JOURNAL OF THE MYANMAR ACADEMY OF ARTS AND SCIENCE

English, History, Philosophy, Geography, Psychology, International Relations, Oriental Studies

Journal of the Myanmar Academy of Arts and Science, 2026, **Vol. XXIII, No.5**

Published in August, 2026, English, History, Philosophy, Geography, Psychology, International Relations, Oriental Studies

Myanmar Academy of Arts and Science

Edition

2026, August, 280 Copies

Published by

Dr Maung Kyaw (00322) Vice-President,

Myanmar Academy of Arts and Science

ISSN 2520-0186

LCCN 2003-323143

Printed by

U Tin Soe (00171), Manager

Universities Press, Yangon, Myanmar

FOREWORD

On 26 February 2026, the Myanmar Academy of Arts and Science (MAAS) was reconstituted to accelerate the implementation of four different strategies:

(a) encouraging universities and colleges to engage in more research activities
(b) organizing domestic and international research conferences
(c) publishing research journals and proceedings, and
(d) fostering research collaboration among local and international universities

Since the year 2001, the MAAS has been making every effort to fulfil these important functions in collaboration with universities and colleges across the country. As a result, the MAAS has published research papers in 23 volumes on diverse academic disciplines in the Journal of the Myanmar Academy of Arts and Science. It is a great honor to say that the 24th research conference was successfully held at the University of Yangon on 9–11 March 2024. The theme of this conference is *'Research and Innovation for Peace, Prosperity and Sustainability'*. A total of 369 research papers presented by both faculty and postgraduates at the conference have been published in Volume XXIII as follows:

Vol. XXIII, No. 1A	Chemistry
Vol. XXIII, No. 1B	Chemistry, Industrial Chemistry
Vol. XXIII, No. 2	Physics, Mathematics and Computer Studies
Vol. XXIII, No. 3	Zoology, Marine Science, Environment and Water Studies
Vol. XXIII, No. 4	Botany, Geology
Vol. XXIII, No. 5	English, History, Philosophy, Geography, Psychology, International Relations, Oriental Studies
Vol. XXIII, No. 6	Myanmar
Vol. XXIII, No. 7	Law, Library and Information Studies, Archaeology, Anthropology, Language and Linguistics
Vol. XXIII, No. 8	Applied Statistics, Management Studies, Statistics, Commerce, Economics, Journalism and Tourism
Vol. XXIII, No. 9A	Educational Theory and Management, Curriculum and Methodology
Vol. XXIII, No. 9B	Educational Psychology

I firmly believe that the empirical research findings from these papers will provide practical assistance for research candidates and those who are interested in research work. I am also hopeful that these findings will significantly contribute to the well-being of the community at large as well as the State's socio-economic development.

On behalf of the members of the MAAS, I would like to offer my special gratitude and thanks to those who have contributed their research papers to this journal. I also do appreciate the editing work done by senior professors and scholars of high standing as well as the members of the MAAS Editorial Board. Finally, my heartfelt thanks go to the members of the Publication Committee and the Department of Higher Education for their great dedication to the success of this journal.

Dr. Soe Win
President
Myanmar Academy of Arts and Science

Journal of the Myanmar Academy of Arts and Science

Vol. XXIII. No.5

Contents

Section (i), English

Section (ii), History

Section (iii), Philosophy

Section (iv), Geography

Section (v), Psychology

Section (vi), International Relations

Section (vii), Oriental Studies

CONTENT ANALYSIS IN ACTION: INVESTIGATING CRITICAL THINKING IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEXTBOOKS*

Thiri Soe[1]

Abstract

Critical thinking is recognized as one of the most essential skills for 21st century learners. From the perspective of English language teaching, teachers, researchers, and syllabus writers think of learners' language acquisition through critical thinking as an effective language pedagogical approach. The present study examines the integration of critical thinking in *New Language Leader* textbooks by using content analysis method, aiming to raise awareness among teachers, researchers, pedagogues, and regional and national authorities about the representation of critical thinking in EFL textbooks. The findings of the study revealed that the textbooks had strengths in terms of incorporating higher order thinking skills into language tasks and activities. The textbooks were found to effectively integrate higher order thinking skills into language tasks compared to the textbooks examined in previous studies mentioned in the literature review section. However, the detailed analysis of knowledge and cognitive thinking skills revealed that procedural and metacognitive knowledge types are not properly integrated into the textbooks. Among the six thinking skills, *applying* and *creating* thinking skills are underemphasized. Based on the findings of the analysis, the study recommends that EFL teachers should take steps to address the underemphasized knowledge types and thinking skills identified in the textbooks. Specifically, teachers are encouraged to customize their language instruction and supplementary exercises to better integrate procedural and metacognitive knowledge types, as well as to emphasize applying and creating thinking processes.

Keywords: content analysis / critical thinking / reliability / validity / Bloom's Revised Taxonomy/ EFL textbooks

Introduction

Over the past years, textbook writers have focused on incorporating critical-thinking-enhanced activities into language teaching materials (Dummett, 2016; Ivory, 2021). In the aspect of developing English language teaching materials, critical thinking is not widely recognized yet among the teachers and textbook writers (Dummett, 2016; Dummett & Hughes, 2019). One of the reasons for this is that language teachers are not very autonomous in their choice of language textbooks and teaching materials. Despite this reality, language teachers need to recognize the fact that they are not merely neutral mediators. They have the potential and creativity to fully utilize prescribed textbooks and create an effective teaching and learning environment. Moreover, the ability to evaluate language teaching materials is one of the essential skills that ELT teachers should possess. Only through critical analysis can teachers explore the potential contributions of the textbooks they use, understand how the materials are developed, and make the best use of them (Mac Donough et al., 2013). As Littlejohn (2011) argued, when examining language textbooks, teachers need to critically raise issues about learner autonomy, involvement in problem solving, and emphasis on learner-centered approaches.

Thus, examining the degree of emphasis on critical thinking in language textbooks reveals its potential contribution to language learning programs (Birjandi & Alizadeh, 2013; Solihati & Hikmat, 2018; Ulum, 2016). According to previous studies on critical thinking integration in English language teaching materials, there was an unbalanced integration between

*First Prize(2024)

[1] Department of English , Myitkyina University.

lower order thinking skills (memory, comprehension, and application skills) and higher order thinking skills (analysis, synthesis, and evaluation skills) in language textbooks. Researchers from language textbook analyses in the EFL context concluded that higher order thinking skills were underemphasized in most language tasks and activities. For this reason, teachers should justify and supplement necessary activities that can elicit learners' thinking skills.

In fact, critical thinking has always played an implicit role in language acquisition, and language curricula and types of language tasks often reflect the strategies and demands that learners are expected to apply in order to develop their critical thinking skills. Nunan's (1999) five classifications of language tasks can be seen as a way to explicitly recognize the importance of critical thinking skills in language acquisition. Nunan's framework for the five classifications of language task types are:

- *Cognitive Tasks*: classifying, predicting, inducing, note taking, concept mapping, inferencing, discriminating, and diagramming;
- *Interpersonal Tasks*: co-operating, and role playing;
- *Linguistic Tasks*: conversational patterns, practicing, using context, summarizing, selective reading/listening, and skimming;
- *Affective Tasks*: personalizing, self-evaluating, and reflecting; and
- *Creative Tasks*: brainstorming

Cognitive tasks largely involve critical thinking skills to understand, analyze, and evaluate language input. Interpersonal tasks are also part of good critical thinking practices in terms of collaborative and flexible learning with other people. Linguistic tasks devote the ability to use language effectively and accurately in appropriate circumstances. Affective tasks engage learners personally so that they can reflect their insights and emotional attitudes in the tasks. Creative tasks are one of the higher order thinking skills, where learners can generate and formulate their own assumptions and ideas from what they have studied. Nunan's (1999) five classifications of language tasks can be related to the knowledge and cognitive dimensions of the Revised Taxonomy. It is important to recognise that each of these classifications involves different critical thinking skills, which are essential for effective language learning and use. By providing learners with a range of language tasks that engage these different critical thinking skills, learners gain abilities to understand, analyze, evaluate, communicate effectively, use language accurately and appropriately, recognize and manage emotions, and think creatively. These are all important critical thinking skills that can be developed through language learning and practice.

Critical thinking across curricula in subject-specific contexts is highly recommended for the development of learners in accordance with educational objectives (Ennis, 2018). Therefore, materials and activities used in language classrooms have become key factors in enhancing language learners' critical thinking skills (Shirkhani & Fahim, 2011). A teacher's choice of teaching methods and materials also directly affects thinking practices and training students receive (Thompson, 2011). Examining the degree of emphasis on critical thinking in ELT textbooks uncovers potential contributions of the textbooks to language learning (Birjandi & Alizadeh, 2013). Thus, textbook analysts and pedagogues of English language teaching are increasingly examining the integration of critical thinking skills in language teaching materials.

As such, textbook writers and teachers as textbook users should strive to incorporate critical thinking into their language syllabi. With the aim of discovering the embodiment of critical thinking in EFL textbooks, the following research question is formulated: "Do Myanmar University EFL textbooks employ critical thinking activities in their language tasks in accordance with the Revised Taxonomy?"

Overview of the Research Design

Research Materials

New Language Leader is a series of coursebooks published by Pearson Publishing, which is used for the present study. There are four textbooks: *New Language Leader Coursebook 1* (Cotton et al., 2019); *New Language Leader Coursebook 2* (Cotton et al., 2019); *New Language Leader Coursebook 3* (Cotton et al., 2019); and *New Language Leader Coursebook 4* (Cotton et al., 2019). When data were collected, these four textbooks are termed Textbook 1, Textbook 2, Textbook 3, and Textbook 4 respectively.

Research Method

In the present study, Bloom's Revised Taxonomy was applied to examine the critical thinking integration in EFL textbooks. Krippendorff 's (2019) content analysis research method was applied for this study.

Bloom's Revised Taxonomy or the Revise Taxonomy

In the Revised Taxonomy Anderson et al., (2001), there are two dimensions: knowledge dimension and cognitive dimension. The knowledge dimension consists of four categories, namely Factual, Conceptual, Procedural, and Metacognition. The organizing principles that differentiate between these categories are the extent to which these categories are concrete or abstract. The cognitive process dimension consists of six categories of verbs such as Remember, Understand, Apply, Analyze, Evaluate, and Create. The main defining feature used to differentiate these six categories among each other is the level of cognitive complexity. The six categories are illustrated in a pyramid structure starting with its base foundation category from Remember through Create up to the top of each category in a hierarchical order classified by their cognitive complexity. The cognitive level becomes more complex as each category becomes higher in the pyramid structure. For example, in terms of cognitive process, Understand is more complex than Remember; Apply is more complex than Understand; Analyze is more complex than Apply, etc. The two dimensions are presented in Table 1.

Table 1 The Taxonomy Table (Anderson et al., 2001, p. 28)

Knowledge Dimension	Cognitive Process Dimension					
	Remember	Understand	Apply	Analyze	Evaluate	Create
Factual Knowledge						
Conceptual Knowledge						
Procedural Knowledge						
Metacognitive Knowledge						

Methodological Description of Content Analysis

Regardless of the different nature of content analysis designs governed by the research questions, objectives and nature of the data, all content analyses should be addressed by a well-founded planning. What content is being examined and for what purpose should be clarified in the planning period. Krippendorff (2019) provided six major components of a content analysis process that guide a series of steps to follow as shown in Figure 1.

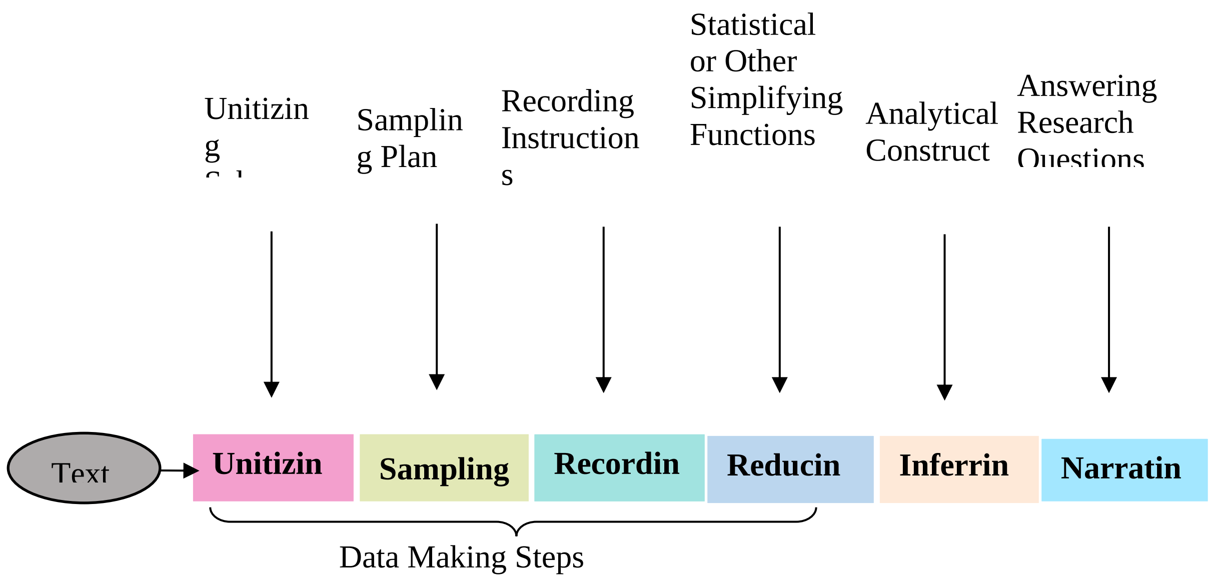


Figure 1 Design of Content Analysis (Adopted from Krippendorff, 2019)

In the present study, the researcher decided to use the human coding method because it is particularly effective in interpreting semantically complex texts. Content analysis with the human coding method always requires a document named codebook and a coding form that is a record of codes for all variables measured. The lack of a standard coding scheme in a content analysis study is a major threat to its reliability and validity of coding. In this study, recorded categories are input into Excel sheets, and descriptive statistical representations of the data were produced. The operationalization process, which involves developing measures, is a crucial step in content analysis coding. The researcher attempted to clearly identify which knowledge types and thinking processes a language task belongs to according to the Revised Taxonomy. Using reliable sources, the researcher developed codebooks and coding forms for the content analysis. It is notable that there were challenges in recording the types of thinking processes of cognitive dimension for each language task. In the Revised Taxonomy, critical thinking skills can be confusing in terms of their characteristics and properties. To distinguish between these similar cognitive processes, the coders carefully examined the definitions and examples provided in the Revised Taxonomy and consider the context and level of complexity involved in the language tasks. The coding procedures involved constructing the codebook, giving training to the second coder, practicing coding together, revising the codebook, when necessary, independently coding a number of cases, discussing the results of independent coding practice, and revising the codebook again if necessary. The second coder analyzed 13% of the whole sample to seek reliability agreement, while the researcher coded all the contents of the textbooks.

Reliability Agreement Assessment

The content analysis method is not complete without conducting the reliability assessment. Neuendorf (2017, p. 234) emphasized, "without the establishment of reliability, content analysis measures are useless". In the previous textbook content analyses, little attention was given to the ways of demonstrating reliability measures for coding data. Krippendorff's alpha was used as a standard reliability measure over other measures such as percentage agreement such as Bennett et al.'s *S* (1954), *Scott's pi* (1955), *Cohen's Kappa* (1960), *Fleiss's K* (1971), and *Cronbach's alpha* (1951) because the data was nominal (Hayes & Krippendorff, 2007). Krippendorff's *alpha* reliability agreement test is widely applied because it can be applied across different sample sizes, measurement levels, and situations involving multiple coders and missing data. In this study, the researcher applied the reliability agreement test twice for two dependent variables: the variable for types of knowledge and the variable for types of cognitive process.

To conduct Krippendorff's alpha reliability agreement test, a sub-sample of 13% from the whole sample was randomly selected to be coded independently by the second coder. The test requires the use of a computing platform, and Hayes (2005) developed a macro (KALPHA) for this purpose. The macro and SPSS are required to conduct the test. The *Kalpha macro* can be downloaded from http://afhayes.com/spss-sas-and-r-macros-and-code.html. To execute the *macro*, start *SPSS* and open a blank page. Click *File*, *Open* and *Syntax* and search for the *kalpha.sps file* (that is called macro). Open and execute the macro by clicking on *Run* and *All* in *SPSS*. A window pops up, and click *OK*, then close the window. Next, open the data and manually execute the test in the *SPSS* by clicking *File*, *New*, *Syntax* and typing in *kalpha* "judges = obs1 obs2/level=1/detail=0/boot=10000". The digit "1" indicates the data level is nominal, and analysts should include the right measurement level for the variables in the *KALPHA* command line (1 = nominal, 2 = ordinal, 3 = interval, 4 = ratio). Finally, click on *Run*, and *All* to run the test. The results showed a high-reliability agreement for the variable of types of cognitive processes (α = 0.79), indicating strong agreement between the two coders in coding the nominal data of cognitive processes of the language tasks. The reliability agreement for the variable of types of knowledge was also acceptable (α = 0.72), suggesting some level of agreement between the coders in coding this variable. Overall, Krippendorff's *alpha* reliability agreement test showed to be a useful tool for ensuring consistency and reliability in the coding process.

Findings and Discussion

The content analysis of four selected language textbooks yielded a total of 3153 language tasks. As shown in Table 2 and Figure 2 respectively, the percentages of the inclusion of the types of knowledge are not equally distributed. Factual knowledge is the largest percentage followed by conceptual knowledge, both constituting about 85% of the content. Procedural and metacognitive knowledge are the least focused on, constituting 15% of all content. This pattern of knowledge type integration is common across all the textbooks.

Table 2 Frequencies and Percentages of the Knowledge Types in the Four Textbooks

Knowledge Types	**Frequencies and Percentages of the Language Tasks**			
	Textbook 1	**Textbook 2**	**Textbook 3**	**Textbook 4**
Factual Knowledge	379 49%	372 50%	377 48%	398 46%
Conceptual Knowledge	310 40%	300 39%	289 38%	329 38%
Procedural Knowledge	63 8%	58 8%	89 12%	104 12%
Metacognitive Knowledge	20 3%	20 3%	14 2%	31 4%
Total	772 100%	750 100%	769 100%	862 100%

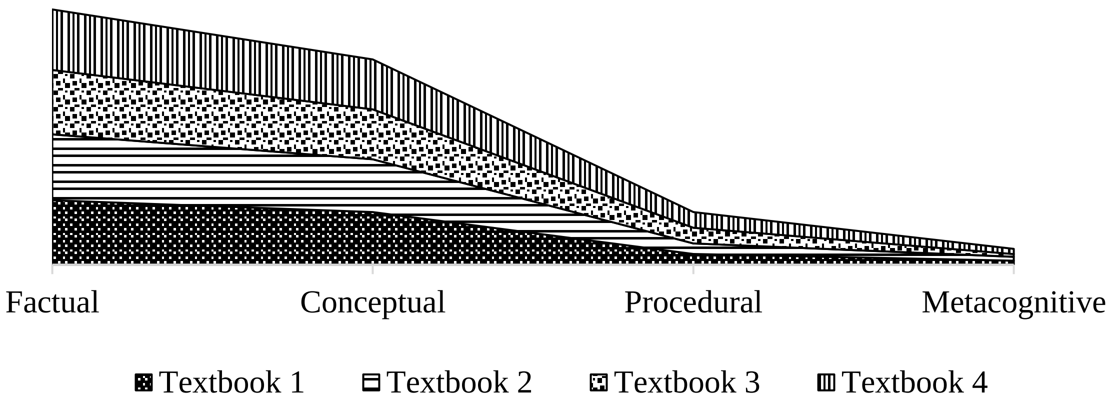


Figure 2 Patterns of Knowledge Types Inclusion in the Four Textbooks

Regardless of the levels of the textbooks, factual and conceptual knowledge types are largely integrated in the textbooks. On the other hand, procedural and metacognitive knowledge types are scarcely focused on in the textbooks. Underlying factors for this unbalanced integration of different knowledge types can be due to the fact that reading, and listening tasks are more included than writing, grammar, and vocabulary exercises. Reading and listening activities are largely presented as factual and conceptual knowledge types. Figure 3 again shows the dominant role of the two knowledge types in the textbooks. As can be seen in the overall percentages of the knowledge types in Figure 3, it can be said that the textbooks do not provide a well-rounded approach to understand and apply all effective learning experiences.

