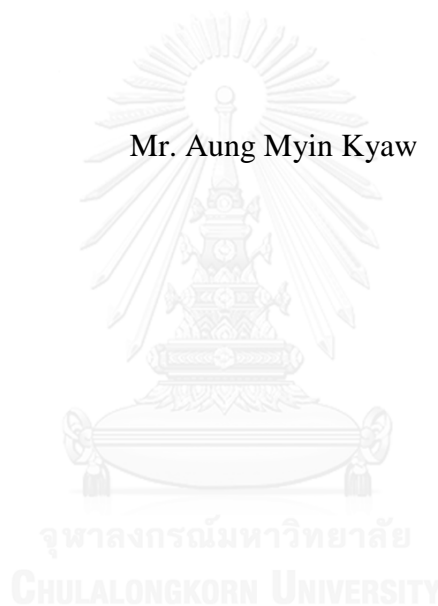


MYANMAR EDUCATION REFORM FROM 2011 TO THE PRESENT

Mr. Aung Myin Kyaw



บทคัดย่อและแฟ้มข้อมูลฉบับเต็มของวิทยานิพนธ์ตั้งแต่ปีการศึกษา 2554 ที่ให้บริการในคลังปัญญาจุฬาฯ (CUIR)
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งานวิจัยเรื่องนี้พิจารณากระบวนการปฏิรูปการศึกษาเมียนมาตั้งแต่ ค.ศ. 2011 ถึงปัจจุบัน เป้าหมายของการศึกษา คือ วิเคราะห์แผนการปฏิรูปการศึกษาของรัฐบาลใหม่ ประเมินคู่ทางความสำเร็จของนโยบายปฏิรูปการศึกษา และระบุปัญหาท้าทายและอุปสรรคต่างๆ ที่แผนการปฏิรูปการศึกษาของเมียนมาต้องเผชิญ ช่วงแรกของการวิจัยประกอบด้วยการเก็บข้อมูลและสารสนเทศจากแหล่งต่างๆ ได้แก่ เอกสารตีพิมพ์ของรัฐบาล หนังสือ และบทความ ตลอดจนเอกสารขององค์การพัฒนาเอกชน (NGOs) และช่วงที่สองของการวิจัยจะเป็นการสัมภาษณ์ผู้ทำงานด้านสังคมและเจ้าหน้าที่รัฐในกระทรวงศึกษาธิการเพื่อจะได้รู้ว่าพวกเขาเข้าใจปัญหาท้าทายและโอกาสและคู่ทางต่างๆ สำหรับการปฏิรูปการศึกษาของเมียนมาอย่างไร

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This research examines the discovering of Myanmar Education Reform process from 2011 to the present. The goals of study are to analyze the new government's education reform plan, to evaluate prospects of success for the education reform policy and to identify possible challenges and obstacles facing the education reform plan of Myanmar. The first phase of the research consists in collecting data and information from sources including government publications, books and articles as well as NGO documents. And the second phase involves interviewing social workers and officials of the Ministry of Education to know their current challenges and prospects for the new government education reform policy. This will allow for more individual considerations of overall prospects for Myanmar Education Reform.

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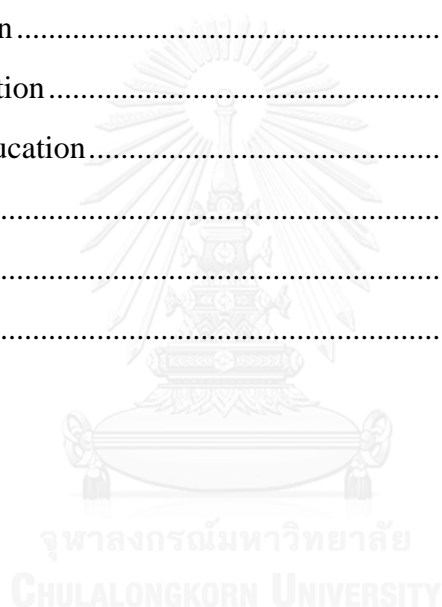
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Chapter -1

Myanmar Higher Education Background

Education plays a very important role in developing a country from all angles. We have had fifty years of military rule and during this fifty years, our education system has been a failure. Students hardly gained anything good from this system. However, during the 1940s and 50s, Myanmar's education was known to be the best in Southeast Asia.

Myanmar Education started from monastic education which could be studied at monasteries since Myanmar Monarchy. Literacy rates in the practice of reading, speaking and mathematics have increased dramatically to preserve religious teachings and cultural traditions. British colonial rule created a move towards a Westernized education system. In 1866, the British government founded the Department of Education and changed monastic education into class education in lower Burma¹. The university education regarded as higher education was first introduced in Myanmar in 1878(Aung 1999). In 1884, Rangoon College² was established and it was designated as an integrated college of Calcutta University, India, then it was upgraded as a Rangoon University in 1920(James 2005).

¹ The official name was changed by the government from the "Union of Burma" to the "Union of Myanmar" in 1989, and still later to the "Republic of the Union of Myanmar".

² University of Yangon (formerly Rangoon College) is the oldest university in Myanmar's modern education system and most well-known university in Myanmar.

In 1925, Mandalay College was established under Yangon University. In 1930, the Teachers Training College and the Medical College, two associated schools, were set up in Yangon. The Agriculture College was established in Mandalay 1938. Education of that period was influenced by the need to produce personnel for the bureaucracy.

During the colonial period, many of the Burmese people were deprived of the right to pursue the required education. Although the curriculum was of good standard, it was drawn in a way to meet colonial requirements only. All the professors and the governing officers were the British people. According to Maung Khin Min (Min 2000), it was learnt that even the wardens and hall tutors were British. It seemed that the British did not totally trust the Burmese students and their associates.

Although it was attended only by the selected students of the day, the university nonetheless was at the centre of anti-colonial movement. All three nationwide strikes against the British colonial government (1920, 1936 and 1938) began at the university. By the 1930s, the university was the hotbed of Burmese nationalism, producing a number of future senior Burmese politicians, including General Aung San, U Nu, Ba Maw, Kyaw Nyein, Ba Swe, U Thant and Thein Pe Myint, etc. Throughout the 1940s and 1950s, Rangoon University was the most prestigious university in Southeast Asia and one of the top universities in Asia, attracting students from across the region. (Kyi 2000)

According to Myat Thein(Thein 2004), having obtained independence, the government sought to create a literate and educated population and Burma was believed to be on its way to become the first Asian Tiger in the region. During the 1940s and 50s, Myanmar's education was known as the best in Southeast Asia. However, the 1962 coup d'etat under Gen. Ne Win and the Burmese Way to Socialism isolated and impoverished Burma. After the military coup of 1962, Rangoon University was put directly under the control of the Directorate of Higher Education, a central government agency, although previously it was run by a council of professors, scholars and government officials. All schools were nationalized and educational standards began to fall.

Rangoon University students staged a peaceful demonstration and protest on campus against 'unjust university rules, on 7 July 1962. The military regime violently suppressed a student demonstration at Rangoon University attended by some 2,000 students with military forces resulting in the death of more than a hundred and the arrest of more than 3,000 students according to unofficial but reliable sources. However, official government statements put the death toll at 15. In the morning hours of the next day, the military regime blew up the historic Rangoon University Student Union (RUSU) building, which had been the symbol of the anti-colonial nationalism struggle since the 1920s. (Maung 1992, Fink 2009)

Burmese replaced English as the medium of instruction at Burmese universities in 1965, with the passing of the New University Education Law a

year earlier. Educational standards began to decline markedly and international bodies stopped recognizing degrees issued by or obtained from the University. The university was also renamed the Rangoon Arts and Sciences University (abbreviated RASU), after certain departments and faculties (medicine, economics, education, etc.) were separated from the University in 1964. Under military rule (1962-1988) the Burmese educational system became highly centralized. General Ne Win's Government used the schools as a tool of political indoctrination. While the military rulers emphasized science and technology, school and college curricula were controlled and teachers were not able to teach in a free atmosphere. Once an economically as well as educationally leading country in South East Asia, Burma was granted a status of "Least Developed Country" by the United Nations in 1987.

The 8888 uprising was started by students in Yangon on 8 August 1988. Student protests spread throughout the country. Due to students' protest of 8888 uprising, all universities were closed around Myanmar for 2 years. Since the 1990s, the new structure of the education system was weak. After the re-opening of universities and colleges in 1999, the government scattered universities in different regions. Certain universities were placed under different ministries. Myanmar lags far behind in terms of educational standards. Many universities have been built and scattered in different cities all over the country to prevent students' participation in potential unrest. Teaching revolves around textbook instruction with little or no research focus.

Because of the 8888 uprising the schools were closed till 1991. The education system was slowly crippled systematically by the military regime since then. During the military regime periods decisions on curriculum developments, training methodologies and education managements were centrally made by the junta by. Their involvements can be seen especially in subjects like Burmese literature subjects and History subjects. According to blogger May Nyein(Nyein 2016), during the 1991-1992 education year, an order was issued prohibiting the explanation of the 10 kingly manners³ by which all rulers must abide in detail. It was previously included as a general knowledge in reading in Myanmar literature subject which was a compulsory subject for all majors. Even though some of their poems are still used in the curriculum, many poems of famous poets who stood up against the junta such as Sayargyee Minn Thu Won⁴ and Sayar Tin Moe⁵ were ordered to be banned from the curriculum.

³ 10 kingly manners are as follow –

1. Dana- Charity
2. Pari Sar ga-. Benefaction
3. Thi La - Moral Precepts
4. U Paw Tha Hta- Keeping Sabbath
5. A Wi Yaw Da-. Avoidance of Conflict
6. Khan Ti - Patience
7. A Kaw Da- Benevolence
8. A Wi Hei Thana- Avoidance of Cruelty
9. Mu Du Ka-. Gentleness
10. Than Mar Pani Pan na- Fairness

⁴ Min Thu Wun was a Burmese poet, writer and scholar who helped launch a new age literary movement called Khit-San in Burma. He is the father of Htin Kyaw, president of Myanmar since 2016.

⁵ Tin Moe (1933-2007) was a Burmese poet.

