trainers in carrying out their profession (P4). Another participant added that trainers also have administrative and institutional responsibilities, such as attending meetings, evaluating trainees, and reporting learning activities to management (P5). On the other hand, interpersonal ethics are also considered important, where trainers are expected to respect trainees, be fair and honest, and be good role models in the learning environment (P9).

Furthermore, participants also assessed the implementation of the TPE code of ethics in daily activities. Most participants viewed the implementation of the code of ethics as going quite well, particularly in learning situations during the COVID-19 pandemic. One participant stated that trainers had demonstrated good efforts through lesson preparation and the provision of online materials during the pandemic (P2). However, some participants assessed that implementation of the code of ethics was still at a moderate level, as some trainers were considered to be late or not fully meeting professional expectations (P3.T). Differences in implementation quality were also evident in the trainers' abilities and characteristics. One participant stated that newer trainers tended to excel in technology proficiency, while senior trainers were more prominent in teaching experience (P6). In assessing the overall effectiveness of the TPE code of ethics implementation, some participants estimated that implementation had only reached around 60–70 percent (P6.T). However, other participants provided a more positive assessment, stating that trainers had fulfilled approximately 90 percent of their obligations through effective training and mentoring of trainees (P12.T). This finding indicates that the implementation of the code of ethics is perceived quite positively, but the level of consistency varies among trainers.

The research results also showed that interpersonal relationships between trainers and non-teaching staff tended to be harmonious. Participants described good cooperation and mutual understanding among trainers in carrying out their duties. One participant stated that the relationship between trainers was good because they were able to collaborate and understand each other (P1). This statement was reinforced by another participant who mentioned that the trainers worked as a team, helped each other, and maintained communication both formally and informally (P2). However, several participants acknowledged that minor misunderstandings sometimes arose, but these did not lead to serious conflict (P3). The relationship between trainers and non-teaching staff was also perceived as positive. One participant explained that the relationship between the two was friendly and cooperative (P4). Furthermore, another participant emphasized that good communication helped them collaborate effectively and complete tasks together (P12.T).

In terms of work culture and professional behavior, participants described a fairly supportive and respectful work environment. One participant explained that members of the institution greeted and respected each other, while trainers also demonstrated appropriate behavior toward trainees (P1). Another participant added that there was strong collaboration among trainers, particularly in supporting learning activities and other institutional activities (P4). Furthermore, the director's leadership style was also seen as having a positive influence on the work environment. One participant stated that the director led effectively with a positive approach and did not emphasize strict control (P5). In terms of professional behavior, the trainers were assessed as using appropriate language, demonstrating respect, and maintaining good communication with both trainees and colleagues (P3.T). Another participant also revealed that the trainers were able to provide support to trainees by providing motivation, positively correcting mistakes, and acting as role models in the learning process (P6.T). Furthermore, the trainers were also seen as demonstrating good behavior, maintaining cleanliness, and taking responsibility for their work (P5.T).

Overall, the study results indicate that the implementation of the Teacher Professional Ethics (TPE) code of ethics was perceived quite positively by participants, although not yet fully optimal. The trainers were assessed as having carried out their professional obligations quite well, especially in the aspects of teaching, self-development, institutional responsibility, and ethical behavior. Harmonious working relationships, good communication, and a culture of mutual support are also factors that strengthen the implementation of the code of ethics within the institution. However, the implementation of the code of ethics still shows variations in aspects of discipline, technology adaptation, teaching experience, and the consistency of the application of professional values among trainers. These findings indicate that the implementation of the TPE code of ethics has been quite

effective, but still requires further strengthening, particularly in improving the consistency and equality of the quality of professionalism among educators. The overall findings of this study are summarized in more detail in Table 5.

