Research Institute

THE PNMD RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS: KEY INSIGHTS FROM MYANMAR

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Pyin-Nya-Man-Daing Programme

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Foreword

The past four years have been harsh, to say the least, for millions from Myanmar. The fates of countless people from all walks of life were hit hard by politics. On the national level, disruption and downturn took turn in virtually all sectors after a brief period of hope. The same is true for education and research. Human rights education and evidence-based research barely flourished in pre-coup Myanmar. But an ever-growing cohort of inspiring young researchers made the research scene vibrant and optimistic. Events following the first of February 2021 interrupted academic and career pathways of these promising researchers, some of whom I am fortunate enough to know personally. Yet their passion for academic inquiry and social change through research was not stopped. Against the greatest odds and hardships, they have preserved in their academic journeys and continue contributing to our collective knowledge of the society and state of Myanmar. This collection is a tribute to these unwavering efforts and bright minds which never cease to inspire the rest of us.

Enabling quality research is YRI's mission. Impact-oriented evidence-based research is in sorely needed in today's Myanmar. After several years of disorientation, it is about time to reflect, through creative research, on issues across various domains, old and new alike. The YRI team and its development partners are proud to have contributed to this effort. The PNMD Research Highlights: Key Insights from Myanmar contains synopses of 37 research papers developed and published in the three years from 2022 to 2024. Researchers engaged in important questions from diverse themes including women and LGBTQI, cultural rights, access to education, environmental justice, justice for vulnerable communities, sustainable peace, the challenges of migrants and displaced people, and politics. In doing so, they employed a wide range creative data collection techniques and methodologies despite limitations imposed by extraordinary safety and ethical concerns. The quality of research was ensured by close technical support and mentorship of supervisors and reviewers from partner institutions and the YRI team.

This book is intended for a wide audience including but not limited to: academics, policy makers from Myanmar and beyond, civil society organizations, international donors and development organizations. I welcome readers to first explore the research titles under each thematic area to appreciate the diversity of subjects in this collection, before engaging deeper into the topics that appeal to your interest most or align with your organization's work. I hope that our research papers can provide fresh insights which are helpful in setting research agendas, laying out prudent strategies,

getting to know more about the communities that your organization serves, making aid policies, and advocating with international governments.

Once again, I would like to express my appreciation of the great efforts put into developing and publishing the research papers by our researchers, supervisors, editors and technical support teams. This volume is a direct result of their excellent work. Moreover, while I believe that this collection is a humble yet valued contribution to Myanmar's human rights education and literature, much work still needs to be done for the local research landscape to thrive. I hope the following research summaries point to new avenues for that work.

Yours sincerely,

Bhone Myat
Chairperson
YRI

Acknowledgements

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to each and every one for your invaluable contributions, which have significantly enhanced the quality of the research. Once again, I am deeply thankful to all those who have made such meaningful contributions to these research projects.

Sabae Khine
Senior Research Adviser
YRI

Contents

Barriers Faced by Women & LGBTQI

The Struggle and Resilience of Rakhine Women for Their Livelihoods in the Face of Triple Challenges: COVID-19, the Resurgence of Armed Conflict following the 2021 Military Coup and Cyclone Mocha

Ei Shwe Sin Phyo[1]

In various regions across the world, vulnerable individuals often confront the brunt of abuses and encounter cumulative sufferings through political, economic, and other crises. Among them, women specifically tolerate more prominent challenges compared to men, ranging from employment and wage disparities to gender inequalities, gender-based violence, limited power in decision-making, and participation in leadership roles (Cruz and Klinger, 2016; Oxfam International, 2024). This issue of women facing more challenges holds true for those in the complicated situation in the western part of Myanmar, Rakhine, which is marked by armed clashes between the State Administration Council (SAC) and the Arakan Army (AA) and Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA) (Human Rights Council, 2019; Sachdev, 2021; UNDP, UNWOMEN, and UN Development Group, 2022). In northern areas of the region, where most clashes and conflicts occur, the poverty rate reached 78% which was nearly twice the national average according to the Kofi Annan Commission's 2017 report (Naing and Lin, 2019). Therefore, over an extended period, women in those regions in particular have been faced with prolonged human rights issues, livelihood struggles, and gender-based violence as the result of wars and displacement.

Unfortunately, women's livelihood and economic challenges in the region have been compounded by the Covid-19 pandemic, a resurgence of armed clashes after the 2021 coup, and the exacerbated effects of Cyclone Mocha in 2023. Their perspectives in confronting these struggles have been overlooked among the different issues happening inside the region and the whole country. This study, therefore, investigates the hardships faced by women in northern Rakhine State, particularly highlighting their livelihood struggles and coping mechanisms amidst these crises. Through this, the study attempts to provide essential insights for policymakers and stakeholders, empowering women in the region and enhancing their resilience amidst multiple crises.

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[1] Freelance Researcher

By using a qualitative research approach with nine in-depth interviews and data analysis, the study found how women in northern Arakan encounter terrifying livelihood situations impacted by armed conflict, natural disasters, and the pandemic. The interview participants were vulnerable Rakhine and Rohingya women chosen based on their residential status and experiences, allowing them to share their insights about their own struggles and those of other women in their areas. The research prioritized ethics and security considerations due to the current political sensitivities. The study covered the rural and urban areas of Sittwe, which were seriously impacted by the Mocha cyclone.

According to the findings, women's vulnerability and livelihood struggles in northern Rakhine State are influenced by a complex intersection of the above-mentioned multiple crises. The impacts were more serious after the coup compared to the Covid-19 period. Furthermore, the findings revealed the serious negative impact on women's livelihoods from increased security risks and incidents of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), and gender role discrimination at household and community levels during the crisis. In addition to these challenges, the findings also highlighted notable individual and community-level coping mechanisms that partially alleviate complex livelihood hardships experienced under marginalization. Individual resilience strategies and community support networks like women groups in some villages previously supported by Non-government Organizations or Civil Society Organizations are some methods to overcome livelihood challenges.

Lastly, the study again highlighted the significant challenges to their coping mechanisms. These include the limited access to humanitarian aid, no specific livelihood-adaptable measures amidst the new compounded daily struggles. Particularly, these problems stem from the weaknesses and lack of effective resilience strategies implemented by local and state-level stakeholders (the Arakan Army and particularly, the SAC). Therefore, the study indicated the need for more efficient interventions like reducing the restrictions on Travel Authorizations set out by the junta to allow humanitarian organizations to support women in crisis-affected areas and improving supportive actions for their livelihoods. In brief, the study recommends more inclusive targeted actions to mitigate the specific problems confronted by women in the northern Arakan region amidst crises.

Gender Inequality in Inheritance Rights: A Study of Zomi-Chin Indigenous People in Chin State

Gin Lam Dim[2]

Inheritance right is one of the categories of the rights to ancestral property of the deceased, either immovable, or movable property. Zomi-Chin women from northern Chin State encounter various challenges and disadvantages in different areas of their lives because of gender discrimination in inheritance matters. The researcher explored the custom of unequal inheritance practiced in Zomi-Chin society, analyzed how the current inheritance system affects the rights of Zomi-Chin women under customary law, and explored paths to more equal and fair inheritance practices applicable within Zomi Chin society.

The researcher applied a qualitative approach for an in-depth understanding of the current situation of Zomi-Chin inheritance customs and to explore critically how participants define and interpret women's rights to ancestral lands and how they contribute to refining the custom fairly and justly. The data was collected from five informants, Zomi-Chin leaders, elders, and educators randomly selected in terms of gender, sub-tribes, and leadership role. The study analyzed relevant human rights declarations, conventions, and documents and added to the existing literature on gender inequality, inheritance rights, and indigenous peoples' rights.

The rights to property of indigenous peoples are guaranteed under International Law such as Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Convention on the Rights of the Child, Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The Zomi-Chin indigenous people have applied their own customary law and the law called Kam Hau Upadi, 1925, codified by Pum Za Mang. On inheritance matters, they have to abide by the Customary Inheritance Law codified under section 15A of the Chin Special Division (Amendment) Act, 1957. The rights to inheritance of Zomi-Chin women are still remote and unequal to those of men under enacted law and customary law.

The family tree diagram below shows the third generations of the descendant line and ascendant line of the deceased. It can be seen that the rights to inheritance

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are unequal and unfair on gender under the explanation 3 of section 3(2) of the Customary Inheritance Law 1957. Male relatives to the third generation of the descendant line (son, grandson, great grandson) and ascendant line (father, uncle, parental grandfather) of the deceased are at the priority stage, and the female line inherits only if male relatives are absent. There is no right of inheritance for the deceased's wife, aunt and descendants of the female relatives.

Diagram - Inheritance practice in Zomi Chin Society
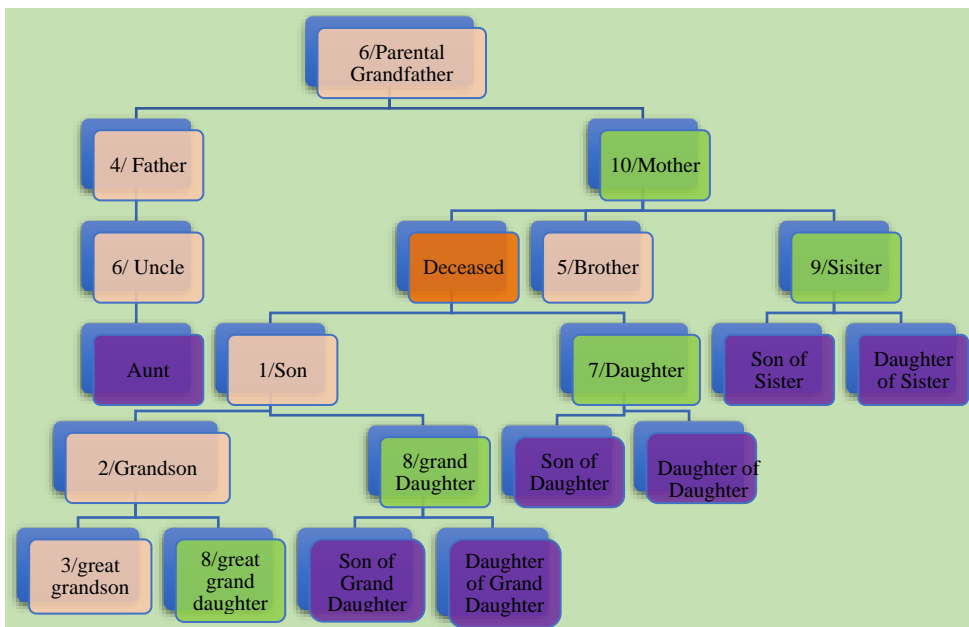
The inheritance rights practiced in Zomi-Chin society are influenced by patriarchal norms and values under the Zomi-Chin customary law, Kam Hau Upadi. According to these laws and customs, Zomi-Chin women have no rights to inherit property from their parents or husbands when there are male relatives in the lineage up to the third generation. The participants also established that the exclusion of daughters from inheritance is tantamount to a violation of the human right that prescribes "all human beings are equal before the law" and discrimination against Zomi-Chin women. The study asserts that the Zomi-Chin women still face many challenges in securing equal rights and interests equal to men due to the legal protection, recognition and lack of awareness of gender equality in inheritance.

The finding is that the Zomi-Chin customs favor male heirs, excluding most women from inheritance. Although the law allows daughters to inherit, male-preferential customs dominate in practice. Women's exclusion limits their empowerment and perpetuates gender inequality. Some community members now support equal inheritance, especially for caregiving daughters. Therefore, it is necessary to align inheritance laws with human rights principles and promote awareness of gender-inclusive practices.

The researcher recommends that, to achieve gender equality in Zomi-Chin inheritance, it is essential to reform the existing customary inheritance law. Moreover, awareness raising and advocacy with parents, heirs, leaders, and policymakers appear to be the best way to modify customs for inclusive, fair, and equal inheritance practice within Zomi-Chin society.

Post-Revolution Strategies: Dismantling Gender Stereotypes and Empowering Women Across Myanmar's Societal Landscape

Ei Nandar Khin[3]

This study emphasizes women's roles in Myanmar's revolutionary context, examining how the 2021 Myanmar Spring Revolution has transformed societal norms. This research also investigates how the conflict has had a reverse effect on women's empowerment by addressing their ongoing efforts to shift cultural stereotypes and promote gender equality through the social justice movement in the revolution. During the 2021 Spring Revolution, women have become key leaders in driving social justice movements and challenging long-standing patriarchal norms. This study employed qualitative data through in-depth interviews with 10 respondents from distinct backgrounds. It aims to provide valuable insights into cultural shifts and the revolutionary impact of the 2021 Spring Revolution on social norms and practices. Additionally, it explores how these changes affect women's empowerment and promote gender equality on different societal levels. The findings underscore the transformative power of collective action in dismantling gender stereotypes and empowering women across Myanmar's societal landscape. To realize the vision of a more equitable and inclusive society, this study provides practical ideas to scholarly knowledge of how social justice movements are connected to gender equality to foster gender equality and empower women during and after a time of political upheaval.

By demolishing traditional structures, the revolution has enabled women to enlarge their influence in social and political spheres, advocating for lasting change and genuine gender equality in Myanmar. This research documents the significant role of women in Myanmar's 2021 Spring Revolution, highlighting their efforts to challenge and transform entrenched societal norms and gender stereotypes. Conflicts often disrupt traditional societal structures and create unique opportunities for women to step into roles of power and engage more effectively in social and political arenas. This dynamic was notably evident during the Myanmar Spring Revolution. Women's participation in conflict and post-conflict reconstruction can lead to a redefinition of

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[3] MA candidate in Social Science, Development Specialization at Chiang Mai University in Thailand. This study was conducted from Dec 2023 to June 2024. The researcher presented the paper at the 4th International Conference on Burma Studies 2024 .

social norms. By stepping into roles traditionally reserved for men, women challenge and change societal perceptions of gender capabilities. This redefinition can have a lasting impact and encourage more inclusive and equitable gender practices that recognize and value the contributions of women.

Hence, conflict also results in the formation of new governance structures such as transitional governments or unity governments and provides fresh platforms for women to participate in political processes and influence policy decisions. The inclusion of women in these emerging governance frameworks ensures representation of their perspectives and rights in the new political landscape. The establishment of the National Unity Government (NUG) provides opportunities for women to assume key ministerial roles and advocate for gender equality and women's rights although there are still some limitations to women's decision-making power.

Through qualitative analysis, the study reveals how the revolution has created opportunities for women to illustrate leadership roles and promote gender equality. Despite historical patriarchal constraints, women have become central characters in the social justice movement, advocating for democracy, human rights, and gender equality. This active participation in the revolution has proved their capacity to lead and effect social change, reshaping perceptions of gender roles in Myanmar. Moreover, their involvement has revealed the essential role of diverse leadership regarding the comprehensive needs of affected communities. The findings also emphasized the transformative power of collective action in dismantling gender stereotypes and empowering women.

Examining Constraints on Women's Participation in Decision-Making Roles in Myanmar's National Unity Government

Sithu Aung, Myo Myint Myat Thein, Myat Thiri[4]

Globally, women's contributions to political movements remain underrecognized, often failing to translate into leadership roles. Myanmar reflects these trends. Following the 2021 military coup, the National Unity Government (NUG) was formed as an alternative political body. Despite the central role of women in resistance movements, their representation within the NUG is disproportionately low, with only 17.6% of leadership positions held by women. This research investigates barriers to women's political leadership in the NUG and proposes strategies to foster inclusivity and equity.

The barriers women face in achieving leadership positions in political movements have been widely documented. Global studies reveal that entrenched patriarchal norms and systemic biases continue to impede women's participation in decision-making roles (Kumar, 2002). In Myanmar, cultural and religious norms have historically limited women's political engagement, but during the ongoing revolution, these barriers have become less influential as broader societal transformations challenge traditional hierarchies (Latt et al., 2017).

Although international mechanisms like gender quotas have shown mixed results, they often fail to address structural challenges, such as transparency and accountability, which are critical for sustained inclusivity (Htun and Jones, 2002). In South Africa, legal and policy frameworks aimed at increasing women's participation demonstrated that systemic change requires more than quotas; it needs institutional reforms and grassroots support (Gouws, 2008). Similarly, Myanmar's political transition underscores the necessity of addressing foundational challenges, including security concerns and procedural clarity, to foster women's leadership (Minoletti, 2019).

The interplay of gender norms and institutional constraints is particularly pronounced in Myanmar, where initiatives like the National Strategic Plan for the

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[4] Undergraduate students and emerging researchers. The paper was presented at the 4th International Conference on Burma Studies 2024.

Advancement of Women (2013–2022) made limited progress due to the absence of robust implementation mechanisms (May Sabe Phyu, 2016). The current context demands that women not only gain access to leadership roles but also influence institutional reforms to promote gender equality in governance.

A qualitative approach was adopted, employing semi-structured interviews with ten participants involved in the Spring Revolution. Ethical measures, including confidentiality, were prioritized due to the sensitive political environment. Thematic analysis was used to identify trends and barriers in women's participation in decision-making roles within the NUG.

The study identified key barriers of women's leadership in the NUG. Security concerns were prominent, especially in urban areas where risks of persecution are significant. Transparency issues in leadership selection further deter participation, with unclear pathways limiting access. Institutional support for women remains insufficient, evidenced by the absence of dedicated departments for women's rights. Despite these challenges, respondents recognized the significant contributions of women to the revolution, as exemplified by leaders like Ei Thinzar Maung. The findings align with global patterns of underrepresentation but revealed specific challenges unique to Myanmar's context. Security concerns and procedural opacity emerged as primary barriers. Unlike other contexts, cultural and religious norms are less influential in the current revolutionary period, as women actively challenge traditional gender roles. Addressing these barriers requires enhancing procedural transparency, fostering inclusivity, and implementing institutional reforms to ensure women's meaningful participation in leadership roles.

Understanding the Root Causes of Discrimination Against Gender Diverse Youth in Myanmar

Arthur[5]

In this research, the term gender diverse youth represent the LGBTQIA+ youth in Myanmar under the age of 25. This research started in June of 2023 and ended in June 2024. The main idea behind the research is to elaborate the source of discrimination against gender diverse youth in Myanmar through examining the education, healthcare, and religion and cultural sectors of Myanmar. In depth interviews were conducted with five LGBTQIA+ youth from Myanmar together with interviewed with two teachers, three doctors and one Buddhist monk as a part of ethnographic interview. The research also surveyed 47 individual in-person surveys in Mandalay, Myanmar and 39 online.

The findings of the research can be separated into four different sections. Discrimination based on religious grounds is the most common, especially due to the interpretations of the third precept (no sexual misconduct). The basic Buddhist scripture is the same for all Theravada Buddhist countries, but the original texts are written in Pali and the translation of these text into Burmese leads to the problem of misinterpretation which results in discrimination toward gender diverse youths.

The main issue in Myanmar culture is patriarchy which encourages discrimination by imposing traditional gender roles. The idea of a "real man" is problematic and leads to more discrimination against gay men and trans women who do not fit into the public idea of masculinity than against other LGBTQIA+ people. 23% (23) of the survey participants think gender diverse youth are not normal, and 30% (26) think that they are not "real men/women". These standards based on patriarchy were taught to children of a young age from around the age of 6 to 7 years old. There are problems with the translation of the phrase 'human rights' which in Burmese contains connotations.

In terms of education, there is a lack of consistency in the training of teachers in Myanmar. All the gender diverse youth pointed out this fact and the interviews

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[5] Master Student, Institute of Human Rights and Peace Studies, Mahidol University. The researcher presented the paper at the 4th International Conference on Burma Studies 2024.

with teachers also show a similar idea. There are no Myanmar government guidelines relating to providing education about gender diverse youth. All the gender diverse youth participants faced discrimination, mostly during middle s and high school. The most common forms of discrimination are name calling, isolation, and discriminatory treatment.

In interviews the doctors mentioned that they do not receive enough training relating to providing healthcare for gender diverse youths. They experienced working or volunteering with gender diverse communities through NGOs One of the doctors pointed out a lack of training relating to gender diversity for non-medical staff members and be the possibility of discrimination in medical environments.

One of the most prominent problems in discrimination toward gender diverse youth is Session 377 of the Penal Code, also known as the sodomy law. Due to this law, some other laws in Myanmar can be interpreted in a discriminatory way.

In summary, socio-cultural norms are not the only cause of discrimination toward the gender diverse youth, but are interconnected with other factors as well. The root causes of discrimination have been found to be religion, culture (especially patriarchy), education and antiquated Laws (like section 377 of the penal code). Section 377 of the penal code is major obstacle to improving rights related to gender diversity. All these factors are equally important in reducing discrimination against gender diverse youth in Myanmar and must be dealt with simultaneously.

Challenges Encountered by LGBTQ+ Individuals in the Workplace: An Analysis of Myanmar

Kalyar Ko Ko[6]

This paper examines instances of human rights violations and discrimination against individuals who identify as LGBTQ+ in the workplace in Myanmar. These experiences of discrimination, and unfair violations of their human rights create workplace challenges for them. the study further explores other key concepts and factors contributing to these challenges and provides an understanding of barriers encountered by the LGBTQ+ community. The research employed qualitative methods, including in-depth online interviews with 10 participants and a Google Form survey with 4 respondents, representing diverse identities within the LGBTQ+ community. To ensure a more comprehensive analysis, the study also includes a thorough review of relevant literature.

The findings of this study revealed that members of the LGBTQ+ community in Myanmar face significant workplace challenges, including serious mistreatment, societal prejudice, discrimination, and human rights violations. They regularly encounter these challenges in their daily work lives, which extend beyond the workplace to the job-seeking process. Transgender individuals encounter particularly heightened discrimination, frequently facing job denials because their appearance does not correspond with their biological sex. Regarding human rights violations, the study found that members of the LGBTQ+ community are often denied their fundamental rights to work, including the freedom to choose employment, the principle of equal pay for equal work, access to a favorable working environment, protection against unemployment, and the right to freedom of expression, as guaranteed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Despite the fact that the Myanmar government has ratified the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights, the absence of legal protections that safeguard the LGBTQ+ community in Myanmar from workplace discrimination and diminished employment opportunities contributes to these challenges. Similarly, deeply rooted conservative cultural traditions and religious beliefs in Myanmar, as well as a significant lack of understanding of sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression (SOGIE), have fostered a challenging workplace for them.