During 1995 and 1996, the regime's involvement in the education sector was increased dramatically, especially in cases of letting students pass exams and receive high scores without having to sit in the exam. Such cases were common among students who have good relations with high level government officials and their relatives. Such practices have nurtured corruption in the education sector. And those corrupt practices bring discriminatory practices in the education system which is supposed to be fair and equal to all regardless of ethnicity, color, religion and their economic status. As a result, discrimination appeared between student teacher relations. These weaken the education system. Even though they are technocrats they still can't resist the pull of money and power.

In 1992, an order was announced that all teachers are to attend one month empowerment training in Phaung Gyi. Since then, all civil servants from different branches of the government have had to attend that empowerment training till now. That training was designed to put all civil servants in place, and designed to nurture the practice to obey orders without questioning them. In those training sessions, teachers and officers were trained and taught to hate peoples like General Aung San⁶ and Daw Aun San Suu Kyi⁷ and what they stand for.

⁶ General Aung San was responsible for bringing about Burma's independence from British rule, but was assassinated six months before independence. He is recognized as the leading architect of independence, and the founder of the Union of Burma.

⁷ Aung San Suu Kyi is a Burmese politician, diplomat, and author who is the First and incumbent State Counsellor and Leader of the National League for Democracy. The youngest daughter of General Aung San.

It could be said that this training has had both good and bad impacts on the regime. The good thing for them is that most of the time they are successful in starting fear in the heart of teachers and officers who are attending the training. The bad thing is that it also makes those who support and stand as one with the people become more offended by them and their practices. That's why many educated people have gone abroad since 1992. That is a big negative impact on the country as the brain drain has affected the country's overall situation in so many ways.

Thus, it can also be said that the reason why the education system has been weakened to a stage where education system now can be held also responsible in a way for the corruption of professors and officers in education system. The university education system after regaining independence was exposed that it was just a revised version of colonial education, and since 1962 military had also interfered in universities and colleges. While the military rulers emphasized science and technology, school and college curricula were controlled and teachers were not able to teach in a freedom.

Table 1: Yearly Higher Education Statistics

	1947	1962	1988	2010	2015
University	3	8	32	161	170
Teacher	156	655	6300	12883	13236
Student	1432	16514	138236	454356	699508

Source: Ministry of Education. 2016. Operation Documentary

According to Ministry of Education (Ministry of Education. 2013. Myanmar, Comprehensive Education Sector Review (CESR) Phase 1. Rapid Assessment Report.), from the 2000-2001 fiscal year to the 2003-2004 fiscal year, the government has initiated a four year plan to enhance the national education system. A 30 year National education empowerment plan was also planned to accomplish this project between 2001- 2002 fiscal year and 2030 - 2040 fiscal year. The 30 year plan was then divided in to 6 periods and each periods was 5 years long.

Before 2011 the education system in Myanmar had very weak policy, strategic planning and implementations. There were only verbal commands from the high ranking officers and those words were implemented as regulations and visions for the system. Myanmar's new National Education Law (National Education Law 2014, 2014) has been designed to reform the country's outdated education system. It was passed on 30 September 2014. From the beginning of the process, the law faced criticisms from students and teachers unions and also various civil society groups in Myanmar. According to the National Education Law 2014, in section 1 includes definition of terms used in the law. The main objectives of the law in section 2 are to train students to become critical thinkers; to support students to become decent citizens with democratic spirit; to enable students to become citizens who could pass down their ethnic, linguistic, and literary traditions to their posterity; to enable them

to value historical heritage and environmental sustainability; and also to enhance human resources in preparation for economic development and higher standard of living. Section 3 of the law covers the fundamental policies of the law that include providing education for students with disabilities, providing education relevant to the lives of the students and granting autonomy of colleges and universities. Section 4 provides for the formation of National Education Commission that will consist of ministers from related ministries and experts from nationality groups and relevant individuals. The duties of the committee include providing guidelines on carrying out of the objectives and the policies of the law, setting policies to ensure the quality of education, working with the government and local administration to get funding for the education sector, making policies about shutting down or opening of domestic as well as international schools and working with relevant departments and ministries on short-term and long-term educational goals. Section 5 states that public education will be divided into primary education, vocational education and higher education. The section also talks about formal and informal education as well as self-learning education. Section 6 covers the different types of schools that include public schools, private schools, monastic schools, volunteer schools, regional schools, government-funded schools, special schools and emergency mobile schools. Section 7 is about curriculum and it states that National Education Commission has to ensure curriculums used in the country have boundaries and standards and guarantee autonomy of

curriculum formations if this meets these. Section 8 sets out educational duties and benefits and explains the roles of parents or guardians and local and regional administrations. Section 9 focuses on requirements for and quality of teachers (National Education Law 2014, p 16- 17). Section 10 covers opening of educational institutions and monitoring education quality and states that on every level of education there must be a quality assessment system. Section 11 is on management and administrative duties of education. It states the Ministry of Education and other relevant ministries and the Higher Education Committee will work together to manage related institutions of higher education based on this law and existing laws. Section 12 covers budget and Section 13 states that existing schools before the implementation of the law must operate according to the law within five years of its enactment. Finally, section 14 covers more general issues including the coverage of the new law; in particular, the law does not govern schools that only teach religion.

Hundreds of Myanmar students staged four days meetings to protest the new education law 2014. They did not want the government to have complete control over the education system and they thought the student union should be given a role to play. However, forming the Education Commission that wields power over the education system and writes the syllabus is not democratic. It'd be better if the government allowed a self-governed university education. The law clearly provides a basis for education reform in Myanmar. However, whether or not it will achieve its goals is another matter. Therefore, as I have

stated in the objective section, it is necessary to analyze both the context of this law (together with the education reform plan based on it) and the challenges this reform effort is likely to face.

Objectives

The main objectives of this study are:

1. To analyze the new government's education reform plan
2. To evaluate prospects of success for the new government's education reform policy.
3. To identify and analyze possible challenges and obstacles facing the education reform plan.

Hypothesis

Education is central to national development. However, education in Myanmar, and higher education in particular, experienced a drastic decline during long years of military rule. Hence, it is argued, education reform is imperative if Myanmar is to make any headway in its development effort. A reform plan has actually been initiated, but the prospect for a successful reform is particularly great. So this study proposes to examine both the prospect for, and obstacles to, this crucial reform.

Methodology

The research methodology for this thesis is based on a qualitative method and it has used primary and secondary data. Primary data had been taken from interviewing with social workers and staffs from Ministry of Education (Myanmar) to know their current challenges and prospects for the new government education reform policy. Conceptual facts were reasoned upon responses available through interviews and organized with concerned authorities and officials. In particular, the researcher visited CAE Private High School (Naypyitaw), Department of Myanmar Board of Examination, Ministry of Education (Naypyitaw), Department of Alternative Education, Ministry of Education (Yangon), Yangon Univeristy (Yangon) and other civil organizations and training centres. Secondary data have been collected or referred from other publications of scholars and experts, as well as articles from newspapers, magazines, authorized documents which are provided by the government or non-government organization and other information sources through internet. The researcher made requests officially to all those institutions and officials to provide relevant information and to explore facts finding, collect documented figures and data.

Limitations of the Study

Although this research was carefully prepared, there were some unavoidable limitations. First of all, because of the time limit, this research was

conducted only on a small size of population who were interviewed. The study should have involved more participants at different organizations. Some respondents did not give information because of their busy work schedule. Since the organizations suffer from strict control, they act as another barrier to getting data. Lack of experience in doing research.



Chapter - 2

Literature Review

In engaging in research for my thesis, I have relied upon both primary and secondary sources, in addition to interviews with a number of key persons. Some of the major works I have made use of in writing the thesis are listed below.

UNESCO 1988. **WORLD CONFERENCE ON HIGHER EDUCATION: *Higher Education in the Twenty-First Century: Vision and Action***(UNESCO 1988)

A main theme of this UNESCO conference is that the quality of higher education is a multi-dimensional concept, which should embrace all its functions and activities: teaching and academic programs, research and scholarship, staffing, students, buildings, facilities, equipment, services to the community and the academic environment. Internet self-evaluation and external review, conducted openly by independent specialists, if possible conducted openly by independent specialists, if possible with international expertise are vital for enhancing quality.

Aung San Su Kyi, **Opening Speech of National League for Democracy's Education Fund** (Dec 27 2012)(Niles 2012)

In this speech, Daw Aung San Su Kyi pointed out that Myanmar could not become a developed country due to the low education of its population. And for promoting the Myanmar education system, the government should change started from the Yangon University because it has played a very important role in making the fastest and most effective changes for the education system of Myanmar.

NLD (National League for Democracy) Education Committee chair, Daw Su SuLwin (**LWIN, D. S. S. 2016. NLD promises universal education. In: NAING, M. T. (ed.). Yangon: The Myanmar Times.)(Lwin 2016)**

In this article, Daw Su Su Lwin mentioned that they could not make changes to all sectors at the same time but they would set universal education as a first priority over the coming five years. The educational sector would improve if the government could create more opportunities through technology and vocational education. They would need to go step by step. The new government will enhance teachers' skills at all levels from primary to higher education. According to her, she would like to start the reform from the primary level. Because the current system is based on learning by rote, so both teachers and students will need to change together.

Myanmar's education standards used to be very high and were recognized the world over. But during these years of military rule, the standards became gradually low. Aung San Su Kyi stated that the education system has gotten worse and worse for the two main reasons. One was that the

government was no longer accountable to the people. Secondly, a dictatorial government does not want its people to think hard. That's why they did not put the right kind of emphasis on education. They did not want education as a means for sharpening people to intellect and as means for increasing people's ability to analyze.

Paul Watson (WATSON, P. 2008. Myanmar, where song is a source of suspicion. Los Angeles Times.)(Watson 2008)

Paul Watson mentioned that the government has treated universities not as sources of higher education crucial to the country's development, but as potential threats to its rule since 1988. So the generals have reduced college campuses to facades.