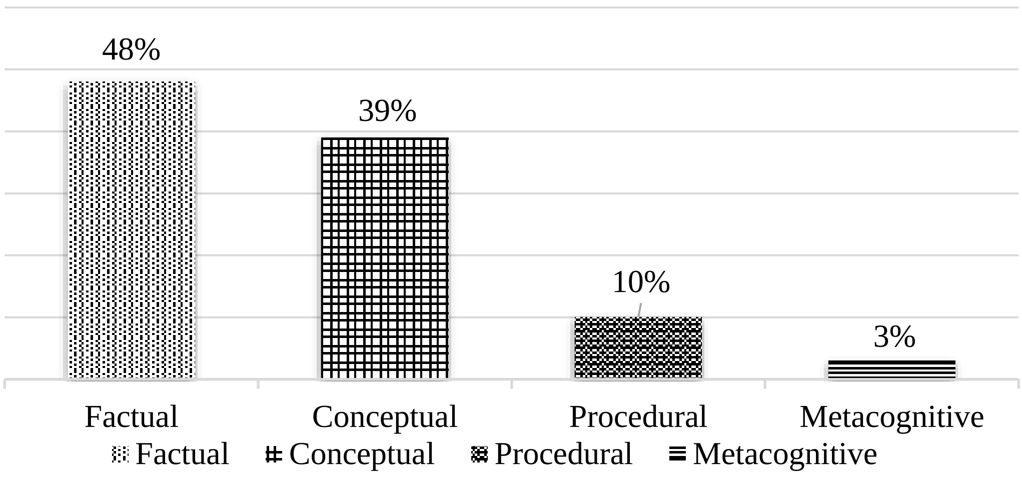


Figure 3 Overall Percentages of Knowledge Types in the Four Textbooks

The cognitive dimension of the Revised Taxonomy includes six different levels of cognitive complexity that learners engage in when processing information and demonstrating their understanding. These six levels are remembering, understanding, applying, analyzing, evaluating, and creating. Table 3 summarizes the frequencies and percentages of the six cognitive thinking skills integrated in the textbooks.

Table 3 Frequencies and Percentages of Cognitive Processes

Cognitive Processes	**Frequencies and Percentages of the Language Tasks**			
	Textbook 1	**Textbook 2**	**Textbook 3**	**Textbook 4**
Remember	61 8%	68 9%	57 7%	48 6%
Understand	278 36%	344 46%	250 33%	218 25%
Apply	28 4%	49 7%	50 7%	31 4%
Analyze	147 19%	99 13%	129 17%	190 22%
Evaluate	167 22%	151 20%	224 29%	291 34%
Create	91 12%	39 5%	59 8%	84 10%
Total	772 100%	750 100%	769 100%	862 100%

While the table shows the exact number of cognitive thinking skills integrated into the textbooks, the visual representation of the data in Figure 4 allows readers to compare thinking skills across and between textbooks. Overall, the presented data suggest that the analyzed language textbooks tend to prioritize the cognitive skill of *understand* over other thinking skills such as application and creation. While understanding is an important skill in language learning, learners should also be encouraged to *apply* what they have learned and *create* new knowledge. According to the analysis result provided, it seems that there is no significant pattern of incorporating thinking skills in relation to the language level of the textbooks.

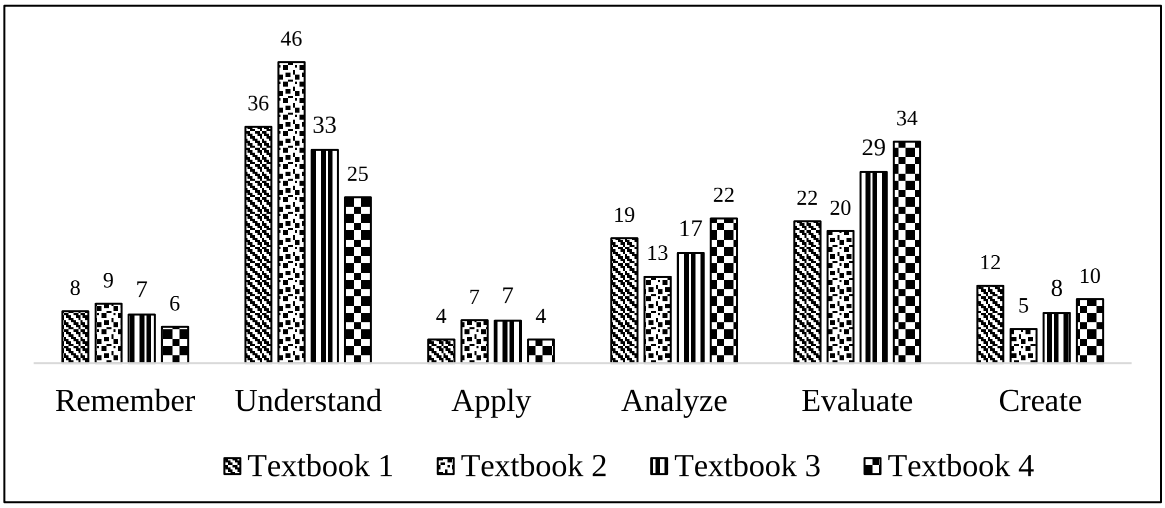


Figure 4 Frequencies and Percentages of Cognitive Processes

The six levels of thinking skills in the Revised Taxonomy can be categorized into two major groups of thinking skills: (1) lower order thinking skills composed of the three basic thinking skills such as remembering, understanding, and applying and, (2) higher order thinking skills compose of the upper three thinking processes such as analyzing, evaluating, and creating. Basic lower order thinking skills are important foundations for learning, but they are not sufficient for developing students' critical thinking abilities. Higher order thinking skills such as analysis, evaluation, and creativity are necessary for learners to engage with complex concepts and apply their knowledge in new contexts. In the previous studies as observed in Thiri Soe (2024), there is an urgent need to integrate more of the higher order thinking skills in EFL textbooks because they identified little amount of higher order thinking skills integrated in the textbooks. As a result of this present study, the textbooks analyzed in this study have a higher percentage of integration of higher order thinking skills as presented in Figure 5.

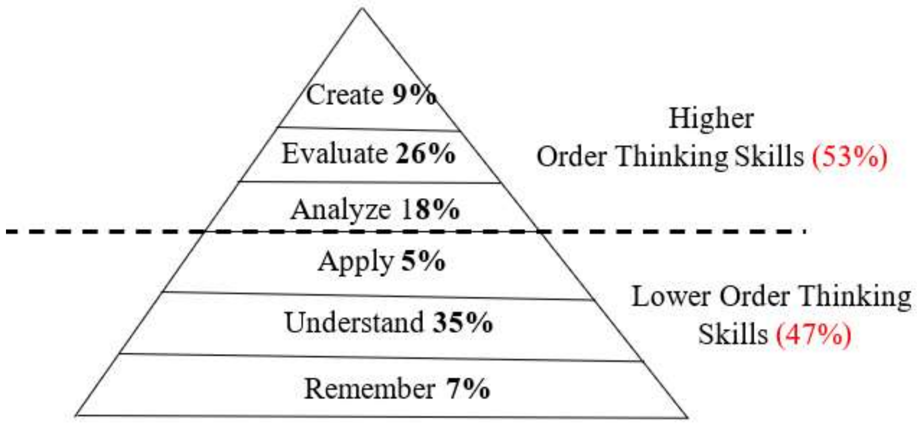


Figure 5 The Comparison of Higher and Lower Order Thinking Skills Included in the Textbooks

By examining the content of language textbooks, the study was able to identify the types of knowledge and cognitive skills that are emphasized in the textbooks. The textbooks mainly focused on factual and conceptual knowledge types, while procedural and metacognitive knowledge types were scarcely focused. All the presented information can be summarized as follows.

- There is an unbalanced integration of different knowledge types. The lack of balance in language learning materials is concerning because procedural and metacognitive knowledge types are essential for language learners to perform language learning very well. Metacognitive knowledge, in particular, is an essential learning strategy that allows learners to plan, self-monitor, and organize their learning effectively.
- Regarding the cognitive skills, it was found that while the skills of understanding, analysis, and evaluation are integrated at a relatively high rate, the skills of remembering application and creation have lower integration percentages. The cognitive skill of understanding is the most emphasized in language textbooks due to the nature of language learning, which involves interpreting language input and performing language tasks. The cognitive skills of remembering, application and creation are underemphasized in textbooks, but they are important for learners to apply acquired linguistic knowledge in new and varied contexts and generate new ideas and concepts. So, in implementing the critical thinking in these analyzed English textbooks, language tasks that promote the development of these skills are necessary.
- In a comparison between the higher and lower order thinking skills, it is found that higher order thinking skills have satisfactory percentages in the language tasks in all four textbooks.

Conclusion

The present study focused on examining the effectiveness of *New Language Leader* textbook series in integrating critical thinking skills into language tasks and activities. The findings of the study revealed that the textbooks had strengths in terms of incorporating critical thinking skills into language tasks and activities. The textbooks were found to effectively integrate higher order thinking skills into language tasks, which helped to potentially improve students' language skills and thinking skills. The implications of the study suggest that incorporating critical thinking skills into language tasks and activities in textbooks can be an effective tool for language learning and development. Additionally, this study highlighted the need for underemphasized knowledge types and thinking skills in the textbooks. It is still unclear exactly what the "proper" balance of higher-order to lower-order skills will be in foreign language learning. That is outside the scope of this study, but does need to be carefully monitored. This study seeks to find what the current balance is and makes suggestions for a more equal distribution, but future studies should examine the effect of such changes and see if that is producing the desired results. Additionally, this study emphasizes each analytical step and the necessity of making appropriate methodological decisions of content analysis research method to ensure the reliability and validity of research outcomes. Despite being a time and labour-intensive research method due to its nature of dealing with large datasets and demanding detailed interpretation of the textual data, it is a valuable research method for discovering hypotheses, patterns, and trends within messages and human communication. Overall, being a descriptive content analysis, the present study lacks the experimental rigor of a classroom intervention study.

However, content analysis is still a valuable research method that can provide insights into how critical thinking is integrated into textbooks. By analyzing the content of the currently prescribed textbooks, common themes, patterns, and trends in the way critical thinking is presented in textbooks are observed. This information can help inform further research and the development of interventions aimed at improving critical thinking skills among students. By identifying the current state of critical thinking integration in textbooks, this study can serve as a starting point for future research and innovations in the field. Therefore, while a descriptive content analysis may not be as appealing as a classroom intervention study, it still has value in contributing to the overall body of knowledge on critical thinking integration. To borrow the saying of Sipple and Sato (2022), "[K]knowing the issue at hand is the first step to solve the issue" (p. 13), by diagnosing the problems, educators and researchers can then work to develop interventions and strategies to improve critical thinking education. Therefore, the present study can be seen as an important step in the process of improving critical thinking education, by identifying areas of strength and weakness in current textbook contents.

Acknowledgements

I am profoundly grateful to the Rector of Myitkyina University, Sayargyi Dr. Aung Win for his great encouragement for the conduct of the research. I would also like to express my immense gratitude to the Head of the Department of English, Myitkyina University, Daw Nilar Win, Associate Professor for her support for the accomplishment of this research paper. I am indebted to all my teachers who have inspired and influenced me along the way in pursuit of knowledge. Their support and wisdom have served as a constant source of motivation, guiding me through challenges and encouraging me to embrace positivity.

References

Anderson, L. W., Krathwohl, D. R., Airasian, P. W., Cruikshank, K. A., Mayer, R. E, Pintrich, P., Raths, J., Wittrock, M. C. (2001). Taxonomy of learning, teaching, and assessing: A revision of Bloom's taxonomy of educational objectives (2nd ed.). Addison and Wesley.

Bennett, E. M., Alpert, R., & Goldstein, A. C. (1954). Communications through limited.

Birjandi, P., & Alizadeh, I. (2013). Manifestation of critical thinking skills in the English textbooks employed by language institutes in Iran. *International Journal of Research Studies in Language Learning*, *2*(1), 27-38.

Cohen, J. (1960). A coefficient of agreement for nominal scales. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, *20*, 37–46.

Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2018). *Research methods in education* (8th ed.). Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.

Cotton, D., Falvey, D., & Kent, S. (2019). *New language leader coursebook 1*. Pearson.

Cotton, D., Falvey, D., & Kent, S. (2019). *New language leader coursebook 2*. Pearson.

Cotton, D., Falvey, D., & Kent, S. (2019). *New language leader coursebook 3*. Pearson.

Cotton, D., Falvey, D., Kent, S., Lebeau, I. & Rees, G. (2019). *New language leader coursebook 4*. Pearson.

Cronbach, L. J. (1951). Coefficient alpha and the internal structure of tests. *Psychometrica*, *16*, 297–334.

Dummett, P. (2016). How to write critical thinking activities. ELT Teacher 2 Writer.

Dummett, P., & Hughes, J. (2019). *Critical thinking in ELT: A working model for the classroom*. National Geographic Learning.

Ennis, R. H. (2018). Critical thinking across the curriculum: A vision. *Topoi*, *37*(1), 165-184.

Fleiss, J. L. (1971). Measuring nominal scale agreement among many raters. *Psychological Bulletin*, *76*, 378–382.

Hayes, A. F. (2005). *Statistical methods for communication science*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.

Ivory, S. B. (2021). *Becoming a Critical Thinker: For Your University Studies and Beyond*. Oxford University Press.

Krippendorff, K. (2019). *Content analysis: An introduction to its methodology* (4^{th} ed.). Sage.

Littlejohn, A. (2011). The analysis of language teaching materials: Inside the Trojan Horse. In B. Tomlinson (Ed.), Materials Development in Language Teaching (2nd ed., pp. 179-211). Cambridge University Press.

Lune, H., & Berg, B. L. (2017). *Qualitative research methods for the social sciences*. Pearson.

McDonough, J., Shaw, C. & Masuhara, H. (2013). *Materials and Methods in ELT* (3^{rd} ed.). John Wiley & Sons.

Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook. Sage.

Neuendorf, K. A. (2017). *The content analysis guidebook*. Sage.

Nunan, D. (1999). *Second language teaching and learning*. Cambridge University Press.

Scott, W. A. (1955). Reliability of content analysis: The case of nominal scale coding. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, *19*, 321–325.

Shirkhani, S., & Fahim, M. (2011). Enhancing critical thinking in foreign language learners. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, *29*, 111-115.

Soe, T. (2024). Investigating Critical Thinking in ELT Textbooks: A Systematic Literature Review of Textbook Evaluation Studies. *Theory and Practice of Second Language Acquisition*, *1*(10), 1-29.

Solihati, N., & Hikmat, A. (2018). Critical thinking tasks manifested in Indonesian language textbooks for senior secondary students. *Sage Open*, *8*(3), 1-8.

Thomson, C. (2011). Critical thinking across the curriculum: Process over output. *International Journal of Humanities and social science*, *1*(9), 1-7.

Ulum, Ö. G. (2016). A descriptive content analysis of the extent of Bloom's taxonomy in the reading comprehension questions of the course book Q: Skills for success 4 reading and writing. *The Qualitative Report*, *21*(9), 1674-1683.

J. Myanmar Acad. Arts Sci. 2026 **Vol. XXIII. No.5**

THE SPEECH ACT ANALYSIS IN *THE MONKEY'S PAW* BY W.W. JACOBS

Kay Khine Nyein[1]

Abstract

This paper aims to explore speech acts through both discourse and pragmatic perspectives. In terms of the discourse-focused mode, turn-taking is one of the key components in speech analysis as it helps to understand the structure of a conversation and reveals how speech acts are used in context. From a pragmatic perspective, speech acts are crucial for understanding speakers' intentions and desires, which are difficult to identify because they are embedded in context. Specifically, this paper attempts to analyse various types of speech acts found in the short story *The Monkey's Paw*. The first part of the research is based on Bennison's (1998) framework on discourse analysis, which includes turn allocation and turn-taking, topic shift/control, and turn length in order to investigate how the characters interact and manage their conversational roles. It also builds on Toolan's (1998) "give and take" model, which analyses dialogue based on speech functions such as offers, requests, informs and questions. In the second part, Searle's (1976) speech act theory is applied to examine how the use of illocutionary acts in characters' utterances reflects their personalities in the horror story. It is found that the dominant pattern of turn-taking is "current speaker selects next", which shows that speakers control the flow of conversation. In particular, Mr. White leads the conversation and allocates turns which indicate his dominance in the interaction. Moreover, most characters prefer discussing a particular topic rather than shifting to another; this reveals their strong interest in the mysterious power of the paw. Regarding turn length, Morris's turns are the longest as he provides detailed explanations about the monkey's paw and its effects. It is also found that the most frequent type of speech act is representatives followed by directives and expressives, while the least frequent type is commissives. No declaration is found in the horror story. The dominant use of representative speech acts in Mr. White's utterances reveals that he is rational and disbelieves in supernatural power. In addition, more directive speech acts are found in Mrs. White's utterances in Part III, where she commands her husband to make a second wish. This highlights the protective nature of a mother and her emotional instability. Moreover, the two main characters lead the conversation by taking more turns, and the majority of spoken exchanges occur among family members.

Keywords: turn-taking, turn shift/control, turn length, speech act, representatives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declarations

Introduction

Effective communication is one of the unique characteristics of human society, and we use different forms of communication to convey our ideas, feelings and attitudes. In real conversations, communication is not just about saying words, because the same words can have different meanings. It involves what speakers say, how they say it and why they say it in conversations. If speakers understand the content, delivery and intention, they can participate in conversations effectively.

Discourse competence raises awareness of how people manage interaction, take turns, and use language. Speakers need to notice when to speak, when to take a turn, and when to switch turns. Moreover, to become competent speakers, pragmatic knowledge is required to interpret speakers' intentions correctly. It is crucial that people have strong discourse competence

[1] Mandalay University of Foreign Languages

and pragmatic competence as both skills are of vital importance in maintaining the flow of conversation and building relationships between speakers.

Discourse analysis concentrates on describing the “structure” of spoken and written discourse above the level of the sentence including, for example, the unwritten “rules” by which people take turns in conversation (Short, 1995, p. 46). Short (1995) also states that discourse analysis and pragmatics overlap to some extent, as they both study how language is used in conversation although their basic aims are different. For example, turn-taking patterns in a particular conversation are interpreted as significant. Turn-taking is more than simply taking turns to talk; it requires cooperation. A turn might be a single word such as “wish” or a longer phrase or sentence.

In the turn-taking process, participants alternate their roles as speakers and listeners, and they manage when to speak and for how long. If A always speaks first and always interrupts B, while B never interrupts A, this behaviour tells us something about the relationship between A and B (Short, 1995, p. 47). In other words, frequent interruptions can lead to an asymmetrical relationship between speakers: A dominates the conversation and B accepts a subordinate role. Bennison (1998, p. 67) claims that words in texts reveal characters’ personalities by analysing their conversational behaviour and by using the powerful interpretative apparatus of discourse analysis and pragmatics. Conversational patterns reveal what speakers think, how they feel and how they relate to others.