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[6] Freelance researcher. The researcher presented the paper at the 4th International Conference on Burma Studies 2024.

To address these issues, the research provided some recommendations and suggestions for both the government and Myanmar society.

- It is essential that the government enact anti-discrimination laws and rules that explicitly include protections for the LGBTQ+ community.
- The government, with the collaboration of international organizations and civil society, should also support and advocate awareness campaigns promoting LGBTQ+ rights and enhancing society's understanding of SOGIE.
- Myanmar society also should be willing to engage in awareness campaigns, eliminate outdated views about LGBTQ+ people, and genuinely recognize and respect their status and rights.

By implementing these steps, individuals in Myanmar, who still hold outdated perceptions of LGBTQ+ people, will begin to recognize these beliefs as conservative misconceptions. Only then will employment opportunities for the LGBTQ+ community expand, and the challenges they face will gradually diminish. This research has identified key factors that hinder equality in the workplace and emphasized the importance of fostering inclusivity. This study advocated for the need to create a workplace culture in Myanmar that respects diversity and ensures equal opportunities for all.

Exploring social inequalities and challenges faced by women in a rare earth elements mining area: A Study of Kachin State, Myanmar

Nan Yin Yin Htun[7]

Global extractive industries are often associated with significant social inequalities, particularly for women. In Myanmar, women in rare earth elements (REEs) mining areas face systemic discrimination, limited opportunities, and various forms of exploitation. This policy brief focuses on the REE mining sector in Kachin State, aiming to highlight the challenges faced by women and provide actionable recommendations. The brief is directed at policymakers, NGOs, and international organizations interested in gender equality, sustainable development, and human rights.

Women in Kachin State's REE mining areas experience systemic discrimination in recruitment, unequal pay, and exclusion from decision-making. Additionally, many are subjected to physical, sexual, and psychological abuse. The male-dominated industry exacerbates these challenges, leaving women in vulnerable positions, such as cooks or sex workers. Barriers like limited access to justice and fear of retaliation prevent them from reporting violence or seeking help. Addressing these issues is critical to promoting gender equality and improving the livelihoods of women in the region.

Key Findings in this research are:

- Women face widespread gender-based discrimination in recruitment, hiring, and career advancement.
- Limited job opportunities force many women into low-paying or exploitative roles, including sex work.
- Female workers are exposed to hazardous chemicals and physical abuse, with many suffering from reproductive health issues due to unsafe conditions.
- Reports highlight the absence of mechanisms to address violence or workplace exploitation effectively.
- The region's militarized environment adds to the insecurity, particularly for displaced women.

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[7] Freelance researcher. The paper was published as a policy brief in YRI policy brief series 2024.

The research recommended the followings goals:

- to implement strict policies to prevent discrimination, harassment, and violence in mining sites;
- to establish workplace codes of conduct with severe penalties for violations;
- to encourage the inclusion of women in leadership and decision-making roles within the mining industry through quotas for female representation in mining workforces and executive positions. to provide access to healthcare, legal aid, and psychosocial support for women affected by violence and exploitation;
- to create safe reporting mechanisms to address grievances without fear of retaliation;
- to partner with NGOs and local communities to raise awareness about women's rights and offer education programs;
- to encourage international actors to advocate for gender-responsive policies in the extractive sector;

The challenges faced by women in Kachin State's REE mining sector underscore the urgent need for systemic change. Addressing these issues will not only improve the lives of women but also contribute to more sustainable and equitable mining practices. Policymakers, NGOs, and stakeholders must act decisively to implement these recommendations, ensuring that women are protected, empowered, and included as essential contributors to the industry and society.

Cultural Rights
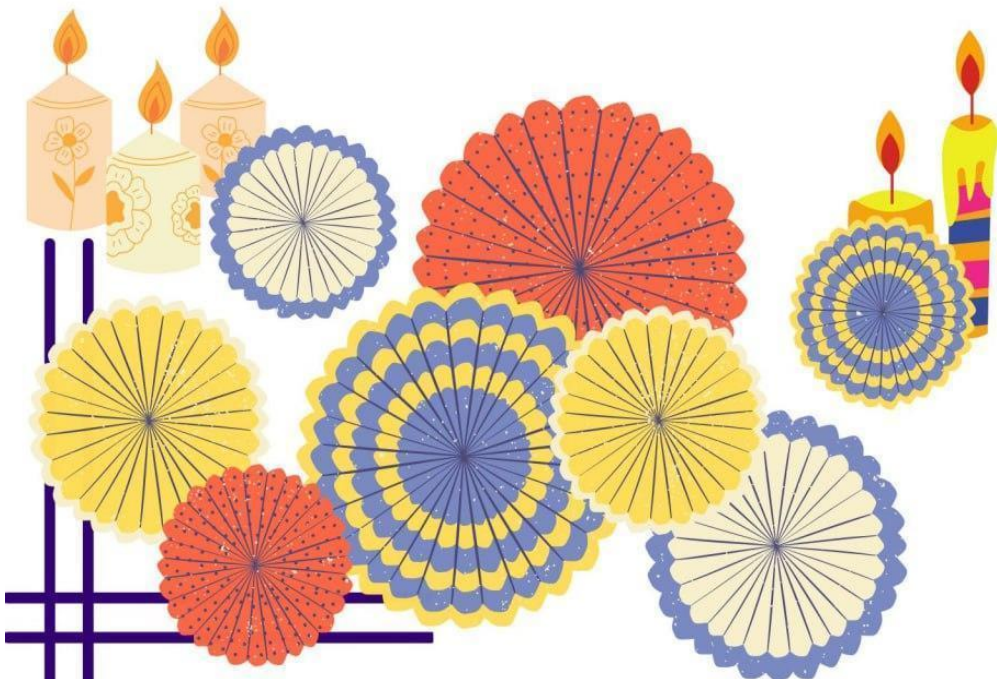
The Vitalization and Sustainability of the Phlou Ethnolinguistic Minority Language in Hpa-An Township, Myanmar: An Analysis of Community and Institutional Support

Kamar[8], Tracy[9]

The Phlou (Eastern Pwo Karen) language is one of the ethnolinguistic minority languages in Myanmar, a multi-ethnically diverse country. Despite the enormous influence of the majority group languages, strong vitalization of the Phlou language by the Phlou community led to the enduring existence of the language. However, Phlou language sustainability has recently declined. The significance of this research is to highlight the voices and perspectives of the Phlou ethnolinguistic minority group regarding the vitalization of the Phlou language. It also provides essential recommendations for stakeholders to enhance the preservation of this minority language.

This research aims to explore the efforts and challenges of the Phlou minority group in vitalizing their language. Additionally, it examines the institutional support for the vitalization of the language. This study applied a qualitative research methodology, designed with semi-structured individual interviews using a case study approach. Community support is studied in terms of how Phlou people make unwavering efforts to vitalize their language within a multi-linguistic society. Institutional support regards how the government preserves and promotes the Phlou language to vitalize it among the ethnic languages.

Dunbar (2022) demonstrated that international law includes 'minority linguistic human rights' within the human rights framework. In Myanmar, ethnic languages are preserved and developed according to the 2014 National Education Law and 2015 Ethnic Rights Protection Law. This study supports the argument of Esteban-Guitart et al. (2015) that the internal community pillar plays a vital role as a strong internal force in Ethnolinguistic minority language vitality when institutional support is not implemented effectively. As Giles et al. (1977) noted, the key factors for assessing the vitality of ethnolinguistic groups are status, demography, and institutional support. Based on these theoretical frameworks, this research incorporates community support as another crucial element in evaluating ethnolinguistic language vitality. It examines community and institutional support for vitalizing the Phlou Language in the Hlar-Kar Village Tract in Hpa-An Township.

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[8] Master student, Institute of Human Rights and Peace Studies, Mahidol

[9] Freelance Researcher and Research Mentor

The findings of this research are divided into three main sections: the effort of the Phlou Community, the challenges of the Phlou Community, and institutional support. In the first section, the Phlou community's dedication to preserving their language and traditions can be seen through.

- daily interactions within their community,
- organizing community language classes for the children and young people,
- celebrating cultural ceremonies such as Wrist-tying ceremony, and
- developing Phlou poems, articles and songs.

While the Phlou community in the research area is striving to vitalize its language, it faces the following significant challenges due to political, social, and linguistic factors.

- Suspension of Phlou language classes because of COVID-19 pandemic and ongoing political crises
- Prioritizing survival during political instability
- Scarcity of skilled Phlou language teachers
- Few career opportunities and financial benefits from the Phlou language
- Increase of other ethnic groups in the Phlou area

It was observed that the local authority in Hpa-An Township implements international provisions, national laws, and rules related to the preservation and development of the ethnic language and literature in the ways of

- Teaching Phlou language to primary school students in public schools,
- Organizing Phlou language course for the youth every summer holiday and
- Broadcasting some occasional programs in the Phlou language on public TV channels.

Some interviewees highlighted the local authority's efforts to promote the Phlou language in a multilingual society. However, they also recognize challenges that may hinder the desired outcomes, such as insufficient Phlou teachers. Further research is needed to identify the effectiveness of national policies and their enforcement in the vitalization of ethnolinguistic minority language in Myanmar.

The authorities and the Phlou ethnic community play a crucial role in the vitalization and sustainability of the Phlou language. This research was highlighted to enhance the operational efficiency of the relevant local authority through integrating the voices and perspectives of the Phlou people to more effective actions. It also sought to create opportunities for Phlou language experts, thus ensuring the sustainable vitalization of the Phlou language. The collaboration between community efforts and institutional support is necessary for maintaining the vitality of the ethnolinguistic language and upholding the linguistic rights of the Phlou community.

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Defending for Justice: Arduous Journey of a Kachin community against Rare Earth Exploitation

Hnin Wutt Yee[10]

This study explores the organizing tactics and strategies of the local Kachin community in Manshi township in the area controlled by the Kachin Independence Organization (KIO) and Kachin Independence Army (KIA), to raise their unanimous and collective voices against the rare earth extraction (REE) plan pushed by the KIO/KIA in 2023. It aims to contribute to the existing literature on grassroots movements against powerful forces in their fight for environmental and social justice. McAlevey (2018) highlights that mass participation by ordinary people is the key to successful movements. The social power of the poor and oppressed is crucial in fighting for social justice. McAlevey emphasizes organizing as the primary strategy of successful movements. On the other hand, Shelton and Eakin 2022 argue that contextual factors such as socioeconomic conditions, public opinion, and the structure of a country's political system influence outcomes rather than particular advocacy or coalition characteristics or strategies. Tactics involving knowledge dissemination on issues of injustice such as protests increase visibility and attract capital, technology, and spiritual resources enabling more leverage over powerful parties (David 2018, Räthzel et al 2018, Sayan 2019 cited in Ibid).

What is significant in this study is related to the complex and opaque setting in which the voices and concerns of the grassroots community have been deliberately suppressed. The positive result of the movement of this specific community seems unimaginable within the context of civil war. Since the coup in Myanmar in early 2021, environmental rights defenders and movements have been disbanded due to security concerns for movement leaders and activists given the military's brutal suppression of popular resistance. Taking advantage of such situations, exploitative, unregulated, and illegal extraction of mineral resources in resource-rich border areas like Kachin State has been growing exponentially, rendering the local community and the ecosystem defenseless and powerless.

Data for this research came from fieldwork between November 2023 to February 2024. Informants were recruited through the personal contacts of the local field researcher. They participated in semi-structured interviews, and follow-up conversations continued via WeChat, the most used online chat app for Kachin villagers along the China-Myanmar border areas. As a practitioner and local person with academic knowledge in human rights and business, the researcher has witnessed

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[10] Freelance Researcher

the struggle of local communities across the country to get access to remedies for negative impact on their land and the environment by irresponsible businesses or the struggle of workers to defend their rights. The issue of rare earth mining and the collusion of local militias and armed groups with powerful actors from China signifies inequalities and injustice in a neo-colonial context where a transition to green energy is not even and just for local communities in the frontier areas. Although there have been several studies on rare earth mining and its negative impact, including in Kachin state, a few studies focus on this grassroots movement of the Kachin community against REE mining.

This study focuses on the organizing tactics of Kachin communities in Mansi township to influence the decision of KIA/KIO to halt the REE planning project. The study shows that key characteristics of a successful movement in the literature can be found in its key tactics and approaches. Key tactics include passing consistent key messages across the board that their objections are specifically to the project, not the political leadership of the authorities, and based on Christian values that God's creation of lands and the environment must not be destroyed. The movement's committee members made an effort to consolidate people's power by highlighting the imminent threat of unregulated and rampant extraction of rare earth to local people, their lands, the environment, and their livelihood, and the need for a collective voice to raise their common concerns. When a point was reached at which they saw the need to attract the leverage of other Kachin communities inside and outside the country, they reached out and strengthened the network. Their tactics proved to be working after six months of organizing, since the authorities promised to stop the project in April 2023.

However, as this study was being conducted in late 2023 and early 2024, villagers were worried about the signs of resumption of the halted project. The unity of communities has been threatened by the enticements of businesses and their persuasion of landowners while global demand for minerals like rare earths and reliance on powerful countries like China have been increasing. The local communities will continue their ongoing journey despite difficulties and challenges to demand their rights to protect their lands and their environment albeit in a faith-based language. They expect their messages to get across to the concerned authorities and the world. These messages should get heard, especially across the global supply chains in REE extraction, if international human rights due diligence policies and practices are to be applied in actuality in these frontier areas. The international human rights framework and mechanisms that require authorities and companies to listen to grassroots voices seem to remain nominal amidst global and local challenges. A strong domestic regulatory system to ensure that mining has no negative impact on the land and the environment might be a feasible solution within this context. A

further study in this area drawing from other countries' lessons would contribute to understanding of ways to overcome such challenges by frontier communities like the Kachin region in Myanmar.

The Impact of Political Instability on Wildlife Conservation Efforts: A Case Study in Putao, Kachin State, Myanmar

Ei Ei Mon[11]

Humans and nature are connected and therefore biodiversity loss has a negative effect on humankind. In today's globalized world, the utilization of resources is influenced by political factors, and it usually harms the ecosystems of poorer countries, especially those already in crisis. A study by Amano et al. (n.d.) shows that the abundance of waterbirds is highly dependent on whether the country has effective governance. The study made clear that socio- political instability can cause biodiversity loss and reduce the effectiveness of ongoing conservation efforts. Political instability makes laws more difficult to enforce, which encourages unjustified, frequently illegal killing of wild animals even in protected zones. Moreover, political changes also affect wildlife conservation efforts as evidenced by a decline in that ornithological work after Myanmar independence in 1948 (Thwin, 2011). This research uses on the case of Putao to examine how the relationship between national politics and global demand affects efforts to conserve wildlife by highlighting causes on the ground.

This study used a qualitative methodology to gain a deep understanding of the experiences of respondents involved in wildlife conservation in Putao, Kachin State, Myanmar. In-depth interviews were conducted with open-ended questions to allow participants to freely share their thoughts and experiences. Participants were selected through non-probability sampling, with snowball sampling to identify additional participants based on referrals from initial respondents.

Myanmar is a poor country in the global south where prolonged conflict has been fueled since the military coup in 2021. The stability of the country has come under severe threat (Aung, 2024). While thousands of people have died and been displaced as a result of the coup, and civil war in Myanmar, a less salient crisis that these events have made it possible for the country's natural resources, such as gold, rare-earth elements, jade, and wildlife, to be exploited (Lusan, 2022). Among these, wildlife is the most neglected and less emphasized issue.

In Myanmar, the degradation of wildlife is caused by a number of political issues, especially in the northern region of Myanmar, which has one of the largest

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[11] Freelance Researcher

remaining contiguous intact forest areas in the country (Suarez-Rubio, 2020). the political crisis, it has made it more difficult to carry out conservation activities which need prior approvals from local authorities, which makes the process harder and more difficult and raising the risk of activities being deemed illegal and potentially leading to regime crackdowns or arrests (Li, 2021). It has also led to foreign support for Putao's efforts to conserve its species being discontinued, leaving Putao's fauna in a state of disarray. Not only does Putao lack international aid, but also human and technical resources have become more limited after the coup. The most significant circumstance that hit wildlife conservation efforts in Putao hard is the civil disobedience movement (CDM) in government departments. The Forestry Department has lost the majority of qualified officials for the conservation in Putao. Another silent consequence of the military coup is the economic collapse. Commodity prices, especially for petrol and rice, have risen, and rapid inflation has impacted the livelihoods of local people who are left with no choice but to extract more natural resources for food and their livelihood.

In addition, long-term resource exploitation in ethnic minority regions resulting from the structural violence by the central government has been presented as the root cause of Myanmar's prolonged civil war in ethnic regions. The obvious examples in Putao are land grabbing for the demarcation of National Parks and the potential for rare earth mining. In Putao, under the Forest Department's management, and a WCS-supported national park designation, there is a history of the resource grabs, the breakdown of customary practices, and the destruction of local livelihoods (Fishbein, 2020). The example in Northern Myanmar's Hkakabo Razi Region proves that a lack of trust between the authorities (supported by NGOs) and the local community, due to top-down land-use practices, hinders the possibility of achieving positive peace and structural harmony in conservation efforts.

Furthermore, the presence of rare earth mining close to Putao causes concern for conservationists in this period of instability. According to Global Witness (2024), China controls 90% of the global rare earth processing capacity with most of the resources coming from Kachin State, located on the border with China. Rare earth extraction is controlled by militias aligned with Myanmar's brutal military rulers (Global Witness, 2024). Activities appear to be expanding to other areas as the number of testing sites is increasing. According to one respondent, rare earth testing by militias has already been conducted in the Kaunglanhpu and Chiang Khawng/Shingkawng regions and also in Tahaundam region which is located just half a mile from Hkaborazi National Park.

In summary, wildlife conservation efforts in Myanmar have been badly impacted by political issues, directly and indirectly, especially in the northern regions like Putao. As a result, there has been a greater exploitation and unsustainable use of natural resources, which has deepened socio-economic problems in the area and put biodiversity at even greater risk.

Bridging Gaps in Environmental Governance: A Case Study of Indawgyi Lake, Myanmar

Nyein Chan[12], May Thazin Phoo[13] and La Minn Ko Ko[14]

This study examines environmental governance and procedural rights among communities near Indawgyi Lake, Myanmar, with a focus on environmental awareness, access to information, and participation in decision-making. The region's ecological significance as an ASEAN Heritage Park and UNESCO Biosphere Reserve is juxtaposed against pressing environmental challenges such as deforestation, pollution, and unsustainable resource exploitation. Procedural environmental rights, including access to information and participatory decision-making, are emphasized as pivotal for sustainable development.

The study investigates three main aspects: environmental awareness, access to environmental information, and participation in governance processes. A mixed-methods approach was adopted, incorporating household surveys, key informant interviews, and secondary data analysis. The research also utilized ethnographic observations to contextualize findings within the community's socio-cultural landscape. Key Findings of the research are as follows:

Environmental Awareness

While respondents demonstrated high awareness of environmental changes, such as biodiversity loss and climate impacts (Figure 1), understanding of regulatory frameworks was limited.
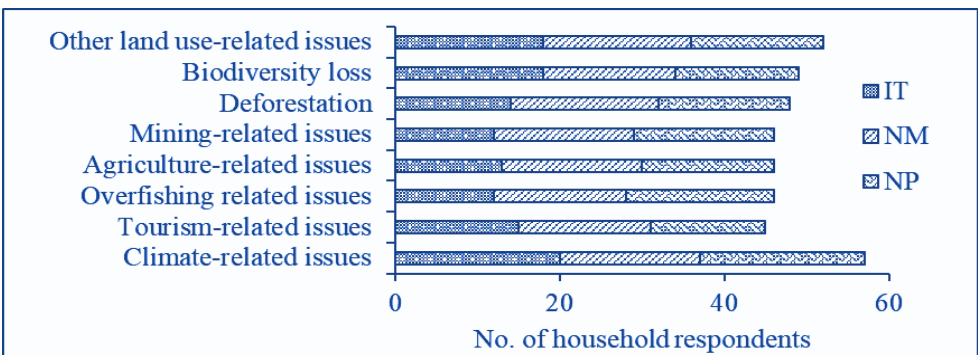
Figure 1. Recognition of local environment changes by the local communities in study villages

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[13] Freelance Researcher

[14] Master Student, Graduate School of Science and Engineering, Saitama University

Community elders and informal networks were identified as influential in shaping environmental consciousness, highlighting the need for culturally adaptive awareness campaigns.

Access to Environmental Information

Digital media and community-based organizations were key sources of environmental information (Table 1). However, barriers such as digital illiteracy, language constraints, and inadequate dissemination hinder inclusivity.

Table 1. Number of respondent households who have access to environmental information in study villages.

Village	Traditional knowledge	Through digital media (social media/ TV/ Radio)	Governmental Institutions	CSOs/ NGOs	Newspaper/ magazines	Local community meetings and events
IT	4	11		11	2	4
NM	4	11	2	6	4	6
NP	13	5	1	4	1	5
Total	**21**	**27**	**3**	**21**	**7**	**15**

Establishing localized information hubs was suggested as an effective strategy to bridge these gaps.

Participation in Decision-Making

Respondents expressed willingness to participate in environmental governance but reported limited opportunities due to institutional constraints and a lack of transparent processes. Capacity-building initiatives targeting women and marginalized groups were recommended to enhance their agency in decision-making.

Policy Implications and Recommendations

The study underscores the importance of integrating environmental education into formal curricula and enhancing access to information through improved digital infrastructure and community-centric approaches. Partnerships among local governments, NGOs, and community-based organizations are critical for amplifying outreach and fostering inclusive governance frameworks.

Institutionalizing participatory governance and ensuring transparency and accountability are essential for empowering local communities.