There has been a steady destruction of higher education since 1962. After the protest in 1988 which many students were involved in anti-government activities. There activities were led to the ends of universities and colleges within Myanmar. Since that time onward there has been a repeated cycle of opening and closing the universities and colleges. That has made higher learning education almost impossible. The universities and colleges were closed in 1996, and only a few were reopened in 2000. These university have produced an uneducated generation with no hope for the future. People who want to be school teachers can't even get training. When universities have reopened, to avoid trouble, classes have often been scheduled at locations away from the campuses

According to Arohana, Thabyay Education Network (**HAYS, J. 2014. Problems with the Myanmar Education System [Online]. Jeffrey Hays)(Hays 2014)**): Despite the high value placed on education in Myanmar culture, the state education system has long been in decline, suffering from a critical lack of resources and skills. Education, particularly higher education, is often perceived as a potential threat by the authorities who exercise strict control over education institutions. Investment in this sector is accorded a low priority by the government. Due to the lack of investment, schools often charge students a range of unofficial fees. Many families, particularly those in poorer rural areas, cannot afford to pay these fees and so are forced to withdraw their children from education.

According to the (Source: www.kapriole-freiburg.de)

Democratic schools are characterized by involving students in the decision-making process that affects what and how they learn. Democratic schools have no compulsory curriculum, considering forced learning to be undemocratic. Some democratic schools officially offer voluntary courses, and many help interested students to prepare for national examinations so they gain qualifications for further study or future employment. Democratic schools often have meetings open to all students and staff, where everyone present has a voice and sometimes an equal vote. Some include parents. These school meetings can cover anything from small matters to the appointment or dismissal of staff and the creation or annulment of rules, or to general

expenditure and the structure of the school day. At some schools all students are expected to attend these meetings, at others they are voluntary. In Myanmar, youths are always seen as part of the problems and are oppressed. The central authorities need to delegate decision making power to the local levels. They believe that giving youth freedom to decide and involve them in the education system will create problems in the long run. However, what they are actually doing is ruining the youth demographic.



Chapter- 3

An Overview of Higher Education in Myanmar

This chapter present critical issues, priorities and recommendations to promote the status of Higher Education focused on policy, legislation, access, quality, and management and training programmms. According to the Ministry of Education in Myanmar (Myanmar 2016) resources and evidence have been collected through universities, Basic Education departments and degree colleges, and by communicating with different Ministries. International practices in quality assurance, information from the internet on examinations and various suggestions and recommendations are all included.

According to the Ministry of Education Myanmar (Education 2016), there are two Departments of Higher Education which is lower Myanmar and Upper Myanmar and these two departments are responsible for administration and coordination of higher education institutions under the Ministry of Education (MoE). In spite of the fact that higher education institutions are under the administration of different ministries, academic and administrative policy matters relate to higher education are managed by the two councils chaired by the Minister of Education which

are the Universities Central Council which is primarily in charge for the framing of broad policy and coordination of the work of higher education institutions and the Council of University Academic Bodies is for adopting of academic regulations and coordination of academic work.

Ministry of Education is constantly working to improve the Education Sector for all citizens to have the opportunity to learn basic quality of higher education and human resources development. During the years 2011 to 2015, as the Ministry of Education, managed to carry out the Comprehensive Education Sector Review, Practical Education Changes, National Education Law, and Free Education from Primary to High School. In addition, the government increased the funding on the number of basic education schools, student dormitory buildings for universities and colleges, libraries, classrooms, laboratories and teaching materials after increasing on education spending.

Table 2: Higher Education Universities and Colleges in respective state/ region

No.	State/ Region	No. of Universities and Colleges
1.	Kachin State	9
2.	Kayah State	3
3.	Kayin State	4
4.	Chin State	3

5.	Mon State	4
6.	Rakhine State	5
7.	Shan State	15
8.	Sagaing Division	14
9.	Taninthayi Division	7
10.	Pago Division	9
11.	Magwe Division	11
12.	Mandalay Division	37
13.	Yangon Division	35
14.	Ayeyarwaddy Division	12
	Total	168

Source: Higher Education Department (Lower Myanmar)

Table 3: Universities and Colleges under Ministries Relating to Higher Education

No.	Ministry	No. of University/ College 1988	No. of University/ College 2012	Increased University/ College
1.	Ministry of Education	27	68	41
2.	Ministry of Health	4	15	11
3.	Ministry of Science and Technology		61	61
4.	Ministry of Defence	1	6	5
5.	Ministry of Culture		2	2
6.	Ministry of Forestry		1	1
7.	Ministry of Agriculture & Irrigation		1	1
8.	Ministry of Breed		1	1

	Stock			
9.	Ministry of Cooperatives		5	5
10.	Ministry of Religious Affairs		3	3
11.	Ministry of Border Affair		2	2
12.	Ministry of Transport		2	2
13.	Union Board of Civil Service	1	1	
	Total	32	168	136

Source: Higher Education Department (Lower Myanmar)

Table 4: Higher Education Courses Offered by Ministry of Education

No.	Course	No. of Course
1.	Preliminary Course	57
2.	Honours Degree	34
3.	Diploma	22
4.	Master Degree	46
5.	Master's Degree (Research)	29
6.	Ph.D	27
7.	Human Resource Development Course	195
	Total	410

Source: Higher Education Department (Lower Myanmar)

Table 5: List of Attendance, Passed and Percentage from 2008 to 2012

No.	Year	Attendance			Passed			Percentage		
		Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
1.	2008	271763	296618	568381	73376	95052	168428	27.00	32.05	29.63
2.	2009	229187	258546	487733	64165	83946	148111	28.00	32.47	30.37
3.	2010	245249	281609	526858	78054	105935	183989	31.83	37.62	34.92
4.	2011	214168	255684	4669852	69612	95395	165007	32.50	37.31	35.12
5.	2012	209148	258701	467849	66668	94110	160778	31.88	36.38	34.37

Source: Higher Education Department (Lower Myanmar)

Table 6: List of Academic Staff at Universities and Colleges Under Ministry of Education

No.	Position	No. of Academic Staff		
		Male	Female	Total
1.	Professor	178	605	783
2.	Associate Professor	153	614	767
3.	Lecturer	513	3134	3647
4.	Assistant Lecturer	531	2580	3111
5.	Tutor/ Demonstrator	534	2118	2652
Total		1909	9051	10960

Source: Higher Education Department (Lower Myanmar)

A total of 168 universities, degree and colleges and colleges operate under the institutional management of 13 different Ministries involved in higher education. Policies for higher education policies have been implemented under the Ministry of Education. The 2011 guidelines of the President and Vice President also are being implemented as education policies. However, no main education policy is in place. According to the Ministry of Education (Education 2016), these are the goals of Departments of Higher Education in Myanmar –

1. To train the students to be intellectual, wise and strong
2. To support the students to become the Myanmar citizens who obey the rules and regulations in accordance with ethics and democratic practices
3. To become citizens who value, preserve and transmit their language, culture, customs, art, historical heritage and natural environment, with union spirit
4. To nurture human resources for knowledge-based socio-economic development
5. To promote quality of teaching, learning, research, and management by using ICT effectively
6. To produce specialists
7. To promote sports, games and school health
8. To let every citizen enjoy the right to learn

9. To give information about policies, strategies, planning, educational laws and other procedural information to the citizen

And the followings are the key findings by analyzing Higher Education according to Ministry of Education-

1. An up-to-date, overarching university education policy for the higher education sector will need to be enacted, including by analyzing education principles required for the country.
2. The University Education Law 1973⁸ remains in use and should be corrected to become an overarching law relevant to the current situation.
3. With the purpose of providing equitable access to learning opportunities, each state and region should have a technological university, a computer college and art and sciences university. More graduates are needed in fields such as agriculture, livestock and fisheries; finance and revenue; environmental preservation and forestry; and hotels and tourism.
4. The university admission system is based on matriculation exam marks, admissions capacity and applicants' preferences.
5. Quality and management indicators are specified and utilized to evaluate the quality of higher education institutions.

⁸The University Education Law 1973, amended in 1983, 1989 and 1998.

6. Efforts are under way to replace a teacher-centered approach with a student- centered approach and more conceptual teaching and learning.
7. MoE is preparing to establish faculties at universities.
8. To enhance the quality of university teachers, they are required to complete a PhD program, participate in research, and be sent to international as well as national seminars and trainings.
9. Universities provide computer training centers, resource centers, multimedia lecture rooms, language labs and e- libraries, all of which are used as teaching- learning resources. Access to computer, e-library and internet is reported to be moderate.
10. Myanmar has initiated preparation for adoption of the National Qualifications Framework, which will aim at improving employment opportunities and competencies of Myanmar workers to the level of international counterparts.
11. Budget allocations for higher education institutions face limitations.
12. Officials from higher education institutions are appointed by upper administrative bodies.
13. Communication and coordination with foreign universities should be decentralized to hasten such processes.

In Myanmar Basic Education schools, chapters and tests are held at the end of school year before conducting the matriculation examination. Entrance to the university depends on their total amount of marks they acquired from the matriculation examination depending on the students choice of special subject. Nevertheless, majority of students could not meet their demands as they are assessed only through one particular examination. The matriculation exam is held simultaneously in every schools across the whole country. Entry of university students depends on their total matriculation results, admission capacity and the choice of specialized subject. Much of the exam requires rote learning instead of creative thinking. Ministry of Education should be encouraged to use a student- centered approach instead of a teacher- centered approach as well as conceptual teaching and learning instead of rote teaching and learning. Ministry of Education should be responsible for reviewing students' favorite subjects to adjust admission numbers.

Conclusion

The government should upgrade the status of the Matriculation examination and it should be held continuously to ensure students who pass have opportunities at universities. They should offer training programmes for students who complete the high school level in technical and vocational stream. For universities, it'll be better the government collaborate and cooperate with scholars from the ASEAN region and expand opportunities in universities to

attend workshops, and research thesis and other projects, more effectively employing relevant cooperation.

Current Quality Assurance Framework in ASEAN Countries

Singapore

In 2011 the Singapore Ministry of Education imposed a Quality Assurance Framework for Universities (QAFU). This framework is based on the practices of Denmark, Sweden, US and Hong Kong. QAFU assesses the continuous learning of universities, quality improvement and implications of public funding. An assessment on quality of a university is conducted five times a year by observers from the Ministry of Education. Similar plans are being undertaken for Polytechnics and ITE.

Indonesia

Under National Education Law 2003, there are three External Quality Assurance Agencies in Indonesia. They are BAN-PT (National Accreditation Agency for Higher Education), BAN-S/M for basic education and religious schools, and BAN-PNFI for other technical and vocational education schools. BAN-PT is also responsible for the assessment of the level of legally established university/ courses and announcement on the results as A, B, C levels or no rank.