**Table 5.** Effectiveness of implementing the code of the TPE

Themes	Descriptions
Effective implementation as an obligation	Proper adherence to the code of the TPE, adhering to justice, good morals, good manners, honesty, and transparency; having a sense of fairness; having loyalty with patience in their profession; and following the policy and guidelines of the institution and MoEYS are obligations of trainers.
Education	Education is the main obligation of the trainers: educating content knowledge, intellectual education, physical education, moral education, labor education, and behavioral education; having morality, ethics, and disciplines of their profession; and considering that trainers do good things with morale.
Teaching or Training	Teaching based on the schedule set, teaching by heart, training (skills), producing qualified trainees, having sufficient knowledge on pedagogy, teaching quality with patience and clarity, flexible training based on the real situations, effectively training trainees and transferring content knowledge to trainees, preparing the lesson plans and some training materials to support their training, checking and following up on the daily activities of training, using the teaching materials with modern equipment to train trainees, having clear objectives and confidence of the content in each lesson, having good instructions explaining to the trainees, and being responsible for using supporting aids with clear explanation and advice are main obligations of the trainers and educators.
Administrative tasks	Joining monthly meetings with the management team to discuss and report accomplishments and raise current issues to find solutions; joining their technical team meeting, leading technical team leaders; and reporting on their delegated tasks and challenges to the management team.
Collaboration	Having friendly dialogues, showing their joy and excitement, and making remarkable communication with one another at the workplace.
Participation	Individually contributing to building education and participating in trainee evaluations to help build their gaps.
Support	Promoting the education sector and growth; helping and cooperating with one another; mutually correcting when mistakes are made; junior trainers help senior ones in terms of ICT and updated information related to the training program; attending any training workshop and sharing with those who don't attend or are less understanding of the content of training.
Hygiene	Maintaining hygiene, caring about the campus, and properly disposing of and packing up the garbage are good habits of the trainers.
Personal development	Personal development, conducting research for more supporting documents to facilitate classes, having personal ethics, behaving well towards others with appropriate manners and soft speeches, and showing good role models to the public are the obligations of the trainers.
Respect & Love	Respecting and loving the profession; respecting the trainees and other surrounding people; caring for the trainees; comforting the trainees; being gracious with friendly facial expressions to other relevant people; being generous; using their friendly attitudes towards others; never showing inappropriate attitudes towards the trainees; taking off their shoes before getting into the classes; and both trainees and trainers wearing their uniforms and being pleased to see trainers and trainees greeting and saluting others.
Time mag	Respecting appropriate time management, prioritizing the best time for office hours, and being good at punctuality.
Leadership	Appreciated the director's leadership; valued the friendly humbleness of the director showing his appropriate gestures to others and his hospitality to all trainees and trainers; and were the role models to everyone, especially their trainees.
Motivation & Encouragement	Like the way that the trainers motivate and encourage the trainees to make changes accordingly to their particular personality and mistakes without forces, and so does the director, using no forces towards the staff, including the trainers; showing appreciation towards the trainers' good actions and behaviors at the campus; and regarding admiration and inspirations from the trainers to the trainees when they have done good jobs as a motivational way of inspiring the trainees to put efforts to make more accomplishments.

### 3.4. Perspectives and suggestions for implementing TPE

Based on interviews with participants, the implementation of the Teacher Professional Ethics (TPE) code of ethics is perceived as continuing to improve in the future. Participants expressed optimism that PTEC can develop into a more harmonious, equitable institution, and one founded on

mutual trust. They believe that the effectiveness of the TPE code of ethics implementation will increase with the increasing commitment of all stakeholders to carrying out their professional responsibilities. Key findings related to recommendations for strengthening the implementation of the TPE code of ethics are summarized in Table 6.

However, several participants acknowledged that the implementation of the code of ethics has not been fully implemented. One participant stated, "The implementation of the TPE code is normal; it is difficult to achieve 100 percent in practice" (P2). This statement was reinforced by another participant, who said, "Although it isn't perfect, the current implementation is acceptable" (P3). This view indicates that participants understand the limitations in the implementation of the code of ethics, but they still consider the current situation to be at an acceptable level.

On the other hand, some participants expressed confidence that the implementation of the code of ethics would become more effective in the future. One participant stated that "The effectiveness will improve in the future as all stakeholders are working harder" (P4). Similarly, another participant emphasized that "PTEC is becoming a place where trust, fairness, and harmony will continue to improve" (P1). This optimism was supported by the view that improving the professional capacity of trainers is a crucial factor in strengthening the implementation of the code of ethics. One participant explained that "Trainers are improving their capacity through self-study and training, which will lead to better implementation" (P6).

Professional development was also seen as a strategic effort to improve the quality of trainers' ethical practices. Several participants assessed that the implementation of more modern learning methods had a positive impact on professional practice within the PTEC environment. One participant stated that "We have learned more practical and modern teaching methods at PTEC compared to before" (P3). Another participant added that "Training workshops on ICT and 21st-century education help improve our practices" (P4). These findings indicate that training and strengthening of professional competencies are an important part of supporting the sustainable implementation of the TPE code of ethics.