The findings highlight significant gaps in procedural environmental rights, which impede effective governance and sustainable management of natural resources in the Indawgyi Lake area. By addressing these challenges through targeted policy interventions and inclusive strategies, stakeholders can promote equitable and sustainable outcomes that enhance both community livelihoods and environmental health.

Assessing Daily Plastic Bag Consumption and Consumer Perceptions on Environmental Awareness: A Case Study in Bago, Myanmar

Hsu Yee Lwin[15]

Myanmar is grappling with widespread plastic bag pollution. This study was conducted in Bago, a region facing numerous environmental challenges, including flooding and the burning of landfills. Additionally, the Bago River, which flows into the Yangon River and eventually reaches the Gulf of Martaban in the Andaman Sea, serves as a major waterway. Plastic pollution in the area poses a significant threat to marine ecosystems and wildlife.

This study seeks to explore the extent of plastic bag usage in daily life, as well as the factors influencing consumption and consumers' awareness of the environmental issues caused by plastic bags. The research focuses on a local marketplace, a high-traffic area where both shoppers and vendors frequently use plastic bags. This location was selected because it represents a significant opportunity for addressing and reducing plastic bag pollution.

The study was conducted by using semi-structured interviews at two marketplaces in Bago: the vegetable market and the household goods market. The study interviewed 45 individuals, comprising 30 sellers and 15 buyers. The interviews were conducted face-to-face, ensuring direct engagement at the marketplace. The buyers were selected randomly, and the sellers included fish and meat vendors, vegetable sellers, grocery store owners, fish paste vendors, clothing sellers, food stall vendors, fruit sellers, cosmetic sellers and others.

The research found that most buyers prefer to use plastic bags when they buy something from the market, because plastic bags are easy to use, and free, but some buyers prefer paper bags. From sellers' answers it was found that just 40% of buyers rejected plastic bags. Most sellers also prefer to use plastic bags for the same reasons that they are cheap and plentiful. Moreover, most sellers and buyers have positive mindsets to reduce and control environmental pollution but face many challenges. Most sellers are interested in alternatives to plastic bags but have no other option. Plastic bag users (sellers and buyers) know about the environmental pollution resulting of plastic bags consumption. They are also aware of environmental issues but continue to use plastic bags due to their convenience. Among buyers, some

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[15] Undergraduate student and emerging researcher. The paper was published as a policy brief in YRI policy brief series 2024.

participants do not want to use plastic bags when they are not free, and sellers do not use them. Buyers do not want to plastic bags by taxed. Buyers cite the same reasons: plastic bags are free easy to use and ubiquitous. Law enforcement and sharing awareness are given the best ways of controlling plastic bags pollution. Most buyers are unwilling to pay taxes or fees for plastic bags and legal regulations are one of the options to control plastic bag pollution.

Based on information from market representatives, there are approximately 313 sellers across the two markets. To estimate the average kilograms of plastic used by these sellers, calculations were made using two key assumptions. The average daily usage of plastic bags for one seller is 1.9 kg, or 57 kg per month. Thus, the estimated total monthly usage of the two markets is 1487 kg or 1.487 tons. This amount is substantial and noteworthy. Consequently, the marketplace is one of the significant places to reduce the plastic bag pollution. By controlling and reducing consumption in the marketplace, plastic bag pollution can be mitigated indirectly, promoting respect for human rights. Furthermore, buyers reported that 60% of the plastic bags at home come from marketplaces.

In conclusion, this study found that monthly plastic bag consumption in the selected sites is 1.487 tons, with significant effect on the environment. Users suggest that an effective approach to reduce plastic bags pollution is policy making. While this research does not cover all aspects of controlling and reducing plastic bag pollution, future studies should examine supermarkets and small shops or different areas to design effective controls and actions to reduce plastic bag pollution.

To address and minimize the use of plastic bags, CSOs and NGOs should focus on marketplaces. Campaigns not only encourage vendors to reduce plastic waste but also support efforts to decrease overall plastic consumption. CSOs should raise awareness among plastic bag users at marketplaces through beneficial "No Thank You" campaigns which support vendors and reduce plastic waste with clear and effective objectives. Similar awareness campaigns should be conducted frequently. Efforts should also focus on changing the attitudes of plastic bag users toward reducing consumption. NGOs should also consider providing sellers with alternatives to plastic bags and supporting these campaigns through funding.

Access to Education

Protecting the Right to Education: How Mindat Communities Sustain Education Amid Conflict

Ling Kee Htang[16], Peter Kamtungtuang Suante[17]

Chin State, one of the least developed regions in Myanmar, has long faced significant challenges in accessing quality education. The COVID-19 pandemic and the 2021 military coup have further exacerbated the education gap, with massive school closures depriving children in areas such as Kanpetlet, Mindat, Tonzang, and Thantlang Townships of access to basic education. Education, a fundamental right guaranteed by international conventions like the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), remains inaccessible for many children in conflict-affected areas like Chin State.

This study explores how stakeholders in Mindat Township encountered and addressed educational challenges amidst political instability. Using a qualitative approach, semi-structured interviews were conducted with teachers and parents from Mindat Township. Participants shared their experiences and perspectives on the challenges and opportunities in sustaining education during the ongoing conflict.

Key Findings of the research are:

1. **Challenges Faced by Schools:**

   o **Transportation and Communication:** Roadblocks and restricted telecommunications hinder access to teaching materials, certified teachers, and financial resources.
   o **Security Concerns:** Airstrikes and military operations pose safety threats, discouraging attendance and participation.
   o **Resource Limitations:** Schools suffer from inadequate infrastructure, textbooks, teaching aids, and low teacher salaries.
   o **Teacher Shortage and Quality:** Many schools rely on uncertified local volunteers with minimal training.
   o **Student Dropout:** A two-year closure of schools due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the 2021 coup has contributed to student dropouts.
   o **Pathways to Higher Education:** Certificates from community schools may not be recognized, threatening students' future educational pathways.

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[16] Freelance researcher and research trainer

[17] Research Fellow: Melbourne University & Australia National University

2. **Community Responses and Adaptations:**
   - o **Self-Reliance:** Communities organized self-supporting schools, sustained by financial contributions from parents and the diaspora."
   - o **Educational Autonomy:** Schools adapted curricula to include ethnic languages and introduced formative assessments to enhance learning quality.
   - o **School-Level Adjustments:** Local schools were upgraded to reduce the need for students to travel to distant institutions.
3. **Opportunities Amidst Adversity:**
   - o **Strengthened Parental Engagement:** Parents became more involved, recognizing the value of education as a community-driven effort.
   - o **Improved Student-Teacher Ratios:** Local recruitment increased accessibility and participation, though quality remained a concern.
   - o **Potential for Decentralized Education:** The limited state control fostered educational autonomy, creating room for innovations like ethnic language instruction and culturally relevant teaching practices.

The study highlighted the resilience of the Mindat community in overcoming systemic challenges. However, it also underscores the need for:

- **Support for Volunteer Teachers:** Teacher training and adequate compensation to improve teaching quality.
- **Recognition of Non-State Schools:** Accreditation mechanisms for qualifications obtained through community-based education systems.
- **Policy Reforms:** Advocacy for decentralized education policies that respect the cultural and linguistic rights of indigenous and minority groups.
- **International Support:** Greater involvement from international organizations to ensure access to education where state systems fail.

In conclusion, Mindat Township exemplifies the resilience of marginalized communities in ensuring education amidst crises. Despite resource limitations, local stakeholders utilized self-reliance and innovation to sustain learning opportunities. Recognizing and supporting these efforts is critical to upholding the right to education for children in conflict-affected regions like Chin State.

Conflict and Displacement in Pekon Township: Navigating Educational Access in a Conflict Setting

Felicita[18]

The February 2021 coup precipitated a surge in armed resistance across Myanmar. Pekon Township, previously a tranquil area, has become a zone of intense conflict since May 2021, with over 40,000 individuals displaced by 2023 (Interim Executive Council of Karenni State, 2024). The closure of over 200 state schools, many of which briefly reopened before shutting down again, disrupted children's educational opportunities. Using Pekon Township as a case study, this paper investigates how families in conflict-affected regions navigate educational challenges amidst political unrest.

This study employed a qualitative research design, combining primary and secondary data sources. Primary data were collected through interviews with twenty participants, including parents, educators, and education providers, while secondary data were drawn from reports, articles, and news. Participants were selected using purposive sampling, with a focus on families and educators directly impacted by displacement and conflict. The interviews were conducted in areas with fewer clashes or locations hosting internally displaced persons (IDPs).

The study is grounded in Hassoun's navigational framework, which views IDPs as active decision-makers with aspirations beyond mere survival (Hassoun, 2023). This framework conceptualizes navigation as a dynamic process in which individuals confront barriers, pursue goals, and make decisions based on their personal contexts and understanding of the educational landscape. These decisions are shaped by beliefs regarding the purpose and accessibility of education (Sung and Wahl, 2021). In this study, the framework is applied to delve into how parents in Pekon Township navigate the challenges of securing educational opportunities for their children amidst the collapse of state-provided education due to political unrest.

The research findings are as follows:

Disruptions: The convergence of the COVID-19 pandemic and post-coup violence has severely disrupted state-provided education in Pekon Township. School closures due to the pandemic in 2020 created significant learning gaps, and the 2021 coup further exacerbated this crisis (Htut et al., 2022). Schools became contested spaces during armed clashes, instilling fear and insecurity among families, which discouraged them from sending their children to school. Many families have kept

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[18] Researcher

their children at home due to the ongoing violence (Irrawaddy, 2023). The persistent armed conflicts forced state schools in conflict zones to shut down entirely. Although some schools briefly reopened in mid-2022, escalating violence in the region led to further closures. Moreover, widespread mistrust of the State Administration Council has hindered community engagement with reopened schools (World Bank, 2023). These disruptions illustrate the significant barriers that families face, and the constrained landscape that they navigate as they seek safety and learning opportunities for their children.

Adaptations: In response to these disruptions, families employ various strategies to ensure their children continue learning. Some parents relocated to safer urban areas, such as Taunggyi, where state schools remained open, or enrolled their children in private or boarding schools in cities. However, this option was only accessible to families with more significant financial means. Some turned to monastic schools as an alternative for those unable to afford private education. Others explored pathways such as homeschooling or enrolling children in tuition classes organized by CDM teachers. Such adaptations illustrate how families navigate educational challenges by leveraging their contextual knowledge and available resources. Relocating or opting for alternative educational pathways reflects parents' strategic decision-making amidst systemic barriers.

Alternative Strategies: In response to the ongoing conflict, families in Pekon Township have adopted a range of alternative strategies to ensure their children continue learning. Community-based schools have emerged as a significant option, with local communities establishing formal and non-formal educational institutions tailored to their needs. Many of these schools offer flexible schedules to accommodate the community's circumstances and address the region's security concerns. Schools in IDP camps, such as the Cherry Myay Education Center, have also played a vital role in providing education to children. Online learning has become another viable strategy for families with adequate resources despite limited internet access and technical issues. These strategies underscore the resilience and efforts of families and communities to overcome barriers. Families actively reshape the educational landscape by setting up community-based schools to meet their needs and aspirations amidst the ongoing conflict.

Case Examples: Profiles of Displaced Families

Parent	Hometown	Displaced Location	Children	Education Pathway
1	Pekon	See Bu Village	1	Community school/homeschooling
2	Pekon	Pekon	5	Tuition with a CDM teacher
3	Pekon	Pyin Saung Village	2	Community school
4	Moe Bye	Taunggyi	2	Private school
5	Pekon	Taunggyi	5	Religious school
6	La Ei	Not displaced	2	Monastic school

Sources: Interviews

These profiles illustrate the diverse pathways families have pursued to navigate systemic disruptions to education access. However, each pathway comes with its own set of challenges. For instance, private schooling was only accessible to families with significant financial resources, while online learning faced barriers related to internet connectivity and access to digital devices.

The findings emphasized the agency of parents in pursuing alternative educational pathways, including enrolling their children in monastic schools, community-based schools, and educational programs within IDP camps. These efforts demonstrate the resilience and resourcefulness of parents and the community amidst adversity. However, they also revealed stark educational disparities, as children from wealthier families tend to access private or formal education systems, whereas those from less privileged backgrounds are more likely to rely on community-led initiatives. Unfortunately, these initiatives frequently face inadequate resources and infrastructure, making providing consistent and quality education challenging. This disparity highlighted the urgent need for policymakers and NGOs to address barriers that hinder equitable access to education in conflicted areas. Adequate support for community-based educational initiatives, including funding, professional development for educators, and infrastructure improvements, is essential to ensure long-term continuity and quality of education in conflict settings.

Rights of Myanmar Youth Refugees in Mizoram: Access to Higher Education

Thawm Zar Maw[19]

The political turmoil in Myanmar since the 2021 coup has forced thousands to seek refuge in Mizoram, India. Among these refugees, youth face unique educational challenges, exacerbated by India's lack of a refugee protection framework. This study explores three primary research questions:

1. What higher education opportunities exist for Myanmar youth refugees in Mizoram?
2. Why do these youth struggle to access higher education?
3. What interventions can improve their access?

The research methodology involved qualitative legal research, including in-depth interviews with nine participants, including refugee students, education providers, community leaders, and policy-making representatives. Conducted in January 2024, the study provides crucial insights into the educational experiences of youth refugees. The research uncovered nuanced findings regarding educational opportunities and barriers for Myanmar youth refugees in Mizoram.

1. Educational Opportunities

In terms of educational opportunities, formal institutions like Mizoram University present limited pathways for refugee students, contingent upon their ability to provide specific documentation such as Grade 10 certificates - a significant hurdle for many displaced individuals. Alternative educational programs have emerged as critical lifelines, with organizations like the Institute of Chin Affairs (ICA) and National University of Zoland (NUZ) developing innovative approaches such as research fellowships and online programs. However, these alternative initiatives often lack broader institutional recognition, constraining their long-term value for students.

2. Key Barriers

The key barriers facing these young refugees are multifaceted and deeply interconnected. Documentation constraints represent a primary challenge, with refugees encountering substantial difficulties in transferring academic records and meeting stringent admission requirements of educational institutions. Financial challenges further compound their educational access, as many refugees lack the financial resources to cover tuition, educational materials, and basic living expenses. Limited internet access in refugee communities, combined with language barriers,

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substantially impede participation in both online and traditional on-campus educational programs. These challenges collectively create a complex ecosystem that severely restricts educational opportunities for Myanmar refugees in Mizoram, highlighting the urgent need for comprehensive policy interventions and supportive educational frameworks.

Key recommendations target various stakeholders: the government should develop clear educational policies for refugees; educational institutions must create more inclusive admission processes; civil society organizations should raise awareness and provide mentorship; and interim educational bodies should strengthen partnerships with recognized universities. By implementing these strategies, India can help Myanmar youth refugees access higher education, supporting their personal development and potential social integration.

In conclusion, Myanmar youth refugees in Mizoram face systemic and practical barriers to higher education. A multi-stakeholder approach, encompassing policy reform, financial support, and community engagement, is essential to address these challenges. Despite India's non-signatory status to the Refugee Convention, aligning with international standards like the International Covenant on Social, Economic and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) can ensure inclusivity and equity in educational opportunities for refugees.

Accessibility of Virtual Instruction for Education Students at the Tertiary Level in Myanmar

Tauk[20]

Most current university students in Myanmar are familiar with technology, and curious about what they encounter in online classes. Moreover, students face challenges to attend Universities run by the military-led government, the State Administration Council (SAC), because of the political situation. Physical universities opened by private institutions are expensive and not accessible to all students, and thus discriminate against poorer students. To ensure learning opportunities for all university students, accessibility of virtual education is important for individuals and society to invest in people for nation building. University students in Myanmar can have the opportunity to study further in foreign institutions from their own homes through virtual education. This research is focused on the challenges and opportunities for students in accessing virtual education. The specific objectives of the research are to:

- Identify the challenges and opportunities for university students studying education in accessing virtual learning.

- Compare strategies used by university students studying education to access to virtual education in terms of age, year and region

- Make recommendations to enhance accessibility of virtual learning for university students studying education in Myanmar

Participants in this study are students specialized in education, who reside across Myanmar, and are enrolled in either one of the private virtual universities or one of the virtual universities under the NUG. Additionally, students from the University of Education who had discontinued their studies were also engaged.

In this paper, mix-method research design of quantitative and qualitative approach was used. The quantitative survey method and the descriptive method were used to test hypotheses or answer questions concerning the current status of the subjects of the study (Gay, 2011). Survey questions were shared with university students of education in selected universities using a convenience sampling method for; this received responses from 111 participants. For interviews with 10 students, a snowball sampling method was applied.

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[20] Freelance Researcher. The paper was presented at the 4th International Conference on Burma Studies on 2-4 August 2024.

According to the data, there was no significant difference at ($p < .001$) between the students who were above or below 20 years of age or in terms of region, age or educational platform with regard to teaching and learning, internet connection and accessibility, communication between teachers and students and understanding and rights to education. It can be interpreted that the students in the selected sample of virtual universities face the same challenges such as the issues of internet and security concerns about their personal information due to the serious political situation in Myanmar.

The greatest challenges faced by students in accessing virtual learning comprise: Electricity shortages and poor internet connection, challenges to collaboration, limited technical skills, security concerns, the needs for pedagogical skills, loss of concentration, need for support with mobile data or Wifi fees. The most significant challenges, named by are shown in Figure 1.
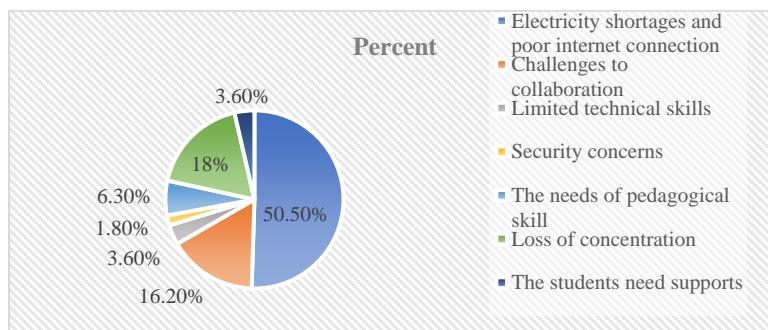
Figure 1. Challenges faced by students

According to the results, the students' suggestions for improving their experience of virtual education are:

(1) ensuring the security of personal information;
(2) avoiding cancellation by the minimum of five students (the private virtual university in the sample selected limit course to a minimum of 5 students despite the wish students to study nonetheless);
(3) the need for all organizations to recognize virtual education certificates;
(4) motivation to enjoy virtual education;
(5) the need to ensure good Internet connections and free Wi-Fi for CDM students;
(6) the need for teachers to use more interactive tools during lectures and give job opportunities to other organizations;

The following recommendations are made based on the findings of this study:

(1) Every CDM teacher in virtual education should cooperate and share job opportunities with others to overcome the barriers of the current political situation.

(2) The NUG Ministry of Education should systematically provide educational and other political policies for all teachers and students who have joined the CDM in Myanmar.

Access to Education for Burmese Refugee Children in Mizoram, India

Khin Mon Lin[21], Mary[22], and Ei Ei[23]

Access to education is a fundamental human right and a key factor for social and economic development. However, education remains a distant dream in war-torn regions grappling with poverty, human rights violations, and internal conflict. In Myanmar, after the military junta took over on February 1, 2021, the Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack found that the junta and other armed groups often attack schools or universities while using them as bases or for other military purposes. Severe targeted destruction of educational facilities has created a hostile educational context for students, parents, and educators, who have found it increasingly challenging to make safe choices about teaching and learning.

Many Myanmar people are trying to hide or flee to neighboring countries such as India, Thailand, and Bangladesh to save their lives. Since India has not ratified the 1951 United Nations Convention on the Rights of Refugees and its Protocol, it is not legally obligated to recognize refugee status or to meet the needs of refugees. However, with regard to access to education for children, the Mizoram regional authorities, within their mandate, are opening schools to refugee families. It has arranged for admission of refugees to schools an official letter stating that "children aged between 6 to 14 years of vulnerable communities have the right to attend school in a class appropriate to his or her age.

This study aims to explore the current situation and the prospects of the access to the right to education for Myanmar refugee children in Mizoram and identify the gaps and opportunities for improving their educational outcomes, including the Myanmar curriculum. The study employed a qualitative phenomenological research approach, which is well-suited to exploring the subjective experiences and perceptions of individuals in their natural context. Document analysis involved a systematic review of relevant newspapers, academic articles and reports on refugee education, the international and national legal framework governing refugee education, and policies for refugee education. The difference in educational systems between Myanmar and India poses challenges for refugee

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[21] Freelance Researcher and Human Rights Educator. The initial findings were presented at 2024 International Interdisciplinary Conference on Myanmar's Borderlands at Chulalongkorn University on 17-19 June 2024.

[22] Freelance Researcher and Human Rights Educator

[23] Freelance Researcher

children. As a result, some students experience barriers to enrolling in age-appropriate grades. The interview results indicate that language poses a significant barrier for Burmese refugee students in Mizoram. The Mizo language is not only a compulsory subject in schools in Mizoram up to grade 8 but the medium of instruction in schools. At the higher school level, students who opt not to pursue Mizo have the option to select either English or Hindi. The research findings also highlight the social stigma and discrimination faced by refugee children attending public and private schools in Mizoram. Due to the lack of a clear policy of the central government, the Mizoram government is likely to have limited resources for the Burmese refugee population. In this situation, residents expressed worries about the state's culture and demographics due to the growing number of Myanmar migrant population. According to official government statements, there are no documentation difficulties for Burmese refugees attending schools established by the state government. However, private schools may have specific document requirements for enrollment. Refugee students also face psychological challenges related to adapting to life in a new environment, a new country and among different communities, as well as language barriers, and cultural differences in the education systems. Refugee families face financial pressure due to the restrictions of the host countries. Due to the lack of a stable source of income, most refugee families struggle to meet the prohibitively expense of school fees, uniforms, books, and other learning supplies. The research highlights the concerns of parents whose children are attending the Myanmar curriculum in refugee camps in Mizoram. Parents are worried about the continuity and recognition of their children's education, especially when they return to Myanmar in the future.