Cambodia

Cambodia formed an Accreditation Committee of Cambodia (ACC) in 2003 with the purpose of enhancing the status of higher education. The Ministry of Education has promulgated norms and standards in guidelines, principles, administration and financing of technical and vocational education schools.

Malaysia

The Quality Assurance Act was passed in 2007. According to the Law, the universities are examined by a team under the Ministry of Education. This team considers:

1. Identification of principles and quality assessment
2. Awarding of certificates, diplomas and degree with regard to qualifications
3. Programme maintenance across different departments and conducting of thesis interviews and field visits

Lao

No legally formulated quality assurance system for education exists.

Philippines

The Federation of Accreditation Agencies of Philippines was formed in 1957. This federation was assigned in 1979 to take responsibility for policies, workplans, standards and principles.

Vietnam

An Accreditation Commission has been formed to develop a quality assurance system in universities in Vietnam. Accreditation agencies have been arranged at 50 universities and offer internal and external quality assurance courses.

Thailand

With the purpose of promoting the status of education and nurturing highly qualified trainees, a higher education commission was formed in Thailand. This commission performs internal quality assurance and external quality assurance duties in examining the capacity of universities.

Brunei

The Brunei Ministry of Education formed an Accreditation Council in 1990, which is responsible for evaluating the capacity of universities. Generally the higher education system in Brunei is based on the standards and principles of the British education system. According to the Education development plans laid down by the King of Brunei Darussalam, the Accreditation Council is responsible for the assessment of technical and vocational education schools.

Source: Current Quality Assurance System in ASEAN Countries Working Paper Report

The followings are the major recommendations by analyzing Higher Education according to Comprehensive Education Sector Review-

1. Link the education system with the economic system and employment opportunities.
2. Implement a monitoring system to ensure there are no gaps nor oversupply in the sub-sector as a whole, including the University of Distance Education. This will forge a stronger link between the State's material resources and human capital for continuous human resource development.
3. Generate more social scientists and philosophers for national intellectual development, as well as produce innovative technicians who can meet the development needs of the State.
4. Develop a modernized Myanmar National Education Law inclusive of all education sub-sectors.
5. Select specialized subjects to be offered by studying labour market demand and provide suitable degree/ diploma programmes.
6. Upgrade the High School Leaving Examination so that those who pass can have it is recognized for further study in Technical and Vocational Education and Training and to attain employment opportunities.

7. Adopt the quality assurance system used in ASEAN higher education institutions and adapt it to align with the situation of the country.
8. Systematically implement replacement of the teacher-centred approach with student-centred and conceptual teaching/ learning approaches.
9. Establish faculties at universities according to the forthcoming University Education Law.
10. Expand the State scholar programme and regular research and submission of papers to international conferences, to enhance staff quality.
11. Ensure teachers supervise the effective use of teaching aids. Expend the provision of computers and internet access to support learning.
12. Have Ministry of Education or Ministry of Science and Technology lead and cooperate with other relevant Ministries to establish the National Qualification Framework.
13. Ensure that universities are aware of regulations for communication and coordination with foreign universities and delegate decision-making authority by using their own creativity.

Assessment of the Adequacy of Existing Financial Resources for Education in Comparison With Other Countries in the Region, While Taking Into Account International Norms

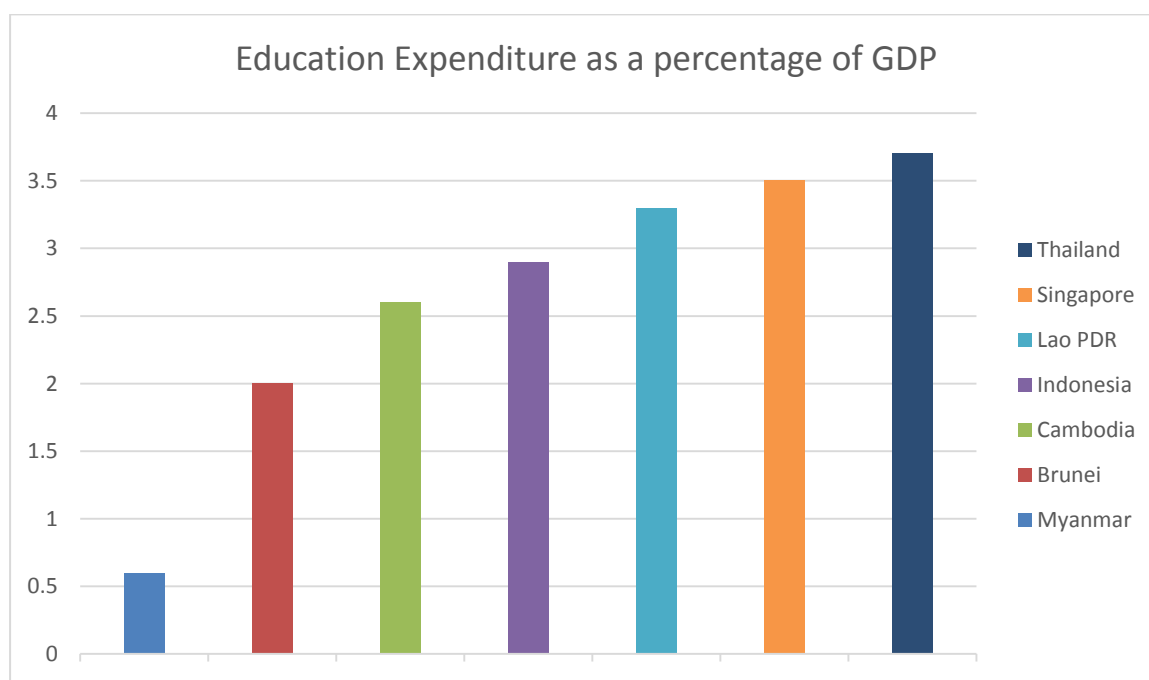


Figure 1: Public Expenditures on Education as a Percentage of GDP – ASEAN Countries (fiscal 2010-2011)

Source: World Bank Edstat (www.edstat.worldbank.org) and MOE

According to the Comprehensive Education Sector Review report, Myanmar's education budget is still very low in comparison with ASEAN countries, although it has risen notably since fiscal 2010-2011. Myanmar's budget for the education sector rose from 0.7% of GDP in fiscal 2010-2011 to 0.8% fiscal 2011-2012 and to 1.7% of GDP for fiscal 2012-2013. However, if the budget is compared with data from ASEAN countries for fiscal 2010-2011, it reveals that the public spending for education as a share of GDP is relatively low.

In the same way, the amount of budget allocation for education stood at 5.8% of the Union budget in fiscal 2010-2011, but had risen to 14% in fiscal 2012-2013. However, this amount is still insufficient when compared with education spending as a share of the government budget in ASEAN countries in fiscal 2010-2011.

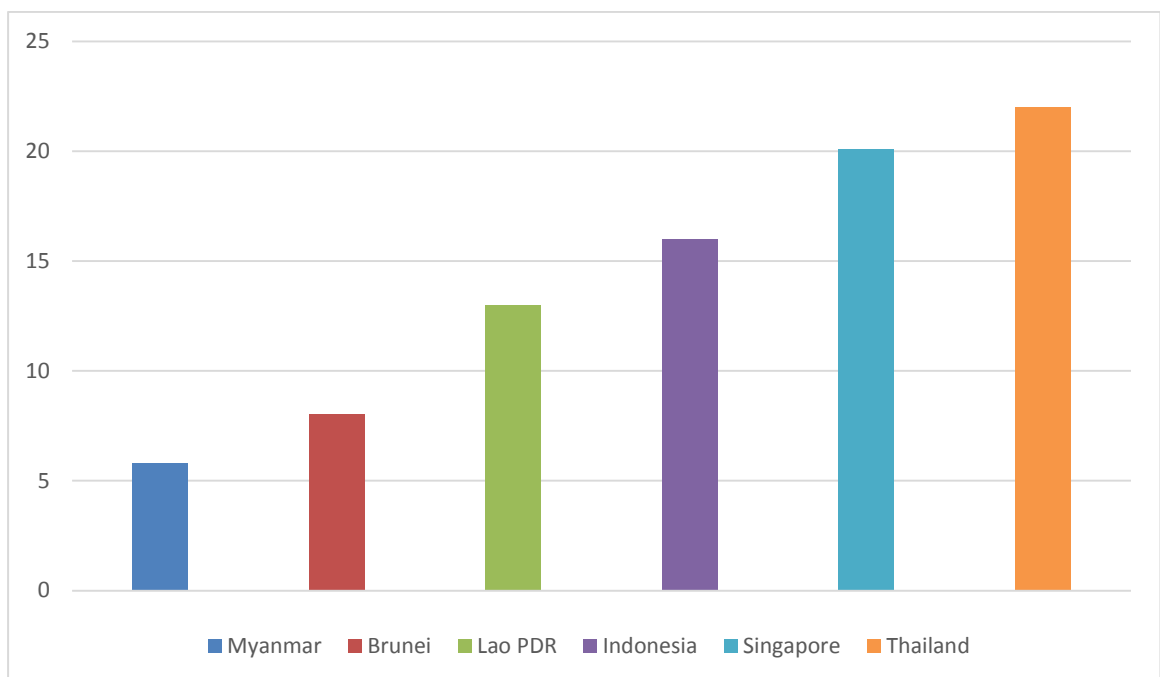


Figure 2 : Public Expenditures on Education as a Percentage of Total Government Expenditures (fiscal 2010-2011)

Source: World Bank Edstat, www.edstat.worldbank.org and MOE

The financial figures represent the educational expenses for the Ministry of Education (MoE) and 10 other line Ministries in fiscal 2012-2013. However, the figures for fiscal 2010-2011 and fiscal 2011-2012 present only the budget allocated for MoE. According to the MoE, nearly 2.59 billion kyat⁹ was

⁹ 1.9 million dollar

allocated for goods and services under budget heading for the three Departments of Basic Education. However, this amount is insufficient to be used for more than 40,000 Basic Education schools and about 8 million students.