Speech acts are considered part of pragmatics as they focus on how language is used in context, including the functions and underlying meanings of utterances. Yule (1996) claimed that pragmatics is the study of contextual meanings. Pragmatics explores how utterances are interpreted in context, which gives meanings to utterances that differ from the meanings of the individual sentences that comprise them (Short, 1995, p. 47).

In real-life communication, context largely influences the choice of language; therefore, speakers must be aware of whom they are talking to and where the interaction takes place. If linguistic competence is the ability to perform and understand illocutionary acts, then competent speakers and hearers must possess certain mental states and abilities which are, in general, traditionally related to the faculty of reason (Vanderveken, 2001). It is crucial to understand a wide range of speech functions or acts which help speakers communicate effectively in different contexts; speakers need to be flexible and skillful enough to vary their techniques. In other words, speakers should understand both the basic functions and the deep structure of language and they need to vary speech functions in different social situations to achieve specific goals.

Linguists have become increasingly interested in different types of texts (conversations, articles, speeches, etc.) and how texts function in specific contexts. This shift in emphasis has given rise to a relatively new discipline of discourse analysis, which regards all types of spoken and written texts—for example, conversations, interviews, leaflets, poems and novels—as discourses, that is, as interpersonal communicative activities performed for a specific social purpose and situated in a particular context (Verdonk, 1995, p. 45).

It is found that EFL learners can develop both discourse and pragmatic competence through reading fiction, which exposes readers to vocabulary, dialogue and social and cultural contexts. By reading fictional conversations, language learners raise their awareness of turn-taking patterns because, in the society, a person is considered impolite and less respectful if a listener or speaker does not give others opportunities to take turns. As learning a new language involves more than memorising words and rules, learners can improve their language proficiency and communication style, practise functional language (making requests, apologising, inviting and so on) and learn how to respond appropriately in real-life situations.

In particular, the utterances spoken by characters in novels and short stories are not different from those which are used in daily conversations. Generally, authors create dialogues, plots and characters in fiction, based on their experiences; moreover, readers engage with literary texts to understand human behaviour and the complex nature of life.

This research paper applies Bennison's framework, which includes turn-taking, turn shift/control and turn length, to investigate how participants interact and how they manage conversational roles. Moreover, Toolan's "Give and Take" model and Searle's speech act theory are applied to identify different types of speech acts in the horror story *The Monkey's Paw*. A horror story is a narrative in which the focus is on creating a feeling of fear. Such stories may feature supernatural elements—ghosts, witches, vampires—or they may address more realistic psychological fears (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2024).

This study examines how turn-taking patterns influence character development. For example, shorter responses indicate shock or uncertainty whereas longer turns reveal characters' control over the conversation or their detailed explanations of topics. Speech act analysis across different genres also helps learners gain a better understanding of the pragmatic nature of utterances and their social functions. For instance, speech functions such as warnings, wishes and representatives are commonly found in horror stories whereas speech functions such as promising, apologising, requesting and giving compliments are more abundant in romance.

The aim of the research paper is to explore different types of speech acts used by the characters in the short story *The Monkey's Paw*. It involves three objectives: to identify different turn-taking patterns used by the characters, to examine different types of speech acts employed by the characters and to investigate how dominant types of speech acts depict the characters' personalities, desires and emotions. This research paper also helps learners appreciate how characters' utterances convey their emotions, personalities and desires.

Research Questions

The research paper addresses the following questions:

1. What types of turn-taking tools are used by the characters in the short story *The Monkey's Paw*?
2. What types of speech acts are found in the short story *The Monkey's Paw*?
3. What are the dominant types of turn-taking patterns and speech acts that indicate the personalities of the two main characters in the short story *The Monkey's Paw*?

Literature Review

A turn is the basic unit of conversation analysis and it is the process of alternating between speakers. A turn refers to when someone speaks; they take a turn at speech and when speech alternates, turns alternate as well (Herman, 1998, p. 19). A turn is the time when a speaker is talking and turn-taking is the skill of knowing when to start and finish a turn in a conversation (British Council, 2024).

In both formal and informal conversation settings, people exchange their thoughts, opinions and emotions. And sometimes they wait for their turns to speak while listening to others. Failing to wait for one's turn or frequent interruptions can cause misunderstandings and are considered impolite in some contexts. Competent speakers have the ability to keep things on track or keep things moving smoothly and to manage conflicting ideas, emotions and the flow and pace of conversations. A conversation is regulated by how people take turns. Turn change proceeds smoothly: one participant talks, stops, the next participant talks, stops and so on; however, there can also be a conflict at the changeover point, termed the Transition Relevance Place (Herman, 1998, p. 19). It helps to understand how people organize turns to maintain the flow of conversations.

Bennion (1998) illustrated how discourse analysis frameworks can be applied in "Accessing Character through Conversation in Tom Stoppard's *Professional Foul*." In the analysis, he applied ideas from discourse analysis (including turn-taking and allocation, turn-taking and topic control/shift, and turn length). He adopted turn-taking and allocation tools proposed by Sack et al. (1974): (a) those in which the next turn is allocated by the current speaker and (b) those in which the next turn is self-selected. Topic control is the strategy that limits the coverage of a discussion or conversation to things that are acceptable to the people involved in the communication process. It is disrespectful if the topic that a speaker introduces is ignored as effective communication requires active listening and engagement. There are some occasions to shift topics in order to avoid potential conflicts or maintain interest. Topic shifting is a strategy that requires listening intently to the person or people you are conversing with. Good speakers know which topics to avoid, when to respond and when to give other speakers their turns. Turn-taking is useful for building rapport and maintaining social connections between speakers.

Speaker turns may vary in length ranging from a minimal one-word utterance to extended talk lasting many minutes (Carter and Simpson, 1989). Long turns can also block access to the floor for other potential speakers and can function as a ploy for dominance, exclusion or coercion, depending on whether resistance, challenge or counter-measures are undertaken in response. Short turns, too, are dependent on the responsive dimension for their interactive value and could be used to signify indifference, urgency or the need for extra detail if questions are relayed in succession on the same topic (Herman, 1998, p. 21). In other words, longer turns may lead to dominance, authority or strong interest while shorter turns may indicate lower status or disinterest.

In the 'give and take' model, Toolan classifies the four core conversational acts: offers, requests, informs, and questions. Since offers and requests both concern future-proposed action by one interactant or the other, they are called Proposals; since informs and questions provide or seek information, they are called Propositions (Toolan, 1998, p. 144).

In an offer act, the speaker is cast as subordinate and incurs cost and the addressee is cast as superior and beneficiary; in a request act, the speaker is cast as superior and beneficiary and the addressee is cast as subordinate and incurs cost; in an inform act, the speaker is cast as superior (the knower) but incurs cost and the addressee is cast as subordinate but beneficiary; in a question act, the speaker is cast as subordinate but beneficiary and the addressee is cast as superior (the knower) but incurs cost (Toolan, 1998, p. 151).

	PROPOSALS *Goods and services*	**PROPOSITIONS** *Information*
Giving	Offer	Inform
Seeking	request	Question

Moreover, he specifies responses based on four acts: Offer—Acceptance, Request—(Acknowledgement +) Non-verbal Performance, Inform—Acknowledgement, and Question—Inform.

Pragmatics focuses on contextual meaning or unspoken meaning that is beyond literal meaning. It emphasizes the underlying meaning of what the speaker says rather than the literal meaning of words and phrases. To interpret the speakers' intended meaning, listeners need to make inferences and understand what is unsaid.

Speech act theory is one of the key concepts in the field of pragmatics. It suggests that utterances are composed of both the communicative form and their function to "act" on the listener (Bottema-Beutel & Kim, 2021; Searle & Vanderveken, 1985). A speech act is an utterance that is expressed by an individual to perform actions; it also reveals the intention of the speaker. Actions performed via utterances are generally called speech acts and, in English, are commonly given more specific labels, such as apology, complaint, compliment, invitation, promise or request (Yule, 1996, p. 47). A speech act is an act that a speaker performs when making an utterance. It can be in the form of an offer, request, order, etc. (SIL International, 2024). In general, a speech act is a kind of communication that shows the attitude of the speaker.

John Austin, a renowned British philosopher, developed a Speech Act Theory which studies how words are used to carry out actions. Austin categorizes three types of acts: locutionary act, illocutionary act and perlocutionary act. Searle (1976) proposed the basic categories of speech acts: representatives, directives, commissives, expressives and declarations.

Representatives. The point or purpose of the members of the representative class is to commit the speaker (in varying degrees) to something being the case, to the truth of the expressed proposition (Searle, 1976, p. 10).

Directives. They are attempts (of varying degrees, and hence, more precisely, they are determinates of the determinable which includes attempting) by the speaker to get the hearer to do something (Searle, 1976, p. 11).

Commissives. Commissives then are those acts whose point is to commit the speaker (again, in varying degrees) to some future course of action (Searle, 1976, p. 11).

Expressives. Their function is to express the psychological state specified in the sincerity condition about a state of affairs specified in the propositional content (Searle, 1976, p. 12).

Declarations. Characteristic of this class is that the successful performance of one of its members brings about the correspondence between the propositional content and reality;

successful performance guarantees that the propositional content corresponds to the world (Searle, 1976, p. 13).

Based on their functions, speech acts can be divided into five types: (1) assertive or representative functions to strengthen, suspect, confirm and announce; (2) commissives which have the function of committing to do something, for example swearing or promising; (3) directives which have the function of encouraging listeners to do something, for example ordering, asking, or advising; (4) expressives which are speech acts involving feelings and attitudes, such as apologizing, thanking and so on, and (5) declarations which function to decide something such as punishing, firing, naming and so on (Stevani & Tarigan, 2023).

Leech (1993), as quoted by Ainurorhmah (2011, p. 28), gives some examples of speech act verbs for each speech act, such as: (1) representative speech act verbs: assert, predict, insist, etc.; (2) directive speech act verbs: ask, beg, request, etc.; (3) commissive speech act verbs: promise, swear, offer, etc.; (4) expressive speech act verbs: apologize, congratulate, thank, etc.; and lastly (5) declarative speech act verbs: declare, bless, curse, baptize, etc.

Many research papers related to speech act analysis have been published for decades. The research paper titled “Speech Act Analysis of Anger in the Film Entitled *Something the Lord Made*,” written by Istiqomash (2013) was submitted for the Sarjana Sastra Degree. This paper focused on investigating the types of speech acts used to deliver anger by applying Searle’s theory of speech acts. It was found that directives were used most frequently in the film while declarations were less frequently used; moreover, the characters used commands, questions and requests to express their anger.

Another research paper “Speech Acts Analysis of *Pride and Prejudice*, a novel by Jane Austen,” was written by Mardiani and Leviani and published in 2022. This paper analyzed speech act utterances by the main character of the novel *Pride and Prejudice* written by Jane Austen. Searle’s speech act theory was employed in the paper: representatives, directives, commissives, expressives, and declarations. It was found that there were only four types of speech acts: 253 utterances of representatives, 96 utterances of directives, four utterances of commissives and 122 utterances of expressives. The researchers claimed that representative speech acts, the most dominant type, could be seen as “things that stand for something else”; the speech acts determined the force and the content of the utterances. The researchers also claimed that Elizabeth, the main character, uttered facts that could be confirmed as either true or false.

“An Analysis of Illocutionary Acts in *Sherlock Holmes* Movies” was written by Nugroho (2011). Its aim was to find out the types of illocutionary acts that portrayed the main character in the movie. By applying Searle’s speech act theory, five types of speech acts (representatives, directives, expressives, commissives, and declarations) were identified; among them, the most dominant type of speech act was directives. The research claimed that Holmes had a great influence on Watson.

Hanifa conducted a research paper titled “Turn-Taking Patterns in the Characters’ Dialogue in *The Help* (2011) Movie” in 2019. She used a turn-taking theory by Sacks et al., (1974). It was found that self-selection (SS) was the most common pattern that emerged in M1, meanwhile the current speaker selects the next speaker (CS2TNS) who was dominantly used in M2. The use of the CS2TNS pattern is mostly influenced by social status.

The current research paper explores the turn-taking patterns used by the characters and the different types of speech acts that reveal the personalities of the main characters in the horror story *The Monkey's Paw*.

Synopsis of the Short Story *The Money's Paw*

The Monkey's Paw is set in Laburnam Villa, in rural England, during the early 20th century. On a dark and stormy night, Mr. White was playing chess with his son, Herbert, while Mrs. White was knitting by the fireplace. Sergeant-Major Morris visited their house and told them about a mummified monkey's paw, its magical power to fulfill three wishes and the terrifying consequences of the wishes.

Despite Morris's warning, Mr. White wished for £200; the next day, the family received £200 as compensation for their son's death at work. The old couple wept for the great loss; a week after the funeral, Mrs. White sobbed her heart out by the window and refused to go to sleep. Instead, she urged Mr. White to make another wish which was to bring her son back to life. Mrs. White ordered him to make the wish. At first, Mr. White was hesitant to agree with his wife's words. Finally, he wished upon the monkey's paw in fear.

As soon as he heard a knock on the front door, he was numb and ran to his room. When Mrs. White heard the knock, she assumed that it was Herbert although there was no evidence to prove who was at the door. Mr. White grasped her and begged her not to open the door. When the noise of the continuous knocks sounded louder and louder, Mr. White was terrified to face the consequence since he believed that the sudden knocks were connected to his second wish. Finally, he searched for the mysterious monkey's paw immediately and made the last wish. The frightening sound of the knocks suddenly faded away. When the old lady opened the door, no one was there; she burst into a long wail.

Research Methodology

The research focuses on studying speech acts from both discourse and pragmatic perspectives. In discourse analysis, the turn-taking patterns of the characters are examined while speech act theory is applied to discover the subtle aspects of the characters in the short story. *The Monkey's Paw* by Jacobs, a horror story, is composed of three parts: in Part 1, the story behind the monkey's paw and the first wish are introduced; in Part 2, the consequence of the first wish is depicted; in Part 3, the second and third wishes are mentioned. This horror story highlights the three wishes and the impacts of ignoring the terrible consequences caused by human desire and greed.

Firstly, the utterances of each character from the short story are collected and categorized into turn allocation and turn-taking, topic shift/control, and turn length based on Bennison's (1998) work on discourse analysis to discover how the characters manage turns in conversation. Next, by applying Michael Toolan's (1998) 'give and take' model, the dialogues are analysed in terms of offers, requests, informs and questions. After that, Searle's (1975) speech act theory is applied to examine the utterances from the horror story. These utterances are classified into five types of speech acts: representatives, directives, commissives, expressives and declarations. The most and least frequent speech acts are identified. The ways in which the characters reveal their desires and emotions are also discovered in terms of the speech acts that they utter.

Findings

The short story *The Monkey's Paw* is about a family who owns a mysterious object that grants three wishes and the fatal consequences that follow. The characters mainly use **representative** speech acts to convey facts and emotions and they employ **directive** speech acts to give commands or ask for information. **Searle's speech act theory** is applied to categorize the utterances into five types of speech acts.

Example

"As I wished, it twisted in my hand like a snake."

The above utterance is considered a **representative speech act**; Mr. White utters it after he has made the first wish. As soon as he wishes for $200 while holding the monkey's paw, it moves like a snake. He is asserting the truth and describing the movement of the paw which actually happens in his hand.

Example

"The other two wishes," she replied, rapidly.

The above utterance is regarded as a **representative speech act**. Mrs. White gives the information that two wishes are left. She struggles to overcome her grief after her son died in the accident. She believes that the monkey's paw is the hope to bring her son back to life.

Example

"For God's sake don't let it in," cried the old man, trembling.

The above utterance is a **directive speech act**. Mr. White tells his wife not to allow the creature into the house. In other words, he commands her not to open the door.

Example

"Go and get it and wish," cried his wife, quivering with excitement.

The above utterance includes **directive speech acts** because the use of imperative forms ("go," "get," and "wish") is found in the utterance. Mrs. White commands her husband to perform two actions; the first action is to go and get the monkey's paw and the second one is to make a wish.

Example

"I won't," said his friend, doggedly.

The utterance is **commissive**. Morris declines Mr. White's request for the monkey's paw.

Example

"I'm afraid it'll turn you into a mean, avaricious man, and we shall have to disown you."

The utterance involves two **commissive speech acts**. In the first part of the sentence, the speaker commits that the outcome (a person will turn into a greedy man) will happen after using the paw. The word *"shall"* indicates that the speaker will do something in the future.

Example

"Good God, you are mad!" he cried, aghast.

The utterance shows the emotional reaction of Mr. White and it is **expressive**. He is shocked as soon as he is asked to make a second wish by his wife. He is aware of the terrible consequences of the wish and he reveals his emotions by saying, "Good God."

Example

"The idea of our listening to such nonsense!"

The above utterance is an **expressive speech act**. Mrs. White shows her doubts about the magical power of the monkey's paw.

All in all, the characters—Mr. White, Mrs. White, Herbert, Morris and the stranger (the man from Maw and Meggins)—in *The Monkey's Paw* use four types of speech acts to show their intentions. No **declaration** speech act is found in the story. They use **representatives** to describe the situation and their beliefs; **directives** to order, request and ask for information; **commissives** to swear or commit to future actions; and **expressives** to show their attitudes.

Discussion

In this research paper, the utterances of five characters are collected. It has two parts: discourse analysis and pragmatics. In the first part, it applies Bennison's work on discourse analysis which includes turn taking tools (turn allocation, topic control/ shift and turn length) to find out the turn taking patterns of the characters. The utterances are identified in terms of Toolan's 'Give and Take' model and Searle's speech act theory. The collected data are shown in the tables and the personalities of two main characters, Mr. and Mrs. White, are discussed in this section.

Table 1: Turn-taking Patterns Found in the Short Story *The Monkey's Paw*

Sr. No	Characters	Total no. of utterances	Turn allocation		Topic control/ shift		Turn Length		
			Current speaker selects next A	Self-selection B	Topic control	Topic shift	Word count	Total number of turns	Word/ turn
1	Mr. White	60	14	7	22	20	465	33	14.09
2	Mrs. White	61	18	14	17	18	312	36	8.67
3	Herbet	16	4	5	5	8	169	11	15.36
4	Morris	28	2	2	14	0	238	14	17.00
5	Visitor	10	0	3	5	1	96	7	13.71
Total		**175**	**38**	**31**	**63**	**47**	**1280**	**101**	**12.67**

Table 1 shows different turn-taking patterns found in the story. The current speaker selects *next* (38 times), which is the primary turn allocation in the whole story. Especially, Mrs. White allocates the highest number of turns (18 times) to other speakers followed by Mr. White with 14 turns. This indicates that Mr. White is considerate, controlled and authoritative in conversations.

In terms of self-selection, Mrs. White self-selects the turn 14 times. This shows her independence and confidence. Mrs. White does not wait for the current speaker to allocate the turn before she starts speaking and this reveals a close relationship between the participants. In other words, she is more engaged with her family members but she does not actively participate in interactions with Morris and the visitor. On the other hand, the visitor self-selects his turn three times followed by Morris with two turns.

Moreover, most characters constantly discuss a particular topic rather than shift to a new topic; hence, they can convey the message clearly. According to Table 1, Mr. White seeks to control the conversations more because he is interested in the monkey's paw, its impacts and the solutions to fix the problem. He is a responsible and rational decision-maker. In contrast, his wife, who is emotionally overwhelmed by grief, does not stay on one topic for long but shifts topics more frequently. This shows that she is emotional and loses common sense when she faces the conflict.