In addition to professional aspects, participants also emphasized the importance of clear policy support and institutional systems. One participant stated that "Clear guidelines and policies should be communicated to all trainers in advance" (P2). This opinion was reinforced by another participant who stated that "Providing both financial incentives and recognition can encourage better implementation" (P3). Participants believed that clear policies, rewards, and institutional support can strengthen trainers' adherence to the professional code of ethics.

In the context of work motivation, several participants assessed that reward and recognition systems have a significant influence on the effective implementation of the TPE code of ethics. One participant stated that "Differences in salary based on roles could motivate trainers to work harder" (P8). Another participant added that "Trainers who follow the TPE code should be encouraged and appreciated" (P5). Furthermore, there was a view that the code of ethics needs to be more widely disseminated to ensure its understanding by all staff. This is evident in the participant's statement that "The TPE code should be widely promoted and understood by all staff" (P4). Other participants also emphasized the importance of leading by example through good interpersonal relationships, stating that "Trainers should act as role models and maintain good relationships with others" (P2).

Several participants also highlighted the importance of ongoing supervision and coaching to support the implementation of the code of ethics. One participant stated that "Management should advise trainers who don't fully follow the TPE code" (P6). Another participant added that "Continuous encouragement and supervision are necessary to improve implementation" (P5). These findings indicate that implementing the code of ethics requires not only individual awareness but also structural support through supervision and coaching from management.

Furthermore, participants provided various recommendations for strengthening the implementation of the TPE code of ethics in the future. Several participants emphasized the importance of strengthening trainers' motivation and professional values. One participant stated that "Trainers must value themselves, feel proud of their role, and recognize their contribution to developing future generations, and the Ministry of Education and Culture should motivate trainers by providing recognition, trust, and opportunities to present their achievements" (P1). Another participant added that "Both management teams and trainers must act as role models in implementing

the TPE code" (P2). Furthermore, there were suggestions to strengthen disciplinary mechanisms and ethical evaluations. One participant suggested that "A disciplinary committee should be strengthened to monitor and address unethical behavior" (P4.T), while another stated that "Regular monitoring, reporting, and ethical evaluations should be conducted" (P5.T).

Regarding work professionalism, several participants emphasized the importance of trainers' commitment and responsibility to their profession. One participant stated that "Trainers must be committed, responsible, and consistently follow professional ethics" (P7.T). Another participant added that "Trainers should provide clear explanations and ensure trainees fully understand the lessons" (P3). Furthermore, work discipline was also considered important, as reflected in the statement that "Trainers must respect working hours and avoid arriving late or leaving early" (P4.T).

At the policy level, participants assessed that the implementation of the code of ethics needs to be balanced with improvements in welfare and adaptation to the local context. One participant stated that, "If full implementation of the Code is required, salaries and working conditions should also be improved" (P3). Meanwhile, another participant added that, "The TPE code should be adjusted to better fit the Cambodian context" (P6). This demonstrates that the successful implementation of the code of ethics cannot be separated from supportive policy factors and working conditions.

Communication and collaboration were also important considerations in the findings of this study. One participant stated that, "Close communication between trainers and trainees should be maintained to build harmony" (P6.T). Another participant added that, "All stakeholders—trainers, trainees, and staff—should actively participate in school activities" (P5.T). In addition to internal support, participants also assessed that external support from the community plays a significant role in trainers' ethical practices. This is reflected in the statements that "Parents, community members, and society should value and support trainers" (P3.T), and "The community should contribute to supporting novice teachers and improving their working conditions" (P12.T).

Furthermore, participants recommended the importance of ongoing training and self-reflection in professional practice. One participant stated that "Management should organize regular workshops on the effective implementation of the TPE code" (P3.T). Another participant added that "Trainers should continuously reflect on their behavior and improve their professional practice" (P12.T). In the context of strengthening discipline and accountability, several participants considered that firm action was necessary for violations of the code of ethics. This is evident in the statements that "Strict disciplinary actions should be taken against those who violate the TPE code" (P4.T), and "Regular follow-up on trainers' behavior and performance is necessary" (P12.T).

Ultimately, participants emphasized the importance of moral role models in building an ethical culture in educational environments. One participant stated that "Trainers must act as role models by showing respect, fairness, and professionalism" (P2.T). Another participant added that "Doing good with strong moral values will earn respect from society" (P4.T). Overall, the research results show that strengthening the implementation of the TPE code of ethics requires multidimensional support, including strengthening professional values, motivation, communication, supervision, welfare, and ongoing community support.