The followings are the major findings by analyzing Education Financing according to Comprehensive Education Sector Review-

1. The amount of current spending for the Myanmar education sector is very low compared to ASEAN countries.
2. The system for allocating that modest education budget across different budget headings requires further strengthening.
3. Data on household education expenditures shows that constraints exist for students from low-income families to continue education.
4. Although there are encouraging signs in the increase of the education budget in fiscal 2012-2013, more effective financial management is needed.
5. A lack of data and information about students' learning outcomes creates a knowledge gap in evaluating the effectiveness and efficiency of education financing.
6. While the coming years will likely witness even larger increases in spending, that is no guarantee of better learning outcomes.

In this report, findings from the analysis of Higher Education and financing in the education sector have been presented. Findings and

recommendations in this report are intended to support advances in higher education not only in the region but also internationally.

The Ministry of Education has identified nine Transformational Shifts that will transform Myanmar's national education system for the 21st century and directly address the challenges. The alignment between the main sub-sector challenges and the nine Transformational Shifts are shown in table below.

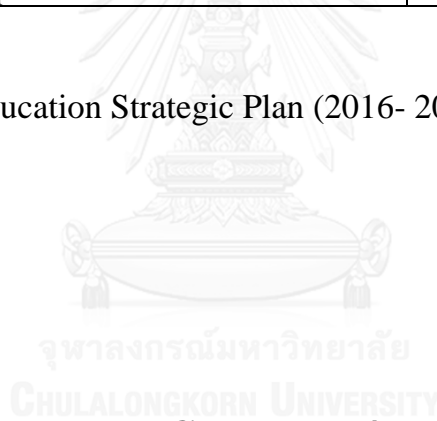
(Education 2016)

Table 7: Alignment between major challenges and nine Transformational Shift

	Challenges	Transformational Shifts
1. Pre-school and Kindergarten Education	Limited access to quality pre-school and kindergarten education negatively affects school readiness, student learning achievement, community wellbeing and national economic development.	All children get a head start on their learning pathway through accessing quality pre-school and kindergarten education.
2. Basic Education Access, Quality and Inclusion	Children's access to basic education needs to be increased. Retention and completion of students enrolled in basic education schools needs to be improved through school quality improvement.	All children can access, progress through and successfully complete quality basic education.
3. Basic Education Curriculum	The existing basic education curriculum needs to be improved with a focus on 21 st century skills. The curriculum change process needs to be supported with strengthened professional capacity of MOE officers in curriculum development, implementation and evaluation.	All school children develop knowledge, skills and competencies that are relevant to their lives and to the socio-economic development needs of 21 st century Myanmar.
4. Student Assessment and National Examinations	A comprehensive assessment policy and a coherent assessment framework are needed to assess student learning against national learning standards. These new assessment strategies demand strengthening institutional and human resource capacities at all levels of the national education system.	Teachers and education managers implement a quality assessment system to improve student learning achievement.
5. Teacher Education and Management	Basic education teachers need better management and continuous professional development in order to successfully apply interactive classroom teaching methods to improve student learning achievement.	Teacher support, develop and apply interactive classroom teaching and learning benefiting all students.
6. Non-Formal	NFE provision needs to be transformed	Learners can access and graduate

Education	with new and improved quality, accessible, flexible and certified programmes that respond to the diverse needs of learners at different stages of their education and career pathways.	from quality- assured, certified and nationally credentialed non-formal learning and equivalency programmes.
7. Technical Vocational Education and Training	Students need better access to quality, industry- relevant and co- ordinated technical and vocational education and training (TVET)	Most learners can access TVET and graduate from quality- assured and labour market- responsive TVET programmes under a more effective TVET management system.
8. Higher Education	Myanmar’s higher education system needs a significant improvement in terms of quality- related dimensions, such as curriculum, learning environment, research and teaching processes.	Students have equitable access to quality learning and improved facilities, leading to better opportunities for employment and significant contributions to a knowledge-based economy.
9. Management, Capacity Development and Quality Assurance	Inadequate quality assurance, management systems and co- ordination mechanisms, and low human resource capacity, are interdependent challenges that need to be addressed to support the successful implementation of the NESP.	Education managers at all levels apply evidence- based decision making and demand accountability for improved teaching and learning in schools and educational institutions.

Source: National Education Strategic Plan (2016- 2021)



Chapter – 4

Myanmar Education Challenges and Prospects of Interviewees

Civil Societies’ perspectives on Myanmar Education

In addition to my research, I conducted interviews with Myanmar people from government organizations and other civil society groups to know their views on Myanmar Education and Myanmar Education reform plan. In

order to find out what they mentioned and talked about Myanmar Education, their voices were recorded. I also had their frank feedbacks on the advantages and problems they had experienced. The first interview took place at CAE Private High School, Naypyitaw. It was an interview with Vice President of CAE U Phay Win Thant. He said that their private school is still not like private schools in other countries which have their own curriculums and syllabus. So, they have to use the curriculums and teaching guidelines mapped out by the government's policy. Nothing has changed for their school right now. But the government started to use a new curriculum for the kindergarten this year and they had to send 2 kindergarten teachers to attend the government training for teaching under the new curriculum.

For the prospect of Myanmar Education, he pointed that education system in Myanmar is still based on the marks of exams. We still don't have the system which is based on the students' favorite subjects. Kids only focus on the exam marks to get as many marks as they can, so they can choose the universities they like to attend. It is still very rare to see that choosing the universities depends on their ambitions. The reason why it happens like that is because of the matriculation marks system. Students are not as outstanding as they could because they cannot choose the subjects of their interest at the universities. It is still rare for Myanmar to get outstanding people. In other developing countries, students can choose the subjects of their interest, so they work hard, focus on their studies and create new things. However, he

mentioned that the way they teach pupils at the kindergarten is better now. The teaching is now not like rote learning, but more like practical learning. It should have been like that for a long time ago.

He had served as a principal of middle school and high school, and also served at the Basic Education Department. At that time, his income as a teacher was sufficient for his needs. His salary was 400 kyats and it was very sufficient. Teachers were not interested in opening private tuitions. After that, the education system of Myanmar was ruined because of a general increase in prices, inflation and student protest (8888 uprising). The examination system was also ruined by insufficient of incomes. The Ministry of Education changed the education policy. It was a good policy, because under this policy kids could retake the examinations. But the number of kids who retook the exams increased more and more and teachers couldn't give time for them because they opened private tuitions for their insufficient incomes. So, the teachers passed kids who weren't qualified for courses without retaking the exams. That's how education system was ruined.

As seen from the first interview, the vice principal gave his opinions about Myanmar education, which were derived from what he had experienced. After that, I met with Mr. Zwe Nay Nang, one of the directors (Organizational Development) of the Center for Youth and Social Harmony Organization. The Centre for youth and Social Harmony is an organization founded by 6 young activists in Myanmar. Their vision is to create a Myanmar where discrimination

based on identities has been overcome and people live in dignity and security; a place where everyone has a chance to realize their dreams and to actively participate in the development of the nation. CYSH was founded in 2014 and since then their founders and members have extensive experiences from civil society initiatives and organizations, including from the Panzagar Campaign¹⁰, iPACE¹¹, the Mandalay Conflict Mitigation Committee, the Metta Campaign, and Equality Myanmar, We are Myanmar Campaign, Unity within diversity Campaign among others to develop a peaceful society that fully respects human rights and democratic values.

The Center for Youth and Social Harmony currently runs four different programs: the Peace program; the Human Rights program; the Democracy program; and the Advocacy and Research program. In Peace program, they strive to contribute to both formal peace and peace between ethnic groups in Myanmar. In Human Rights program, they particularly focus on the right to freedom of religion, besides delivering broader human rights trainings and documenting human rights violations.

Zwe Nay Naung mentioned the state of education in Myanmar under military dictatorship. Because there had been many uprisings initiated by

¹⁰ Myanmar blogger and activist started the Panzagar ("Flower Speech") campaign to battle the online hate speech that led to offline violence. As Myanmar moves from a military dictatorship to a democracy its people are enjoying their newfound freedom of speech. However, uncensored at last, there have been worrying incidences of hate speech in the country. Burmese activist and blogger Nay Phone Latt started an online campaign called Panzagar ("Flower Speech" in English) to combat hate speech and promote better race-consciousness online.
Source:<http://www.designindaba.com/articles/creative-work/panzagar-campaign-battles-hate-speech-online-myanmar>

¹¹ iPACE provides education and training courses to build the capacity of local democracy, labor, and civil society activists in Burma.

students and the educated populace, the military tried to cripple the education system as a whole. The curriculums were changed to decimate and assimilate minor ethnics, the universities were relocated to far away areas so that they could not make contact with the public. This also made it easier for the authorities to surround and neutralize when an uprising appear. There was now a fixed law for the high ranking officers and their relatives in the education system. Everything is operated through their verbal commands which change frequently, so the education system was in a very bad shape under military dictatorship. He'd like to suggest by changing training methods, empowering the trainers and protect against corruptive practices in the system.

After that, I met with Mr. Kyaw Min Htet, one of the representatives of All Burma Federation of Student Unions¹². He mentioned the overall prospects for the Myanmar Education reform. He mentioned that their ABFSU and NLD¹³ have engaged in education activities. In 2012, NLD held the meetings for the education reform in 23 different regions. In 2013, they firstly remarked about education reform and they also pressured the government for education reform. And they presented 13 demands to the government from NLD and

¹² The All Burma Federation of Student Unions is an active voice for academic freedoms and student rights throughout the country. The ABFSU offers a reliable source of information to the outside world, reporting regularly on the attempts of the military government (SPDC) to intimidate and silence those involved in the pro-democracy movement.

¹³The National League for Democracy is a democratic socialist and liberal democratic political party in Myanmar, currently serving as the governing party.

NNER¹⁴ meetings. Their ABFSU took only 11 demands among 13 of them which are really necessary for Myanmar education.

Their main demands are allowing a self-governed university education, increasing 20% of budget for education, allowing students to form associations freely and supporting the minority groups. They asked the previous government (2011 to 2015) to accept their demands by sending letters to U Shwe Mann (former House of Representative), and by medias. But they hadn't received any response from the government. That's why they held the Student Unions meeting and decided to stage the student protest for 4 days. Because of the protest, the government couldn't ignore their voices. After the student protest, students announced a 60-day interval for the government to respond to their demands. The Ministry of Education held a press conference and insisted that the students attend a negotiating meeting with Education Promotion and Implementation Committee (EPIC) which drafted the legislation. They have had agreements after the meeting, which were signed by representatives of parliament, representatives of president- office and our representatives.