India's lack of a comprehensive national refugee policy, its close ties with the Myanmar military junta, and the security concerns raised by the influx of Burmese refugees have created significant barriers to educational access for refugee children in India. The precarious legal status of refugees, the threat of deportation, and tensions with host communities have forced many refugee families to seek alternative education options using the Myanmar curriculum although the Mizoram government offers access to education for refugee children in its legal framework. However, these camp-initiated schools often lack official recognition, accreditation, and resources. On the other hand, the burden on Mizoram state to host a disproportionate number of refugee children compared to its resources has also restricted access to quality education. Balancing security concerns with the humanitarian needs of refugee populations will be crucial in addressing India's refugee dilemma. Overall, the uncertainty surrounding the future of Burmese refugees in India has severely impacted their children's access to quality and recognized education.

Resistance and Resilience: Navigating the Impact of 2021 Military Coup on Higher Education in Myanmar

Merry[24]

Myanmar's 2021 military coup, followed by the COVID-19 pandemic, has profoundly impacted the higher education sector, disrupted academic freedom and institutional governance while sparking a wave of resistance among academic staff and university students. This study captures the contrasting experiences of CDM participants (Civil Disobedience Movement) and non-CDM participants. Through semi-structured interviews with 16 participants, the research unveils contrasting motivations, challenges, and coping strategies that illustrate the polarized educational landscape during the political turmoil. The findings are as follows:

CDM Teachers: Voices of Resistance

The notable movement that developed after the 2021 military coup was the CDM: students, faculty members and teachers have boycotted returning to universities and classes as an act of defiance against the military regime. For teachers, participation in the CDM movement symbolizes a stand against oppression and a commitment to democratic values. One academic staff member, Mr. A, explained his refusal to comply with the military regime: "I refuse to accept a return to those dark days where voices were stifled, and thoughts were suppressed." This strong belief and commitment often came at a cost. Many CDM teachers faced dismissal from their positions and the stigma of being unemployable under a regime that closely monitors freedom fighters. Ms. D shared her experience: "The aftermath of the military coup made it nearly impossible for me to find teaching positions out of fear of being targeted by the authorities." Despite these challenges, resilience became a strong attribute. Some teachers transitioned into alternative careers or embraced online education as a way to continue their work while maintaining their safety.

CDM Students: A Generation of Hope

CDM students faced equally intimidating obstacles, including the loss of formal education and the risks associated with activism. For many, their participation was driven by a desire to protect hard-won democratic freedoms. As Mr. R, a former student union member, remarked: "The prospect of returning to a time when students were oppressed and silenced was unthinkable." The sacrifices were significant, with some students forced to leave their families or live in exile.

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[24] Freelance researcher. The researcher presented the findings at the Sixth International SEAHRN conference in Penang on 13~14 August 2024.

Yet, their hope for a better future remained unshaken. Ms. S emphasized: "Although I lost formal education, I didn't lose hope. Our sacrifices will contribute to a brighter future for our nation." To adapt, CDM students leveraged online education platforms such as those offered by the National Unity Government (NUG) or pursued informal learning through social media channels. Some even became volunteer educators, teaching younger generations in their communities despite the challenges.

Non-CDM Teachers: Professionalism Amid Adversity

For teachers who chose not to participate in CDM campaign, their commitment to their students often outweighed personal or political considerations. Respondent 1 described her dedication: "As a civil servant, we should perform our duty regardless of the political situation. Despite the challenges, I strive to create a positive learning environment despite the external pressures and maintain professionalism in fulfilling my duty." However, this decision came with its own set of challenges. Increased workloads due to staffing shortages and administrative burdens strained their capacity to provide quality education. Respondent 2 highlighted these challenges: "Some teachers have to take on subjects they are not experts in. The lack of resources and expertise remains a concern."

Non-CDM Students: Navigating Isolation and Aspiration

For non-CDM students, the decision to return to school often came with social ostracism. Respondent 1 recounted her experience of being ostracized: "Upon my return, I encountered social punishment from former friends who resorted to harsh words and social media shaming." Despite these difficulties, many non-CDM students remained unwavering in their pursuit of education, viewing it as a pathway to future opportunities.

Comparative Insights between CDM and Non-CDM

Aspect	CDM Teachers	CDM Students	Non-CDM Teachers	Non-CDM Students
Motivation	− Resistance to Oppression − Preservation of Democracy		Commitment to Professionalism	Educational Aspirations
Challenges	− Job Dismissals − Fear of Reprisal from the Authorities	- Education Loss - Fear of Reprisal from the Authorities	− Workload Increase − Staffing Shortages	Social Ostracism

| Coping Strategies | – Online Teaching Careers
– Transition to non-teaching roles | - Online Learning
-Activism
-Volunteering in community services | - Determination and resilience in pursuing education
– Navigating challenges to secure opportunities and maintain academic Progress |
| resistance and resilience | Civic Activism | | Professional Commitment |

In conclusion, participation in the CDM plays a crucial role in promoting democratic values and fostering change in Myanmar by promoting civic engagement and advocating for social justice. Academic staff express a commitment to upholding democratic progress and values, while students emphasize the importance of defending hard-won freedoms and preventing a return to authoritarian rule. Experiences shared by CDM participants vividly demonstrated that their collective efforts paved the way for a more inclusive, equitable, and democratic educational system in Myanmar, underscoring the transformative potential of grassroots movements in effecting societal change. In contrast, experiences shared by the non-CDM participants highlight the divisive and polarized nature of Myanmar's political climate. The ongoing political situation in Myanmar, particularly in the aftermath of the military coup, has deeply affected the community dynamics, creating an environment marked by polarization, social tensions, and pervasive uncertainty. The military's seizure of power has not only disrupted democratic processes but also worsened existing divisions within society along political lines, leading to eroding trust in educational institutions, and hindering efforts to maintain educational quality and integrity amidst ongoing political instability after the 2021 military coup in the country.

Justice for People

Challenges to the Right to Privacy Following the Coup in Myanmar: A Case Study in Mandalay

Aye Chan[25]

This study applied a qualitative methodology, making a case study of three groups: those affiliated with the Civil Disobedience Movement, and professionals and non-professionals in Mahar Aungmyay District, Mandalay. This study explored the challenges faced by individuals in Myanmar under the SAC government and analyzed how the right to privacy of individuals is being violated. It also suggested potential solutions to the challenges of protecting privacy faced by these individuals. Research questions addressed by the study are: How has the right to privacy being violated under SAC? What are the challenges of individuals to protect their privacy rights? What can be the potential solutions for the challenges?

The study site for this research was Mahar Aungmyay district, which includes Chanayetharzan, Mahar Aungmyay, Chanmyatharsi and Pyigyithagon Townships in Mandalay Town. The right to privacy is one of the fundamental human rights enshrined in international human rights law, especially the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), under which every state has the duty to protect the right of their citizens to privacy. Section 357 of the Myanmar Constitution commits to protecting the security of citizens' homes, property and communications. Moreover, the right to privacy is protected by the 2017 Privacy Law. However, the SAC suspended Sections 5, 7 and 8 of the Privacy Law following the coup, totally negating to the guarantee of the right to privacy in the 2008 Constitution. As a result of the suspension of these sections, the government has the right to enter a citizen's home to search without witnesses and to seize property, and intercept or disturb any citizen's communications. Citizens have lost their privacy rights, the rights to freedom of expression, and freedom of movement due to the suspension of these sections. Citizens' fundamental rights, as asserted in the Constitution, have been lost and the SAC government has been seen to fail to protect and safeguard these rights. This research engaged with 27 interviewees, 19 male and 8 female. There are 3 groups: CDM people, professional and non-professional.

Data collected from one man from the CDM group, 3 men from the non-professional group and one lawyer will be discussed here. The right to privacy is violated in Mandalay predominantly through checking phones, checking guests, extorting money at night, arbitrary arrests, and killings by the security forces. The

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challenges faced by individuals relating to privacy include difficulties in withdrawing money both online and from banks and ATMs, freedom of movement, searches and seizure, searches of homes where the guest list is checked by the authorities, surveillance of telecommunications and online communications. This article discusses Article 17 of the ICCPR, which protects the right to privacy, and its application in the context of state surveillance. While the right to privacy may be limited for public interest or to protect others' rights, determining appropriate limit remains challenging according to Praditama and Ranawijaya, 2023.

The discussion of the research has two parts: the first concerning freedom of movement including searches and seizure, and surveillance by CCTV and searches of homes - including guest-list checks, and the second, is concerning freedom of speech including surveillance of telecommunications and online communications. The Mandalay Free Press, 2022 had reported that the military also searched, arrested and extorted money from youths who went out at night. And that the military and police have entered homes and taken property and arrested those inside the house (Voice of Myanmar, 2021). According to Article 289 of the 2008 Constitution, the administration of a ward or village-tract shall be assigned in accordance with the law to a person whose integrity is respected by the community. Action Committee for Democracy Development and Progressive Voice, 2015, commented that the implementation and administration of the law is under the General Administration Department, which is a part of the military-controlled Ministry of Home Affairs. According to the testimony of the teacher, the authorities' activities contradict the provision of the right to privacy under article 17 of the ICCPR and violate section 19 of the Competition Law. However, the authorities have the right to violate privacy as a result of the suspension of the 2017 Privacy Law and revision of section 27-A of the 2004 Electronic Transaction Law. These are the challenges to the right to privacy and the effects of the suspension of Sections 5 and 8 of the 2017 Privacy Law and section 69 of the 2013 Telecommunication Law and the amendment to the 2004 Electronic Transactions Law. Other violations have included the search and arrest of a former politician by the SAC due to her comments in an online post concerning attack by the SAC on a camp in Kachin State (Mandalay Free Press, 13 Oct 2023/ Chindwin News Agency, 13 Oct 2023). The suspension of provisions of the 2017 Privacy Law, the amendment of the 2004 Electronic Transactions Law, the 2013 Telecommunications Law, and the 2012 Ward or Village Tract Administration Law have undermined the guarantee of the right to privacy provided by Section 357 of the Constitution and are thus unconstitutional. Two potential solutions to the violations of privacy rights changing state practice and the law and safeguarding the citizens' security during and the coup.

Joining, Living the Civil Disobedience Movement: An Examination of the Motivations of and Consequences for Myanmar's University Teachers[26]

Ei Khine[27], Mya Mya San[28] and Coeli Barry[29]

On February 1, 2021, a coup in Myanmar disrupted the country's path to democracy, sparking a civil disobedience movement (CDM). Many government employees, including university teachers, joined the CDM. Acts of nonviolent resistance included withholding taxes and boycotting military-affiliated products. Nearly 400,000 educators participated (Spring University Myanmar, 2022), and over 13,000 higher education staff were suspended by May 2021 (Spring University Myanmar, 2023). Despite risks such as evictions, dismissals, and arrests, teachers continued their opposition. This study explores the motivations and consequences of university teachers' participation in the CDM, emphasizing their personal convictions and the impact on their lives and careers.

The primary objectives of this article are to explore the motivations behind university teachers in Myanmar joining the CDM after the 2021 coup, and to assess the challenges and consequences of their involvement in their professional and personal lives. While most literature on civil disobedience focuses on its definitions and justifications, this study aims to delve into its real-life impacts, drawing on Schock's (2021) insights to emphasize the often-overlooked consequences of such movements. Two key research questions drive this study: what are the individual motivations of university teachers in Myanmar for engaging in the CDM, and which challenges and consequences did they face in participating in this movement?

The literature review defined civil disobedience through various scholars' perspectives, highlighting it as a public, nonviolent, and conscientious act aimed at changing government laws or policies. Rawls (1999) and Bedau (as cited in Zain and Yusoff, 2017) emphasize the deliberate and principled nature of civil disobedience, undertaken openly and conscientiously. Quigley and Bahmueller expand on this by underscoring the need for nonviolence and willingness to accept legal consequences. Brownlee and Delmas (2023) introduce the concept of "principledness," reflecting a deep moral commitment to justice. These principles align with the motivations of

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CDM participants, who joined the movement based on their serious, sincere, and selfless convictions. Proserpio and Fiori (2022) highlight concerns among CDM academics about the military's trustworthiness and the potential rollback of educational reforms. Despite ethical controversies and personal risks, CDM participants remained committed to non-violent resistance, underscoring the high price of protesting under authoritarian regimes, as discussed by Tarrow (1998) and Chenoweth and Stephan (2011).

This study used a phenomenological approach, gathering data through semi-structured interviews with fifteen university teachers from Myanmar. The interviews, conducted securely online, explored motivations, challenges, and consequences. Participants were diverse in age, gender, role, and years of service. Analysis used thematic coding to identify key themes, with data collection and analysis from December 2023 to February 2024.

After the coup, most university teachers left their jobs to continue resisting and defied military orders through strikes, boycotts, and refusal to pay taxes. Many were involved in the parallel education system under the National Unity Government (NUG) while facing the threat of arrest and repression (Moon, 2021). Diverse factors influenced the decisions of university teachers to participate in CDM, including a strong sense of personal conviction, the view that the coup was unjust, and a concern for democratic backsliding.

Most of the respondents participated in civil disobedience to restore justice and democracy in the country. More than half of all respondents said they worried about the country moving backward and that reforms in higher education would be lost. University CDM participants face many difficulties and challenges, but they continue to participate in CDM, showing their principles and conscientiousness. Echoing Rawls (1999) that civil disobedience gives voice to conscientious and deeply held convictions, the university teacher CDM participants stand up for their beliefs about truth and justice with the deep conviction that it is necessary to pursue justice and oppose the coup until power can be restored to the duly elected government.

University teachers involved in the CDM faced numerous challenges, including personal safety concerns, emotional stress, and economic hardship. They experienced constant threats from the military, arrests, and blackmail, forcing many to hide or live in fear. Legal repercussions, such as arrests and criminal records, further strained their personal and professional lives. The economic impact was severe, with many losing their jobs and struggling financially. Social relationships were strained, with reduced interactions and increased social divisions. Despite these hardships, the participants found personal fulfillment and a sense of purpose in their

resistance, gaining new experiences and developing self-confidence. They remained committed to their cause, driven by a deep conviction for justice and the desire to uphold democratic values.

This research delved into the motivations and consequences faced by Myanmar university teachers who joined the CDM. Despite initially lacking a formal understanding of civil disobedience, their actions aligned with the principles of achieving true democracy and justice, echoing Thoreau's belief that people should oppose unjust governments. Their motivations included a commitment to preserving educational reforms and a deep conviction for justice. The study highlights the significant risks they faced, including threats to personal safety, economic and emotional challenges, legal repercussions, and professional disruptions. Despite these hardships, the teachers' strong sense of principledness and conscientiousness drove them to persist in their advocacy for change, with hopes for a positive transformation in the future, despite the current cumulative negative impacts.

Lessons for Myanmar's Transitional Justice Measures in Post-Conflict Period through Reflection on Transitional Justice Practices in Cambodia and Nepal

Minn Myoh Minn Oo[30]

Myanmar is expected to encounter several challenges in establishing transitional justice (TJ) measures in its post-conflict period. From the experience of Cambodia and Nepal, this study provides lessons for the development of effective transitional justice mechanisms addressing war crimes, crimes against humanity and human rights abuses in Myanmar. A comprehensive TJ framework is essential for holding all levels of perpetrators accountable for their crimes, seeking truth and ensuring justice for victims, and fostering reconciliation among ethnic states and regions. In this regard, the successes and failures of Cambodia and Nepal in their TJ efforts offer crucial insights for Myanmar.

In Cambodia's TJ experience, the risks of limited prosecution are most highlighted. The Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia did not hold mid- and low-level perpetrators accountable for their crimes while primarily focusing on high-ranking members of the Khmer Rouge only a few of whom were put on trial. Allowing impunity for grassroot level crimes, its TJ approach led to an ineffective system. The absence of a dedicated Truth and Reconciliation Commission extended ineffectiveness, resulting in important gaps in truth seeking activities, documentation and reconciliation efforts from victims and perpetrators. Myanmar must establish effective and impartial independent TJ bodies to prioritize truth-seeking endeavors while implementing a comprehensive prosecution and accountability mechanism for all levels of perpetrators.

Similarly, Nepal's TJ attempts present vital lessons regarding its Truth and Reconciliation Commission and Commission on the Investigation of Enforced Disappearances. Both institutions' operations were found to be highly non-transparent and subject to heavy political interference, leading to the exclusion of many victims from justice procedures and the nationwide provision of impunity and amnesty for perpetrators. These experiences inform Myanmar to concentrate on the establishment of independent and impartial TJ institutions for both truth seeking and prosecution, and clear restrictions for amnesty provisions.

Both countries highlight the significance of a victim-centered TJ system since overestimation of victims led to dissatisfaction and reconciliation delays. Myanmar's

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TJ system must encourage victim communities to freely participate in truth confession and hearings, reparation efforts, and community-level local reconciliation activities, which will ensure an inclusive and representative justice system. Another key lesson is international collaboration Cambodia established a hybrid ad-hoc court of both domestic and international judges for trials, resulting in more credibility and transparency in its proceedings. International partnerships will not only benefit Myanmar in terms of accountability but also from more access to resources and technical support.

In conclusion, in order to develop a unique transitional justice system adapted to Myanmar's post-conflict scene, this research advocates for a robust legal TJ framework, independent truth-seeking institutions, regulated amnesties and promotion of victim engagement, learning from Cambodia and Nepal. This will potentially result in ensuring justice, fostering reconciliation and restoring sustainable peace across the country.

Enhancing Access to Justice: Examining the Challenges of Criminal Legal Aid Institutions in Myanmar Post 2021

H.L[31]

In Myanmar, accessing the justice system is a considerable obstacle for many people and criminal legal aid institutions have become a sensible remedy for the community. Before 2021, many criminal legal aid institutions were able to provide free access to judicial processes and conduct publicly various community awareness-raising events and legal internship programs, but after 2021, many criminal aid institutions in Myanmar temporarily suspended their work in face of several obstacles. This paper examines criminal legal aid institutions in Myanmar by investigating their institutional background, activities, performance in access to justice and methods for community empowerment as well as the obstacles they have dealt with since 2021, together with recommendations and approaches. This research tries to identify the roles of criminal legal aid institutions in Myanmar, the challenges they have encountered in enhancing access to justice since 2021, and recommendations to diminish those challenges.

This research integrates actual voices and perspectives from local communities and criminal legal aid institutions by collecting responses to qualitative questions through a Google form. In a series of interviews with six criminal legal aid institutions, several significant challenges impacting community empowerment and access to justice were identified. While one institution reported legal barriers, another highlighted as a major obstacle financial constraint limiting their capacity to extend their services. Several institutions face security concerns or threats. These obstacles can be overcome with the following approaches.

A. Strengthening legal frameworks:

B. Acknowledgement and support of government/enhancing collaboration:

C. Capacity building, and training:

D. Community engagement

Even though all the criminal legal aid institutions reported that their clients feel satisfied with the legal assistance received and often refer others in need of legal support, the public is not well-informed about their operations and functions, leading to missed opportunities for justice and a lack of confidence in the legal system. Better

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[31] LL.M student, Chulalongkorn University and emerging researcher. The full paper will be available as a YRI policy brief soon.

solutions for the obstacles facing criminal legal aid institutions will eventually promote their activities for access to justice among the public.

မြန်မာ့လူ့အဖွဲ့စည်းအတွင်း ပြန်လည်ထူထောင်ရေးဆိုင်ရာ တရားမျှတမှုမှတဆင့် တရားမျှတမှု လက်လှမ်းမီရေးကို မြှင့်တင်ခြင်း

Wint Wah Wah Naing[32]

Restorative Justice သည် လူမှုအသိုင်းအဝိုင်းတွင် ဖြစ်ပေါ်နေသော ရာဇဝတ်မှု များကို ပြန်လည်ကုစားပေးခြင်း၊ရေရှည် ကောင်းမွန်သောဆက်ဆံရေးကို တည်ဆောက် ပေးခြင်းနှင့် ထပ်မံကျူးလွန်မှုလျော့နည်းစေရန် ဆောင်ရွက်သည့် နည်းလမ်းတစ်ခု ဖြစ်သည်။ ရာဇဝတ်မှုတရားမျှတရေးလုပ်ငန်းစဉ်များတွင် ပါဝင်နေသော Restorative Justice ဆိုင်ရာမူသဘောများနှင့် ကုစားမှုအပိုင်းများကိုပံ့ပိုးပေးနေသော တည်ဆဲဥပဒေရှိ အချို့သောပုဒ်မများ၏ပြစ်မှုနှင့်ပြစ်ဒဏ်အကျဉ်းချုပ်ကို အောက်တွင် လေ့လာနိုင်ပါသည်။

· ၂၀၀၈ ခုနှစ်ဖွဲ့စည်းပုံအခြေခံဥပဒေ

ပုဒ်မ	ဥပဒေဖော်ပြချက်	Restorative Justice ကိုပံ့ပိုးနေ သော အချက်များ
၃၄၇	နိုင်ငံတော်သည် မည်သူ့ကိုမဆို ဥပဒေ အရာတွင် တန်းတူညီမျှအခွင့် အရေး ရရှိစေရမည်။ ထို့အပြင် ဥပဒေ၏ အကာအကွယ်ကိုလည်း တန်းတူညီမျှ စွာရယူပိုင်ခွင့်ပေးရ မည်။	ခွဲခြားဆက်ဆံမှုမရှိခြင်း နှင့် မျှတ သော ခံစားပိုင်ခွင့်ရှိခြင်းတို့ကို တွေ့ရ သည်။
၃၅၃	မည်သူ့ကိုမျှတည်ဆဲဥပဒေနှင့်အညီမှတ စ်ပါး အသက်ကိုဖြစ်စေ၊ ပုဂ္ဂိုလ် ဆိုင်ရာလွတ်လပ်မှုကိုဖြစ်စေ နှစ်နာ ဆုံးရှုံးမှုမရှိစေရ။	မတရားဖမ်းဆီးထိန်းသိမ်းခြင်းနှင့် လူ့အခွင့်အရေးကို ထိခိုက်စေသော ပြင်းထန်သည့် အပြစ်ပေးခြင်းမပြု ရန်ဖော်ပြထားခြင်းသည် ပြန်လည် ထူထောင်ရေးဆိုင်ရာ တရားမျှတမှု ၏ကုစားမှုကိုပံ့ပိုးပေးရာ ရောက်သည

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[32] Paralegal and legal researcher. The full paper will be available as a YRI policy brief soon.