Strengthening the implementation of the TPE code of ethics is perceived as requiring synergy between personal, professional, and institutional aspects. Participants assessed that implementation of the code of ethics depends not only on individual trainer compliance but is also influenced by an organizational culture that supports consistent ethical practices. Exemplary management, harmonious working relationships, open communication, and professional support are seen as important foundations in creating a conducive educational environment. Furthermore, strengthening trainer capacity through ongoing training, workshops, and professional reflection is believed to improve the quality of code of ethics implementation. Participants also emphasized the importance of community support, improved workplace welfare, ongoing supervision, and regular ethical evaluations to strengthen trainer accountability in carrying out their professional duties. Several participants also emphasized that motivation, appreciation, and professional commitment are important factors in building a more ethical and responsible work culture. Thus, the implementation of the TPE code of ethics is understood as a collective process that requires a shared commitment from all parties, as summarized in Table 6.

**Table 6.** Participants' core recommendation for implementing the codes of the TPE

Themes	Descriptions
Communication	Advised trainers to keep maintaining the smooth communication between trainers and trainees; urged the trainers to have good communication with non-training staff, though they are doing it daily; and advised senior and junior trainees to improve their appropriate communication.
Participation	Urging the trainers to participate and dedicate themselves to their profession willingly is very important to participate in any initiatives and make sacrifices to their training profession, and it was suggested that trainees, trainers, and non-training staff participate effectively in school events and meetings.
Commitment to the Teaching Profession	Willingness to have a vision for the institute and involvement in providing the professional values to mutual understanding between colleagues are resolutions to cope with resentment in teamwork; being ready to start a professional career and keeping up harmonization are effective to be done to be good trainers; offering high priority to the teaching profession is the way that could escalate the profession and decrease the issues; loving trainees, the specialty, the training career, and subordinates is helpful for trainers to build and gain; respecting their profession consistently; and loving and respecting could make them satisfied with their job and increase productivity.
Motivation	MoEYS shall motivate the trainers by offering some great praises and chances to present their accomplishments in terms of research studies or individual success in training young teachers; involvement and encouragement from the school leaders are the motivation for the trainers to implement the code of the TPE; praising those trainers and teachers who have adhered to the code of the TPE well; and praising are motivational tools to motivate the trainers and teachers to produce more quality work.
Building value as a trainer	Value training profession; believe in maintaining and adhering to the values of trainers and the code of the TPE and duty; trainers have to maintain strong self-esteem in the profession; urge trainers to have a good conscience, professionalism, and ethics when training consistently; build up the value of trainers; and shall give credit and value to trainers.
Trust	MoEYS shall trust more in trainers and build up the value of knowledge builders in the education system, and trust is everything that gives people comfort to generate productivity.
Support	Providing trainers and new teachers with multi-level support: MoEYS supports and encourages trainers and school administrators to operate equitably and offer equal opportunities; community involvement was emphasized; providing incentives to new teachers: trainers should put forth more effort to assist trainees, assess trainees' comprehension regularly, and employ suitable pedagogical support materials; the significance of trainers' ongoing professional and personal development via training, education, and mentoring; advised to keep in constant contact with new teachers via online channels (such as Facebook groups or Telegram); create a welcoming and motivating workplace; supportive cooperation from village chiefs, school administrators, and local authorities was also considered crucial; and living conditions and financial assistance for trainers and young teachers, including permitting them to work extra jobs outside of regular business hours to support their families.
Encouragement	Encouragement and motivation are essential support strategies at multiple levels; the MoEYS encourages and supports trainers and school leaders to work fairly and provide equal opportunities for all, urging them to recognize the value of trainers and actively participate in training activities alongside trainees. Support and appreciation from school management teams and the community were viewed as crucial for motivating trainers to adhere to the code of the TPE and continue professional development. Parents were encouraged to support children by ensuring regular and punctual class attendance, and encouragement and motivation were identified as key factors in promoting teachers' and trainers' commitment to implementing the code of the TPE.

Furthermore, various technical and systemic strategies are perceived as strengthening the implementation of the Teacher Professional Ethics (TPE) code of ethics. Strict enforcement of rules, continuous competency development, and increased time discipline are seen as important aspects in maintaining consistent professional behavior among trainers. Participants also assessed that strengthening administrative systems, holding regular meetings, and providing constructive feedback play a crucial role in the process of evaluating and continuously improving the implementation of the code of ethics. Furthermore, professionalism, neutrality, and responsibility in the educational environment are seen as key elements in maintaining the integrity and harmony of the institution. Other participants also viewed systematic oversight and periodic evaluations as helpful in minimizing ethical violations in daily professional practice, as described in Table 7.