However, the government still doesn't implement their agreements. The new government has to continue the implementation as soon as possible as a democratic government. It's been almost 1 year since new government took office. The new education minister has been in office for over 100 days but they have not yet seen any big implementation. They also doubt the new

¹⁴National Network Education Reform have founded for planning to form National Education Policy.

education policies. Because they studied education policies by comparing it with the old policies from military rule. They are not that different. As a NNER, they demanded a meeting with Ministry of Education to help but they had not got any response from them for 2 months. They still don't have a chance to meet with them. They're still waiting for the New Education policy to come out. For example, the new policy for higher education should be out. In 2014, they announced the National Education Law and they need to make implementation within 5 years. But 2 years have passed, they don't see any implementation. Myanmar education was not ruined automatically; it was ruined systematically by the policy. Mr. Kyaw Min Htet also recommended that if we want to develop the education system, the government need to start with a better policy first. As for the representative of All Burma Federation of Student Unions, when asked about the problems and prospects in these interviews, he also came up with his experiences of university student life and also member of ABFSU.

Government's perspectives upon Myanmar Education Reform

The second interview took place at Department of Myanmar Board of Examination, Ministry of Education, Naypyitaw. I met with U Myo Nyut, Director General of this Department, Director U Aung Htike, Deputy Director Dr. Kyaw Moe Lwin, Assistant Director Dr. Myat Soe Aung and Advisor U Than Oo. And at the Department of Alternative Education, I met with Deputy

Director U Khin Maung Htwe. I asked them questions as I prepared for the officials.

Questions are-

Q1. What are the central goals of the new Myanmar government's education reform plan?

Q2. Were these goals relevant to the development needs for Myanmar today?

Q3. What're the main obstacles to the achievement of these goals?

Q4. What are the resources available for this reform?

Q5. How is the overall prospect for the reform's success?

Their answers to For Q1 and Q2 actually followed the policy of the Ministry of Education:

1. To get freedom in education in agreement with Myanmar National Education Law and other educational laws
2. To welcome the advice of experts, non-governmental educational organizations, representatives selected by parents, teachers and students when the ministry and respective ministries formulate the education policies
3. To get the opportunity to establish Teachers' Union as well as Students' Union freely in higher education institutions in line with the charter of the respective institutions
4. To collaborate in upgrading the education
5. To allow establishment of private schools in accordance with the law

and encourage their cooperation in education

6. To conduct inclusive education
7. To create an education system that advances lifelong learning and continuing education
8. To utilize modern technology to upgrade the education standard to the international level
9. To give knowledge that can be applied in socio-economic life
10. To establish autonomous universities
11. To adopt the university entrance system that the students can choose based on their desire and qualifications
12. To be free from the interference of religious and political affairs in institutions
13. To implement free compulsory primary education system and to extend to other levels
14. To support the new generation as intellectuals and intelligentsia in human resource development
15. To implement the quality assurance system in all educational sectors
16. To reduce centralization

With regard to the main obstacles of Myanmar Education reform, they mentioned the university admission system which is based on matriculation exam marks only, and funding problems. For the resources, there are many supports from other countries and civil societies in Myanmar to help the

Education reform. And they hope to get the positive results and they are doing their best to achieve success for the Myanmar Education reform.

After I have done my interviews in Naypayitaw, I went to Yangon to meet with Deputy Director General Dr. Thant Sin, Department of Alternative Education, Ministry of Education and Chief Technical Advisor Mr. Jonathan Caseley, PhD, from CESR Phase-3/ National Education Strategic Plan. Chief Technical Advisor Mr. Jonathan Caseley mentioned that the central goals of the new Myanmar government's education reform plans are the same as NESP transformation which means National Education Strategic Plan (2016-2021) policy and programme framework represents an important achievement for the present Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar. He also mentioned that the goals of NESP are relevant to the development needs for Myanmar today because they are based on the National Education Law. The government obtained advices and consultations from various sources. That was actually from the previous government and he added that the new government has done a lot.

Of the main obstacles to the achievement of these goals, the big obstacle in his view was funding. The government had to have enough money to change, and another challenge for the Myanmar Education is teaching style. However, the government is increasing the budget; he mentioned and added they need a new curriculum and lack understanding of the curriculum. With regard to the overall prospect for the reform's success, he said that the new government has

focused on this issue and the previous government also did a lot too. They increased funding and provided for free education. The new government has already made many changes. According to his point of view, it is very comprehensive and it is very good law and he has many positive ideas about that law.

For additional information, Dr. Thant Sin mentioned that curriculum for KG has already started with new textbooks and new curriculum which were designed by JICA from this year and they are expensive to publish. The problem is the same as it was mentioned before: there is not enough funding for education. Because the Ministry of Education's policy is to provide for free education, so they have to publish good quality textbooks and give them to the students for free. The situation of free textbooks for KG this year is pretty fine. But for the next and coming years, the Ministry of Education is not sure how it could deal with insufficient funding and new curriculum.

For my final interview for this research, I met with Dr. Khaing Mye, the Director General of Myanmar Education Research Department. For the obstacles of Myanmar Education, he explained theoretically by drawing a diagram which includes 'Policy', 'Practice' and 'Culture'. There are 'Policy', 'Practice' and 'Culture', and he mentioned that they need these three to success the implementation. The government needs to have a smart policy. If not, the implementation will fail. He added that the government also has good policies since the previous government but they are weak at the part of 'Practice'. In

other developed countries, they have a circle called PDCA. ‘P’ represents ‘Plan’, ‘Do’ for ‘D’, ‘C’ for ‘Check’ and ‘A’ for ‘Act’. It is a four-stage model for continuous improvement in process management and it should be repeated again and again for continuous improvement. It works in other developed countries. For Myanmar, he saw that the ‘Plan’ is great but the government always stops at the stage 2 called ‘Do’. They don’t have the monitoring evaluation to know the weaknesses of their plans and to know the better way to improve their plans. So, the government does not know which policy is not suitable for modern days. Once the new government changed, they made new laws and policies. And if another government took office, they changed new law and policies again. It becomes like a traditional thing in Myanmar, he mentioned. That’s why the PDCA can’t circulate in Myanmar. As soon as this circle can’t circulate, the implementations for Myanmar education system can’t succeed.

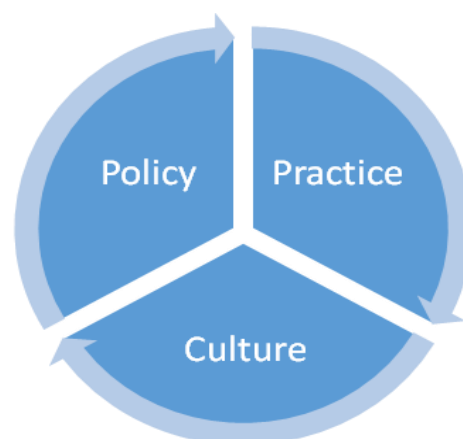


Figure 3: **Policy, Practice and Cultural Circle**



Figure 4: **PDCA Cycle**

Source: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/PDCA>

He also pointed out that the government has planned to change Myanmar universities to autonomous universities; however, they couldn't implement this plan right now and they are still drafting university charter. After drafting university charter, the government can open the autonomous university based on university charter. That's one of the upgraded policies for the new education reform.

For the job opportunities, Dr. Khaing Mye, the Director General of Myanmar Education Research Department, mentioned that the government needs to make sure that Myanmar's education system gives the quality as the industries, companies and communities need. So, they have to do the analysis for what communities need, and their ability to provide suitable knowledge and skills to skilled workforce depends on the analysis. Most of the kids are hard to get a job because they don't have the right qualifications. No matter how many

companies come to invest in Myanmar, if they don't have such qualifications, they will not be hired. In most of the agreements he mentioned, 40% of the workforce must be recruited from the Myanmar people but the country does not have enough of such a workforce. It is the government's responsibility to develop enough of such a workforce with suitable qualifications. But it also related with the economic development of the country. No matter how many skilled workers have been produced, if the country doesn't have SME (Small Medium Enterprise), they can do nothing. As a Ministry of Education as he explained, they need to develop TVET (Technical and Vocational Education and Training) because in Myanmar it is not as developed as in other countries. Even Daw Aung San Su Kyi recommended that TVET should be the First Class.

According to the Ministry of Education in Myanmar, the main objective of TVET is to equip learners with the competencies that will enable them to find decent employment and make a living. High- quality TVET that equips Myanmar's economy with a skilled and competitive workforce will contribute to the economy's sustainable growth.(Education 2016)

Myanmar's TVET system needs to develop a highly qualified workforce for the domestic economy in emerging industrial and service sectors, and ensure that skilled workers are able to achieve international and ASEAN TVET skill standards. The system also needs to provide appropriate and demand the specific training for citizens seeking employment and self-employment within

the less developed sectors of Myanmar economy. According to the Ministry of Education, the country has had an increasing demand for skilled labor in the agriculture, energy, manufacturing, infrastructure and tourism/ hospitality sectors.



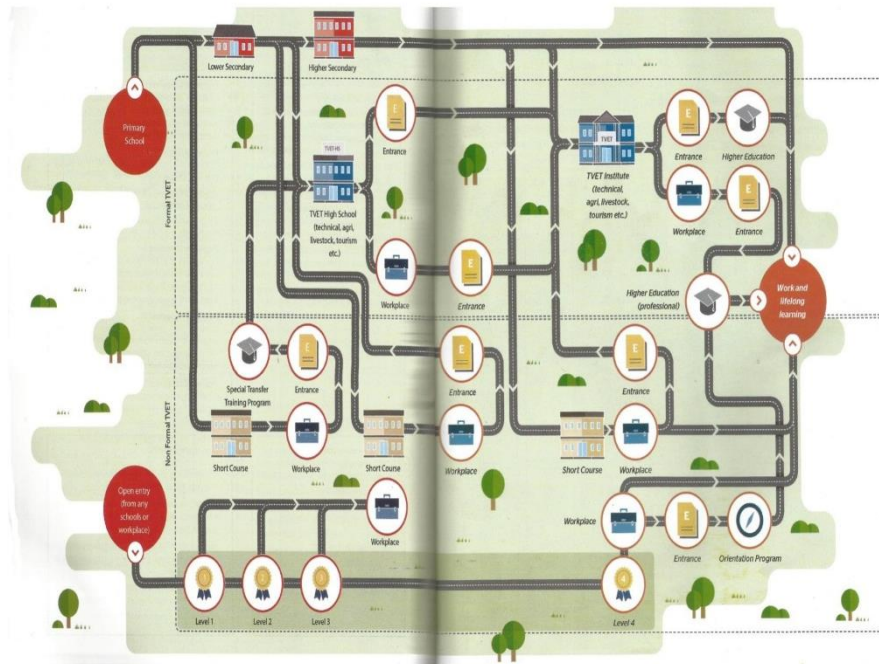


Figure 5 : TVET Pathways Map
Source: National Education Strategic Plan 2016- 21, Policy and Programme Framework, 8 March 2016

The Ministry of Education has developed a TVET Pathways Map to show the multiple and interconnected pathways for students to access non-formal and formal TVET, and to progress to employment opportunities.