၃၅၉	နိုင်ငံတော်သည် ဥပဒေကျူးလွန်သူ အား ပြစ်ဒဏ်ချမှတ်ရာတွင် အလုပ် ဒဏ်ထမ်းဆောင်ခိုင်းခြင်းနှင့် အများ ပြည်သူအကျိုးအတွက်ဆောင်ရွက်ရန် နိုင်ငံတော်ကဥပဒေ နှင့်အညီတာဝန် ချထားခြင်းမှတစ်ပါး အခမဲ့စေခိုင်း ခြင်းကို တားမြစ်သည်။	လူ့ဂုဏ်သိက္ခာကိုညှိုးနွမ်းစေသော အလုပ်ပြစ်ဒဏ်ချ မှတ်ခြင်းနှင့် လူမဆန်သောအပြုအမူများကိုတားဆီး ခြင်းလူ့အဖွဲ့အစည်းတွင် ကောင်းမွန်သော လုပ်ငန်းများတွင် ပါဝင်စေပြီးပြန်လည်ပေးဆပ် စေခြင်းဖြင့် ပြန်လည် ထူထောင်ရေး ဆိုင်ရာတရားမျှတမှု၏ တာဝန်ယူမှု ကို ပွံ့ပိုးပေးရာရောက်သည်။
၃၇၃	ပြစ်မှုကျူးလွန်သူမည်သူ့ကိုမဆို ယင်းပြစ်မှု ကျူးလွန်သည့်အချိန်က အတည်ဖြစ်လျက်ရှိသော သက် ဆိုင်ရာ ဥပဒေအရသာ ပြစ်မှုထင်ရှား စီရင်ရမည်။ ထို့ပြင်ယင်းဥပဒေအရ ချမှတ်နိုင်သော ပြစ်ဒဏ်ထက် ပို၍ချမှတ်ခြင်း မပြုရ။	ပြစ်မှုကျူးလွန်သူကိုထိုက်သင့်သောပြ စ်ဒဏ်ပေး၍ နှစ်နာမှုကို တာဝန် ယူစေပြီးနှစ်နာမှုကို အသိအမှတ်ပြု သောမူသဘောကိုဆောင်သည်။
၃၇၅	ပြစ်မှုကျူးလွန်ကြောင်းစွပ်စွဲခံရသူတစ် ဦးသည် ဥပဒေနှင့်အညီခုခံ ချေပခွင့် ရှိစေရမည်။	မျှတသောတရားစီရင်ပိုင်ခွင့်ကိုရရှိစေ ပြီး ပြန်လည်ထူထောင်ရေး တရား မျှတမှု၊ တာဝန်ယူမှုနှင့် ကုစားကို ပွံ့ပိုးပေးနေသည်။

<center>ရာဇသတ်ကြီး</center>

ပုဒ်မ	ပြစ်မှုနှင့် ပြစ်ဒဏ်များ	Restorative Justiceကိုပွံ့ပိုးနေ သောအချက်များ
၅၁၀	မူးယစ်သူကအများနှင့်ဆိုင်သောနေရာ၌မ လျော် သောအမှုကိုပြုလျှင်ထိုသူကို ၂၄ နာရီထိ အလုပ်မဲ့ ထောင်ဒဏ် ဖြစ်စေ၊ ကျပ်တစ်ထောင်ထိငွေဒဏ်ဖြစ်စေ၊ ဒဏ်နှစ်ရပ်လုံးဖြစ်စေ ချမှတ် နိုင်သည်။	လူမှုအသိုင်းအဝိုင်း၏ သေးငယ်သောပြစ်မှုငယ်ဖြစ်သည့် အတွက်တာဝန်ယူ ခြင်းနှင့် ရေရှည်ဆက်ဆံရေးကို

		ထိန်းသိမ်းပေးသောလုပ်ငန်းစဉ်ကိုပံ့ပိုးပေးသည်။
၃၂၃	သာမန်နာကျင်စေမှုဖြစ်လျှင် ၁နှစ်ထောင်ဒဏ် တစ်မျိုးမျိုးဖြစ်စေ၊ ကျပ်တစ်သိန်းထိငွေဒဏ်ဖြစ်စေ၊ ဒဏ်နှစ်ရပ်လုံးဖြစ်စေချမှတ်နိုင်ပါသည်	ထိခိုက်နစ်နာသူကိုယ်တိုင်မှ ရေရှည်ဆက်ဆံရေးကို ထိန်းသိမ်းစေလိုပြီး နှစ်ဖက်ညှိနှိုင်းကျေအေးလျှရှိသော အမှုအမျိုးအစားဖြစ်သည်။
၂၆၄	ညစ်ညမ်းသောပြုလုပ်မှုများနှင့်သီချင်းများဖြင့် စိတ်ငြို့ငြင်အောင် အများပြည်သူသို့ကျူးလွန်လျှင် ၃လထိ ထောင်ဒဏ်တစ်မျိုးမျိုးဖြစ်စေ၊ငွေဒဏ်ဖြစ်စေ၊ ဒဏ်နှစ်ရပ်လုံးဖြစ်စေ ချမှတ် ရမည်။	ပြုလုပ်မှုသည်သေးငယ်သော်လည်း လူမှုအသိုင်းအဝိုင်း သို့ပြန်လည်တာဝန်ယူစေပြီး ရပ်ရွာတရားမျှတမှု ကို ဖော် ဆောင်ပေးရာရောက်သည်။ သေးငယ်သောအမှုဖြစ်သော် လည်း အများပြည်သူသို့ပြန်လည်ကုစားမှု ပေးပြီး ပြုလုပ်သူအားလည်း နောက်ထပ်မကျူးလွန်စေရန် သတိပေးရာ ရောက်သည်။
၃၂၄	ကြိုရွယ်ချက်မရှိသောနာကျင်စေမှုအတွက် ၁ လထိ ထောင်ဒဏ် တစ်မျိုးမျိုးဖြစ်စေ၊ငါးသောင်းကျပ်ထိငွေ ဒဏ်ဖြစ်စေ၊ ဒဏ်နှစ်ရပ်လုံးဖြစ်စေ ချမှတ်နိုင်သည်။	မတော်တဆအနေဖြင့်သူတစ်ပါးကို ထိခိုက်နာကျင်စေ လျှင်ထိခိုက်မှုမ ပြင်းထန်သော်လည်း လူမှုရေးအရ ကုစားမှုများပေးခြင်းနှင့် နောက်ထပ် သောပေါ့လျော့မှုကြောင့် ထိခိုက်န စ်နာသူများမရှိလာစေရန်အတွက်ရ ည်ရွယ်သော ပြစ်ဒဏ်မျိုးဖြစ်ကြောင်း တွေ့ရသည်။

တချို့သောပုဒ်မများသည် မဖြစ်မနေထောင်ဒဏ်ချမှတ်ရမည်ဟု ဥပဒေဖော်ပြချက်များ တွင်ရှိသည်ကို ကြည့်ခြင်းအားဖြင့် ထိခိုက်နစ်နာခဲ့သူ၏ တရားမျှတမှုကို ဖော်ဆောင် ပေးရေးတွင်ပြစ်ဒဏ်ပေးရေးကိုအဓိကထားကြောင်းဖော်ပြနေသည်။

ရာဇဝတ်ကျင့်ထုံးဥပဒေ

ပုဒ်မ	ဥပဒေအရဖြေလျှော့ပေးမှုများ	Restorative Justiceကိုပုံ့ပိုးနေသောအချက်များ
၅၆၂(၁)	ပထမအကြိမ် ပြစ်မှုကျူးလွန်သူကို ပြစ်ဒဏ်ချမှတ် မည့်အစား ကောင်းမွန် စွာကျင့်ကြံနေထိုင်ရန်အစမ်း သဘောလွတ်ပေးခြင်း၊ဆိုဆုံးမ၍ လွတ်ခြင်း၊ ခံဝန်ချုပ်ဖြင့် လွတ်ခြင်း တို့ဖြစ်သည်။	ပြစ်ဒဏ်လျှော့ပေါ့ပေးရန်အကြောင်းပြ ချက်များအမှု အခြေအနေရှိလျှင် ကျူးလွန်သူအားလူ့အဖွဲ့အစည်းတွင် ကောင်းမွန်စွာကျင့်ကြံနေထိုင်ရန်ဖြေ လျှော့ပေးခြင်းသည်ပြန်လည် ထူထောင် ရေးဆိုင်ရာတရားမျှတမှု၏ရည်ရွယ် ချက်ဖြစ်သောလူမှုဆက်ဆံရေးပြန်လ ည်ထူထောင်ပေး ခြင်းနှင့်ပြန်လည်ပြင်ဆင်ကုစားပေးခြင်း ကိုဖော်ညွှန်းပေး သည်။
၄၉၆	အာမခံပေးနိုင် သောအမှုများတွင် အာမခံပေးခြင်း၊ ကိုယ်ပိုင်ခံဝန် ပေးခြင်းဖြင့် လွတ်ပေးခြင်းနှင့် အချုပ် လွတ် အမှုရင်ဆိုင်ခွင့်ပေး ခြင်း။	စွပ်စွဲခံရသူရသင့်သောအခွင့်အရေးကို ပေးစေပြီး လွတ်လပ်စွာဖြင့် အပြန် အလှန်ခုခံချေပခွင့်ပေးခြင်းသည် နှစ်ဦးနှစ်ဖက်ဆွေးနွေးပြောဆိုခွင့်ပိုမိုရရှိ ခြင်း၊ ဥပဒေပါ အခွင့်အရေးများ သည်ပြန်လည်ပြင်ဆင်ခွင့်နှင့် နှစ်ဖက် ကောင်းမွန်သော ဆက်ဆံရေး ပိုမို ကောင်းမွန်လာစေရန် အတွက် အထောက် အပံ့ဖြစ်စေနိုင်ပါသည်။
၄၉၇(၁)	အာမခံမပေးနိုင်သောပြစ်မှုများတွင်ချွ င်းချက်အနေဖြင့် ၁၆ နှစ်အောက် ရှိသူ၊အမျိုးသမီးနှင့် နာမကျန်းသူ များကို အာမခံဖြင့် လွတ်ထားနိုင် သည်။	လူမှုရေးတရားမျှတမှုကိုဖော်ဆောင်ပေး နေသော အပိုင်းအစအနေဖြင့် ထင်ဟပ်စေသည်။

| ၂၅၀ | တရားလိုမှ စွပ်စွဲခံရသူ့သို့ပေးလျော်ရသော လျော်ကြေး (မဟုတ်မမှန်တိုင်ကြားခြင်းကြောင့်ထိခိုက်နစ်နာမှုဖြစ်ခြင်း) | ပြန်လည်ထူထောင်ရေးဆိုင်ရာတရားမျှ တမှု၏မူသဘော အရ ထိခိုက်နစ်နာခဲ့သူ အားကျူးလွန်သူမှ ပြန်လည်တာဝန်ယူစေပြီး လျော်ကြေး ပေးစေ ပြီး ပြန်လည်ကုစားမှုပေးခြင်းဖြစ် သည်။ |
| ၅၄၅(၁)(ဂ) | တရားခံမှ တရားလိုသို့ ပြန်လည်လျော်ကြေးပေးခြင်း (ခိုးမှု၊ အလွဲသုံးစားမှုလိမ်လည်မှုသိလျက် ခိုးရာပါပစ္စည်းလက်ခံမှု နှင့် ထုခွဲရောင်းချမှု) | ပြန်လည်ထူထောင်ရေးဆိုင်ရာတရားမျှ တမှု၏မူသဘော အရ ထိခိုက်နစ်နာခဲ့အားကျူးလွန်သူမှ ပြန်လည်တာဝန်ယူစေပြီး လျော်ကြေးပေးစေပြီး ပြန်လည်ကုစားမှုပေး ခြင်းဖြစ်သည်။ |

ပြစ်ဒဏ်များအနေနှင့်လည်းအထူးဥပဒေဖြစ်တဲ့ ၂၀၁၉ခုနှစ်ကလေးသူငယ်အခွင့်အရေးကာ ကွယ်စောင့်ရှောက်ရေး ဥပဒေပုဒ်မ၈၈(က)တွင် ရာဇဝတ်မှုကျူးလွန်သော ကလေးသူငယ် ကို သာမန်အားဖြင့်ထောင်ချခြင်းမပြုဘဲယင်းအစား အခြား နည်းဖြင့် ပြုစုစောင့်ရှောက်ခြင်း သို့မဟုတ် အခြားနည်းလမ်းဖြင့်လွဲပြောင်းဆောင်ရွက်ခြင်း ဆိုင်ရာလုပ်ငန်း စဉ်များမရှိမှသာ နောက်ဆုံးနည်းအနေဖြင့် သဘောထားပြီး ထောင်ဒဏ် ချမှတ်ရမည်ဖြစ်ကြောင်းပြ ဋ္ဌာန်းထားသည်။ အခြားနည်းလမ်းဖြင့် လွဲပြောင်းဆောင်ရွက် ရာတွင်သတိပေး ဆုံးမခြင်းနှင့် သိမ့်ဆွေးပေးခြင်း၊ ရပ်ရွာအကျိုးပြု လုပ်ငန်းများတွင် ပါဝင်စေခြင်း စသည့် ကလေး၏ ကောင်းကျိုးနှင့်အကျင့်စာရိတ္တ ပြောင်းလဲလာစေရန် ဦးတည်သောပြစ်ဒဏ် ကိုချမှတ်ရန် ၂၀၁၉ခုနှစ်၊ ကလေးသူငယ် အခွင့်အရေး ကာကွယ်စောင့်ရှောက်ရေးဥပဒေ ပုဒ်မ၇၅(ခ)(၁)မှ(၉) နှင့် ပုဒ်မ ၈၇ တို့တွင်ပြဋ္ဌာန်း ထားပါသည်။ ၂၀၀၁ ခုနှစ်၊ ကလေးသူငယ် နည်းဥပဒေတွင်လည်း ကလေး သူငယ်အားရာဇဝတ်မှုကြောင့်အရ အရေးယူခြင်း၊ မှုခင်းများ စစ်ဆေးစီရင် ခြင်းတို့ တွင် ပြန်လည်ထူထောင်ရေးဆိုင်ရာတရားမျှတမှုကို အဓိကဦးတည်သော လုပ်ထုံးလုပ် နည်းများ ဖော်ပြပါရှိပါသည်။

၁၉၉၃ခုနှစ်၊မူးယစ်ဆေးဝါးနှင့် စိတ်ကိုပြောင်းလဲစေသောဆေးဝါးများဆိုင်ရာဥပဒေကို ပြင်ဆင်သည့် ၂၀၁၈ခုနှစ် ဥပဒေပြဋ္ဌာန်းချက်အသစ်တွင် မူးယစ်ဆေးဝါးသုံးစွဲသူကို အပြစ်ပေးအရေးယူခြင်းထက် ပြန်လည်ထူထောင်ရေး ကဲ့သို့ ပြုပြင် ရေး ဘက်သို့ဦးတည်၍ အပြစ်ပေးရာတွင် ပုဒ်မ ၁၅ အရ ဆေးဝါးသုံးစွဲသူသည် ပုဒ်မ ၉၊ ပုဒ်မခွဲ (ဆ) အရ ဉ္ဌာ၈ကိစ္စအလို့ငှာ ဖွင့်လှစ်ထားသော ပြုစုပျိုးထောင်ရေးစခန်း သို့မဟုတ် ပြန်လည်

ထူထောင်ရေးစခန်းသို့ ပို့အပ်ထားသည့် ကာလအတွင်း သက်ဆိုင်ရာ ပြုစုပျိုးထောင်ရေး စခန်း သို့မဟုတ် ပြန်လည်ထူထောင်ရေးစခန်းက ထုတ်ပြန် ထားသော ညွှန်ကြားချက်နှင့် သတ်မှတ်ထားသည့်စည်းကမ်းချက်များကို ဖောက်ဖျက်ကြောင်း ရာဇဝတ်မှု ထင်ရှား စီရင်ခြင်းခံရလျှင် လူမှုအကျိုးပြု လုပ်ငန်းများဖြစ်သည့် သစ်ပင်ပန်းမန်စိုက်ပျိုးခြင်း၊ သန့်ရှင်းရေး လုပ်ငန်း များဆောင်ရွက်ခြင်း၊ လမ်းတံတားများပြုပြင်ခြင်း၊ လူမှုရေး အဖွဲ့များနှင့် ပူးပေါင်း၍ အကျိုးပြုလုပ်ငန်းများ ဆောင်ရွက်ခြင်း စသည့်လုပ်ငန်းများကို ကြီးကြပ်သူရှေ့မှောက်၌ နှိမ့်ချခြင်း၊ ခွဲခြားဆက်ဆံခြင်းသဘော မသက်ရောက်သည့် သတ်မှတ်ထားသောဝတ်စုံကို ဝတ်ဆင်လျက်တစ်ရက် ၂ နာရီဖြင့် အနည်းဆုံး နာရီ ၂၄၀ မှ အများဆုံး နာရီ ၃၆၀ အထိ ကိုယ်တိုင်လုပ်အားဖြင့်အခမဲ့ လုပ်ကိုင်ဆောင်ရွက်ရမည်ဟု ပြောင်းလဲ ပြင်ဆင် ထားသည်။

အထူးဥပဒေများတွင် ပြန်လည်ထူထောင်ရေးဆိုင်ရာသဘောတရားကို ဖော်ဆောင် ပေးသောပြစ်ဒဏ်များကိုလေ့လာ တွေ့ရှိခဲ့သလို ပြဋ္ဌာန်းဥပဒေအချို့တွင်လည်း ထည့်သွင်း ထားကြောင်းကိုတွေ့ရသည်။သို့သော် ပြန်လည်ထူထောင်ရေးဆိုင်ရာ တရားမျှတမှုအား ကောင်းလာစေရန် ပိုမိုတိကျသောဥပဒေဆိုင်ရာပြဋ္ဌာန်းမှုများလိုအပ်သည်။ ထိခိုက်နစ်နာ သူများအတွက် ပြန်လည်ကုစားပေးရေးလုပ်ငန်းစဉ်များ ထားရှိရန်လို အပ်ပြီးဥပဒေနှင့် နည်းဥပဒေများကိုကဏ္ဍအလိုက်သီးခြားအကောင်အထည် ဖော်ဆောင် ရွက်ပေးရန် လိုအပ်ကြောင်းကို တည်ဆဲဥပဒေများကို လေ့လာသုံးသပ်ခြင်းဖြင့် တွေ့ရှိရပါသည်။

Sustainable Peace

The Role of Youth-Led Organizations in Advancing Sustainable Peace in the Aftermath of the 2021 Military Coup in Myanmar

Thae Ma Ma Zin, Hnin Oo Wai, Kaung Khant Ko, Pyae Lwin Mar Oo[33]

In Myanmar, youth have been crucial actors in collaborative efforts since the colonial period (Htet Lin Oo and Myo Myo Kyaw, 2019). Despite various factors that have historically weakened youth collaboration and threatened success (Paung Sei Facility, 2017), they have been a pivotal actor in the peace building process, particularly during the political transition of the 2010s. Nevertheless, their efforts were disrupted by the political repression and resource scarcity exacerbated by the 2021 military coup. The worsening situation forced youth-led organizations to adapt their missions to address urgent needs while being committed to fostering sustainable peace. Therefore, the overall situation calls for a reevaluation of their missions and strategies and anticipated challenges they face in the worsening crisis.

This study used a qualitative approach and involved 20 participants from diverse youth organizations through purposive and snowball sampling. After the pilot study was done, and verbal informed consent was gathered, data were collected from semi-structured interviews. The findings of the study are as follows:

Educational initiatives: A common approach by youth-led organizations

Educational initiatives are a common approach employed by diverse youth groups. Training on interfaith engagement, feminism, gender equality awareness and environmental awareness, and short- and long-term educational courses are implemented by humanitarian organizations, gender organizations, educational organizations, and environmental organizations in the belief that such initiatives promote critical thinking and conflict resolution, foster community empowerment and build community capacity,

The pivotal role of youth-led organizations: Addressing inequalities and vulnerabilities exacerbated by the coup

The coup has worsened already existing vulnerabilities and inequalities, prompting organizations to offer alternative programs to fill gaps. Educational initiatives to address educational disruption and health care services and health awareness for vulnerable victims of sexual violence, disrespectful treatment, and breaches of confidentiality were implemented. Additionally, youth activists

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[33] Freelance Researchers. The findings of the paper were presented at the 4th International Conference on Burma/ Myanmar Studies on 2-4 August 2024.

documented the environmental harm caused by military rule, exposed smuggling activities, and campaigned for sanctions against exports of natural resources linked to the State Administrative Council to address increased illegal logging and resource plundering.

Navigating the challenges of youth-led organizations in peacebuilding efforts

Legal restrictions and surveillance and scrutiny by the military and local authorities hinder peacebuilding and education efforts of youth organizations, leading to reduced reach and support for beneficiaries. Besides, travel restrictions, internet access issues, and funding constraints further disrupt program effectiveness.

Youth resilience, adaptability, and principled activism

In order to prioritize project continuity for sustained progress despite the worsening situation, youth organizations maintained a low profile and shifted from their traditional field activities to research-based and online activities. They redefined their beneficiaries from university students to a broader demographic in the context of the Civil Disobedient Movement. They modified project focuses and themes. For example, peace initiatives are disguised as environmental or health initiatives. Finally, they collaborated with less risky organizations.