The other character, Herbert, shifts the focus more frequently; this reflects his lack of interest in the mysterious power of the paw. He is a rational and responsible man. In terms of turn length, Morris makes the longest turn; he is the storyteller who gives information about the monkey's paw. He extends his speech by giving background details and explaining the dangers of the paw. Herbert makes the second longest turn as his dialogue includes jokes and critical remarks that require elaboration. Mr. White's average turn length is longer compared to his wife's. He is patient and analytical so he takes time for his explanation. Mrs. White's turn length is the shortest; it indicates that she is emotionally expressive and impatient.

Table 2: Giving and Seeking Found in the Short Story *The Monkey's Paw* (Based on Toolan's Model)

Sr. No	Characters	Giving	Seeking	Giving	Seeking	Responses				Total
		Offer	Request	Inform	Question	Offer—Acceptance	Request—(Acknowledgement +) Non-verbal Performance	Inform—Acknowledgement	Question—Inform	
1	Mr. White	0	10	25	14	0	5	8	8	70
2	Mrs. White	0	18	22	18	0	0	2	9	69
3	Herbert	0	5	8	1	0	1	2	3	20
4	Morris	0	3	5	0	0	4	0	18	30
5	Visitor	0	1	7	0	0	1	0	3	12
Total		0	37	67	33	0	11	12	41	201

Table 2 shows different types of speech acts using Toolan's model found in the story. No offer–acceptance pair is found. Regarding **Request—(Acknowledgement +) Non-verbal Performance** pairs, the characters make 37 requests but give only 11 responses. In the story, the characters use non-verbal responses to show their hesitation to give immediate responses due to fear or they choose to ignore the requests. In the research, only utterances are counted while non-verbal clues (silence, gestures, etc.) are excluded.

Likewise, **inform** speech acts outnumber responses (acknowledgements). One possible reason is that the information may be absorbed silently, or the listeners acknowledge/ignore the information non-verbally. Another reason is that the characters sometimes repeat a speech act twice or thrice, which requires only one response.

In terms of **Question—Inform**, there are 33 questions and 41 responses. In fact, the characters give more answers when they are being asked. In conversation, the number of speech acts and responses does not always match. In real-life conversation, no strict match is required as people do not feel compelled to acknowledge every statement; in addition, they sometimes shift to another topic rather than giving responses.

Regarding **giving and seeking**, Mr. White gives more information as he uses more inform acts than the others; this reflects that he is knowledgeable and communicative. Mrs. White seeks information or something as she makes more requests and questions than the others. This shows that she is curious and inquisitive and she focuses on her desires.

Table 3: Types of Speech Acts Found in the Short Story *The Monkey's Paw* (Based on Searle's Model)

Sr. No	Characters	Speech Acts					Total frequency of speech acts
		Representative	Directive	Expressive	Commisive	Declarative	
1	Mr. White	38	24	8	0	0	70
2	His Wife	37	21	11	0	0	69
3	Herbet	12	6	1	1	0	20
4	Morris	19	8	2	1	0	30
5	Visitor	9	1	2	0	0	12
Total		(115) 57.21%	(60) 29.85%	(24) 11.94%	(2) 1%	(0) 0%	201

Table 3 shows the frequencies and percentages of different types of speech acts – representatives, directives, commissives, expressives and declarations – in the short story *The Monkey's Paw*. A total of 201 speech acts are found in the utterances of five characters: Mr. and Mrs. White, Herbert White, Sergeant-Major Morris and the visitor (the man from Maw and Meggins). Half of the total frequency of speech acts used by the different characters are representatives (115 times). It is the dominant type of speech act which accounts for 57.21%. The second most common category is directives which account for 29.85%. The frequency of expressive speech acts is 24 (11.94%) which is followed by commissives (1%). No declarative speech acts (0%) are found in the short story. Mr. White produces more speech acts than the others; more speech acts such as representatives (38 times), directives (24 times), and expressives (8 times) are found. Likewise, Mrs. White is the second most dominant speaker who produces more representatives (37 times), directives (21 times) and expressives (11 times).

Table 4: Types of Speech Acts found in Mr. White's Utterances

Sr. No	Types of Speech Acts	Part I	Part II	Part III	Total
1	Representatives	17	10	11	38
2	Directives	9	3	12	24
3	Commissives	0	0	0	0
4	Expressives	6	1	1	8
5	Declarations	0	0	0	0
	Total	32	14	24	70

Table 4 shows the different types of speech acts performed by Mr. White. Out of five types of speech acts, three are found: representatives, directives and expressives. No declarative or commissive speech acts are found in his utterances. Representative speech acts are the dominant type. It is found that 38 out of 70 speech acts are representatives; in other words, he uses representative speech acts frequently. He frequently uses representatives when he explains the fatal consequences of using the monkey's paw. In addition, he feels guilty for his wife's mental trauma and he has no desire to deny her wishes directly. He uses representatives more than the other types of speech acts in the story. It shows that Mr. White is a curious and skeptical man who doubts the magical power of the monkey's paw. Through representative speech acts, he shows that he deeply understands the fatal consequences of the paw. He has a rational mindset and he is in control. However, in Part 3, more directive speech acts (12 times) are found in his utterances; this shows his desire to prevent the terrible outcome. Mr. White uses directives when he makes minor requests to get favors from them. When Mr. White interacts with his wife and his son with whom he shares close intimacy, he produces more speech acts. He is cautious but fears the potential consequences of the paw's power after his son's death. His wife's insistence and his son's death force him to rely more on directives than on descriptions. He rarely uses expressives; perhaps he is more concerned with controlling the situation and focuses on practical matters.

Table 5: Types of Speech Acts found in Mrs. White's Utterances

Sr. No	Types of Speech Acts	Part I	Part II	Part III	Total
1	Representatives	8	10	19	37
2	Directives	1	1	19	21
3	Commissives	0	0	0	0
4	Expressives	2	4	5	11
5	Declarations	0	0	0	0
	Total	11	15	43	69

Table 5 illustrates the types of speech acts by Mrs. White. Only three types of speech acts—representatives, directives and expressives—are found whereas no commissives or declarations are found in her utterances. It is found that 37 out of 69 utterances are representative speech acts which is the dominant type found in Mrs. White's utterances. In Part 3, she asserts her beliefs and reveals her desires and emotions more through directive speech acts (19 times). After her son's death, she loses emotional control. She uses more direct requests or commands (19) to her husband in order to wish her son back when she realizes the magical power of the monkey's paw. In other words, she is asking for supernatural things. These utterances reveal her emotional and psychological state. Her grief and maternal love turn her into a strong woman who protects her son. Nothing can stop her from bringing her son back. Like Mr. White, she utters neither commissive nor declarative forms of speech acts; she is too emotional to control herself and lacks the authority to control the supernatural power. What she can do is command her husband to make a second wish.

Table 6: Types of Speech Acts found in Herbert White's Utterances

Sr. No	Types of Speech Acts	Part I	Part II	Part III	Total
1	Representatives	11	1	0	12
2	Directives	5	1	0	6
3	Commissives	0	1	0	1
4	Expressives	0	1	0	1
5	Declarations	0	0	0	0
	Total	16	4	0	20

Table 6 reveals the total number of speech acts found in Herbert's conversation. Most of his utterances occur in Part 1 whereas there is no description of him including flashback narration, after his death, especially in Part 3. Herbert mainly uses representatives the most; their frequency (12) is twice that of directives (6). In contrast, no declarations are found. It reflects his skepticism about the supernatural event which he mocks without expecting any consequences for his future. moreover, it highlights his character as a cheerful and carefree young man with no hesitation in expressing his logical views against his parents' opinions.

Table 7: Types of Speech Acts found in Morris's Utterances

Sr. No	**Types of Speech Acts**	**Part I**	**Part II**	**Part III**	**Total**
1	Representatives	19	0	0	19
2	Directives	8	0	0	8
3	Commissives	1	0	0	1
4	Expressives	2	0	0	2
5	Declarations	0	0	0	0
	Total	30	0	0	30

In the above table, Morris's speech acts appear only in Part 1. Approximately two thirds of the speech acts are representatives which account for 19 instances, followed by directives (8), expressives (2), commissives (1) and declarations (0). He is a sensible man who has experienced the powerful effects of the paw; therefore, he utters representative speech acts more often than any other type. Due to his former experience, he is reluctant to discuss the paw in depth and throws it into the fire; however, he seriously warns the White family about the terrible consequences since they show strong interest in the magical paw and want to test it.

Table 8: Types of Speech Acts found in the stranger's Utterances

Sr. No	**Types of Speech Acts**	**Part I**	**Part II**	**Part III**	**Total**
1	Representatives	0	9	0	9
2	Directives	0	1	0	1
3	Commissives	0	0	0	0
4	Expressives	0	2	0	2
5	Declarations	0	0	0	0
	Total	0	12	0	12

The data from the above table show the total number of speech acts found in the stranger's conversation. Only 12 speech acts are found in Part II; compared with the other characters, he utters the least number of speech acts (12). He also employs representative speech acts the most like the other characters. As his intention is to inform Mr. and Mrs. White about the death of Herbert who faced a terrible accident at the factory, more representatives are found in his utterances. He is an outsider who lacks knowledge about the paw and its ramifications; his duty is to transfer a certain amount (two hundred pounds) to the remaining family members as compensation.

Conclusion

Language is an essential tool for social interaction; people use it to share information, exchange ideas and express emotions through verbal and non-verbal communication. To achieve communicative competence, it is crucial to decode both the literal meaning of an utterance and the intention of the speaker. In the short story *The Monkey's Paw*, analysing turn-taking and speech acts helps readers understand the character development and their intentions. Both Mr. White and Mrs. White are the main characters and they take more turns in the conversation. The most popular turn-taking pattern is that the current speaker selects the next speaker. In the short story, Mr. White allocates the turns; it shows his dominance in the conversation. Furthermore, most characters show great interest in the mysterious monkey's paw; however, Herbert shifts the topic frequently as he doubts its power and wants to discuss other topics. Morris takes the longest turns because he is the main storyteller who explains the paw's history, its power and its impacts in detail. In terms of the 'Give and Take' model, the characters use the inform act frequently to convey information or to share facts.

In the research paper, by applying Searle's speech act theory, the characters' the utterances are classified into five categories: representatives, directives, commissives,expressives and declarations. Representative speech acts are mostly used to convey the facts, wishes and desires of the characters. The characters never utter the declarative form of speech act. In terms of imposition, Mr. White uses directives to make minor requests while Mrs. White produces directives when she asks her husband to do something important. In Part I and Part II, Mr. White is portrayed as a sensible man who disbelieves in mysterious things. There is a sudden change in Mr. White's personality. In Part III, he accepts the invisible connection between the uncontrollable power of the paw and his son's death. He is overwhelmed by deep sorrow and grief. More directive speech acts are found in his utterances; he asks many questions to his wife when she is eagerly looking for the paw. Overall, he frequently uses representatives; it reflects that he is more interested in reality. He is portrayed as an analytical and thoughtful character. He sees the terrible consequences, finds a way to end the conflict and brings peace. Furthermore, Mrs. White is depicted as a mother who is emotionally fragile after Herbert's death. She mainly uses more directives to command her husband to make another wish because she hopes that the magical power of the paw can bring her son alive again. She attempts to control the uncontrollable; this leads to the major conflict in the story. The other minor characters employ representatives the most; they are all sensible men who believe more in information and no dramatic changes in their personalities or emotions can be found. These different types of speech functions found in the utterances are of vital importance in portraying the characters' personalities and emotions in the short story *The Monkey's Paw*.

Future studies should examine speech acts in reality TV shows as this will contribute to a better understanding of cultural differences in communication styles. Moreover, future research should focus on exploring the use of speech acts and language functions in English language textbooks; this will help to develop learners' pragmatic competence. More research into the types of speech acts employed in teaching and learning processes could increase teacher–student interaction in the classroom.

Acknowledgements

Firstly, I would like to express gratitude to Dr. Tint Tint, Rector, Mandalay University of Foreign Languages, who gives the opportunity to do this research paper.

Secondly, I am deeply indebted to Dr. Thi Thi Tun, Professor and Head of Department of English, University of Yangon; Dr. Kyi Chan Nyein, Professor and Head of Department of English, University of Distance Education (Yangon), and Dr. Mon Mon Wai, Professor and Head of Department of English, University of Mandalay. Their profound knowledge, insightful suggestions and dedication to the field of English studies have greatly enriched this work. I am immensely thankful to them for their constructive criticism and encouragement.

Thirdly, my thanks go to U Aung Htoo, Associate Professor and Head of Department of English, Mandalay University of Foreign Languages, for providing support to finish this research paper.

Last but not least, my sincere gratitude is dedicated to all my teachers, who educate and give me motivation to do this research paper, and my colleagues for their support.

References

Ainurrohmah. *The Use of Illocutionary Acts in Stephenie Meyer's New Moon.* Semarang: Semarang State University, 2011.

British Council. "Turn-taking." *TeachingEnglish*. Accessed March 7, 2025. https://www.teaching English. org. uk/ professional-development/teachers/knowing-subject/t-w/turn-taking.

Bottema-Beutel, Kristen, and So Yoon Kim. "A Systematic Literature Review of Autism Research on Caregiver Talk.'' *Austin Research* 14, no. 3 (2021): 432-449.

Britannica, T. Editors of Encyclopaedia. "Robert McHenry." *Encyclopedia Britannica*, April 30, 2024. https://www.britannica.com/biography/Robert-McHenry.

Cambridge University Press, *Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary & Thesaurus*, accessed August 12, 2024, https://dictionary.cambridge.org.

Carter, Ronald, and Paul Simpson, eds. *Language, Discourse and Literature: An Introductory Reader in Discourse Stylistics.* London: Routledge, 1989.

Hanifa, Rifati, and Ernie Diyahkusumaning Ayu Imperiani. "Turn-Taking Patterns in the Characters' Dialogue in *The Help* (2011) Movie." *Passage* 7, no. 3 (2019): 114-128.

Herman, Vimala. "Turn Management in Drama." In *Exploring the Language of Drama: From Text to Context*, edited by Jonathan Culpeper, Mick Short, and Peter Verdonk, 24–?. London: Routledge, 1998.

Holmes, Janet. *An Introduction to Sociolinguistics*. 4th ed. New York: Routledge, 2013.

Istiqomah, Nunung Permata. *Speech Act Analysis of Anger in the Film Entitled Something the Lord Made.* Surakarta: Sebelas Maret University, 2013.

Jacobs, W. W. *The Monkey's Paw.* Project Gutenberg, 2004.

Nugroho, Agung Suryo. *An Analysis of Illocutionary Acts in Sherlock Holmes Movie.* Jakarta: State Islamic University, 2011.

Ridha Mardiani, Bela Sonia Leviani. "Speech Acts Analysis of *Pride and Prejudice* Novel by Jane Austen." *Jurnal Ilmiah Fakultas Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan* (2022): 137–47.

Searle, John R. "A Classification of Illocutionary Acts." Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976.

Searle, John, and Daniel Vanderveken. *Foundations of Illocutionary Logic.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985.

Short, Mick. 1995. **"Understanding Conversational Undercurrents in 'The Ebony Tower' by John Fowles."** In *Twentieth-Century Fiction*, edited by Peter Verdonk and Jean Jacques Weber , 45-62. London: Routledge.

SIL International. *Glossary of Linguistic Terms*. Accessed August 12, 2024. https://glossary.sil.org/.

Stevani, Margaret, and Karisma Tarigan. 2023. "A Case Study of Locutionary, illocutionary, and Perlocutionary Speech Acts in English Learning Interactions in Junior High School." *Journal of World Englishes and Educational Practices* 47-56.

Thomas, Jenny. *Meaning in Interaction: An Introduction to Pragmatics.* London: Longman, 1995.

Vanderveken, Daniel. "Universal Grammar and Speech Act Theory." In *Essays in Speech Act Theory*, edited by Daniel Vanderveken and Susumu Kubo, 32–69. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2001.

Yule, George. *Pragmatics.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996.

J. Myanmar Acad. Arts Sci. 2026 **Vol. XXIII. No.5**

THE IMPACT OF TERRITORIAL DISPUTES IN THE LOI LAN REGION AND O-7 HILLOCK ON MYANMAR-THAILAND RELATIONS*

Phyo Min[1]

Abstract

This paper analyzes the territorial disputes between Myanmar and Thailand, focusing on two key contested areas: The Loi Lan region and the O-7 Hillock. After Myanmar's independence, it could measure the borders with neighboring countries and sign agreements, but it was not to measure the borders with Thailand. Border disputes arose as the Myanmar government asserted political control and legal influence. Due to the encroachment of Thai military bases in the Loi Lan area, the Myanmar delegation objected to Thai outposts in Myanmar and discussed territorial ownership. Despite discussions, relations between Myanmar and Thailand became strained when Thailand helped SURA attack Myanmar military bases on the Myanmar-Thai border. In addition, the Thai army joined forces with the SURA armed insurgents to carry out further attacks on the O-7 hillock and Pachee Camp. Therefore, due to the attack along the Myanmar-Thai border in early 2001, Myanmar and Thailand relations were diminished. However, the two countries tried to negotiate and resolve the over-the-border issues. This research analyzed Myanmar-Thailand relations regarding the Loi Lan region and the O-7 hillock issues.

Keywords: Myanmar, Thailand, territorial disputes, Loi Lan, O-7 Hillock

Introduction

This paper examines the main causes of tension in Myanmar-Thailand relations. Myanmar and Thailand are Southeast Asian countries bordering each other. Thus, border disputes arose frequently because border measures between the two countries were impossible. This paper will review the territorial disputes between the two countries. The existence of formidable insurgent troops along the Myanmar-Thai border had prevented a direct clash between the two countries. However, once the Myanmar government gained control over the border areas in the early 1990s, bilateral tensions and clashes became more frequent and intense. Myanmar's border with Thailand has become a focus of tension and conflict, and a potential flashpoint on mainland Southeast Asia. Understanding the conflicts between the two countries by accurately analyzing the history of Myanmar-Thailand relations. Being able to examine the political changes that occurred during that period. It aims to consider the difficulties of resolving border disputes between the two countries. In presenting Loi Lan region and O-7 hillock, given from the perspective of historical studies based on literary evidence. The books, papers, newspapers, and speeches of political leaders are presented with major evidence to understand the background of the Loi Lan region and O-7 hillock issues.

Research Aim

The aim of this paper is to examine Myanmar-Thailand relations in the context of the territorial disputes concerning the Loi Lan region and the O-7 Hillock.

---

*First Prize(2024)

[1] Department of History, University of Yangon

Material and Method

This paper utilizes both primary and secondary sources. Primary data were collected from periodicals, newspapers, and government officials. Secondary sources include published and unpublished books, journals, magazines, websites, and online sources. Numerous documents were gathered from various sources, including the Library of the University of Yangon, the Central Library of the University, and the Library of the History Department at the University of Yangon. Additionally, materials were sourced from websites like Google Scholar. The research employed descriptive qualitative methods to attain a comprehensive perspective.