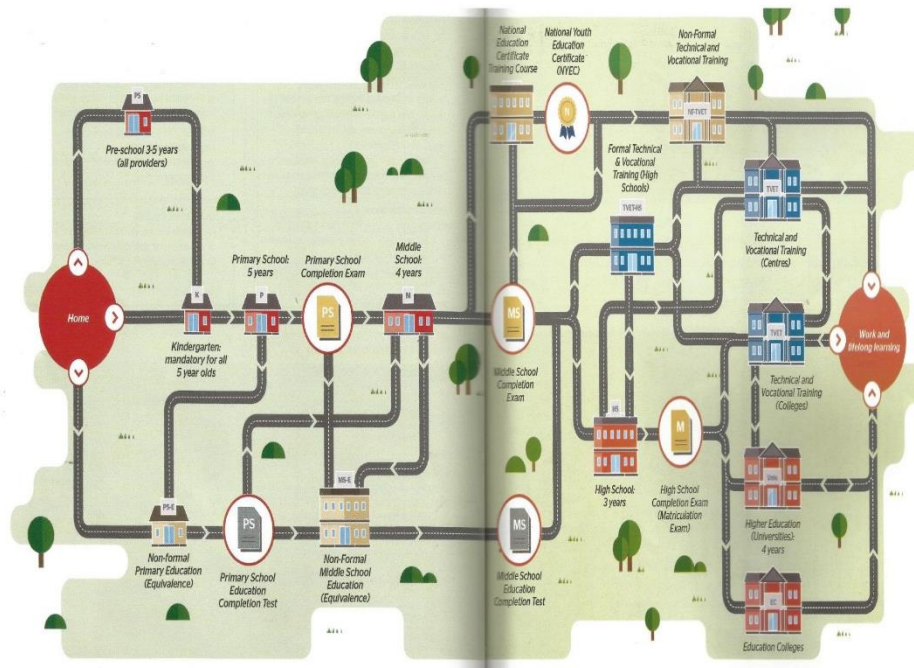


Figure 6. Education Pathways Map

Source: National Education Strategic Plan 2016- 21, Policy and Programmw

Framework, 8 March 2016

Dr. Khaing Mye, the Director General of Myanmar Education Research Department added that NNER had presented 11 demands to the government, some of which are not related directly. Firstly, they pointed out about forming National Education Committee because it is kind of the same Committee from military government. So, the government changed it as a Policy Commission in 2015. And another demand is a school based administration and school based curriculum which is from NNER. It also represents democracy education and it is great. But they are not ready to change that because it needs to develop each of their capacities. He said that It was not that they didn't like the system but the country situation right now is not ready for that.

Another demand that they submitted to the government was to use 8% of GDP for education. The government used less than 1% since 1962 to 2011 according to Dr. Khaing Mye. After that, the budget increased to 2% or 3% in U Thein Sein government. For now, they use 4% of GDP for education. The former minister and Dr. Khaing Mye signed at the Education 2030 agenda which resulted from the UNESCO-organized World Education Forum 2015 in Incheon, Korea. The demand for increasing the education budget to 8% of GDP was also included in agenda. It's too early for 2030 as he mentioned and Myanmar has a situation in the country. The military always takes 65% of GDP and they couldn't help it because they have civil wars according to him. He pointed out that if the government wants to increase to 8% of GDP for education, they need to decrease the budget of military. For decreasing the military budget, they need to end civil wars.

As a Director General of Myanmar Education Research Department, he explained the obstacles to Myanmar Education reform by giving examples and comparing with it the other sectors. As he said, it will be a lot better if the government does not obtain a balance of the 'Policy', 'Practice' and 'Culture' for the implementation of Myanmar education reform. It's very important to circulate the PDCA circle in our country. It takes time to change the system which was destroyed. It'll not happen immediately but it'll be better eventually.

The amount of current spending for the Myanmar education sector is very low compared to ASEAN countries. The government should expand the

education budget to become acceptable and formulate strategies to increase the budget and allocate additional budget to activities that may deliver the best results. And allow additional budget for other categories of recurrent budget than salary payments, including financial support programmes for poor students and pre- school education and primary education sub- sectors.

More skilled experts and employees will be needed in the Myanmar economic sector and will need to be nurtured from the education sector. Relevant academic subjects taught in universities and colleges include knowledge and techniques for economic development, natural resources, environmental conservation and cultural preservation. It'll be better if Myanmar education sector offers in-service training programmes for qualified graduates to support development of economic sector and nurture qualified academics and workers at universities who can help to meet the economic development needs of the future labour markets.

According to the Ministry of Education, the budgets for education spending over the past five years starting from 2011- 2012 are the following-

Table 8. Yearly Education Spending from Ministry of Education

No.	Year	Spending (Kyat Billion)
1.	2011- 2012	310
2.	2012- 2013	640
3.	2013- 2014	892
4.	2014- 2015	1105
5.	2015- 2016	1399

Table 9. Yearly Education Spending from Ministry of Education

No.	Year	Predictive Spending (Kyat Billion)	Actual Spending (Kyat Billion)
1.	2011- 2012	174611.011	174550.770
2.	2012- 2013	516613.870	518535.518
3.	2013- 2014	685442.633	672033.161
4.	2014- 2015	873921.829	861306.015
5.	2015- 2016	1131707.130	702145.551

Source: Higher Education Department (Lower Myanmar)

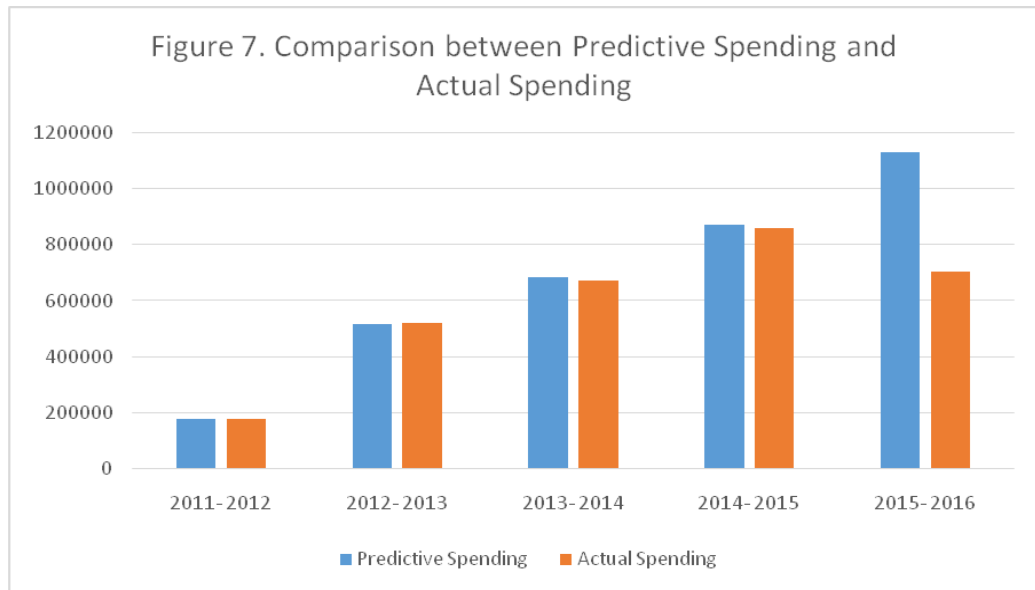


Figure 7. Comparison between Predictive Spending and Actual Spending
Source: Higher Education Department (Lower Myanmar)





Figure 8 : NESP goal and nine Transformational Shifts

Source: National Education Strategic Plan 2016- 21, Policy and Programme

Framework, 8 March 2016

Chapter – 5

Challenges and Resolution of Myanmar Education Reform

The junta has considered students as a major demographic group that could challenge their authority; they therefore destroyed Myanmar's Education system systematically to rule the country as long as they could. However, the victory of National League for Democracy in the 2015 election shows that the people have already make their stand clear that they are against the military government and want a civilian government which is directly elected by them.

The Endeavour for the Development of Education in Myanmar

The Ministry of Education (MOE) has also made clear its endeavor to develop education in Myanmar since the new government took office. Some of the endeavors and achievements in education are mentioned as follows-

The 100 Day Plan

The (MOE) launched the 100 day plans which include 8 programmes from 21st April, 2016 to 9th August 2016. Out of the 8 programmes, the Ministry has fully implemented 5 programmes with the other 3 programmes having been partially implemented.

1.1 Upgrading of Schools

The (MOE) has given its sanction to the upgrading of a total of 3312 basic education schools in order to increase school retention rates and reduce dropout rates. The criteria for the school upgrading were released, which include the facts that some schools are situated in remote regions and have poor transportation.

1.2 School Enrolment Week

The MOE announced the last week of May as the School Enrollment week since schools were reopened on the 1st of June. The MOE has been working towards a target of providing every citizen with access to basic education and implementing free education for the primary and secondary education students. So, to increase the net intake rates, kindergarten students were provided with school uniforms free of charge. In order to increase the net enrollment rates and retention rates, all the school students at other levels were provided with textbooks and six exercise books free of charge and all primary school students with additional free school uniforms. As a result, out of 1.11 million 5 year old children all over the country, a total of 1.07 million children enrolled at kindergarten forming 96.43% of net enrollment rate in 2016- 2017 academic year.