In conclusion, the study highlights the resilience and activism of youth organizations in a challenging political landscape while committed to fostering peace and addressing injustices and inequalities through strategic initiatives. Their efforts empower communities and contribute to community resilience amidst ongoing political unrest. The findings underscore the vital need to support youth-led organizations in their endeavors towards sustainable peace, rehabilitation, and societal progress in Myanmar. Their tireless efforts, coupled with their ability to adapt and innovate, position them as catalysts for positive transformation, even in the face of formidable challenges.

Religious Practices in Myanmar's Educational Institutions and their Implications for Tolerance and Inclusivity

Ja Seng Pan, Su Pan Htwar, Lu Lu Myat Aung[34]

Myanmar is a multicultural country in which religion has influenced its history, as well as its citizens' individual identities and educational development. The majority of Myanmar's population adheres to Theravada Buddhism while there are various minority religions, including Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Animism and others (Department of Population: Myanmar, 2016). Each religion has distinct influences and contributions to education through public and alternative schools such as traditional monastic education, ethnic schools, and Islamic education schools (Asian Children's Missions, n.d.; Skidmore and Wilson, 2008). Among these different religions, Buddhism legally holds a "special position" (Article 361, 2008 Constitution) that entitles it to privileges and protections in promoting Buddhist practices in educational contexts whereas minority religions face limitations in exercising their faiths. The literature highlights the example of advancing Buddhist practices through monastic institutions. The role of monastic education stands as providers of basic education to marginalized children in Myanmar in which Buddhist values, practices, and interfaith understanding are promoted (ibid). Furthermore, monastic education focuses on shaping culture, tradition, and social life through the lens of Buddhist teachings (ibid). On the other hand, in regions where Buddhists are the majority, there is evidence that Christian minorities face disadvantages and marginalization in education and other social and professional areas (Zat Khat Kham, 2016, p. 108). The influence of a particular faith on schools and universities can significantly affect students' learning process and environment, particularly concerning diverse religious identities (Phoenix, 2023). Given the undeniable influence of religions such as Buddhism on mainstream education and society, it is imperative to understand the dynamics of religious practices within educational institutions. Therefore, this research aimed to understand the role of different religious practices in educational institutions by assessing the perceptions of university students and exploring whether these religious practices contribute to challenges or opportunities to create an inclusive learning environment, focusing on two different geographic areas, Mandalay and Kachin State, that offer significant geographical and demographic diversity, with various religious affiliations and a cosmopolitan nature. This study employs a qualitative research methodology to gather primary data on religious practices within Myanmar's educational institutions by conducting focus group discussions and delivering open-ended qualitative

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surveys. The data was collected from a total of 22 university students meeting the sampling criteria for religious diversity, ethnicity, and gender.

The main findings of this study were that religious practices in Myanmar's schools are deeply rooted in Buddhist traditions, reflecting the dominance of Buddhism in the country's culture and society. These practices manifest through ceremonies, daily activities, and school-wide observances, such as Buddhist prayers, festivals, and cultural events. While predominantly influenced by Buddhism, variations occur based on geographical and religious demographics, with some accommodations for other faiths, such as Christian choirs in Kachin State or holiday observances such as Eid Mubarak and Christmas. Building on these practices, religious experiences among university students in Myanmar are shaped by the dominance of majority religions, particularly Buddhism, which influences the allocation of resources and accommodation within educational settings. While basic education incorporates diverse traditions, such as celebrating Eid Mubarak and Diwali, and fosters cultural competency, minority faiths often face limited representation. In higher education, noticeable religious activities decrease, and interreligious interactions increase, but imbalances in representation can still lead to exclusion. The discoveries highlighted the need for inclusive environments to promote interfaith harmony and ensure equitable treatment for all students.

Participants' perceptions of these practices further illustrated the complexity of their integration into education. While some participants highlighted the moral and ethical benefits of religious practices, others pointed to the risks of inter-religious conflict and discrimination against minority faiths. Critics argued that religious practices in schools may foster division rather than unity, emphasizing that education alone can promote critical thinking, humanity, and inclusivity. These differing viewpoints reflected the challenge of balancing moral development with the need for tolerance and equality among students from diverse religious backgrounds. Findings on religious identity in schools revealed contrasting experiences of inclusion and exclusion linked to the dominance of Buddhist practices. Among respondents, 14 reported feeling excluded, including 13 non-Buddhists, due to the strong presence of Buddhist traditions. Conversely, 11 participants, all Buddhists, felt included, though 8 other Buddhists from a majority region reported no sense of inclusion. These varied emotional responses underscored the significant impact of religious dynamics in schools, emphasizing the challenges of fostering an inclusive environment that respects diverse religious identities.

While analyzing the opportunities and challenges, 17 out of 22 respondents expressed a positive outlook based on their school experience within various religious groups. They anticipated cooperation and teamwork between different religious groups, seeing diversity as an opportunity. They also expressed that a diverse religious environment could be a path to understanding other religions and widening

their perspectives. Nine participants found value in participating in different religious practices, such as reciting prayers. One mentioned that this helped her acquire Pali language skills. Additionally, one Muslim participant reflected on her own experiences, noting that she received respect and encountered no discrimination within her circle of friends due to her religious identity, interpreting these experiences as positive outcomes of mutual respect among friends. The school environment, whether high school or university, plays a crucial role in shaping students' religious identity. Participants shared how their experiences in these settings demonstrated understanding and respect for different religious practices. Some also reported no discrimination towards any religious practices at their schools. This environment of mutual understanding was seen as a significant opportunity for promoting tolerance. Regarding opinions on hand gestures, the Christian participants, while acknowledging their Buddhist association, showed acceptance, viewing them as cultural rather than religious markers. This suggested that fostering mutual respect among students should take precedence over religious symbolism.

While some viewed religious practices in schools positively, others criticized them as obstacles to inclusive learning, citing both current and potential challenges. Participants expressed concern about interreligious fear and misunderstanding that might hinder inclusivity. They identified interaction difficulties, potential negative perceptions of other religions, impacts on students' religious identities, and weakened social cohesion. Minor conflicts and misunderstandings were also noted. One participant even described them as "cold wars" (Mdy01, Buddhist, Mandalay Region, January 28, 2024). Reflecting on school experiences, participants emphasized the need for an inclusive curriculum promoting acceptance of all religious affiliations. They highlighted obstacles faced by minority religious communities, including bullying, social isolation, and exclusion from activities associated with religion. A curriculum focused solely on one religion, particularly Buddhism in this context, was seen as potentially intensifying these challenges and amplifying marginalization. Furthermore, they noted potential bias from teachers and students of different faiths, emphasizing the need for equal treatment and respect for diversity. The ongoing political climate in Myanmar was also identified as a hindrance to a positive learning environment. Students also expressed concern that their own religious beliefs might be neglected due to the dominant focus on another religion. These concerns underscored the need for a more inclusive educational approach.

Based on the research findings, this study recommends that educational institutions in Myanmar should implement a mandatory civic education policy in schools to foster mutual respect and empathy among students across religious divides, to enhance teacher training programs to promote inclusive learning environments that accommodate religious diversity, and to facilitate transparent dialogue and panel

discussions involving various stakeholders to encourage understanding and awareness of diverse religious beliefs.

Kachin Students' Perspectives on the Peace Education Curriculum at the Higher Education Level in Mai Ja Yang, Kachin State, Myanmar

Shayem Zau Mai and Ah San[35]

The research objective is to investigate how Kachin students understand peace education and its role in fostering sustainable peace through higher education curricula in Kachin State, Myanmar. The research used qualitative research with semi-structured interviews with18 respondents with experience of peace education, including 12 students, 4 instructors, and 2 administrators from four higher education institutions in Mai Ja Yang. 12 students were studying different fields at different institutions. One instructor came from each institute together with 2 administrators from the education department. Purposive sampling was utilized to select the participants. The interviews were designed as in-depth interviews on topics such as inclusivity, diversity, human rights, and conflict resolution.

Confidentiality was ensured through encryption, secure storage, and informed consent. Participants were first forwarded a consent letter with detailed information about the study. They were told they were able to halt the interview at any moment, and it was explained how the data would be stored and erased a certain time after completion of the research. Key findings of the research are:

1. **Awareness of Peace Education**:

   o Students have limited awareness of peace education
   o Participants underscored the need for curriculum integration to address human rights and conflict resolution.

2. **Impact of Peace Education**:

   o Broader understanding of peace to include justice, equality, and environmental sustainability.
   o Improved critical thinking, conflict resolution skills, and interethnic respect among students.

3. **Challenges in Implementation**:

   o Lack of resources, trained educators, and institutional support.

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[35] Freelance researchers. The initial research findings were presented at the International Interdisciplinary Conference on Myanmar Border Lands on 17-19 June 2024.

      o   Need for policy-level changes to incorporate peace education systematically.

The study showed how peace education can empower ethnic minority students, build social cohesion, and help address environmental conflicts in areas affected by conflict. The study recommended:

- **Curriculum Reform** to incorporate human rights, inclusivity, and environmental sustainability into the core curriculum.

- **Teacher Training** to Develop capacity-building programs for educators.

- **Policy Advocacy** for Get stakeholders to prioritize peace education in policymaking.
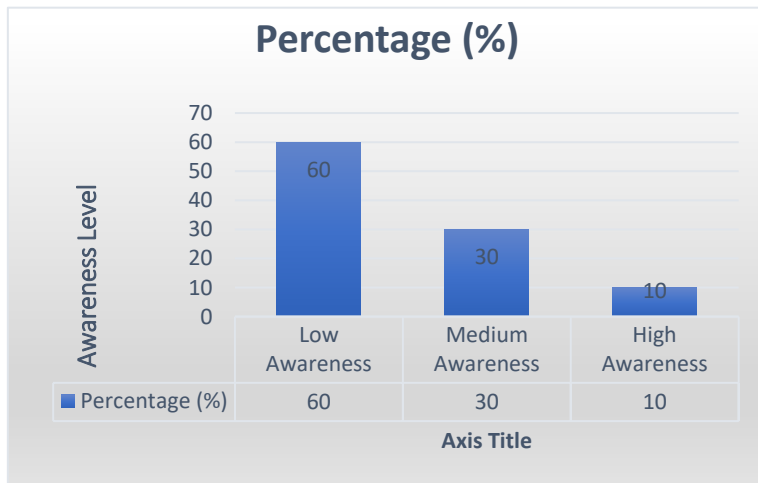
Awareness Level	Percentage (%)
Low Awareness	60
Medium Awareness	30
High Awareness	10

Challenges of Migrants and Displaced persons

Youth Displacement and Resistance Movement: A Study of Myanmar CDM University Students in Mae Sot, Thailand

Wai Yan Linn[36], Hay Marn Soe Nyunt[37], Yin Lae Aung[38], Nan Satt Naung[39]

Since the 1990s, Myanmar has experienced significant internal migration as individuals move to urban areas for economic opportunities (UNDP, 2024). Additionally, many have been compelled to abandon their homes due to forced displacements resulting from the ongoing conflict between TATMADAW (Myanmar military regime) and Ethnic Revolutionary Organizations, even following the country's transition to a so-called democratic government in 2010. Migration from Myanmar to Thailand began in the 1970s due to the political turmoil following the 1962 coup and the subsequent military junta, which forced many dissidents to seek refuge in Thailand. By 2020, Myanmar migrants represented over fifty percent of Thailand's migrant workforce, underscoring their crucial role in the country's labor market. The COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and the military coup in Myanmar in 2021 severely impacted the country's economy, leading to increased inflation and a crisis in the labor market. Additionally, the junta's crackdown on dissent, including the arrests and killings of those opposing the coup, created immense pressure for many to flee their homes in search of safety and to continue their activism against the military regime. Many individuals, including educators and students from the Civil Disobedience Movement (CDM), have migrated to Mae Sot, Thailand, in search of safety and new opportunities. Despite ongoing labor rights violations and poor workplace conditions, Thailand has remained a popular destination for migrants from Myanmar since the 2021 coup.

This research primarily investigated the experiences of students who took part in the CDM movement and engaged in anti-coup activities. Many of these individuals were subsequently displaced, both internally and externally, and faced significant challenges while attempting to adapt to life in a border town in Thailand. The study explores the issues related to forced displacement due to their activism, as well as the obstacles they encounter as new migrants in Thailand, particularly concerning their educational opportunities. Employing a mixed-methods approach, a descriptive survey involved 27 forcibly-displaced students from various

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[36] Freelance researchers. The initial findings were presented at the 4th International Conference on Burma Studies on 2-4 August 2024.

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backgrounds. Additional in-depth interviews, both in-person and online, were conducted with 16 participants, including students, educators, and community leaders involved in migrant education along the Myanmar-Thailand border.

Students and educators felt compelled to leave their homes due to safety concerns related to their activism and the actions of the junta. Those from rural areas moved to urban centers to escape potential arrest, while some urban residents sought refuge in rural regions to evade military operations. Many had been publicly identified as wanted by the junta or had received informal warnings, which made it untenable for them to remain in their original locations due to the risk of arrest and detention. All the young individuals relocated independently, leaving their families behind, and expressed ongoing concern for their safety, fearing that authorities might target their loved ones in their stead. Some sought refuge in jungles, particularly in liberated zones controlled by ethnic armed groups near the border area. During their migration, they faced military checkpoints, where attracting attention could lead to apprehension. Many CDM members and movement participants were detained by security forces at airports. The situation is particularly precarious for those lacking proper legal documentation.

A survey involving 27 participants revealed that many used irregular border crossings in their quest for safety. Approximately 26% reported being stopped by the Thai police. More than 75% faced difficulties in securing stable employment due to limited job availability, with some incurring fines for undocumented work that ranged from under 1,000 THB (28 USD) to over 30,000 THB (840 USD). Monthly incomes were notably low; 15% earned below 5,000 THB (140 USD), and only 3% surpassed 10,000 THB (280 USD), while 34% had no income at all. Academically, over 90% expressed a desire to continue their studies in Thailand, with 59% seeking full scholarships due to their inability to afford tuition fees. Mental health issues were also prevalent, with 58% experiencing weekly distress and 20% reporting elevated stress levels. These findings underscore significant socio-economic and emotional challenges faced by the participants, highlighting the urgent need for targeted support in education and livelihood opportunities.

Interviewees mentioned initial challenges upon arriving in Thailand, including legal issues, financial instability, unemployment, social isolation, job-seeking obstacles, housing difficulties, language barriers, and mental health concerns, including depression and anxiety. Many individuals fleeing Myanmar after the military coup faced significant challenges in Thailand due to their undocumented status. Without valid permits, they lived under the constant threat of arrest and deportation, which often resulted in financial strain from heavy informal fines. The fear of detention limited their mobility, forcing many to stay home. While the Thai

government introduced "pink cards" as identification documents for migrants, obtaining legal documentation remained complex and subject to delay, with financial hardships making it even more difficult. Some migrants were exploited by brokers promising assistance that never materialized. The main barrier was the high cost of legal documentation and slow application processes, leaving migrants vulnerable and anxious, unable to access basic rights or move freely.

Displaced students encountered considerable obstacles in their pursuit of education. In light of threats from the military, they chose not to return to schools and universities governed by the junta regime and instead sought alternative learning opportunities. Many turned to online education, concentrating on essential subjects such as GED classes for admission to Thai universities, as well as vocational training for practical survival skills. However, the absence of a formal educational structure, coupled with financial pressures, compelled them to prioritize immediate survival, which in turn contributed to feelings of mental insecurity. Students face significant challenges in pursuing education in Thailand due to their irregular migration and undocumented status. Legal documentation and academic records are required for admission to educational institutions, but many students cannot retrieve these documents due to displacement. As a result, they must first regularize their status and obtain their certificates to qualify for university enrollment.

In the aftermath of the 2021 coup, various alternative education initiatives have emerged, such as online federal schools and vocational training programs, helping students continue their studies. However, many students from working-class or marginalized communities, as well as those in remote areas, may still find these options inaccessible. Scholars face significant risks, and limited academic resources further restrict support for students. These challenges, compounded by nearly five years of disruption from the COVID-19 pandemic, may discourage continued education. A successful alternative education system should offer practical skills, academic knowledge, and a supportive environment while addressing the real-world challenges students face. By integrating students' real-world experiences and struggles into formal accreditation, education can become a place-based approach that mirrors students' lived realities.

Exploring the Forms, Causes, and Consequences of Physical Punishment in Migrant Schools: A Case Study of Myanmar Migrant Children in Mae Sot, Thailand

Kaung Min Thant[40]

Physical punishment remains a controversial disciplinary practice in schools, particularly in settings involving vulnerable populations such as migrant children. This study examined the forms, causes, and consequences of physical punishment in Myanmar migrant schools located in Mae Sot, Thailand. By understanding these dynamics, the research aims to provide insights into the broader implications of physical punishment and inform policy interventions. The study hypothesized that physical punishment is influenced by cultural norms, teacher training deficits, and resource constraints, leading to students' physical, emotional, and academic well-being.

The study employed a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative and quantitative methods to provide comprehensive insights. Surveys were distributed using Google Forms, featuring multiple-choice and open-ended questions to capture students' attitudes, experiences, and emotions regarding physical punishment. The follow-up interviews with selected participants allowed for a deeper exploration of significant responses. A combination of cluster sampling and snowball sampling ensure broad participation. Quantitative survey data were analyzed using Microsoft Excel to uncover trends and relationships. Qualitative methods included interviews with six teachers and five parents to understand their perceptions and experiences of physical punishment. Focus group discussions encouraged participants to share their stories and feelings. Additionally, three months of school observations across six schools provided valuable insights into teacher-student interactions. Thematic analysis was used to interpret qualitative data, and all participants provided informed consent. Key findings of the research include:

Forms of Physical Punishment: Common practices identified include squat sitting, hitting with a stick, holding hands up in front of the class, slapping, throwing objects, cleaning facilities, hair pulling, and flogging.

Severe Discipline: Some teachers viewed physical punishment as harmful and influenced by personal background and mental state. Others saw it as a way to enforce control and prepare students for challenges, often invoking fear. A group of teachers

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[40] Freelance researcher

believed physical punishment fostered respect, improved behavior, and enhanced academic performance.

Causes: Cultural norms in Myanmar, where physical punishment is widely accepted, heavily influence disciplinary practices in migrant schools. Other factors include a lack of teacher training in alternative methods, resource constraints, overcrowded classrooms, and high teacher stress levels stemming from the challenging living conditions of migrant communities.

Consequences: Physical punishment significantly affects students' physical, emotional, and academic well-being. Physical injuries can range from bruises to more serious harm. Emotional consequences include anxiety, depression, and low self-esteem, which hinder students' ability to learn and participate in school activities. Academic performance suffers as fear and anxiety impair concentration and cognitive function. Moreover, physical punishment can foster aggression and antisocial behavior, perpetuating a cycle of violence in the school environment.

The findings underscore the need for systemic change to address the culturally ingrained acceptance of physical punishment in migrant schools in Mae Sot, Thailand. While some teachers view physical punishment as effective, evidence reveals its long-term detrimental effects on students' health, behavior, and academic outcomes. Promoting positive disciplinary practices, providing teacher training, and creating supportive learning environments are essential steps to mitigating these issues.

In conclusion, this study highlighted the urgent need to reform disciplinary practices in migrant schools. Addressing the root causes of physical punishment and fostering safe, inclusive educational settings can significantly enhance the well-being and academic success of Myanmar migrant children in Mae Sot, Thailand.

Impact of Wrongful Dismissal on Myanmar Documented Migrant Workers in Mae Sot, Thailand

Soe Soe Tun[41]

This study aims to investigate the impact of wrongful dismissal or termination on documented Myanmar migrant workers in Thailand and raise awareness of violations of their labor rights, particularly the hardships associated with wrongful dismissal. Additionally, the study seeks to provide insights for Thai state regulators and inspection officers, helping them offer legal assistance, advocacy services, and support to ensure migrant workers are able to assert their rights in cases of wrongful dismissal or termination.

Wrongful dismissal is a termination of employment in breach of the employment contract, without giving notice or payment in lieu of notice, and occurs when an employee's worker rights are violated by an employer. In Thailand, the legal provisions relating to the grounds for wrongful dismissal and how to terminate employees are provided in the Labour Protection Act of 1998, and also the Civil and Commercial Code of 1985. These laws authorize dismissal or termination with prior notice. One of the legal grounds for wrongful dismissal is based on the termination of the agreement without statutory cause or violations of work regulations without giving prior notice or severance pay (Labour Protection Act of Thailand, 1998). An employer cannot dismiss or terminate an employee without statutory grounds, and an employee is entitled to notice of termination from work (Labour Protection Act of Thailand, 1998). Although Thai labor laws regulate how to terminate employees, most employers neglect the statutory provisions and dismiss migrant workers from their work without giving any reason. According to my in-depth interviews, in Thailand, migrant workers face hardships for themselves and their families' survival, especially food and shelter when employers terminate their employment without giving advance notice as a consequence of wrongful dismissal or termination.

The research used a qualitative research approach including a review of related laws and regulations. The researcher identified 21 key informants for a semi-structured in-depth interview. The key informants were identified through purposive and snowball sampling from Myanmar migrant workers dismissed from specific factories, and representatives from worker's associations, non-governmental organizations, and civil society organizations in the field of migrant labor.

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This study explores the legal forms of wrongful dismissal and reveals the main impact of the wrongful dismissal of Myanmar documented migrant workers from specific factories in Mae Sot, Thailand, and the subsequent further entrenchment of migrant poverty that impacted the right to work for the unemployed because of the wrongful dismissal. When they terminated their employment, most wrongfully dismissed workers had a Certificate of Identity and Passport as legal documentation allowing them to live and work. The study emphasizes their vulnerabilities, such as loss of income and exacerbation of poverty, lack of legal documents including the difficulties in obtaining official documents, difficulties in finding new employment and lack of legal consistency between the provisions of the Social Security Act of 1990 and the Foreigners' Working Management Emergency Decree of 2018 in the case of unemployment benefits. Regarding loss of income and poverty, migrant workers did not have a safety net for their future lives and faced hardships and a struggle for survival. They earned between 100 and 200 baht (US$ 3-6) per day, below the minimum daily wage of 332 baht in Tak Province in 2020 (Ministry of Labour, 2020), and suffered the violations of their rights by wage exploitation. The lack of income caused hardships concerning food and shelter for families deprived of employment.