Overview of Border Demarcation

Myanmar shares a 1,314 mile long border with Thailand. It extends from the confluence of the Mekhong River and the Nam Ruak River (the tri-junction of Myanmar, Laos and Thailand) to Bayin Naung Point (formerly known as Victoria Point). The sector of the Myanmar-Thai boundary between the tri- junction of Myanmar, Thailand and Laos in the east and the Thanlwin River in the west was formally delineated and demarcated by the Burma-Siam Boundary Commission of 1892-93. For the purpose of carrying out the actual on-ground demarcation, the Commission was split into two parties, the Eastern Party and the Western Party. The Eastern Party demarcated the 117-mile-long boundary from Loi Um eastwards to the Mekhong-Mae Huak Junction. The Western Party demarcated the 257-mile-long boundary from Loi Um westwards to the Thanlwin River. Unfortunately, the Eastern Party did not erect any boundary pillars as it was considered unnecessary because the boundary mostly followed conspicuous watersheds or the courses of streams. On the other hand, however, the Western Party erected boundary markers, mainly at places where roads or paths crossed the boundary. In all, 16 boundary markers were erected at an average interval of about 15 miles between Loi Um and the Thanlwin River.

Boundary settlement in 1864-66 was signed at Bangkok in 1868. The Siam-Burma Boundary Commission of 1894-1896 fixed the 940 mile long boundary from Victoria Point to the junction of the Thanlwin River and the Hpa Chaung River. From the junction of the Thanlwin River and the Hpa Chaung River, the boundary follows the course of the Thanlwin River up to its junction with the Thaungyin River and thence along the Thaungyin River up to the source of the Gawli Chaung. No boundary markers were erected in this sector. From the source of the Gawli Chaung to the southern extremity, the boundary follows natural features except near the Payathonezu (Three Pagodas Pass) where the boundary was artificially fixed. There were 49 boundary chains erected on the main watershed on conspicuous hilltops. However, there are cases where local authorities and residents alike are unsure of the exact location of the Myanmar-Thai boundary.[1]

Territorial Disputes in the Loi Lan Region

After the independence of Myanmar, it was able to sign an agreement on the border demarcation with neighboring countries such as China, Laos, Bangladesh, and India. However, it was unable to measure the border with Thailand. This was due to Thailand's acceptance and

[1] Country Report Burma 1986, p.31

support of insurgents from Myanmar along the Myanmar-Thai border. During the colonial period, a border treaty was signed between Thailand and the British, but the treaty lacked specific and detailed measurements. As a result, the Thai government planned to create its map, leading to border disputes caused by changes in the water channel and the expansion of Thai territory.[1] The significant of border dispute involved the Loi Lan area in Shan State.

After Mao Zedong came to power in China in 1949, KMT troops fled to Myanmar and settled in the Loi Lan area of Shan State. In the 1950s, the Myanmar government launched attacks against these KMT forces. Although the KMT troops retreated in 1961, the area became a residential area for various armed insurgent groups including some remaining KMT groups, separate Wa insurgents and Khun Sa's Mong Thai Army (MTA). After the withdrawal of the KMT troops, the Loi Lan area became a key route for the opium trade with Thailand, it continued to be a main centre for heroin production and trafficking by ethnic armed groups.[2] The MTA was formed in 1960 and 1961 as a local pro-government defense organization (Karkweye). Since then, it has gone through various transformations. Between 1976 and 1985, it was known as the Shan United Army (SUA). In March 1985, the SUA succeeded in amalgamating with the Shan United Revolutionary Army (SURA) led by Moe Hein. It was initially renamed the Shan State Army (SSA). However, in order not to be confused with the existing SSA led by Sai Leik (Kalar), the MTA changed its name to the present one. Nevertheless, both the SUA and the SURA retained their separate organizations under the banner of the MTA.[3] In early 1989, the MTA, led by Khun Sa, had about 4000 regular troops. It established outposts and strongholds along the Myanmar-Thai border in the north, especially in the areas known as Loi Lan, Homein, and Lwesansaw.[6] There were the MTA operating along the Myanmar-Thai border in the early 1990s. On 5 January 1995, when the MTA forces completely surrendered in the Loi Lan area, the Myanmar Army took over the MTA camps. At the same time, the Thai army entered a parallel area, advancing ten miles into the territory of Myanmar.[4] Some MTA troops were demobilized and sent home. A few days later, a group led by Ywek Sit, who was present at the surrender ceremony, went back to its former outpost on the pretext of having to collect money from former contacts. Later, Ywek Sit declared that he and his group did not accept the surrender and took up insurgency once again. The group was named the Shan United Revolutionary Army (SURA). It later changed its name to the Shan State Army (SSA) but the Myanmar government continued to refer to them as the SURA. Since the Thai Army started helping the SURA to launch attacks on Myanmar military outposts along the Myanmar-Thai border, they have become a source of

---

[1] Kyaw Htin Nawrahta, *နယ်နိမိတ်စာချုပ်တွေရှိသော်လည်းနှင့်အထူးဆောင်းပါးများ (Despite the Existence of Conventions on Boundaries)*, Yangon, News and Periodical Enterprises, 2003, p.2 (Hereafter cited as Kyaw Htin Nawrahta, *Despite the Existence of Conventions on Boundaries*)

[2] (a) Kyaw Htin Nawrahta, *အမြဲသတိထားရမည့်အိမ်နီးချင်းနှင့်အထူးဆောင်းပါးများ (The Neighbouring Country we will have to always beware of and Special Articles)*, Yangon, Mate Kaung Press, 2002, p.125 (Hereafter cited as Kyaw Htin Nawrahta, *The Neighbouring Country we will have to always beware of*)
(b) Kyaw Htin Nawrahta, *Despite the Existence of Conventions on Boundaries*, pp.15-17

[3] U Aung Zaw, *တပ်မတော်အစိုးရ၏အမျိုးသားပြန်လည်စည်းလုံးညီညွတ်ရေးကြိုးပမ်းဆောင်ရွက်ချက်များ (Government for National Reconsolidation)*, Yangon, 1999, pp.133-134

[4] (a) Kyaw Htin Nawrahta, Kyaw Htin Nawrahta, *The Neighbouring Country we will have to always Beware of*, p.125
(b) Kyaw Htin Nawrahta, *Despite the Existence of Conventions on Boundaries*, pp.15-17

tension and conflict between Myanmar and Thailand.[1] In early 1996, the Thai military maintained seven military outposts, manned by about 550 troops, in the area.[2] Thai troops deployed across three miles wide in this area.[3] Therefore, Myanmar asserted its ownership of the Loi Lan area at the 12th RBC meeting held in Mawlamyaing, Myanmar from 19 to 22 February 1996, the Myanmar delegation protested against the presence of Thai outposts inside Myanmar territory and discussed the demarcation of the border. At the 13th RBC meeting held in Phitsanulok, Thailand from 18 to 21 June 1996, the Myanmar delegation asserted again that the disputed area belonged to Myanmar. Myanmar further provided evidence by stating that a pagoda had been built in this area since 1986, establishing it as Myanmar territory. Thai Commander-in-Chief General Viroj Saengsnit mentioned that it cost the Thai Army 100 million baht annually to maintain forces in the Loi Lan area.[4] Ultimately, the longstanding presence of multiple armed groups in the Loi Lan area has heightened tensions in the region, prompting Myanmar firmly to assert its territorial claims and pursue diplomatic resolutions.

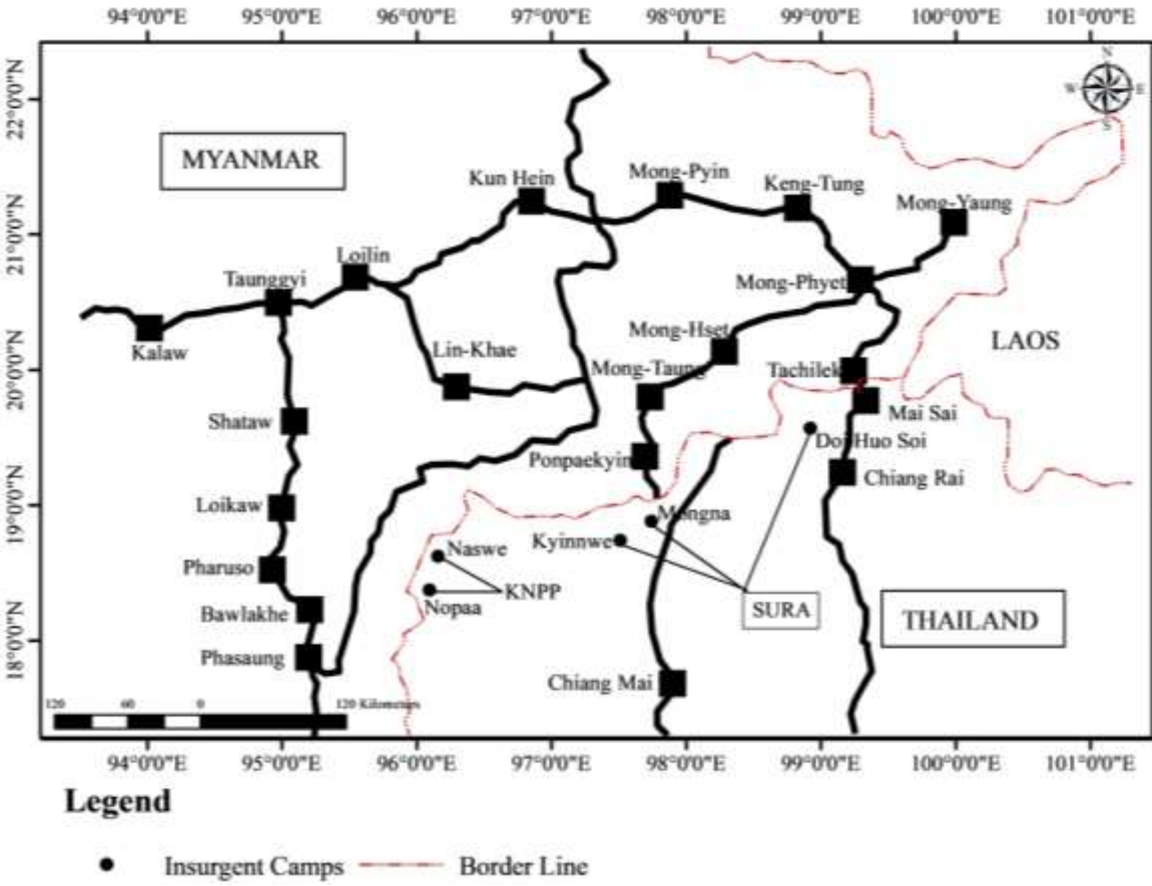


Figure 1. Map of Location of insurgent camps inside Thailand[5]

[1] *အရှေ့ပိုင်းတိုင်းစစ်ဌာနချုပ်၏ ၁-၉-၈၈ မှ ၃၁-၁၂-၈၈အတွင်း စစ်ဆင်ရေးသုံးသပ်ချက် (Assessment of Military Operations in Eastern Command HQ Area (1 September 1988 to 31 December 1988))*, pp.94,126

[2] Bangkok Post, 22 June 1996, p.1

[3] (a) Kyaw Htin Nawrahta, *The Neighbouring Country we will have to always beware of*, p.125
(b) Kyaw Htin Nawrahta, *Despite the Existence of Conventions on Boundaries*, pp.15-17

[4] Bangkok Post, 22 June 1996, p.1

[5] Watching For Long Didn't Say and Special Articles, Yangon, News and Periodicals Enterprise, 2001, p.13 (Hereafter cited as *Watching For Long Didn't Say*)

The Thai Army had set up a special command task force under the 7th Infantry Regiment to guard the disputed area since 2 January 1996.[1] In February 1997, General Chettha Thanajaro, the Thai Army Commander-in-Chief, suggested that the area be turned into a military-free-zone.[2] However, it was never realized. Although both sides had built up their troops along the border, the area under dispute was remarkably peaceful. Soldiers from both sides played volleyball and chinlone (takraw) together in the evenings on a playground jointly constructed for daily sports activities, and officers dined together from time to time. Myanmar soldiers were also allowed to buy daily fresh food from Thai villages. In the meantime, on the night of 26 October 1997, a group of Thai officials removed the temporary landmark pillar with a bulldozer from the Myanmar-Thai border near BP.1. The Myanmar government did not make any public protest or statement on the incident. It was resolved peacefully. Although the Myanmar government interpreted it as a forced cession of Myanmar territory, it never exploited the situation to sensationalize the issue to make the other party look bad. Instead, the Myanmar government planned to make a formal protest at the Township Border Committees (TBC) meeting. Five days later, as the Thai authorities came to realize that the issue would be brought up at the TBC meeting, a group of Thai soldiers led by Colonel Watanachai, Commander of 7th Infantry Regiment of the 4th Division of the Third Army, returned the pillar to the Myanmar authorities.[3] This incident highlights the delicate balance of cooperation and tension along the Myanmar-Thai border, as both sides handled conflicts peacefully while still having disagreements about territory.

In December 1997, the Thai military deployed a Rapid Deployment Force (RDF) battalion consisting of artillery and paratroopers to the disputed Loi Lan region as a special operation. The Thai Army Chief of Defense General Chettha Thanajaro stated that Thailand and Myanmar need to withdraw their troops from the Loi Lan region as there is no agreement yet.[4] He stated this action was only to boost Thailand's defense.[5] In July 1998, Third Army Chief of Defense Lt. General Sommai Vichavorn mentioned that the Thai military had established seven military outposts along the border to prevent intrusion.[6] In late 1998, about 775 Thai troops were still in the area. Since 1 October 1998, the 138th Cavalry Battalion has been working on special duty as an operational unit.[7] In the disputed area, the Thai military established eleven military outposts manned by cavalry and paramilitary forces about 500 to 800, in early 2000.[8] The Thai Army learned that the Myanmar Army had also deployed several battalions in the area. The Thai troops in the disputed area are outnumbered by the Myanmar troops, stated Colonel Akradet Songworawit, Commander of the Third Cavalry Regiment.[9] The Thai Army Commander-in-Chief General Surayud Chulanont arrived on 31 March 2000, to inspect troops in the disputed area.[10] According to Myanmar media in January 2001, of the thirty-four Thai military outposts

---

1 Bangkok Post, 20 December 1996, p.3
2 Ibid, 24 February 1997, p.2
3 *မြန်မာ့အလင်းသတင်းစာ (Myanma Alin Newspaper)*, 21 February 2001, p.4
4 Bangkok Post, 29 December 1997, p.5
5 Ibid, 30 December 1997, p.8
6 Ibid, 20 July 1998, p.4
7 Ibid, 20 December 1998, p.1
8 Ibid, 1 March 2000, p.3
9 Ibid, 20 December 1998, p.9
10 Ibid, 1 April 2000, p.1

inside Myanmar territory, nine were located along the border. Both forces deployed within the Loi Lan area, there were Thirty-four Thai Army units stationed in the Loi Lan area, nine of which were along the border.[1] The Loi Lan area is a strategic location affected by both historical conflicts and contemporary geopolitical tensions, illustrating the ongoing challenges in Myanmar-Thai border relations.

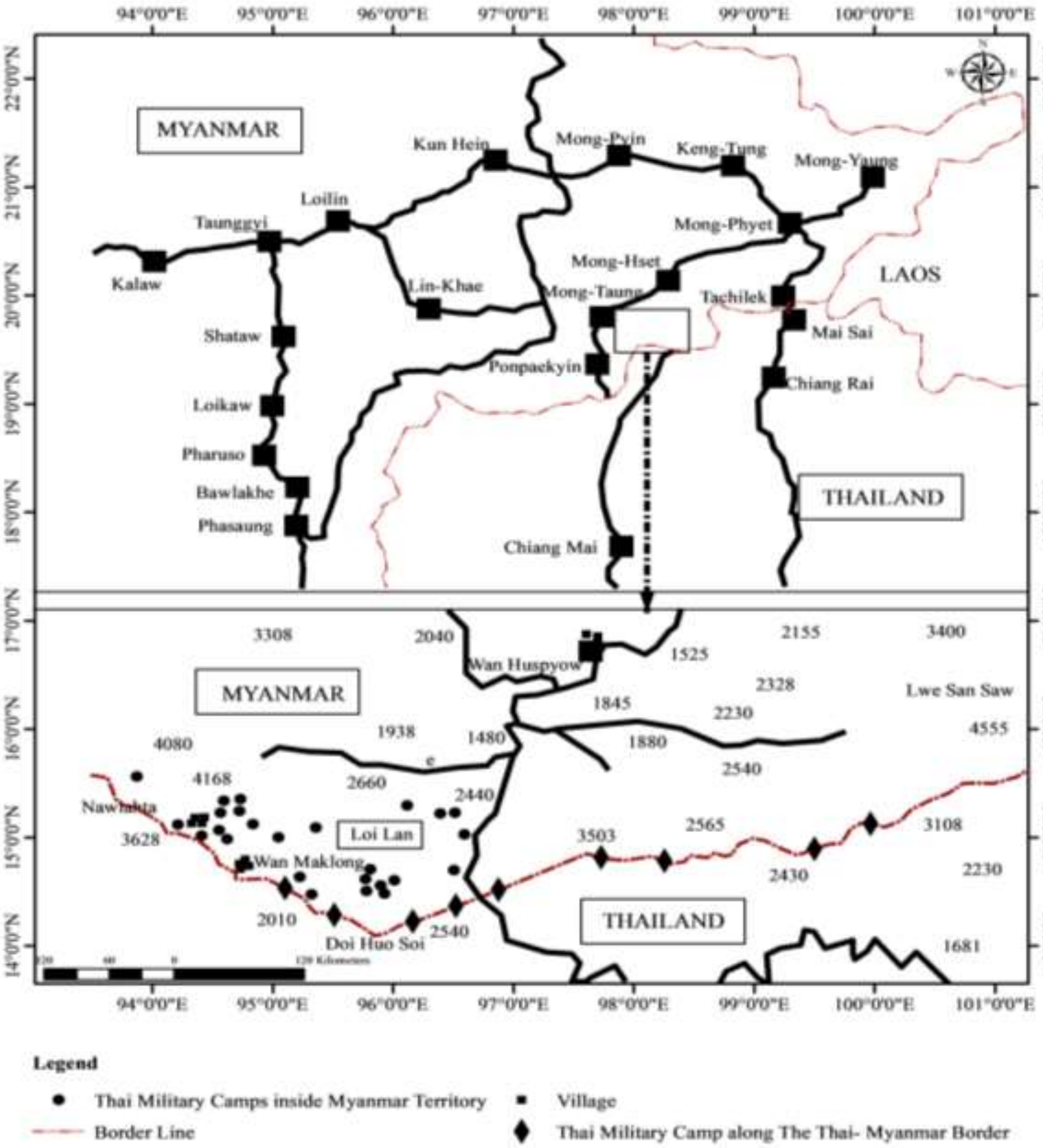


Figure 2. Map of Thai military camps inside Myanmar and along the Myanmar-Thai border[2]

[1] (a) Maung Aung Myo, Neither Friend Nor Foe, Myanmar's Relations with Thailand Since 1988, Institute, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore, 2002, p.121 (Hereafter cited as Neither Friend Nor Foe)
(b) Kyaw Htin Nawrahta, *The Neighbouring Country we will have to always beware of*, p.125

[2] Watching For Long Didn't Say, p.23

Territorial Disputes in O-7 Hillock

In early 2001, a military clash took place in the area. On 5 January 2001, when the Myanmar Army was reestablishing an outpost at O-7 Hillock near Tachilek, a group of Thai troops led by Captain Yohtin of the 138th Cavalry Battalion came to the hill and demanded that the Myanmar troops withdraw. The hillock was not removed by the Myanmar Army as it was Myanmar territory. However, Myanmar refused fully to comply with this demand. Historically, O-7 Hillock served as a camp for KMT forces before being reclaimed by the Myanmar Army in 1961. When the KMT units encroached en masse into Myanmar territory, the Myanmar Army raised the national flag after launching the Yangyi Aung Operation to recapture the hillock with a lot of blood and sweat. Thus, O-7 Hillock became an important point of contention between Thailand and Myanmar. In response, the Thai Army, in collaboration with SURA, launched an offensive against Myanmar troops stationed at O-7 Hillock. Among the items seized by the Myanmar military after the confrontation were Thai military communication devices and a gas mask, providing evidence of Thai involvement in the conflict.[1] This incident underscores the ongoing tensions between Myanmar and Thailand, as the historical significance of O-7 Hillock continues to fuel conflict and highlight external involvement in territorial disputes.