**Table 7.** Participants' core supporting strategies for implementing the codes of the TPE

Themes	Descriptions
Strict action	The need for stricter enforcement from MoEYS, recommending that firm action be taken when unethical practices arise; amendments to the code of the TPE should be carefully adjusted to better suit the Cambodian context; the role of management teams in maintaining regular attendance records and strengthening disciplinary measures when ethical issues occur; school leaders should closely monitor trainers' professional behavior and documentation, while trainers themselves should remain accountable for their conduct; management teams should actively collaborate with staff to consistently reinforce implementation of the code of the TPE; strengthening its effective application was viewed as a key strategy for addressing potential challenges within educational institutions; and they encountered no significant barriers to implementing the code of the TPE, attributing this to the effectiveness of existing training programs.
Personal development	Strengthening the implementation of the code of the TPE through regular training workshops, increasing awareness among the community and trainees, and enhancing pedagogical and participatory training for teachers and trainers; reviewing the code of the TPE during regular meetings, using clear ethical and unethical case studies for guidance, and encouraging teachers and trainers to engage in self-study and research to improve professional practice.
No political involvement	Not to be involved in any political issues in the education system if there were any; urged not to have group-thinkers in the training institute, because if there were group-thinking, the harmonization would disappear.
Time management	Urging some late trainers to respect office hours and guidelines: some trainers arrive late and leave early, and some trainees arrive late to class.
Administrative task	Trainers document trainees' ethical activities, management teams conduct annual self-evaluations and reward high performers, and MoEYS continues implementing the Teacher Career Path to guide trainers' long-term professional development.
Monthly meeting	Having community and school meetings to introduce the challenges and needs of trainers and teachers and to find solutions to the difficulties they face.
Feedback	Maintaining constructive criticism of the teachers and trainers is helpful to cope with the issues happening rather than gossiping about others.
Attitude	Urging some trainers to show their hospitality and greetings to the trainees when they are greeted, all trainees shall keep the great attitudes; advised them to focus on the code of the TPE; recommended that the trainers should better get to know trainees' preferences and attitudes; and suggested the relevant stakeholders shall keep the campus clean.

Professional ethics is the foundation and nature of a teacher. In this regard, one hundred percent of the participants saw the code of the TPE, whereas seventy-five percent of the participants completely read it, and twenty-five percent of the participants partly read it (Yang, 2024). Codes of ethics are an important expression of societal values shared by individuals within the same society (Espinosa-Pike & Barrainkua-Aroztegi, 2014).

A code of conduct exists to support teachers in their activities in classes working with children and supports children as they work with their teachers (Van Nuland & Poisson, 2009). However, the findings pointed out that a couple of participants complained about the lack of use of the training materials to support classes. Consistently, five participants considered that having less conscience and focusing on training are what the trainers should consider and change. In addition to this, a couple of participants were complaining about somehow neglecting trainers when questioned during the classes. Therefore, it could definitely be considered that the trainers are qualified with their higher educations. Based on the findings of this study, eleven participants declared that insufficient monthly salary leads to less commitment, finding another job, and a delay of the effectiveness of implementing the code of the TPE. Not differently, looking for another second and/or third job added to the first main profession is the factor shared by the other four participants. Besides, five participants added that poor classroom management and non-professional attitudes and behaviors in terms of inappropriate dressing are key issues leading to the problem in this matter.

The first research question on participants' perceptions of the barriers hindering the effectiveness of implementing the code of the TPE pointed out two different core opinions. The first perceived core opinion is personal factors, and the second one is social environment factors. Regarding the personal factors, most of the participants pointed out the lack of self-esteem, commitment, participation, concentration on the profession, time management, and willingness to engage with the profession, according to the finding of this study. Apart from this, the participants

also pointed out that some trainees (novice teachers) may find the second and/or third job excluding their first teaching job due to the family economics factor. Teachers' literacy with ethics cultivation, cultural cultivation, professionalism, and psychological qualities, and the ethical cultivation is teacher-centered, and the ethical is first (Hu, 2015). Therefore, it could definitely be seen that teachers shall prioritize their time, dedicating it to their first profession, which is teaching.