As legally documented factory workers are required to pay social security contributions under the Social Security Act of 1990, they are eligible for unemployment benefits if terminated during a period of unemployment (Social Security Act of Thailand, 1990). Additionally, the Foreigners' Working Management Emergency Decree stipulates that a foreign worker cannot legally remain in Thailand without an employer (Foreigners' Working Management Emergency Decree, 2018) and must notify authorities of any change in employer within sixty days, as outlined in a resolution by the Thai Cabinet on migrant workers' affairs (No. 24, September 24, 2024). As a result, some workers who lose employment are entitled to unemployment benefits for only two months, rather than six. This limitation can have a significant impact on unemployed workers and their families, as the lack of income may make it difficult for them to renew their documents once they expire.

In addition, the research examined the situation of Myanmar migrant workers in Thailand, who are typically hired through a formal employment process involving the acquisition of work permits and visas. However, many migrant workers enter the country through illegal channels due to poor living conditions in their home country. As undocumented migrants, they often seek to obtain legal residency, work permits (referred to as pink cards), and a Certificate of Identity through brokers, at high costs and within a prescribed period. Migrant workers also face significant challenges in renewing their work permits or visas, which may result in their return to an undocumented status. According to the Immigration Act of Thailand (1979), foreign

workers cannot legally remain in Thailand without an employer, putting them at risk of deportation. Legal documentation is one of the most pressing issues for migrant workers, as their earnings are often primarily spent on securing and renewing identification documents, a struggle they face annually.

Thailand recognizes the importance of foreign workers as an important mechanism for driving the growth of the country's economy, no less than Thai workers (Ministry of Labour News, 2024). The Labour Protection Act of 1998 protects the rights of all migrant workers, even with illegal status, in line with international human rights treaties. However, the laws that have more impact on migrant workers is the Immigration Act of 1979 and the Foreigners' Working Management Emergency Decree of 2018. As a result, some workers apply for documents by borrowing money at interest. When a migrant worker has no work permit or works at certain kinds of jobs, s/he shall be liable to punishment of deportation and be banned under the Immigration Act.

This study also highlights the critical need for migrant workers to be better protected by government mechanisms ensuring access to equitable remedies and advocating for policy reforms to promote the rights of migrant workers. The issues faced by migrant workers should be addressed in collaboration with key stakeholders, including policymakers, workers' associations, non-governmental organizations, migrants, advocacy groups, and human rights institutions. In particular, the government should consider the situation in Myanmar, where many migrants are vulnerable, and establish new mechanisms that provide more efficient measures and processes to ensure the effective protection of migrant workers, allowing them to live with dignity and well-being.

A Livelihood Analysis of Remittance Patterns, Social Networks, and Economic Resilience of Migrant Workers in Mae Sot

Tin Maung Htwe[42]

This research explores the multi-layered legal, economic, and social challenges faced by Myanmar migrant workers in Mae Sot, Thailand, following the 2021 military coup in Myanmar. The political upheaval has heightened the vulnerability of this group, leading to significant displacement and an increased reliance on cross-border migration for survival. The study underscores the interconnected effects of political instability, economic downturns, and restrictive legal environments on the economic behaviors of these migrant workers, as well as changes in remittance patterns.

Based on the livelihood framework, this study evaluates the assets, strategies, and vulnerabilities that impact individuals' livelihoods. By providing a structured approach to understanding their resources, the research examines how migrant workers adapt to economic risks, demonstrate resilience in a foreign environment, and leverage social networks. Among various factors, the study primarily focuses on remittance patterns, financial management strategies, and the role of social networks. The research methodology employs a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative interviews and thematic analysis. The study involved 50 participants, selected for their diverse experiences and backgrounds, and was conducted in two phases (2023 and 2024) to gain a broad range of insights into changes in their financial management and economic activities.

Key aspects examined the role of remittances and the platforms. With attention to transaction costs, accessibility and trust among migrant workers, broker agencies and recipients, the study investigated how the economic capital, high remittance fees, bank instability in Myanmar and volatile exchange rates due to political instability often diminish the financial returns for families in Myanmar. Findings indicate that despite the hardships, migrants leverage social capital and digital financial tools to sustain their livelihoods and support their families. The study advocates targeted policy interventions and support mechanisms that address high transaction costs, improve financial literacy, and enhance formal banking access to mitigate economic vulnerabilities. Such measures are essential for reinforcing the

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economic stability of Myanmar migrants and ensuring their long-term well-being in Thailand.

Figure: Migration of Myanmar Nationals to Thailand (2021 to March 2024) based on IOM 2024 reports
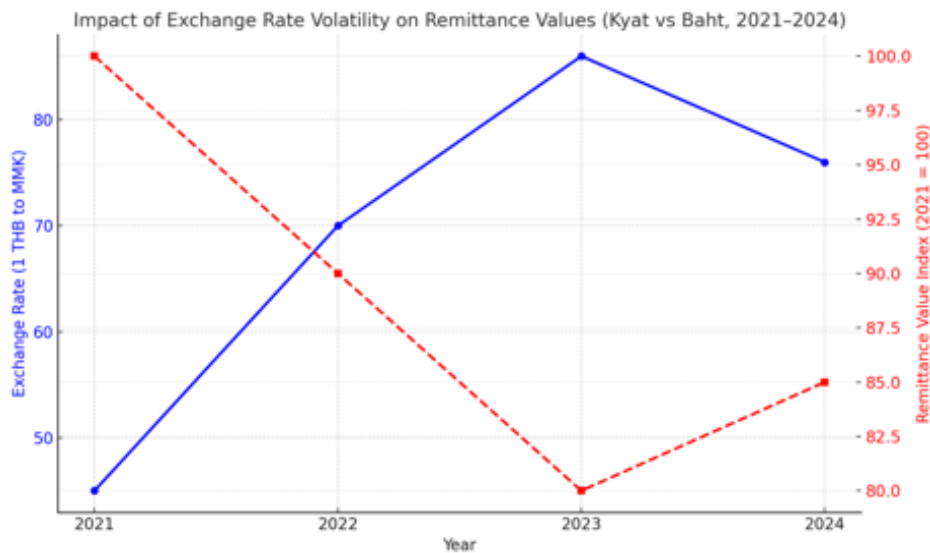
Figure: Impact of Exchange Rate Volatility on Remittance Values (Kyat vs Baht, 2021–2024) Based on Mae Sot Currency Exchange brokers

Distribution of Employment Sectors for Myanmar Nationals in Thailand
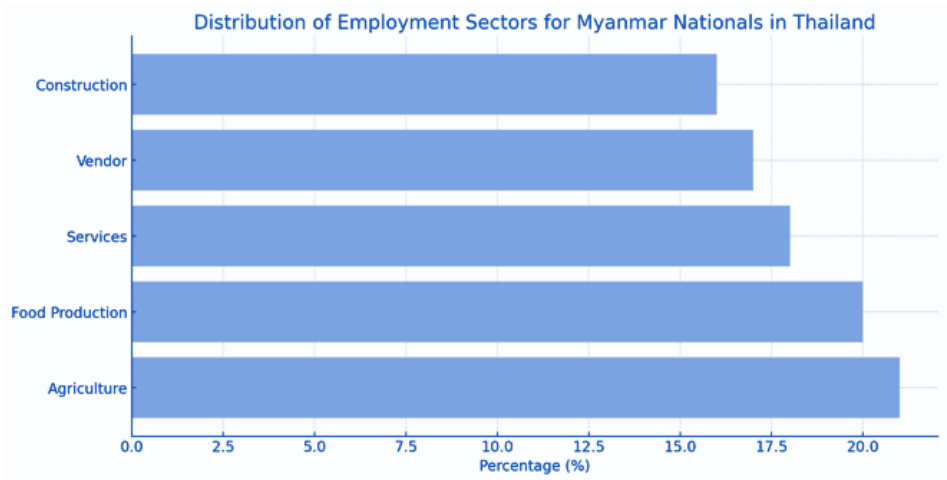
Figure: Distribution of Employment sectors for Myanmar Nationals in Thailand Based on IOM 2024 report

Sector	Daily Wage Range (THB)
Agriculture	120 - 250
Garment Industry	250 - < 345 (below minimum)
Construction	320 - 360
Hospitality	250 - 300
Domestic Work	5,000 - 10,000/month (approx. 167 - 267/day)

Figure: Comparison of Wage Levels for Migrant Workers in Mae Sot (THB)

Between Conflict and Survival: Conflict-Induced Displacement and Security Challenges in Central Myanmar Townships

Lilly Kris and Nwe[43]

Forced migration has gradually increased along with conflict intensification. Millions of people were forcibly displaced from their homes during the last decade of the 20th century because of conflict, development projects and human rights violations. Forced displacement in Myanmar is often induced by the armed conflict around the country after the 2021 military coup. The fighting has become intense not only in the border areas, but also in central Myanmar such as Sagaing, Mandalay and Magway. People displaced in central Myanmar have difficulty in finding a safe place to avoid the armed conflict due to a lack of war experience. Consequently, it is easy for the military troops to find them, to arrest them and to use them as human shields. This paper highlights the violation of the right to security of displaced people in a township in Mandalay Region. The purpose of this study is to identify the adverse impact of armed conflict on displaced people in one specific township in Myanmar, to examine the extent to which the right to security of internally displaced persons (IDPs) has been violated and to investigate how displacement influences the ongoing security of displaced people.

This study used qualitative methods to gather primary data about the situation of displaced persons in townships in central Myanmar. In the township, which is the focus of this research, people actively participated in the non-violent protest movement and in the armed revolution against military rule which emerged after the coup. The location and geographic details of the township have been omitted to preserve the security of research participants and researchers. The township is in a strategic area in the battle for the capture of one of central Myanmar's key cities. Both military troops and members of the People's Defense Force (PDF) are continuing to fight for control of the township. Fighting in the township intensified as the battle for control of the city escalated. Primary data were collected through both a survey instrument and semi-structured interviews with key informants and people with diverse perspectives, to ascertain the ways in which members of different groups are affected differently by displacement. Further information was collected from tracking daily news in local and social media.

At the time of writing, the military is engaged in a bombing campaign of villages in the township, bolstering personnel numbers at strategic locations and

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[43] Freelance researchers and human rights educators

launching a new series of raids. Homes and villages continue to be systematically burnt down and destroyed in orchestrated attacks by security forces and armed gangs allied with the junta. Military soldiers move from village to village even if there is no active fighting, looting properties, beating villagers, arresting villagers without reason, occasionally staying overnight, burning down houses and destroying livestock before departing. The rights of IDPs are widely ignored, disregarded or violated. The right to security of the person is a fundamental right of international human rights law. Article 3 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and Article 9 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) explicitly provide that everyone has the right to personal security of person. General Comment No 35 of the ICCPR, 2014, affirms that the security of a person concerns freedom from injury to the body and the mind, or bodily and mental integrity (Para 3).

Under Article 8 of the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, no one's right to life, dignity, liberty, or security should be violated during the process of displacement. In Myanmar domestic law, every citizen has the right to enjoy fully personal security under Section 3 of the Myanmar 2017 Privacy Law. Section 357 of the 2008 Myanmar Constitution provides that "the Union shall protect the security of home, property, correspondence and other communications of citizens under the law subject to the provisions of this Constitution." Therefore, the government of Myanmar is not only obligated to respect and protect these rights, but also to act affirmatively to fulfil them. The participants in the study reported that they faced severe security challenges following internal displacement, including torture, being used as human shields, kidnapping, insecurity in temporary hiding places, threats of loss of life, and losing family members.

In the area being studied, there were some camps for IDPs in the jungle, supported and operated by the PDF. These cannot be regarded as formal IDP camps. The lack of shelter and proper sanitation facilities in these camps further contributes to insecurity. A further complexity is that some displaced people studied in this research project fled their homes when the military began camping in their villages, or when the fighting began between the military and the PDF. However, they often returned to their residences when the battle receded or did not transpire at all. These situations create technical difficulties in defining these people as internally displaced. In this study, these people are considered IDPs because of their displacement-induced vulnerability and the human rights violations to which they are exposed (Brookings Institution, 2002). As the conflict in Myanmar escalates and the fighting continues, the number of displaced people is increasing. Displaced people live with constant anxiety and feel that no place is safe. With no experience of war and the authorities not providing IDPs with secure accommodation, IDPs in central Myanmar face different challenges to those in the ethnic border regions.

Challenges to Mental Health and Integration of Newly Arrived Refugees from Myanmar in Mizoram

Benjamin Langle[44]

Mizoram, a state in northeastern India, has seen an influx of over 4,000 refugees from Myanmar, particularly from the Chin ethnic group, following the military coup in Myanmar in February 2021 (BBC News, 2021). These refugees face various challenges and live in makeshift camps and are susceptible to mental health problems due to exposure to stressors and trauma, as noted by the World Health Organization (WHO, 2019). Factors contributing to their mental health risks include poverty, discrimination, poor living conditions, separation from family, and uncertainty about their future and legal status. This research explores the multifaceted challenges faced by refugees and asylum seekers during and after migration, including uncertainty about legal status, experiences of discrimination, psychosocial impacts, and coping strategies. By understanding these issues, this study seeks to inform interventions and policies to enhance the well-being and resilience of displaced populations. The study aims to fill a gap in the literature by studying a relatively under-researched group and region and provides evidence-based recommendations for improving mental health services, resources, and interventions for refugees in Mizoram.

This study used qualitative approaches that can provide insights into the lived experiences of refugees and identify previously unknown challenges through personal accounts. The study was conducted in the districts of Aizawl, Lunglei, Champhai, and Lawngtlai, and 12 Chin refugees were interviewed. The research findings include:

1. **Impact of past and ongoing events**

All participants have experienced traumatic events during the pre-migration and transit phases as well as severe difficulties after resettlement. They were forced to flee their homes due to conflicts, violence, fear of persecution, and human rights violations, seeking a safe environment for themselves and their family members. Others have confirmed post-migration difficulties such as delays in finding shelter, prolonged insecurity, rejected refugee claims, poor socioeconomic conditions, concern about family back home, social exclusion, and perceived discrimination resulting in negative psychosocial well-being (Li et al., 2016). There are a range of studies on the impacts on refugees confirming psychosocial impacts (Bogic, Njoku, and Priebe, 2012).

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[44] Freelance researcher and consultant. Part of the paper was published as a policy brief in YRI Policy brief series 2024.

2. Legal Status

Legal issues are a major issue for respondents. They have no legal documents or legal protection and are not recognized as refugees by UNHCR or the Indian authorities. They have no right to work and can be deported at any time. Participants are challenged by a lack of housing opportunities, health care, education, and decent working conditions. This echoes the recent study of Delilovic et al., (2023) that found asylum seekers were at greater risk of mental illness compared to other refugees, and legal status is a significant predictor of poor mental health.

3. Discrimination

Almost half the respondents have faced discrimination in daily life such as when hiring a taxi and being mistreated when meeting friends in a cafe. Non-native speakers or immigrants often face higher fares and unfair treatment in public transportation due to language barriers (Smith, J. 2020). Immigrant workers are frequently overworked, underpaid, and denied skill development opportunities (Johnson, L.2019). Brown (2021) found that Language barriers can lead to immigrants being overcharged for medical services and medications. Others have shown that discrimination in general had a negative association with mental health in migrants and refugees (Szaflarski and Bauldry, 2019; Ziersch et al., 2020). Addressing discrimination is a key resettlement and health issue requiring urgent action.

4. Social Impact

Participants repeatedly expressed how an undefined present made them unable to visualize their future and integrate it into their experience of the present. Sagbakken et al., 2020 have stated that loss of future directedness, a feeling of being trapped, disempowerment, passivity and development of a negative view of self, distortion of relations, and a feeling of loss of opportunities for growth were important factors in the life of refugees and migrants. Bradley-Geist and Schmidtke (2015) discuss how workplace stereotyping and discrimination harm immigrants' job performance and well-being, and suggest ways to address these issues. Varvin (2009) found that a person fleeing their home country adapts to situations with quite different and often unknown time frames, unknown places; and the experience of seemingly endless waiting for a decision on asylum applications that evoke deep and overwhelming anxieties.

5. Coping

All participants are managing their struggles and depression by praying, going to Church, meditation, and participating in Church activities. Religious coping, specifically turning to God is the most effective way of seeking comfort and support. Schweitzer et al., (2007) found that effective ways of dealing with meaninglessness and feelings of insecurity, and passivity, are through a daily rhythm and facilitation in group solidarity. Additionally, coping strategies could help refugees overcome

painful experiences through social support (65%), behavioral change (55%), faith in God (80%), and controlling negative emotions (40%) (Theodoratou et al., 2015).

Squalid Rohingya Camps: Right to Access to Humanitarian Aid after Cyclone Mocha in Sittwe, Rakhine State in Myanmar

Ar Mee Mar[45]

On May 14, 2023, Cyclone Mocha slammed into Myanmar, especially the west, one of the most powerful storms in the country. Cyclone Mocha damaged numerous structures, such as bridges, roads, public buildings, communication infrastructure and homes in its path (Regan and Watson, 2023). The most impacted area was Sittwe, Rakhine State, where thousands of Rohingya live. Thousands of households were damaged, and farmland and livestock were inundated. More than two million people were affected, including Rohingya in Rakhine State who have lived in restricted access camps since the 2017 crackdown. Most of the housing in internally displaced person (IDP) camps was destroyed and around 400 people, including Rohingya, died.

Photo: BBC and UNOCHA

However, the military TV channel reported that just over 100 people had been killed, and little damage was mentioned (Al Jazeera, 2023). It is undeniable that the military would like to hide the casualties and damage caused by Mocha as well as deny by travel restrictions the right of affected communities, especially Rohingya IDP communities, to access humanitarian aid. These restrictions delayed the response

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[45] Freelance researcher

of relief items such as basic foods and hygiene kits, as well as materials for repairing buildings and shelters for affected communities (MSF, 2023). Donors or social workers must request travel authorization from the State Administration Council (SAC) to deliver humanitarian assistance. This led to a critical shortage of humanitarian aid (basic food, clean water, shelters, health care) for hundreds of affected communities, especially Rohingya IDPs.

Humanitarian actions must be neutral, impartial, and operationally independent during and after a conflict or natural disaster. The suffering of people must be addressed and relieved whenever it occurs. Humanitarian aid aims to save lives and health and restore personal dignity. Humanitarian action is based on urgent need without discrimination on the basis of religion, belief, nationality, gender, political opinion, or class. Humanitarian actors must desist from and avoid taking political, racial, religious, and ideological sides. Humanitarian actors must be independent without interference from politics, economics, and the military (OCHA, 2011). However, the military denied the right to humanitarian assistance after Cyclone Mocha. Denying the right to access humanitarian assistance during and after a natural disaster is a human rights violation. This study investigated the humanitarian aid situation and the challenges of accessing humanitarian aid for Rohingya IDPs in Sittwe, Rakhine State, by applying qualitative research methods. Ten Rohingya IDPs from four camps were interviewed directly by phone.

The findings confirmed that Rohingya IDPs received an alert regarding Cyclone Mocha from the military but no evacuation support. It is undeniable that the systematical displacement and forcible relocation in camps led to more Rohingya fatalities and injuries. *"Most Rohingya IDPs did not evacuate because they were worried that if they did, their shelters and properties would be confiscated and occupied by the SAC because our IDPs had experienced this in the past."* The Rohingya IDPs did not receive emergency relief due to restrictions imposed by the military. The humanitarian aid situation deteriorated even further after Cyclone Mocha. Six months after Mocha, most of the shelters had not been rebuilt or repaired, and Rohingya IDPs face difficulties.

Rising commodity prices after the Mocha Cyclone put another strain on the livelihoods of Rohingya IDPs. With humanitarian aid, nothing in the camp has changed substantially after the Cyclone Mocha. Furthermore, the renewed armed conflict between the Arakan Army and the military imposed emergency and humanitarian relief restrictions after Mocha. One of the findings highlights that the Rohingya IDPs had no prior support for t evacuation. Moving to designated places

without help was impossible because the impact of restrictions and freedom of movement.

Photo by: UNOCHA

Photo by: CNN

Rohingya IDPs were the most vulnerable group during the cycle and are still struggling. The Rohingya IDPs have encountered various challenges and difficulties in the squalid camps, with t insufficient humanitarian aid, inadequate health care like living home dentition and restricted freedom of movement for a decade. Rohingya IDPs already struggle with the impact of different oppressions and persecutions. Mocha Cyclone has compounded the existing challenges and added another layer of the vicious cycle of poverty.