The Myanmar military began a regular offensive in February 2001. The operation targeted newly constructed SURA outposts on the Myanmar-Thai border. South-west of Tachileik and on the border line of the north of Maheintet in Thailand, within the region of Kyathina region (estimate U-59864), Lwekhanchon region (estimate U-673601) and Lwemahsoak region (estimate U-501642), under the leadership of Ywet Sit about 150 armed drug smugglers from the Myanmar side came and built nine new camps along the border with the help of the Thai military. Then, they invaded the O-7 hillock as well. Hill O-7 overlooks Tachilek and surrounding villages.[2] During the attack, the Myanmar military captured a SURA camp on 9 February 2001, and also captured an associated Thai military outpost. When General Thein Sein, the Commander of the Triangle Military Command, met with the Commander of the Chin Rai (District) Military Command, he stated that the Myanmar Army had only attacked the SURA camps and had no intention of invading Thai territory. Myanmar forces were delayed in withdrawing from the hill (Thai Camp) due to the Thai army's artillery attack. The matter was not resolved diplomatically and was reported to the Thai media, the situation made worse. On 11 February 2001, the Thai Army allowed the SURA to use Aung Zeya Hill to attack the Myanmar military outposts at O-7 Hillock with artillery. SURA's firing resulted in 48 shells hitting O-7 Hillock in Tachilek town and another 10 shells landed in Tachileik town and the Myanmar Army returned fire. As a result, a few bullets fell in Mae Sai, killing and injuring some Thai citizens. Three civilians were killed and 15 were injured by the bullets that fell in Tachileik. The Thai Foreign Ministry protested the incident and accused the Myanmar government of showing complete disregard for the lives and safety of innocent civilians. The Thai government has been completely silent on the deaths of Myanmar civilians as a result of the SURA artillery attack. The Thai government accused the Burmese army of firing into Thai territory. The Myanmar government denied the allegation.[3] This rise in military conflict shows the complicated issues of

---

[1] *မြန်မာ့အလင်းသတင်းစာ (Myanma Alin Newspaper)*, 4 March 2001, pp.9,16

[2] Watching For Long Didn't Say, pp.4-5

[3] *ကြေးမုံသတင်းစာ (Kyemon Newspaper)*, 13 February 2001, pp.12-13

land disputes, outside influences, and the tragic effects on ordinary people, highlighting the urgent need for a peaceful solution in the Myanmar-Thai border area.

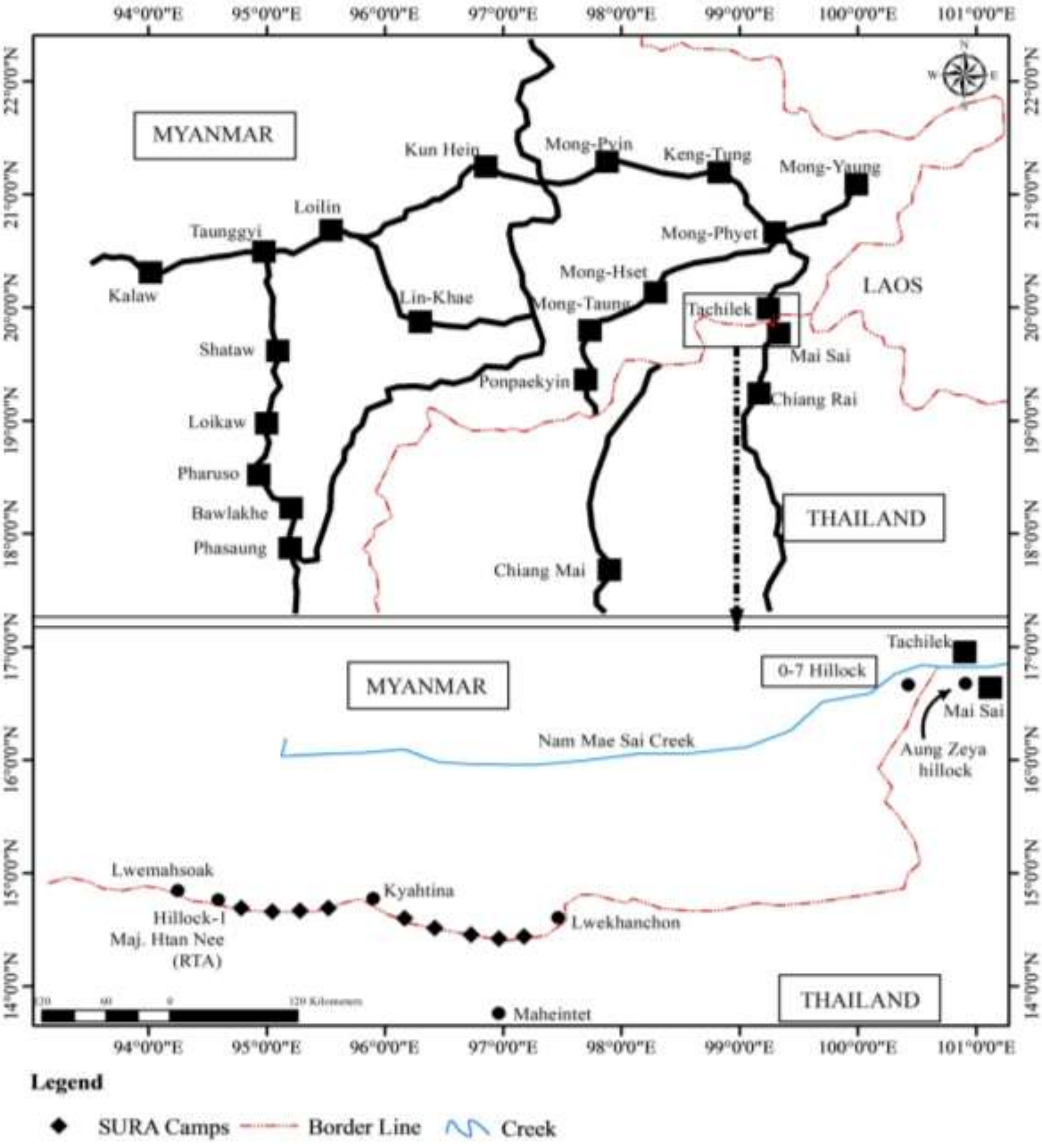


Figure 3. Map of Clash sites between Myanmar Armed Forces and the Royal Thai Army[1]

Taking advantage of the attack, the Thai government's military and media accused the Myanmar government of protecting the drug trade and launched counter-insurgency operations into battles. A simple counter-insurgency operation turned into an ugly border conflict. At the same time, both countries have sent reinforcements to the area and media criticism from both countries has raised tensions. At a press conference held by the Myanmar government on 12

[1] Neither Friend Nor Foe, p.118

February 2001, the government spokesman stated that the Thai military not only assisted SURA in their attack on O-7 Hillock but also fired heavy weapons into Tachileik. The Thai military unit, putting the SURA to the front attacked the Myanmar military.[1] SURA continued to attack Myanmar outposts from inside Thailand, making full use of shelters provided by the Thai Army. The negative comments on the Myanmar government and military were made by the Thai government and Lt. General Watanachai Chaimuenwong. Finally, a joint statement was issued at the TBC meeting on 26 February 2001.

Following the battle Thai No.3 Military Commander Lt. General Watanachai Chaimuenwong closed the border gates between Thailand and Myanmar without reporting to the Thai government. This action halted the exports of essential goods such as rice, medicine, and fuel to Myanmar. Border close quietly led to protests who Thai traders and civilians demonstrating in front of the Mae Sai Police Station on 8 March 2001, as the blockade negatively impacted cross-border trade. Under mounting pressure from affected traders, Lt. General Watanachai Chaimuenwong announced on 12 March 2001 that border gates would be reopened, once again without consultation with the Thai government. Due to the lack of formal coordination with the Myanmar side regarding this issue, tensions arose when the Myanmar side did not reopen the site.[2] Therefore, after diplomatic negotiations on the part of the Thai government, the 18th Regional Border Committee (RBC) meeting was able to be held on 3 April 2001 in Keng Tung. The meeting was attended by Lt. General Watanachai Chaimuenwong from the Thai side and Lt. General Thein Sein, Commander of the Triangle Regional Military Command from the Myanmar side. In the meeting, they discussed drug elimination, the border process and readmission of illegal entrants, and the promotion of tourism. However, the Thai Army again participated in the attack by SURA on the Myanmar Army's Pachee camp (T-905114) on 21 April 2001. During the attack, the Myanmar Army had only twenty-one soldiers who faced approximately 200 joint forces of SURA and the Thai Army. As a result, the Myanmar Army was forced to retreat. SURA claimed to have found methamphetamines at the camp and presented them to the Thai media, accusing the Myanmar Army of drug use. Additionally, relations between the two countries became strained as the Thai media published insulting reports about Myanmar. On 23 April 2001, SURA's team again attacked the Myanmar military camp at the Myanmar-Thai border point BP.1 but the Myanmar Army was able to fight back. Pachee Camp was recaptured by the Myanmar Army on 3 May 2001.[3] These events show how weak the relationship between Myanmar and Thailand is, as decisions made by military leaders and ongoing violence disrupt important trade and cooperation while increasing tensions, stressing the need for better diplomatic efforts to bring stability back to the border area.

Conclusion

After the independence of Myanmar, it maintained a neutral policy and has not caused any problems with neighboring countries for more than 50 years. Negotiations with China, Laos, India, and Bangladesh successfully defined the borders of the two countries. Myanmar-Thai border issues also began with an inaccurate boundary issue. However, Thailand's successive

[1] *ကြေးမုံသတင်းစာ (Kyemon Newspaper)*, 13 February 2001, pp.12-13

[2] *မြန်မာ့အလင်းသတင်းစာ (Myanma Alin Newspaper)*, 15 March 2001, p.8

[3] Ibid, 26 April 2001, pp.8,16

governments took advantage of the presence of armed insurgents on the Myanmar-Thai border and were unable properly to control the border area, and supported the KMT who invaded Myanmar to fix the border set by the former British colonial government and Thailand. As armed insurgents in Myanmar have made peace, there is no buffer zone in the border area, and more support has been provided to the remaining insurgents to avoid a potential clash between the two countries' forces. Armed insurgents who violate Myanmar's sovereignty and law, SURA also supported in one way or another. During the period of the Myanmar military government, the border problems between Myanmar and Thailand began to arise when Myanmar continued to practice independent and active foreign policy, had friendly relations with neighboring countries, and dominated the border region. However, although the Myanmar government negotiated and resolved the border delimitation issue with the Thai government, it has not yet been completed and is still being worked on.

In early 2001, Myanmar-Thailand relations were strained when SURA and the Thai military joined forces to carry out attacks in the border region between the two countries. Starting from the Loi Lan area, the Thai military launched an attack on O-7 Hillock and Pachee Camp in collaboration with the armed insurgent's SURA. As a result, tensions between the two countries escalated into armed conflict. These tensions have led to the write of books, articles, and newspapers between the two countries that have fostered a spirit of patriotism. Territorial disputes will continue to exist between the two countries until a precise border can be established. In early 2001, tensions and fighting along the Myanmar-Thai border significantly diminished Myanmar-Thailand relations. But both government tried to negotiate mutual respect and trust over the territorial disputes.

Acknowledgement

I wish to express my deep gratitude to Rector Dr Tin Maung Tun for giving permission to present my paper. I wish to express appreciation and thanks to Dr Myint Thein, Part-time Professor and Dr Margaret Wong, Professor and Head (Retired), Department of History, University of Yangon for their guidance and valuable advices. I am greatly indebted to Dr Thin Thin Aye, Professor and Head, Department of History, University of Yangon for her kind supervision and invaluable suggestions.

References

ကြေးမုံသတင်းစာ (Kyemon Newspaper), 13 February 2001

မြန်မာ့အလင်းသတင်းစာ (Myanma Alin Newspaper), 21 February 2001

မြန်မာ့အလင်းသတင်းစာ (Myanma Alin Newspaper), 4 March 2001

မြန်မာ့အလင်းသတင်းစာ (Myanma Alin Newspaper), 15 March 2001

မြန်မာ့အလင်းသတင်းစာ (Myanma Alin Newspaper), 26 April 2001

Aung Myo, Maung, (2002) Neither Friend Nor Foe, Myanmar's Relations with Thailand Since 1988, Institute, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore

Aung Zaw, U, (1999) *တပ်မတော်အစိုးရ၏အမျိုးသားပြန်လည်စည်းလုံးညီညွတ်ရေးကြိုးပမ်းဆောင်ရွက်ချက်များ (Government for National Reconsolidation)*, Yangon

Bangkok Post, 22 June 1996

Bangkok Post, 22 June 1996

Bangkok Post, 20 December 1996

Bangkok Post, 24 February 1997

Bangkok Post, 29 December 1997

Bangkok Post, 30 December 1997

Bangkok Post, 20 July 1998

Bangkok Post, 20 December 1998

Bangkok Post, 20 December 1998

Bangkok Post, 1 March 2000

Bangkok Post, 1 April 2000

Country Report Burma 1986

Kyaw Htin Nawrahta, (2002) *အမြဲသတိထားရမည့်အိမ်နီးချင်းနှင့်အထူးဆောင်းပါးများ (The Neighbouring Country we will have to always beware of and Special Articles)*, Yangon, Mate Kaung Press.

Kyaw Htin Nawrahta, (2003) *နယ်နိမိတ်စာချုပ်တွေရှိသော်လည်းနှင့်အထူးဆောင်းပါးများ (Despite the Existence of Conventions on Boundaries)*, Yangon, News and Periodical Enterprises.

Watching for Long Didn't Say and Special Articles, Yangon, News and Periodicals Enterprise, 2001

အရှေ့ပိုင်းတိုင်းစစ်ဌာနချုပ်၏ ၁-၁-၈၉ မှ ၃၀-၄-၈၉အတွင်း စစ်ဆင်ရေးသုံးသပ်ချက် (Assessment of Military Operations in Eastern Command HQ Area (1 January 1989 to 30 April 1989))

အရှေ့ပိုင်းတိုင်းစစ်ဌာနချုပ်၏ ၁-၉-၈၈ မှ ၃၁-၁၂-၈၈အတွင်း စစ်ဆင်ရေးသုံးသပ်ချက် (Assessment of Military Operations in Eastern Command HQ Area (1 September 1988 to 31 December 1988))

J. Myanmar Acad. Arts Sci. 2026 **Vol. XXIII. No.5**

THE ORIGIN AND SIGNIFICANCE OF WORKERS' DAY IN MYANMAR*

Nay Win Lian[1]

Abstract

The celebration of Workers' Day, also known as May Day, holds profound significance in Myanmar's history and labour movement. Originating from the global labour movements advocating for workers' rights and better working conditions, Workers' Day was first commemorated in Myanmar in 1938 amidst widespread labor unrest. This research explores the evolution of Workers' Day in Myanmar, tracing its origins from early labour strikes and protests to its formal recognition as a public holiday in 1948, following the country's independence from British colonial rule. The study examines key historical events, including the 1938 Oil-field Workers' Strike, which played a pivotal role in establishing May Day celebrations in Myanmar. Furthermore, it assesses the significance of Workers' Day in Myanmar's socio-political landscape, highlighting how it has been utilized to honor the contributions of workers, advocate for labour rights, and reflect the broader struggles of the working class.

Keywords: Public Holiday, Workers' Day, Labour Rights, Oil-field Workers' Strike, Colonial Rule

Introduction

The word holiday comes from the old English word *hāligdaeg* meaning holy day. It originally referred only to special religious days in the Christian community of Europe. Religious holidays are set by religious organizations for their members and are often observed as public holidays in religious-majority countries. In Christian communities, they always attend prayer at church every Sunday, the weekend day of the week. The people need to take a rest at home and have a chance to pray for the religion they believe in. The holiday therefore appeared in the Western Christian communities. Subsequently, holidays were also held for the political and social purposes of their nation. Therefore, holidays did not belong to the religion but also political and social concerns.[2]

In Myanmar, according to historical evidence, the royal audience and the five supreme courts of the realm were usually closed on the 8 waxing day of the month, and the 8 waning day of the month during the reign of Myanmar kings. The five supreme courts of the realm are;

(1) hluttaw (The Supreme Court)
(2) byetaik (Chamber of the Privy Council)
(3) shei: joun (Criminal Court)
(4) nau: joun (Western Court)
(5) taja: joun: joun (Royal Court of Justice)

It can be seen that the nobles and officers do not need to attend the five supreme courts regularly on Sabbath day. At the time when Myanmar was ruled by the British government, weekends and Sundays were designated as office holidays and all government departments were closed on those days because the British respected their Christianity and recognized these days as

---

*Second Prize(2024)

[1] Department of History, University of Yangon

[2] (a) https://www.vocabulary.com/dictionary/holiday, (Assessed Date-3 May 2023)
(b) https://www.britannica.com/dictionary/holiday, (Assessed Date-3 May 2023)

holidays. Also, closing the office on Sunday is not just a practice of the British, but a worldwide practice.[1]

After the independence of Myanmar, the Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League (AFPFL) government has been doing its best to improve the lives of workers, which has been designated as a major task. Before the War, there were laws related to labour. The government formed a committee to amend the outdated provisions in these laws that are not relevant to the current situation. With the approval of the labour Act Amendment Committee, the new laws were enacted and amendments to some laws were made. Moreover, the government enacted the 1951 Leave and Working Holidays Amendment Act.[2]

In Myanmar, a gazetted holiday is a public holiday that is officially recognized by the government and published in the official government gazette. The Gazette is a publication that contains various official notices, including government orders, acts, rules, and notifications. The formation of gazetted holidays in Myanmar is governed by the Myanmar Holidays Law, which was enacted in 1951 and amended several times since then.[3] In Myanmar, there are several gazetted holidays throughout the year, including National Day, Peasants' Day, Diwali, and Eid al-Adha etc.[4]

The major state holidays in the country hold significant importance in promoting nationalist sentiments and are often accompanied by festive events. The government also recognizes several religious holidays. The dates for Diwali and Eid al-Adha are usually announced by government newspapers, and government offices often close on these days. It's worth noting that some businesses and organizations in Myanmar may observe additional holidays that are not officially gazetted by the government. However, these holidays are not recognized as public holidays and may not be observed by all businesses or institutions.[5]

Worker's Day, also known as Labour Day or May Day, is an internationally recognized holiday celebrated in many countries around the world. It serves as a tribute to the contributions and achievements of the working class and highlights the ongoing struggle for workers' rights and social justice. The struggles of workers and their organized movements laid the foundation for the recognition of their contributions and the establishment of a dedicated day to honor their

---

[1] *စနေနှင့် တနင်္ဂနွေနေ့များ အစားရုံးပိတ်ရက်သတ်မှတ်ရန်ကိစ္စ၊ (The issue of setting office holidays instead of Saturdays and Sundays),* A.G. 15/3(1), Acc. No. 257, 1952, National Archives Department File.