Not surprisingly, the findings pointed out a few matters regarding the barriers hindering the trainers from implementing the code of the TPE. Commonly, the participants revealed less participation and value of the community and colleagues and less encouragement and demotivation from the surrounding people in terms of the senior staff. Likewise, materialism also causes the trainers to find another job to make more money, according to the findings of this study. Once they get involved with other careers, they will be busier and less productive in their profession. Ethics are considered to be the principles and norms that people deal with in the relationship between people and others (Fang, 2021; Saxena & Upadhyay, 2020; Yang, 2024; Zhu & Guo, 2021). This is effectively referred to as the training profession. According to the findings of this study, participants criticized the resentment in the teamwork of the trainers. Additionally, the twenty-third article of the fifth chapter officially stated, "Teachers shall have good relationships with non-teaching staff and respect the hierarchies of managerial levels." Moreover, urged teachers to ensure their communication with other stakeholders, such as students, colleagues, parents, school management, and others, in various forms (Forster & Maxwell, 2022).

Obligations, extent of implementing the code of the TPE, and the ethical things that the trainers adhere to and do daily are considered core components leading to the effectiveness of implementations of the code of the TPE. Teachers ought to maintain their status and uprightness in the career and take rational steps in relation to the maintenance of pupils under administration to guarantee their security and well-being (Forster & Maxwell, 2022; Maxwell, 2017). Then, correlation seems to be getting along well in this particular aspect. Based on the above findings of the study, it was commonly suggested that the MoEYS shall continue administering the TCP and offer encouragement, trust, empowerment, and incentives to the outstanding educators. The suggestions were paralleled to the Forward in Education in Cambodia: Findings from Cambodia's Experience in PISA for Development. The purpose of the Ministry of Education is to shape the education system to offer exceptional and equitable outcomes to all Cambodian learners (Hangchuon, 2018).

Finally, the trainees were advised to keep proper attitudes towards others in terms of the trainers, focus on the lessons of the code of the TPE due to upcoming needs on a particular subject when becoming novice teachers, communicate with surrounding people, and help clean up the campus and, especially, the dormitory. In short, according to the findings of this study, it was briefly predicted that PTEC would be prosperous with trust, fairness, and harmonization. Increasingly, it was also regarded that the effectiveness of the implementations of the code of the TPE and trainers' efficiency would be more effective and positive with a better impact. The next chapter concludes and recommends possible suggestions and studies.

#### 4. Conclusion

From early 2020 to early 2021, a qualitative research study was carried out at the Provincial Teacher Education Center (PTEC) to investigate how trainees, trainers, and the director perceived the success of applying the codes of the TPE. Twenty participants—trainees, trainers, and institutional leadership—were carefully chosen. Four primary research questions served as the study's compass, and supplementary questions were used to produce rich and detailed data. Using interview guides created by the researcher, in-depth interviews were used to gather data. Individual interviews took place at various times at PTEC. All interviews were transcribed, checked, and thoroughly examined after data collection to guarantee precision and comprehensiveness. After that, the researcher used a coding framework to code and classify the data's main themes. The results represent partial perceptions and can't be applied to other contexts because the study was restricted to a single teacher education institution and had a small sample size. The study's scope was limited to opinions about how well the codes of the TPE were implemented. The results showed that trainers generally understood and appreciated the code of the TPE, realizing its significance in directing daily practice and professional behavior. Effective implementation was hampered by a number of issues, such as a lack of encouragement and motivation, inadequate professional recognition, low pay,

unfavorable living conditions, and demanding workloads that required trainers to take on extra jobs. Concerns about junior educators being harassed or chastised by senior colleagues, materialism, and unfavorable attitudes toward ethical adherence were also noted. The study suggested that professional development workshops, frequent stakeholder meetings, better pay structures, a contextual review of the code of the TPE, and the acknowledgment of exceptional trainers should be used to strengthen motivation. Despite the difficulties, trainers were thought to successfully carry out their primary professional duties, especially in the areas of instruction, teamwork, and moral behavior. Moreover, this study pointed out the basics for comprehending and applying the codes of the TPE in the educational contexts. The study is also limited due to the size of twenty participants, which cannot be generalized to the bigger population. Last but not least, the stakeholders should pay more attention and contribute to promoting adherence to the code of the TPE.

### Acknowledgment

The dynamically vigorous success of the research thesis wouldn't have been possible without the efforts, support, and encouragement of the following respected individuals. I owe my family, instructors, faculty members, supervisor, and MoEYS.

### Declarations

- Author contribution** : The first author contributed to data collection and analysis for the first draft of this article. The second author contributed to the quality of the research article by editing and revising the article.
- Funding statement** : There is no information available about funding.
- Conflict of interest** : We, the authors, declare no conflict of interest regarding the publication.
- Additional information** : No additional information available for this paper.

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