နေရပ်စွန့်ခွာရွှေ့ပြောင်းနေထိုင်ရသော သက်ကြီးရွယ်အိုများ ၏ ကျန်းမာရေးစောင့်ရှောက်မှုရှိရန် အတားအဆီးများ

Shu Moe Wai[46]

မြန်မာနိုင်ငံတွင် ၂၀၂၁ ခုနှစ် စစ်အာဏာသိမ်းမှုဖြစ်ပွားပြီးနောက် ပြည်တွင်းတွင် နေရပ်စွန့်ခွာ ရွှေ့ပြောင်းနေရသူ အရေအတွက် များပြားလျက်ရှိသည်။ ထိုသို့နေရပ်စွန့်ခွာ နေရသူများထဲမှ အသက်၆၀နှင့်အထက် သက်ကြီးရွယ်အိုများသည် ကျန်းမာရေး ပြသနာများနှင့် ရင်ဆိုင်ကြရသည်။ စစ်တပ်နှင့်စစ်အာဏာသိမ်းမှုကို လက်မခံခြင်းကြောင့် ပေါ်ထွက်လာသည့် ပြည်သူ့ကာကွယ်ရေးတပ်ဖွဲ့များအကြား တိုက်ခိုက်မှုများ မြန်မာနိုင်ငံ နေရာအနှံ့အပြားတွင် ဖြစ်ပွားလျက်ရှိရာ စစ်ကိုင်းတိုင်းဒေသကြီးသည်လည်း အပါအဝင် ဖြစ်သည်။ ထို့ကြောင့် ဤစာတမ်းသည် စစ်ကိုင်းတိုင်းဒေသကြီး မုံရွာမြို့နယ်နှင့် ချောင်းဦးမြို့နယ်အတွင်းရှိ စစ်ရှောင်စခန်းများကို ရွေးချယ်ထားပါသည်။ ထိုစစ်ရှောင် စခန်းများရှိ သက်ကြီးရွယ်အိုများ၏ ကျန်းမာရေးစောင့်ရှောက်မှုရရန် ရင်ဆိုင်ကြုံတွေ့ နေရသော အတားအဆီးများကို ဖော်ထုတ် ရန်ရည်ရွယ်ပါသည်။ ဤစာတမ်းကို အရည်အသွေးအခြေပြု သုတေသနနည်းလမ်းဖြင့် ဆောင်ရွက်ပြီး ထိုစစ်ရှောင် စခန်းများမှ သက်ကြီးရွယ်အိုများအားတွေ့ဆုံ မေးမြန်းထားပါသည်။ တွေ့ရှိချက်များမှာ စစ်ရှောင် စခန်းများတွင် နေရပ်စွန့်ခွာ ရွှေ့ပြောင်းနေရသော သက်ကြီးရွယ်အိုများသည် လမ်းခရီး အခက်အခဲ၊ သွားလာရမှု ဝေးကွာခြင်း၊ အန္တရာယ်ရှိခြင်း၊ ငွေကြေး အခက်အခဲများ၊ ကျန်းမာရေးအသိပညာဆိုင်ရာ သတင်းအချက်အလက် လက်လှမ်းမီမှု နည်းပါးခြင်းနှင့် ကျန်းမာရေး စောင့်ရှောက်မှုပေးသည့်နေရာများ ဝေးလွန်းသည့် နေရာတွင်ရှိခြင်းတို့ ကြောင့် ကျန်းမာရေး စောင့်ရှောက်မှုများ အပြည့်အဝမရယူ နိုင်ကြခြင်းဖြစ်သည်။

နေရပ်စွန့်ခွာသက်ကြီးများ၏ ကျန်းမာရေးစောင့်ရှောက်မှုရှိရန် အတားအဆီး တစ်ခုမှာ လမ်းခရီးအခက်အခဲ၊ ဝေးကွာခြင်းနှင့် အန္တရာယ်ရှိခြင်းဖြစ်သည်။ စစ်ရှောင် စခန်းများတွင် နေရပ်စွန့်ခွာရွှေ့ပြောင်းနေထိုင်ရသော သက်ကြီးရွယ်အိုများ၏ ကျန်းမာ ရေးကိစ္စဖြစ်ခဲ့လျှင် ပြည့်စုံလုံလောက်သည့် ကျန်းမာရေးစောင့်ရှောက်မှုအတွက် အနီးဆုံး ဒေါ်မိုင်အကွာအဝေးတွင် ရှိသည့် မုံရွာပြည်သူ့ဆေးရုံသို့ သွားကြရသည်။ မုံရွာသည် စစ်အစိုးရ ထိန်းချုပ်နယ်မြေတွင်ဖြစ်ပြီး ထိုပြည်သူ့ဆေးရုံသို့သွားလျှင် လမ်းခရီး အခက်အခဲများ

ဖြစ်သည့် မြေမြှုပ်မိုင်းဧရိယာများ၊ စစ်ဆေးရေးဂိတ်များကြောင့် အခက်အခဲနှင့် အန္တရာယ် များရှိသည်။ စစ်ရှောင် စခန်းများမှ တွေ့ဆုံမေးမြန်းမှု များအရ သက်ကြီးရွယ်အို အများစု သည် မိသားစုများနှင့် ခွဲခွာနေထိုင်ကြရသည်။ ထို့ကြောင့် စိုးရိမ်ပူပန်မှု အထီးကျန်မှုနှင့် ကြောက်ရွံ့မှုတို့ကို ခံစားနေကြရသည်။ ထို့ပြင် ဝင်ငွေအခက်အခဲများကြောင့် စိတ်ပိုင်းဆိုင်ရာ ကျန်းမာရေးကိုလည်း သက်ရောက်မှုများ ရှိလာသည်။

နေရပ်စွန့်ခွာသက်ကြီးများ ကျန်းမာရေးစောင့်ရှောက်မှုရရှိရန် နောက်ထပ် အတားအဆီး တစ်ခုမှာ ကျန်းမာရေးအသိပညာဆိုင်ရာ သတင်းအချက်အလက် လက်လှမ်းမီမှု နည်းပါးခြင်းဖြစ်သည်။ ယခင်က ကျေးလက်ပြည်သူများသည် သတင်း အချက်အလက်များကို လူမှုကွန်ယက်များမှသိရှိကြသည်။ စစ်တပ်အာဏာ သိမ်းပြီးနောက် စစ်ကိုင်းတိုင်းဒေသကြီးတွင် ဆက်သွယ်ရေးလိုင်းများနှင့် အင်တာနက်လိုင်းများ ဖြတ်တောက်ခံခဲ့ရသည်။ ထို့ကြောင့် ကျေးလက်ဒေသများတွင် လူမှု ကွန်ယက်များမှ သတင်းရရှိမှုခက်ခဲလာပြီး ကျေးလက်ဒေသရှိ သက်ကြီးများသည် ကျန်းမာရေး ဗဟုသုတ နည်းပါးနေကြသည်။ ထို့ပြင် အင်တာဗျူး အချက်အလက်များအရ စစ်ရှောင်စခန်းရှိ သက်ကြီးများသည် ကျန်းမာရေးဗဟုသုတများ လိုအပ်လျက်ရှိသည်။ စစ်ရှောင်စခန်းများ တွင် သက်ကြီးများအတွက် ကျန်းမာရေး ဟောပြောပွဲများကို ပြုလုပ်ပေးရန် လိုအပ်လျက်ရှိသည်။ သို့မှသာ ဗဟုသုတများတိုးပွား၍ ကျန်းမာရေး စောင့်ရှောက်မှုများ ခံယူနိုင်ကြမည်။ သက်ကြီးရွယ်အိုများသည် ရာသီတုပ်ကွေးရောဂါ၊ သွေးတိုးရောဂါတို့ ဖြစ်ပွား တတ်သည်။ ထို့ပြင် ပုံမှန်ကျန်းမာရေး စောင့်ရှောက်မှုများလည်း မရှိသေး သောကြောင့် ကျန်းမာရေးစောင့်ရှောက်မှု လိုအပ် နေကြောင်းတွေ့ရှိ ရပါသည်။ ထို့ပြင် သက်ကြီးရွယ်အိုများတွင် စိတ်ပိုင်းဆိုင်ရာ ကျန်းမာရေးများလည်း ခံစားကြရသည်။ လူငယ်စေတနာ့ဝန်ထမ်းများ၊ ရပ်ရွာအခြေပြု ဝန်ထမ်းများ ဖွဲ့စည်း၍ နှစ်သိမ့်ဆွေးနွေးမှုများ လိုအပ်လျက်ရှိသည်။ ဆုတောင်းခြင်း သို့မဟုတ် တရားထိုင်ခြင်း ကဲ့သို့သော ဘာသာရေး အလေ့အကျင့်များဖြင့် လျှော့ချနိုင်ကြောင်းများ တွေ့ရှိရပါသည်။

Politics
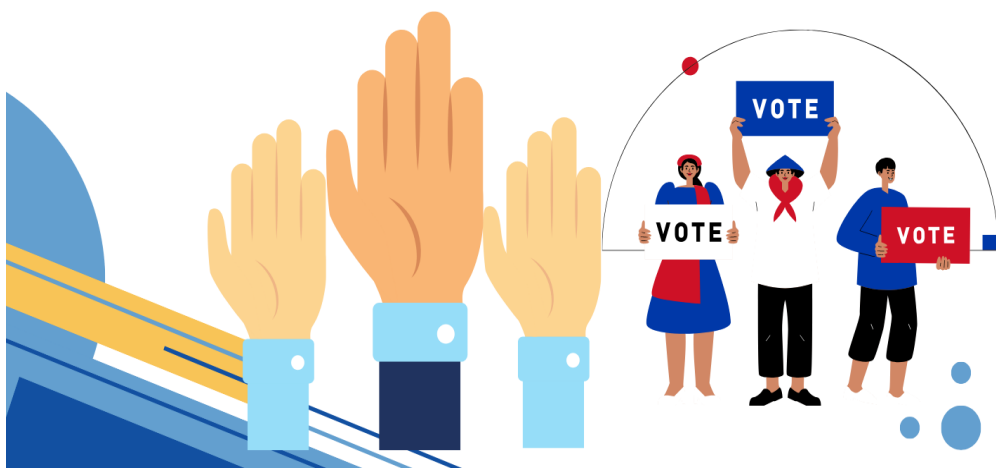
Beyond the Boundaries: Analyzing the Impacts of Myanmar's Diaspora Activism in Thailand

Htet Lynn Oo[47]

This research explores the significant role of Myanmar's diaspora in shaping sociopolitical dynamics, focusing on activism from Thailand as a case study. Diasporas perform diverse roles as providers of humanitarian aid, reconstruction agents, peacebuilders, or disruptors of peace, often acting as both fuelers of armed conflicts and supporters of democratic movements. Myanmar's diaspora in Thailand exemplifies this spectrum of roles, driven by complex motivations and structural challenges.

Conflict, economic instability, and political persecution have caused significant displacement in Myanmar, particularly following military conflicts in Karen, Karenni, and Shan states. These crises have propelled over 2.3 million Myanmar nationals to Thailand, forming a heterogeneous diaspora comprising economic migrants, political refugees, intellectuals, and conflict-driven refugees. Despite their varied origins and motivations, these communities share a profound connection to their homeland and actively engage in activism, making them critical actors in Myanmar's political landscape.

This study investigated how Myanmar's diaspora in Thailand navigates dual identities, mobilizes resources, and sustains political advocacy from exile. The research contributes to understanding the potential agency of diaspora communities in influencing political developments and highlights their dual role in addressing immediate humanitarian needs and advocating for long-term political change. The study employed three theoretical frameworks to analyze diaspora activism:

1. **Diaspora and Transnationalism Theory**: Robin Cohen's concept of "long-distance nationalism" underscores how diaspora communities maintain active connections with their homeland. This theory elucidates how Myanmar's diaspora leverages transnational ties for political advocacy, fundraising, and cultural preservation.
2. **Social Movement Theory**: Resource mobilization theory, as articulated by McCarthy and Zald, highlights the importance of financial, informational, and human resources in sustaining activism. Myanmar's diaspora in Thailand

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relies on these resources to engage in advocacy campaigns, community organizing, and policy lobbying.

3. **Theories of Identity and Belonging**: Stuart Hall's insights into cultural identity illustrate how diaspora members negotiate their dual identities, fostering a commitment to activism that bridges their host and home societies.

The study employs a qualitative approach, combining narrative and discourse analysis with participant observation and key informant interviews. Data collection focused on the activities of diaspora members, including fundraising, advocacy, and community support efforts. Ethical considerations, such as informed consent and anonymity, were integral to the research process. Key findings of the research are:

1. **Fundraising**: Diaspora members organize cultural events to generate resources for humanitarian aid and resistance movements. Proceeds often support local NGOs and grassroots organizations assisting internally displaced persons and members of the Civil Disobedience Movement.

2. **Advocacy**: Myanmar's diaspora fosters international awareness and lobbies for policy changes through public discussions, strategic partnerships, and local engagement in Thailand.

3. **Resettlement Support**: Collaborating with Thai organizations, the diaspora provides housing, vocational training, and integration support for newly displaced individuals.

4. **Technical Assistance**: Financial and strategic aid from the diaspora sustains resistance efforts within Myanmar, ensuring continued communication and planning amidst challenging conditions.

5. **Identity and Motivation**: Activism is driven by moral obligation, guilt, attachment to Myanmar, and aspirations to return home. Collective memories and shared experiences of alienation in Thailand further reinforce their commitment to social justice and political change.

6. **Community Dynamics**: The composition and activities of diaspora communities vary based on identity, timing of displacement, legal status, and geographical location. Cities like Bangkok and Chiang Mai serve as hubs for political advocacy and civil society, while vulnerable communities in Mae Sot focus on grassroots activism.

This research highlights the strategic importance of Myanmar's diaspora in Thailand as transnational actors influencing political and humanitarian landscapes. Despite facing security concerns and structural inequities, the diaspora's resilience

and resourcefulness position them as pivotal contributors to Myanmar's ongoing struggle for democracy and development.

The findings underscore the need for policies that recognize and support diaspora activism as a critical component of broader efforts to address Myanmar's political and humanitarian crises. This study also opens avenues for further exploration of diaspora politics and transnational advocacy, offering valuable insights for scholars and policymakers alike.

Connecting the Federal Democracy Charter with the ''Way of Rakhita'' (A Theoretical Analysis of the State of Relations between the NUG and ULA-led Movements)

Kyaw Lynn[48]

The three key research objectives are (1) to explore the significance of the NUG and United League of Arakan (ULA)-led movements in Myanmar politics, (2) To trace the context of the current state of relations between the two movements, (3) To analyze the development of the relations based on theoretical perspectives.

The key research methodology was the qualitative collection and analysis of non-numerical data such as text, video, audio, etc. Major findings include that that there was very little precedence and historical experience when it came to collaboration between the Rakhine armed forces and pro-democracy and federal ethnic Bamar-led opposition movements. This therefore poses two key challenges: firstly, not having historical lessons and secondly not being able to build a sufficient level of trust between the two movements, arising from the ULA's grievances against the NLD government leaders who still hold de jure positions in the NUG.

The Myanmar military (also known as the Tatmadaw) staged a military coup on account of alleged electoral fraud and overthrew the incumbent NLD-led government on February 1, 2021.The Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians (CRPH) was formed by MPs elected in the 2020 election on February 5, 2021. The two segments of the Federal Democracy Charter (FDC) were announced separately on March 31 and April 21, along with the dissolution of the 2008 constitution on April 1, 2021. In line with the road map, the CRPH appointed the National Unity Government (NUG) on April 16. Theoretically, the NUG has the responsibility to implement the FDC, which includes the core principles and road map for building a civilian-led Federal Democratic Union and Federal Army in addition to the formation of the National Unity Consultative Council (NUCC) as a consultative platform for the CRPH and other stakeholders including the ethnic armed organizations (EAOs).

Although the NUCC aimed at the inclusion of all anti-military forces in the country, the ULA and its armed wing, the Arakan Army (AA), formed in April 2009, are still not a part of the consultative body or of the NUG. The chief of the ULA/AA has proclaimed to march along with the 'Way of Rakhita' philosophy and has also stated its political goal as a 'confederation model,' (Interview with CCN, 2022).

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Beyond these differing ideological stances, both the spring revolution currently led by the NUG and the armed movement of the ULA in Arakan have a common enemy, the junta military, common tasks like fighting against the junta military, and common interests like the abolition of the military dictatorship and a greater concentration of power at the ethnic state level. Yet the two forces have a low level of collaboration in the military and political spheres. Therefore, the problem statement for the current research study is how the relations between these two actors and their policies have developed into the current situation and why.

Key findings include:

- **Summary of Results**

In assessing the historical records of the NUG-ULA interactions after the 2021 military coup, the research found that there are three critical factors to be noted. First, relations are highly informal and rhetorical. The two leaderships have considered each other as a part of their mainstream movement, but not essential. There are also very few institutional platforms or normative principles that the two movements have upheld and agreed on. Second, the ULA leadership has perceived the NUG as one of the actors, not the only legitimate actor, and developed its own policy toward the NUG and other newly emerged ethnic Bamar-led political forces. Thirdly, the NUG has also prepared to lose the ULA's trust given its comparative and strategic interests in the cases of Rohingya policy and federal democracy construction.

Finally, based on the structural perspective, two arguments could be made. First, relations between the NUG and ULA could be ultimately determined by the relative military power between the NUG and the State Administration Council (SAC). Second, as the power gap between the NUG and SAC decreases, there is a higher possibility of seeing closer relations between the NUG and ULA. But this also needs to do with the political alignment between the two movements.

Implication of Diaspora Politics in Contemporary Myanmar: Exploring the Trends, Patterns and Influence of Diaspora Groups on Current Myanmar Politics

Htet Lynn Oo[49]

Diaspora communities play multifaceted roles, ranging from contributing to humanitarian aid, reconstruction, and peacebuilding to, at times, fueling conflicts or supporting extremist activities. This research focuses on the underexplored influence of the Burmese/Myanmar diaspora on Myanmar's political and economic spheres, particularly in the aftermath of the 2021 military coup. Using case studies and interviews, the study examines diaspora activities, including advocacy, transnational networking, and support for anti-coup movements. It aims to enhance academic discourse while informing policymakers and international organizations on how to engage with diaspora groups effectively.

Three main drivers have shaped the Myanmar diaspora:

1. **Forced displacement** due to civil wars, ethnic conflict and political persecution.
2. **Search for political asylum** by activists, academics, and civil society members.
3. **Economic and educational migration** for better opportunities.

This research investigated the influence of the Myanmar diaspora, focusing on their role in shaping the political and economic landscapes in Myanmar after the 2021 military coup. It explores how diaspora communities contribute to political movements, economic support, and advocacy efforts, and their involvement in peace-building or even conflict escalation. The study draws on key informant interviews and case studies to explore these dynamics, particularly highlighting the evolving role of the diaspora in post-coup Myanmar.

Key findings of the research:

1. **Unified Diaspora Communities Post-Coup**: One of the central findings of this research is the significant shift towards unity among Myanmar's diverse diaspora communities following the coup. While diaspora groups had previously been fragmented along ethnic, political, and regional lines, the shared threat posed by the military junta has driven a more cohesive and

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[49] Researcher and Grant recipient

coordinated response. In the United States, for example, the formation of the US Advocacy Coalition for Myanmar has brought together organizations from various ethnic backgrounds, such as the Karen, Rohingya, and Chin communities, to advocate for democratic reforms and support anti-coup movements. Similar unification is seen in other countries like the Czech Republic, Australia, and Germany, where diaspora groups have also rallied together, prioritizing collective action over individual interests.

2. **Diverse Motivations Based on Experience**: The research also reveals that motivations for diaspora activism differ depending on when and why individuals relocated. For those displaced after the 2021 coup, the desire to return to Myanmar and reunite with family members is a powerful driver. In contrast, older generations, particularly those who fled earlier periods of repression (such as the 1988 uprisings), have become more settled and are driven by a deep sense of moral obligation to help end military rule, rather than by a desire to return. These varying motivations underscore the diversity of diaspora activism and the way personal histories have shaped political engagement.

3. **Role of 'Near' vs. 'Far' Diaspora**: The study highlights the crucial distinction between "near" and "far" diasporas. Near diaspora communities, those based in neighboring countries like Thailand and India, have a more immediate and influential role in political and humanitarian efforts. They are often better positioned to engage in real-time advocacy, provide support for refugees, and offer direct assistance to conflict-affected areas. Their proximity to Myanmar allows for quicker responses to emerging crises and greater involvement in resource mobilization. In contrast, far diaspora communities, particularly those in Western countries, have greater organizational freedom and access to international platforms, but their ability to respond immediately to events on the ground is more limited.

4. **Moral Obligation and Deep Attachment**: Across all diaspora groups, a strong sense of moral responsibility to contribute to Myanmar's future has been a key motivator for activism. Many diaspora members feel compelled to use the freedoms and privileges they enjoy abroad to help their compatriots still suffering under military rule. This moral imperative is especially evident in diaspora-driven initiatives to support political prisoners, displaced people, and ethnic groups engaged in armed resistance. For example, activists in Thailand have been particularly vocal in advocating for urgent relocations and engaging with the Thai government to support displaced Myanmar nationals.

5. **Solidarity Across Ethnic and Political Divides**: The research also found that the military coup has led to increased solidarity between ethnic groups,

especially those who previously may have had differing political goals. For instance, the Kachin diaspora in the UK has shown strong support for the broader anti-coup movement, recognizing that unity across ethnic lines is essential to counter the common adversary: the Burmese military. This unity is further reflected in shared advocacy efforts, with many diaspora communities working together to push for international recognition of the National Unity Government (NUG) and to support the fight for democracy in Myanmar.

6. **Strategic Use of Transnational Networks**: Another key finding is the strategic use of transnational networks by Myanmar diaspora groups to influence both local and international actors. Through the formation of global advocacy coalitions, diaspora communities have been able to amplify their voices, mobilize resources, and draw international attention to the crisis in Myanmar. The research emphasizes the role of these networks in raising awareness, lobbying foreign governments, and coordinating humanitarian assistance.

This research provides a comprehensive view of how Myanmar's diaspora has transformed in response to the 2021 coup. It highlights the growing unity among diverse diaspora groups, shaped by shared experiences of displacement and persecution, and reveals how their collective action has become a significant force in Myanmar's ongoing struggle for democracy. The findings also underline the importance of both near and far diaspora in influencing the political and humanitarian landscape, showing that their contributions are critical not only in advocating for political change but also in providing tangible support to those affected by the conflict. This research enriches the understanding of diaspora dynamics and offers valuable insights for policymakers and international organizations engaged in Myanmar's crisis.

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YRI is an academic research institute passionately dedicated to advancing education, cultivating and refining research skills, facilitating the creation of valuable knowledge, and fostering positive societal transformations. Since its establishment, it has been supporting Myanmar independent academic researchers, providing the essential technical skills to the young and emerging independent researchers to be able to do their research works ethically and academically, and deliver their research outputs to the different audiences. It provides research training, mentorships and supporting research publications. Additionally, it collaborates with local, regional and international research institutes that are interested in strengthening rule of law, justice, peace and democracy of Myanmar through research.