[2] (a) U Thant, *ပြည်တော်သာခရီး၊* (*Road to Pyidawtha*), Vol. I+II, Second Edition, Yangon, Pyitsagan Press, 2014, pp.163-164 (Hereafter cited as U Thant, *Road to Pyidawtha*)
(b) The Burma Gazette, *၁၉၅၁ ခုနှစ်၊ အားလပ်ခွင့်နှင့် အလုပ်ပိတ်ရက်များဥပဒေ၊* (*1951 Vacation and Working Holidays Act*), August 25, 1951, Part-III, pp.171-173 (Hereafter cited as The Burma Gazette, *1951 Vacation and Working Holidays Act*)

[3] The Burma Gazette, *၁၉၅၁ ခုနှစ်၊ အားလပ်ခွင့်နှင့် အလုပ်ပိတ်ရက်များဥပဒေ၊* (*1951 Vacation and Working Holidays Act*), 17 November 1951, Vol. IV, p.858

[4] (a) The Burma Gazette, *ပြည်ထောင်စုမြန်မာနိုင်ငံတော် တော်လှန်ရေးအစိုးရက ထုတ်ပြန်သည့် အမိန့်ကြော်ငြာစာများ၊ ဥပဒေပြုဌာနစု၊* (*Notices issued by the revolutionary government of the Union of Myanmar*), 21 December 1963, Vol. XVI (Part-1), p.1490
(b) *ပြည်ထောင်စုမြန်မာနိုင်ငံတော် တော်လှန်ရေးအစိုးရ၊ တရားရေးရာဝန်ကြီးဌာန၊ အထွေထွေဌာနခွဲ၊ ပြန်တမ်း (Government of the Union of Myanmar; Ministry of Justice, General Division newspaper),* A.G. 3/11, Acc: No. 1212, File No. 5 M -5, 1953, National Archives Department File.

[5] The Burma Gazette, အလုပ်ပိတ်ရက်များနှင့် *အလုပ်ပိတ်ရက်အတွက် အလုပ်အတွက် ခံစားခွင့်အများ အလုပ်ပိတ်ရက်များ၊ (Public holidays and public holidays with allowance for public holidays*), 26 December 1953, Vol.VI, (Part-2), p.1854

efforts. This research examines the following research questions: How did colonial rule and post-independence political changes influence the growth and activities of labour movements in Myanmar? How did the Oil-field workers' strike of 1938 contribute to the establishment of Workers' Day in Myanmar? How is Workers' Day currently observed and celebrated in Myanmar?

Research Aim

This research explores the historical development of the labour movement in Myanmar, highlighting significant events, such as strikes, protests, and labour legislation, which have shaped the country's labour landscape. Furthermore, it also investigates how Worker's Day is celebrated in present-day Myanmar.

Research Method

The methodology integrates a qualitative approach, utilizing primary data from official documents, report and archive records alongside secondary data sourced from libraries and official documents.

The Origin and Significance of Workers' Day in Myanmar

In Myanmar, Labour Day has been celebrated as a public holiday since 1948, following the country's independence from British Colonial rule. Labour Day, is also called International Workers' Day and May Day. The holidays have their roots in the labour movements and commemorates the struggles of workers for better working conditions, fair pay, and other labour rights.

During the colonial period in Myanmar, the pioneering movement in Burmese labour was the 1916-1917 strike by the American driller in Burmah Oil Company (Chauk). Moreover, about 200 clerks from the Burmah Oil Company (Chauk) in 1918, and in 1920 more than 8,000 workers from the oil refinery and wax factory from Thanlyin and 2,000 workers led by labour union from Burmah oil Company (Chauk) in 1923, in May 1925, more than 2,500 cargo workers at the Yangon port and in August 1925, about 3,000 workers of the Irrawaddy Flotilla Shipping Company and in 1926, more than 4,000 laborers led by the Labour Union in Yenangyaung Township went on strike. In May 1930, about 5,000 cargo workers went on strike against the imperialists at Yangon port. Started from the strike of the American drillers in 1916 to the Indo-Myanmar riot on 26 May 1930, general strikes broke out in Myanmar.[1] B.O.C tried to break up the strike with the help of a group of nineteen high-paid Myanmar workers and police detectives.[2]

The B.O.C company reduced the annual religious holiday to seven instead of ten days in 1938. According to the statement of oil company, although the religious holiday will be reduced, the workers will be allowed to take leave up to ten days when they need it. However, BOC clerks strongly protested for getting no ten days for religious leave and twenty days leave with salary

---

[1] Hla Kwint, *၁၉၇၄-၁၉၇၅ အလုပ်သမားအရေးအခင်း၊* (*The Worker's Strike of 1974-1975 in Myanmar*), Yangon, Dobama Aloke Thama Press, 2015, p. 23-25

[2] *မြန်မာ့အလုပ်သမားလှုပ်ရှားမှု၊ အတွဲ (၁)၊* (*Labour Movements in Myanmar, Vol. I*), Burma Socialist Programme Party, Yangon, Sarpebaikman Press, 1972, p.164-185 (Hereafter cited as *Labour Movements in Myanmar*)

per year. The ten religious holiday days is the right that the workers had originally obtained, but now it has been unfairly reduced. The workers held a rally and rejected the suppression of religious holiday days. Moreover, the workers demanded to get ten religious holidays and twenty days leave with salary for a total of thirty days as the right obtained by the B.O.C clerks. They also demanded to abolish the labor welfare department headed by Mr. Wester of the B.O.C company and asked to be led by a group consisting of government, company and labor representatives. Meanwhile, the oil-field workers submitted twelve demands to the B.O.C company. Out of the twelve demands, the B.O.C company complied with only three and did not comply with the rest. The three demands that the company complied with are as follows;

(1) Electric lighting will be installed in labor barracks. However, it cannot be installed inside residence of the workers.

(2) Arrangements will be made to get enough water in the labour barracks.

(3) Labour barracks will be repaired and built.[1]

While the workers' demands were proposing, a case of the unfair removal of labour leader, Thakhin Khin who is a mechanic from the transport section of the Chauk B.O.C occoured on 8 January 1938. As soon as the removal of Thakhin Khin from the work was announced, the workers of the Chauk B.O.C company went on strike. The B.O.C representatives discussed with the labour leaders and they agreed to return to work, but the leaders who led the B.O.C strike would be arrested.[2] The great oil-field workers' strike spread to Lanywa, Singu, Yenangyat, Molar, and Yenangyaung within two or three days. In addition, the strike spread to the workers and clerks of oil refinery in Thanlyin.[3] As the workers' strike gained strength, S.H.Muller Worth, D.S.P of Magway District issued Article 144 of the Curfew Order started from 12 January 1938 in order to break the strike. Deputy Minister of oil industry also issued a further order not to carry weapons. On 17 January 1938, as more than 90 percent of the labour forces went on strike, the government authorities and company officials at Yenangyaung again issued a criminal code of 144 to prevent gathering of more than four people.[4]

The B.O.C company and the British government arrested the women and men who were taking part in the strike. About 15 days after the strike, Chief Minister, Dr. Ba Maw and Minister of Commerce, Dr. Thein Maung went to the oil field areas of Yenangyaung and Chauk to solve the problems but in vain.[5]

The oil-field workers' strike of 1300 began on 8 January 1938, at the Chauk oil-field area. The workers from oil-field areas shout loudly the following slogan;

"Strike strike upside down"

---

[1] Maung Thit Lwin, *၁၃၀၀ ပြည့်နှစ် ရေနံမြေအရေးတော်ပုံ၊ (Oil-field Workers' strike of 1300*), Yangon, Myananda Press, 2013, Third Edition, p. 19,22 (Hereafter cited as Maung Thit Lwin, Oil-field Workers' strike of 1300)

[2] *Labour Movements in Myanmar*, p. 217-219

[3] *Thakhin KhinZaw၊ မေဒေးသမိုင်း၊* (*History of May Day*), Yangon, Burmese Women's Press, p. 54-55, (Hereafter cited as *History of May Day*)

[4] Thakhin Khin Zaw, *ဗမာ့လွတ်လပ်ရေးနှင့် အလုပ်သမားတိုက်ပွဲ၊* (*Myanmar's Independence and workers'Struggle),* Yangon, Kalaungpyan Press, 1969, p.258, 260 (Hereafter cited as Thakhin Khin Zaw, *Myanmar's Independence and workers' Struggle*)

[5] *History of May Day*, p. 55

"My lord, Dobama"

"Capitalism, Let it be destroyed"

"Capitalism, let it fall"

"Revolution, let it win"

The slogans were raised with big flags all over the oil-field areas Dobama Asiayone supported the oil-field workers' strike in Chauk with the spirit of people in all parts of Myanmar and money.[1] Myanmar's first May Day ceremony was held under the leadership of Dobama Asiayone at Lebaw Tazaung in Yenangyaung Township on 1 May 1938 while Chauk oil-field workers' strike was in full swing in 1938. The May Day demonstration was attended by Thakhin Lay Maung and Thakhin Soe from Dobama Asiayone Headquarters. Thakhin Soe, who arrived from Yangon discussed regarding the worker's day that is 1 May. Then Thakhin Soe continued as follows that:__

> May Day, now celebrated as Workers' Day, was started in the United States in 1886. At that time, the poor workers gathered to protest against the torture and unfair repression of the person of great wealth in America. This started from the United States and has been held once a year. Like all countries around the world, today is the day when everyone will be celebrating Labour Day. They will be celebrating Labour Day just like the workers of the world. This is organized by Myanmar workers, just like the workers of the world.[2]
>
> Then Thakhin Ba Maung continued to speak as follows that:__
>
> Many Myanmar oil-field workers were forced to go on strike to protest against the torture of the rich. Therefore, they held a celebration on 1 May every year to celebrate the Workers' Day.[3]

The World Workers' Day in Chauk was planned to celebrate like that of Yenangyaung Township, but the Deputy Minister of oil industry issued Article 144. Therefore, a mass meeting could not be held in Chauk, but a meeting was held with labour leaders.[4]

After the oil-field workers gave a show of strength for the International Worker's Day in 1938, May Day ceremonies have been held in many parts of the country in 1939. A show of strength for May Day were held at Yangon, Mandalay, Mawlamyine, Myaing Mya, Pyinmana, Taungoo, Chauk, and Yenangyaung. At the fourth conference of the Dobama Asiayone, Thakhin Soe put up a motion that 1 May should be recognized as the International Workers' Day and Thakhin Pe Than supported the proposal and it was decided by the Dobama Asiayone.[5] In 1940-1941, May Day celebrations were also held by Dobama Asiayone under the government repression. However, in 1942, Dobama Asiayone was declared as an illegal association by the British government and therefore, May Day celebrations could not be held in Myanmar. Then,

---

1 *Labour Movements in Myanmar*, p. 235
2 *History of May Day*, p. 55
3 Ibid, p. 97
4 *Labour Movements in Myanmar*, p. 238
5 *History of May Day*, p. 69

during the interwar period, the Japanese authorities severely suppressed the people and so May Day celebrations could not be held in Myanmar.[1]

After the Second World War, two major political parties, Burma Communist Party and Burma Socialist Party emerged in Myanmar and the All Burma Trade Union Congress (ABTUC), led by Burma Communist Party and the Trade Union Congress Burma (TUCB), led by the Burma Socialist Party were formed as two major labour organizations under the banner of Anti-Fascist People League (AFPFL). As two Labour Organizations emerged, the labour unity began to disintegrate. However, these two large groups formed a joint committee within the AFPFL and coordinated the political activities. The joint committee of Burma Communist Party and the Burma Socialist Party collaborated to celebrate the Workers' Day (May Day) after the Second World War.[2]

The joint committee of Burma Communist Party and the Burma Socialist Party held the meeting for holding International Workers' Day at the house of Ko Ba Hein in Myenigone in April 1946 in order to celebrate the International Workers' Day in 1946. The international workers' day was organized by the coordination of representatives from Burma Communist Party and Burma Socialist Party. Myanmar workers were able to give a show of strength for International Workers' Day in 1946 and 1947.[3]

During the years in 1948, 1949 and 1950 TUCB celebrated Workers' Day by cooperating with other separate organizations. U Tin Nyunt (TUCB), Secretary of the Committee for holding International Workers' Day called a mass meeting on 26 April 1948 and encouraged workers to participate in the Workers' Day celebration and clarified the plans. Many capitalist companies who are extremely worried about the May Day celebration said that they cannot pay wages if they miss work for workers' day. As the capitalists were shouting and harassing the workers, Thakhin Lwin, TUCB President sent representatives from TUCB to the ministers for the Ministry of Labour and Ministry of Finance and discussed the matters. Therefore, Sao Shwe Thaik, the President of the Union of Burma, announced Workers' Day (May Day) as a holiday with full pay on 27 April 1948.[4] The TUCB organized the May Day ceremony on 1 May 1949, which is International Workers' Day.[5]

Among the shows of strength celebrated after regaining her independence, The May Day of 1950 was the most significant demonstrations in Myanmar. A wide range of organizations participated in the May Day celebration organized in that year and Thakhin Lwin, TUCB President acted as the chairman and Thakhin Khin Zaw as general secretary. The special features of May Day demonstration in 1950 are the prevention of world war since May Day in 1950, moving motions for world peace, showing art exhibitions of workers, sending the formal messages to workers in Soviet Union and People Republic of China, and marching by holding

---

[1] Ibid, p. 75-76

[2] Ni Ni Aung, *အလုပ်သမားအစည်းအရုံးများနှင့် အဖွဲ့ချုပ် (ဗမာနိုင်ငံ) တီယူစီ (ဘီ) သမိုင်း၊* (*History of Trade Union Congress*), Yangon, University of Yangon, 1996, p. 36 (Hereafter cited as Ni Ni Aung, *History of Trade Union Congress)*

[3] Ni Ni Aung, *History of Trade Union Congress*, p. 35

[4] Ni Ni Aung, *History of Trade Union Congress*, p. 64-65

[5] *ဗမာခေတ်သတင်းစာ၊ (Burmah Khit Newspaper*),on 1 May 1949

pictures of the world's working class leaders such as Marx, Angel, Lenin, Stalin and Mao Zedong.[1]

Unlike previous years, the Myanmar government organized May Day celebration in the honor of the workers in 1958. May Day celebrations of 1958 were held at Kyonmange, Thaekone, Thaton, Waw, and Pyinmana Townships.[2] From 1959 to 1962, May Day celebrations were no longer held by the government, but it was led by labor federations and held fragmentedly. The year 1959 was a year of the May Day rivalry reached its peak.[3]

During the Revolutionary Council Government in 1963, the May Day ceremony was led by the revolutionary government and held at the old Kyikkasan horse racetrack in Yangon. General Ne Win, chairman of the Revolutionary Council attended the celebration and delivered a speech. On the Workers' Day of 1963, the exhibition halls, market festivals and nightly entertainment such as the film, Puppet show, and plays were held for fun in the large horse racing arena.[4] The Workers' Day of 1964 was celebrated in the Chauk Township where the 1300 uprising started in Myanmar. In 1964, the special feature of May Day was that the people who fought in the 1300 Uprising were invited as special guests and were honored by General Ne Win with 500 Kyats.[5] On Workers' Day of 1965, party members, and factory workers dressed in the same clothes and enthusiastically marched to the Kyaikkasan stadium with solidarity and slogans at midnight.[6]

The Labour Day meeting of 1974 was held at the Saya San Hall in Kyaikkasan stadium in Yangon. U Ne Win, the President of the Socialist Republic of the Union of Myanmar, sent a "Labour Day" message to the public. The Workers's Day celebrations were held all parts of Myanmar such as Wet Lek Township, Natalin Township, Letpadan Township, Le Way Township, and Sakagyi Township.[7]

May Day celebration of 1988, was held by supporting three political objectives in States and Divisions. U Ne Win, the chairman of the Socialist Republic of the Union of Myanmar, sent a "Labour Day" message to the public. In honor of Labour Day, environmental clean-up events are held by organizations around the city.[8]

---

1 *History of May Day*, p. 80-81
The Burma New Paper,on 3 May 1950

2 *ဟံသာဝတီသတင်းစာ၊ (Hantharwaddy Newspaper)*, on 1 May 1958

3 *History of May Day*, p. 87
ဟံသာဝတီသတင်းစာ၊ (Hantharwaddy Newspaper), on 1 May 1959
ဟံသာဝတီသတင်းစာ၊ (Hantharwaddy Newspaper), on 3 May 1960
ဟံသာဝတီသတင်းစာ၊ (Hantharwaddy Newspaper), on 3 May 1962

4 *ဟံသာဝတီသတင်းစာ၊ (Hantharwaddy Newspaper)*, on 3 May 1963

5 *ဟံသာဝတီသတင်းစာ၊ (Hantharwaddy Newspaper)*, on 3 May 1964
ဟံသာဝတီသတင်းစာ၊ (Hantharwaddy Newspaper), on 4 May 1964

6 *ဟံသာဝတီသတင်းစာ၊ (Hantharwaddy Newspaper)*, on 4 May 1965

7 *မြန်မာ့အလင်းသတင်းစာ၊ (Myanmar Alin Newspaper)*, on 3 May 1974
မြန်မာ့အလင်းသတင်းစာ၊ (Myanmar Alin Newspaper), on 4 May 1974
မြန်မာ့အလင်းသတင်းစာ၊ (Myanmar Alin Newspaper), on 7 May 1974

8 *မြန်မာ့အလင်းသတင်းစာ၊ (Myanmar Alin Newspaper)*, on 3 May 1988

Celebrations and public work discussions were held every Workers' Day in the States and Divisions under the Burma Socialist Programme Party led by U Ne Win until 1988. In Myanmar, from the time of the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC) in 1992 until the time of the Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP) in 2015, Heads of State have sent May Day messages in honor of Labour Day every year.[1]

Conclusion

Myanmar's first May Day ceremony was held under the leadership of Dabama Asiayone at Lebaw Tazaung in Yanangyaung Township on 1 May 1938 while Chauk oil-field workers' strike was in full swing in 1938. The oil-field workers' strike of 1300 was a strike that led by Myanmar to celebrate the first May Day ceremony together with the world. However, in 1942, as Dobama Asiayone was declared as an illegal association by the British government May Day celebrations could not be held in Myanmar. Then, during the interwar period, May Day celebrations could not be held in Myanmar. The joint committee of Burma Communist Party and the Burma Socialist Party collabrated to celebrate the Workers' Day (May Day) after the Second World War. Many capitalist companies who were extremely worried about the May Day celebration was shouting and harassing the workers, Thakhin Lwin, TUCB President sent representatives from TUCB to the ministers for the Ministry of Labour and Ministry of Finance and discussed the matters. Therefore, Sao Shwe Thaik, the President of the Union of Burma, announced Workers' Day (May Day) as a holiday with full pay on 27 April 1948. From 1959 to 1962, May Day celebrations were no longer held by the government, but it was led by labour federations. During the Revolutionary Council Government in 1963, the May Day ceremony was led by the revolutionary government. In Myanmar, from the time of the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC) in 1992 until the time of the Union Solidarity and Development

---

ကြေးမုံသတင်းစာ၊ *(The Mirror Daily),* on 2 May 1988

မြန်မာ့အလင်းသတင်းစာ၊ *(Myanmar Alin Newspaper),* on 4 May 1988

[1] ကြေးမုံသတင်းစာ၊ *(The Mirror Daily),* on 1 May 1985

ကြေးမုံသတင်းစာ၊ *(The Mirror Daily),* on 1 May 1986

ကြေးမုံသတင်းစာ၊ *(The Mirror Daily),* on 1 May 1987

ကြေးမုံသတင်းစာ၊ *(The Mirror Daily),* on 1 May 1988

လုပ်သားပြည်သူ့နေ့စဉ်သတင်းစာ၊ *(The Working People's Daily),* on 1 May 1989

လုပ်သားပြည်သူ့နေ့စဉ်သတင်းစာ၊ *(The Working People's Daily),* on 1 May 1990

လုပ်သားပြည်သူ့နေ့စဉ်သတင်းစာ၊ *(The Working People's Daily),* on 1 May 1991

လုပ်သားပြည်သူ့နေ့စဉ်သတင်းစာ၊ *(The Working People's Daily),* on 1 May 1992

လုပ်သားပြည်သူ့နေ့စဉ်သတင်းစာ၊ *(The Working People's Daily),* on 1 May 1993

လုပ်သားပြည်သူ့နေ့စဉ်သတင်းစာ၊ *(The Working People's Daily),* on 1 May 1994

မြန်မာ့အလင်းသတင်းစာ၊ *(Myanmar Alin Newspaper),* on 1 May 2003

မြန်မာ့အလင်းသတင်းစာ၊ *(Myanmar Alin Newspaper),* on 1 May 2007

မြန်မာ့အလင်းသတင်းစာ၊ *(Myanmar Alin Newspaper),* on 1 May 2008

မြန်မာ့အလင်းသတင်းစာ၊ *(Myanmar Alin Newspaper),* on 1 May 2010

မြန်မာ့အလင်းသတင်းစာ၊ *(Myanmar Alin Newspaper),* on 1 May 2015

Party (USDP) in 2015, Heads of State have sent May Day messages in honor of Labour Day every year.