1.3 School Health and School Development Programmes

The MOE announced the last week of June and the first week of July as the Knowledge Sharing Week for Coordinated School Health and School Development. The education, public health and school health sectors are required to develop greater alignment, integration and collaboration. The aim is to achieve the coordination between education and health to improve each child's cognitive, physical, social and emotional development. So, the cleaning of school compound programme was launched in collaboration with students, teachers, parents and social organizations.

The school development programmes link children's academic growth with their emotional wellness and social and moral development in a collaborative school culture congenial to learning. So, knowledge sharing dialogues on disaster preparedness, pedestrian safety rules and human trafficking have been held in collaboration with the relevant ministries. The Citizenship Scrutiny Cards have been issued to 10 year old students in collaboration with the Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population.

1.4 Drawing Salary from ATM Machines by Teachers and Administrative Staff Working at the Schools and Offices near

Banks

At the first stage, a total of 5787 teachers and administrative staff from the Office of the Ministry of Education, 4 universities and colleges in Yangon and Mandalay and 14 high schools in Nay Pyi Taw, Yangon and Mandalay now have their own accounts in Kan Baw Za Banks and can draw their salaries at ATM machines.

1.5 PhD Entrance Programmes

The university lecturers who have gained three years of service, rather than 10 years of service according to the old rules, are now eligible for the PhD programmes if they have submitted a work-related research paper. As a result, 88 old-service lecturers gained admission to Mandalay University and 132 to Yangon University of Economics.

1.6 TVET Programmes

According to the National Education Law, the respective ministries must increase the opportunities for the citizens to have technical and vocational education. Technical and vocational education and training (TVET) plays a vital role in reducing school dropouts, poverty, and unemployment, and in achieving economic recovery and sustainable development of our country. It is also important for the country's workforce increase and GDP development.

For this reason, the TVET projects have been set up to meet the local needs for SME development and the national needs for industrial zones and special economic zones development.

The two short term 3 month courses were conducted at Government Technical Schools in Nay Pyi Taw, Ywama and Mandalay in collaboration between the Department of Technical and Vocational Education and Training and Asia Development Bank (ADB) in May 2016. The Technical and Vocational Education and Training courses were conducted at Nyaung Shwe Vocational Training Institute (NVTI) in May, 2016.

The MOE held a consultation meeting with 18 ministries and 14 Regions and State Government Offices in May 2016 in order to conduct short term and long term TVET courses at Government Technical Schools. As a result, the MOE received the replies from 10 ministries and 9 Regions and State Government Offices and has been arranging to conduct the TVET courses in collaboration with them. The TVET Forum was held in Nay Pyi Taw on 16 July, 2016 to find ways to develop the new TVET programmes.

1.7 Teacher Assessment

The assessment of the regular attendance and efficient teaching of the teachers will be made in collaboration with parents and principals at

schools. On the other hand, at universities, the student assessment sheets have been distributed to assess the teaching abilities and regular attendance of their teachers. The student assessment of teaching abilities and regular attendance of their teachers was conducted at Government Technical Schools in June, 2016.

The regular attendance and teaching quality of the teachers as well as the student progress have been assessed at primary schools by the assessment and inspection teams led by Assistant Township Officers and at middle schools and high schools by the teams led by Assistant Directors from District Education Officers' offices.

1.8 Alternative Education

In Myanmar, there are 3.5 million adult illiterates. According to the National Education Law, Alternative Education has been carried out for the students who left schools before the completion of their education due to various causes. A new department for Alternative Education has been set up to carry out non-formal education and lifelong learning. The Alternative Education Forum was held in Nay Pyi Taw on 6 July, 2016.

Higher Education

There are 22,530 teachers teaching 616,872 students in 163 universities at the higher education level in 2015- 2016 academic year. The Seminar on

Education Development (Higher Education) was held at the Diamond Jubilee Hall in Yangon on 28- 29 May, 2016. It was attended by a total of 552 participants. At the seminar, the topics on drafting Myanmar National Qualification Framework (MNQF), implementation of Credit Transfer System, the drafting of the university charter of its own by each university, student's evaluation sheet, teacher's performance indicators, the academic duration of honors classes and master classes and encouraging quality researches were discussed.

Basic Education

There are 363,298 teachers teaching 8,785,178 students at 46,006 schools at the basic education level. The Seminar on Education Development (Basic Education) was held in Nay Pyi Taw on 28-29 May, 2016. It was attended by a total of 743 participants.

The Ministry of Education has been trying to improve inclusive and Equitable Quality Basic Education for all school aged children to complete free and compulsory Basic Education as mentioned in the National Education Law and the Amendment Law.

The Ministry of Education has introduced a new schooling system, KG+12 in the Academic Year 2016-2017. Children start their education in new Kindergarten at the age of five in this Academic Year. Next Academic Year,

they will go to attend Grade-1. The University students will be of at least 18 years in the near future.

The Ministry of Education has also introduced the learning support programme and the remedial programme in this academic year to improve student learning achievement and promote the retention rate and completion rate at the basic education level.

Teacher Education

There are 1,876 teachers teaching 16,328 students at 24 education colleges in the teacher education sector. The Teacher Education forum was held in Nay Pyi Taw on 4-5 August, 2016.

The Ministry encourages the teachers to teach their students with efforts using effective teaching learning methodologies so that the students really acquire what they are taught. In doing so, it is necessary to develop the caliber of the teachers by conducting pre-service training and in-service training. So, the Ministry of Education is planning to upgrade Education Colleges to Education Degree Colleges which can confer the Bachelor Degrees in Education Programmes.

Alternative Education

The Ministry of Education has organized a new department, namely the Department of Alternative Education, comprising 300 office staff. The

Alternative Education forum was held in Nay Pyi Taw on 4- 5 August, 2016.

The forum aimed:

- To draft policies for migrant children from border regions,
- To study the disabled children among out of school children,
- To perform income generating activities,
- To increase potential awareness,
- To create vocational opportunities,
- To provide training courses to vocational teachers,
- To arrange vocational training courses for out of school children in various services and
- To collaborate with development partners were discussed.

The Ministry of Education has implemented the 100 day plans successfully and has gone ahead with the National Education Strategic Plans for inclusive and equitable quality education in Myanmar.(Office 2016)

Conclusion

Education plays a very important role in developing a country from all angles. Much has been said and written about how poorly Myanmar education is doing. Many comments have been made about university education in Myanmar, most of them are negatives. Curriculum reform is an issue that also needs to be addressed urgently. The current curriculum is so overloaded with

factual knowledge that it lends itself to rote learning. Classroom practices also do not allow for analytical, creative thinking or free discussion and expression of thought. As for the higher education institutes under the Ministry of Education, the budget allocation is limited. Furthermore, this budget has to be distributed among the departments under it. The reallocated budget for the two higher-education departments is then shared by the 168 universities, institutes and colleges under them. Shortages of equipment and teaching materials, and more importantly the shortage of teaching as well as support staff have adversely affected the standards of the new universities and higher-education institutes under the Ministry of Education. Much investment and effort will have to be made in order to regain the high standards achieved in the 1950s and 1960s by the two national universities of Yangon and Mandalay. Recognition of some degrees has become problematic, even within the country itself. For example, University of Distance Education graduates are increasingly difficult to be competitive in the job market.

In democratic countries, teachers and students have a right to choose and decide for the administration of their own schools. However, one of the challenge in the education system in Myanmar, is also the fact that all teachers and school managements are all under the employment of central government. On the other hand, even if the center wish to continue their control over the whole education system they need to implement policies to empower teachers so that they can offer quality education to all.

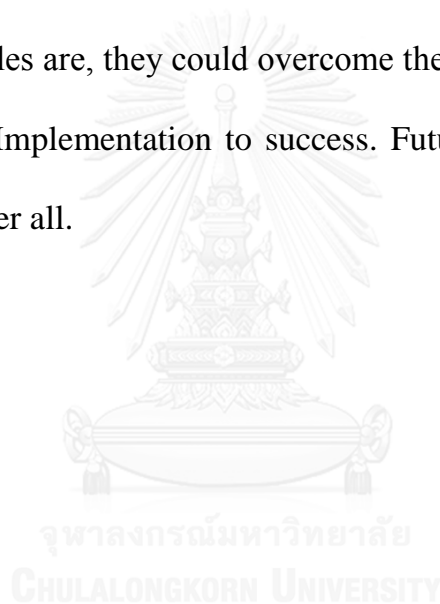
Education system in Myanmar is still based on the marks of exams and students have to memorize what they have studied in classes and write down what they have memorized. Parrot learning in Myanmar doesn't give students a chance or weaken their own critical thinking and their perspectives. The education system have to be a system that can show a way to students what they are interested in and what they want to do.

Trainers need trainer development and regional schools and universities need freedom and a voice to decide on curriculum development for their regional use. History lectures need to also consider on national resolution process during curriculum development. All the curriculums need to promote national reconciliation process. In current curriculums have no justice for minor ethnicity as it promotes superiority of the major ethnic (Burma). The curriculums were developed by the major ethnic to promote itself in the current ones. As the curriculums portray how superior the major ethnic is to create dissatisfaction and a sense of discouragement for minor ethnicities. If the current government truly wish to practice federalism the education system need to also become federal. The regional authorities also need to have some range of decision making power for the education system in their own regions.

Thus, it'll take a lot of time to improve our education system. Because Myanmar education system was destroyed systematically. It'll be better if the government increase the spending for education as soon as possible. It's true that authority of the government is important but the military budget has

always been 65% of GDP since military rules and it should be fine to decrease a little of military budget for now and I hope to have a peace in Myanmar as soon as possible. Myanmar education will improve only when the education and training of its young improves. Their education should be carefully planned and mapped out.

The government and other organizations in Myanmar try their best to support Myanmar Education Reform as much as they can. They believe that whatever the obstacles are, they could overcome them but it'll take time. I hope Education Reform Implementation to success. Future of our country depends on the education after all.



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APPENDIX



จุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย
CHULALONGKORN UNIVERSITY

VITA

Aung Myin Kyaw was born in Yangon City, Myanmar, in 1992. He graduated from Bangkok Univeristy International with a Bachelor's Degree in Computer Graphic and Multimedia. He was granted a scholarship by Thailand International Cooperation Agency (TICA) in 2015 to join the Master Program in Southeast Asian Studies at Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok.