Acknowledgement

First of all, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Rector Dr. Tin Maung Tun for his encouragement in pursuing this research. My special thanks also go to Professor Dr. Toe Hla (Part-time Professor, Department of History, University of Yangon), Professor Dr. Kyaw Win (Retired Professor and Head, Department of History, University of Yangon), Professor Dr. Myint Thein (Part-time Professor, Department of History, University of Yangon), and Professor Dr. Margaret Wong (Retired Professor and Head, Department of History, University of Yangon) for their invaluable suggestions and guidance. Additionally, I am deeply thankful to Dr. Thin Thin Aye (Professor and Head, Department of History, University of Yangon) for her encouragement and support throughout this research.

References

Primary Sources

The Burma Gazette, *၁၉၅၁ ခုနှစ်၊ အားလပ်ခွင့်နှင့် အလုပ်ပိတ်ရက်များ ဥပဒေ၊* (*1951 Vacation and Working Holidays Act*), August 25, 1951, Part- III.

The Burma Gazette, *၁၉၅၁ ခုနှစ်၊ အားလပ်ခွင့်နှင့် အလုပ်ပိတ်ရက်များ ဥပဒေ၊* (*1951 Holidays and Working Holidays Act*), 17 November 1951, Vol. IV.

The Burma Gazette, *ပြည်ထောင်စုမြန်မာနိုင်ငံတော် တော်လှန်ရေးအစိုးရက ထုတ်ပြန်သည့် အမိန့်ကြော်ငြာစာများ၊ ဥပဒေပြုဌာနစု၊* (*Notices issued by the revolutionary government of the Union of Myanmar*), 21 December 1963, Vol. XVI (Part-1).

The Burma Gazette, *အလုပ်ပိတ်ရက်များနှင့် အလုပ်ပိတ်ရက်အတွက် အလုပ် အတွက် ခံစားခွင့်အများအလုပ်ပိတ်ရက်များ၊ (Public holidays and public holidays with allowance for working holidays*), 26 December 1953, Vol. VI, (Part-2).

စနေနှင့် တနင်္ဂနွေနေ့များ အစားရုံးပိတ်ရက်သတ်မှတ်ရန်ကိစ္စ၊ (*The issue of setting office holidays instead of Saturdays and Sundays*), A.G. 15/3(1), Acc. No. 257, 1952, National Archives Department File.

ပြည်ထောင်စုမြန်မာနိုင်ငံတော် တော်လှန်ရေးအစိုးရ၊ တရားရေးရာဝန်ကြီး ဌာန၊ အထွေထွေဌာနခွဲ၊ ပြန်တမ်း၊ (Government of the Union of Myanmar, *Ministry of Justice*, *General Division newspaper),* A.G. 3/11, Acc. No. 1212, File No. 5 M - 5, 1953, National Archives Department File.

M.A (Thesis)

Ni Ni Aung, (M.A) *အလုပ်သမားအစည်းအရုံးများ အဖွဲ့ချုပ် (ဗမာနိုင်ငံ) သမိုင်း၊* (History of Trade Union Congress), Yangon, University of Yangon, 1996.

Secondary Sources

Hla Kwint, *၁၉၇၄-၁၉၇၅ အလုပ်သမားအရေးအခင်း၊* (*The Worker's Strike of 1974-1975 in Myanmar*), Yangon, Dobama Aloke Thama Press, 2015.

Khin Zaw, Thakhin, *ဗမာ့လွတ်လပ်ရေးနှင့် အလုပ်သမားတိုက်ပွဲ၊* (*Myanmar's Independence and Workers' Struggle*) Yangon, Kalaungpyan Press, 1969.

\- *မေဒေးသမိုင်း၊* (*History of May Day*), Yangon, Burmese Women's Press.

Thit Lwin, Maung, *၁၃၀၀ ပြည့်နှစ် ရေနံမြေအရေးတော်ပုံ၊* (Oil-field Workers' Strike of 1300), Yangon, Myananda Press, 2013, Third Edition.

Thant, U, *ပြည်တော်သာခရီး၊ (Burma Road to Pyidawtha),* Vol. I+II, Second Edition, Yangon, Pyitsagan Press, 2014.

\- *တို့ဗမာအစည်းအရုံးသမိုင်းအကျဉ်းချုပ်၊* (*A Brief History of Dobama Asiayone*, Volume-II), Yangon, Sarpebaik Press, 1976.

\- *မြန်မာ့အလုပ်သမားလှုပ်ရှားမှု၊ အတွဲ(၁)၊* (*Labour Movements in Myanmar,* Vol. I), Yangon, Burma Socialist Programme Party, Sarpebaikman Press, 1972.

Newspapers

- *ဗမာခေတ်သတင်းစာ၊ (Burmah Khit Newspaper*),on 1 May 1949
- *The Burma Newspaper*, on 3 May 1950
- *ဟံသာဝတီသတင်းစာ၊ (Hantharwaddy Newspaper)*, on 1 May 1958
- *ဟံသာဝတီသတင်းစာ၊ (Hantharwaddy Newspaper)*, on 1 May1959
- *ဟံသာဝတီသတင်းစာ၊ (Hantharwaddy Newspaper)*, on 3 May 1960
- *ဟံသာဝတီသတင်းစာ၊ (Hantharwaddy Newspaper)*, on 3 May1962
- *ဟံသာဝတီသတင်းစာ၊ (Hantharwaddy Newspaper)*, on 3 May 1963
- *ဟံသာဝတီသတင်းစာ၊ (Hantharwaddy Newspaper)*, on 3 May 1964
- *ဟံသာဝတီသတင်းစာ၊ (Hantharwaddy Newspaper)*, on 4 May 1964
- *ဟံသာဝတီသတင်းစာ၊ (Hantharwaddy Newspaper)*, on 4 May 1965
- *မြန်မာ့အလင်းသတင်းစာ၊ (Myanmar Alin Newspaper)*, on 3 May 1974
- *မြန်မာ့အလင်းသတင်းစာ၊ (Myanmar Alin Newspaper)*, on 4 May 1974
- *မြန်မာ့အလင်းသတင်းစာ၊ (Myanmar Alin Newspaper)*, on 7 May 1974
- *ကြေးမုံသတင်းစာ၊ (The Mirror Daily)*, on 1 May 1985
- *ကြေးမုံသတင်းစာ၊ (The Mirror Daily)*, on 1 May 1986
- *ကြေးမုံသတင်းစာ၊ (The Mirror Daily)*, on 1 May 1987
- *ကြေးမုံသတင်းစာ၊ (The Mirror Daily)*, on 1 May 1988
- *ကြေးမုံသတင်းစာ၊ (Myanmar Alin Newspaper)*, on 3 May 1988
- *ကြေးမုံသတင်းစာ၊ (The Mirror Daily)*, on 2 May 1988
- *မြန်မာ့အလင်းသတင်းစာ၊ (Myanmar Alin Newspaper)*, on 4 May 1988
- *လုပ်သားပြည်သူ့နေ့စဉ်သတင်းစာ၊ (The Working People's Daily)*, on 1 May 1989
- *လုပ်သားပြည်သူ့နေ့စဉ်သတင်းစာ၊ (The Working People's Daily)*, on 1 May 1990
- *လုပ်သားပြည်သူ့နေ့စဉ်သတင်းစာ၊ (The Working People's Daily)*, on 1 May 1991
- *လုပ်သားပြည်သူ့နေ့စဉ်သတင်းစာ၊ (The Working People's Daily)*, on 1 May 1992
- *လုပ်သားပြည်သူ့နေ့စဉ်သတင်းစာ၊ (The Working People's Daily)*, on 1 May 1993
- *လုပ်သားပြည်သူ့နေ့စဉ်သတင်းစာ၊ (The Working People's Daily)*, on 1 May 1994
- *လုပ်သားပြည်သူ့နေ့စဉ်သတင်းစာ၊ (The Working People's Daily)*, on 1 May 2003
- *လုပ်သားပြည်သူ့နေ့စဉ်သတင်းစာ၊ (The Working People's Daily)*, on 1 May 2007
- *လုပ်သားပြည်သူ့နေ့စဉ်သတင်းစာ၊ (The Working People's Daily)*, on 1 May 2008
- *လုပ်သားပြည်သူ့နေ့စဉ်သတင်းစာ၊ (The Working People's Daily)*, on 1 May 2010
- *လုပ်သားပြည်သူ့နေ့စဉ်သတင်းစာ၊ (The Working People's Daily)*, on 1 May 2015

Website

(a) https://www.vocabulary.com/dictionary/holiday, (Assessed Date- 3 May 2023)
(b) https://www.britannica.com/dictionary/holiday, (Assessed Date- 3 May 2023)

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT AND TRANSFORMATION OF MUDON TOWNSHIP

Thazin Mon[1]

Abstract

This research explores the historical development and transformation of Mudon Township, now known as Mudon, focusing on its geographical, cultural, and administrative evolution. The historical trajectory of Zayar Township reveals a dynamic interplay between local traditions and external influences. Originally part of the Mottama Thirty-Two Towns, Zayar's significance as a trade and administrative center was marred by repeated warfare, including conflicts with Ayutthaya and Myanmar rulers. The impact of the First Anglo-Myanmar War (1824-1826) led to significant demographic shifts, with British annexation introducing new administrative practices and infrastructure. The construction of the Mawlamyine-Kyaikkhami road in 1833 and subsequent migration from various regions revitalized the township. By the mid-19th century, Zayar, rebranded as Mudon, emerged as a key administrative and agricultural hub, benefiting from both Mon migration and infrastructural improvements. The transformation from Zayar to Mudon reflects broader trends of adaptation and resilience in response to external pressures and internal changes. This aim of this research is to investigate the historical development and transformation of Mudon Township. By examining the historical and socio-political factors that have influenced Mudon Township, this research seeks to enhance our understanding of the region’s resilience and adaptability amidst external pressures and internal shifts. Additionally, it offers insights into broader historical trends impacting southeastern Myanmar.

Keywords: Mudon, Zayar, Socio-economic, Township administration Mottama Thirty-Two Towns

Introduction

Mudon Township, formerly known as Zayar Township, situated in the fertile plains of southeastern Myanmar, Mudon Township has been a significant site of historical and cultural evolution. The township's history, marked by ancient Mon settlements and the impacts of colonial rule, reveals a complex narrative of change and continuity. Originally a key trade and administrative center within the Mottama Thirty-Two Towns, Zayar Township’s development has been shaped by both external conflicts and internal transformations. Notable upheavals include the First Anglo-Myanmar War and the subsequent British annexation, which resulted in considerable demographic shifts and administrative restructuring. The paper is organized as follows: the first section provides a detailed historical context of Zayar Township; the second explores its administrative evolution and the impacts of colonial rule; and the third analyzes the socio-economic changes leading to the modern-day Mudon Township.

Research Aim

This research aims to investigate the historical development and transformation of Mudon Township, focusing on the effects of colonial rule, migration, and the socio-economic structure and demographic evolution of Mudon Township, formerly known as Zayar Township.

[1] Department of History, University of Yangon

Research Method

Utilizing a comprehensive approach that includes historical analysis, geographical surveys, and socio-economic data evaluation. Primary sources include historical records, Zayar Township surveys, and archival materials from both colonial and pre-colonial periods. Secondary sources consist of historical accounts, academic literature on Mon history, and regional studies. Additionally, the research utilizes cartographic evidence to trace shifts in administrative boundaries and infrastructural development. This comprehensive methodology seeks to elucidate how historical and socio-political factors have shaped the township's development and population dynamics over time.

Historical Context

Mudon Township, formerly known as Zayar Township, is located in a region characterized by a diverse topography that includes the prominent Limestone Mountains. Historically, it was one of the thirty-two townships listed in the *Sittan* of Mottama, bearing the name Zayar. The township is also home to three ancient towns that add to its rich historical significance. The majority of the population in Zayar Township is of Mon ethnicity, with many villages where the Mon language is still widely spoken. Geographically, Zayar Township spans from Mawlamyine to Kalunbaw Pagoda in the east, and from Mawlamyine to Kin Chaung in the northwest. To the south, it extends from Wakharu Town to Kamaparin Stream, and to the southwest, it reaches from Wakharu Town to Bikalyin Stream. In the northeast, the township's boundaries extend from Winyaw Town to Taikkalar Hill. This comprehensive description of Zayar Township is outlined in the Zayar Township Survey.[1]

There are three old towns included in Zayar Township, notably, Binhlaing Town (Kawkhapon Village), Zayar Town (Kamarwet Town) and Lebin Town (Kwanton Ward). At the heart of Zayar, Pyinsalanago (Kamarwet) is situated. The term *Pyinsalanago* means "*Pyinsa*" five persons, "*Sala*" moving, "*Nago*" town. Regarding Binhlaing Old Town, the old town was built with laterite stones, was around seven feet high. The entrance road of Sasana Waiponelarma Monastry is the entrance to the old town. Of Binhlaing Old Town, there is Binhlaing lake in the east, Binhlaing stream in the north and it is 3 miles away from the west.[2]

Regarding Zayar Town (Kamarwet Town), the circled moat of the old town has length of around 1 mile each, 100 feet width and the depth are 5 to 6 feet in the east and 2 and half feet in the north and west. In the southern part of the moat, there were bushes and shrubs, and a bazaar is on the moat and town wall at the entrance to the town wall. The renovated Zayar pagoda is situated 200 feet away on the south-east corner of east moat inside the town.[3] The name Zayar

[1] Mr. B.O. Binns, *Burma Gazetteer*, *Amherst District,* Volume A, Rangoon, Superintendent, Government Printing and Stationery, Union of Burma, 1962, p. 19 (Hereafter cited as Binns, *Burma Gazetteer*, *Amherst District*)

[2] Ma Ngwe Su, "မုဒုံမြို့နယ်၏ လူမှုစီးပွားရေးအပေါ် ပဏာမလေ့လာချက် (၁၉၆၂–၁၉၇၄)" ("A Study on the Socio-Economic History of Mudon Township (1962-1974)"), M.Res, Department of History, Mawlamyine University, 2002, p. 4 (Hereafter cited as Su, "Socio-Economic")

[3] Ma Ohmar Khin, "မုဒုံမြို့နယ်သမိုင်း (၁၉၀၁–၁၉၂၇)" ("History of Mudon Township (1901-1927)"), (Ph.D), Department of History, Yangon University, p. 23 (Hereafter cited as Ohmar, "History of Mudon Township")

was named after an old rich man named Zina, who was named (Zayar[1]).[2] Later, the place was called Zayar Town, which was also called *"Pyinsalanago", "Don Ze"* in Myanmar.[3]

Administrative Evolution

Administration region by King Thirimarthawtayarzar (Thiridamar Thawka) of the Thaton Dynasty, there were the duke Thugadinmin of Mupon (Mawlamyine), the duke (Banyathanbwi) of Zayar, Thameinpyatthapop of Wakharu, the duke Bawgarin of Lamaing and the duke Hanlar of Ye.[4] Zayar Old Town, it is concluded that those were located at Theingon Village, a village of today Kamarwet Town, 9 miles away from Mudon Town.[5] Zayar Town, similar to Thaton was also affected and damaged by warfare.[6]

Regarding Lebin Town (Kwanton Ward), according to Mon literature, the term *"Laevin"* or *"Lavin"* has three different meanings (1) *"Lebin Sura"* in Mon means those who produces and sells alcohol or drunkards, (2) "*Lebin Weinzin*" means gamblers, (3) *"Lebin Lawdayin"* means the musicians or dancers. Those people, in nature, lived in group by establishing their wards or villages.[7] Progression over time, Lebin Village grew and expanded and reached a level of town in Thaton Era. Lebin Town had the town wall two furlongs in length and width) on all four sides of the town and there was a moat outside the town wall. Inside the town, roads, streets and housing blocks were built orderly. The ward inside the town was called in Mon language *"Kwanton"* (Royal Town) as per the name *"Kwanton"* [8], there were different levels of duke (*Myosa*), second in command of Military unit (*Sit Kal*), officer presenting to and relay king's order (*Nar Khan*), Clerical staff (*Myosa-yae*) and Head of town (*Myo-Thugyi*) in place.[9] Kwanton Ward was one of three parts under administration of Mudon Town's head. Kwanton in Mon language means; *"Kwan"* village and *"ton"* town. Therefore, Kwanton means the village inside the town.[10] The old town was surrounded by town wall and moat with the duke or town's head who administered that town.[11]

---

[1] Regarding the Myanmar spelling of Zayar Town, historians use the letter *"Ya Kaut"* while in Ayo Gu stone inscription of U Shwe Aye, it used the letter *"Ya Pa Let"*

[2] *မုဒုံမြို့နယ်သမိုင်း (The History of Mudon Township)*, Township Law and Order Restoration Council, Mudon Town, pp. 1-2 (Hereafter cited as *The History of Mudon Township*)

[3] *ကျိုက်ဇယ်စေတီတော်သမိုင်းအကျဉ်း (A Brief History of Kyaikze Pagoda)*, Myanmar Era 1369, p. 21 (Hereafter cited as *Kyaikze Pagoda*)

[4] Mg Kyi Sein (Ramanya), *ဘုန်းသစ်နိုးပါနှင့် အတိတ်ပစ္စုပ္ပန် ရုပ်ပုံလွှာစာစုများ (Awake Bhone Thit and Past and Present Pictorial Journals)*, 1st Edition, Mawlamyine, Swe Moe Press, 2017, p. 151 (Hereafter cited as Sein, *Past and Present*)

[5] Su, "Socio-Economic", p. 2

[6] *ကမာဝက်မြို့၊ ဒေသဆိုင်ရာအချက်အလက်များ (Regional Specifics of Kamarwet Township)*, Mudon Township General Administration Department, Mawlamyine District, Mon State, 2019, p. 2 (Hereafter cited as *Regional Specifics of Kamarwet Township*)

[7] *မွန်ပြည်နယ်ဖြစ်စဉ်မှတ်တမ်း (၁၉၈၁) (Chronicle of Mon State (1981))*, General Administration Department, Mudon Township, Type Writing Copy, p. 17 (Hereafter cited as *Chronicle of Mon State (1981)*)

[8] *မုဒုံမြို့နှစ် (၁၀၀) ပြည့် အထိမ်းအမှတ်စာစောင် (The Journal Marked the Centenary Year of Mudon Town)*, Mudon General Administration Department, 1901-2001, p. 3 (Hereafter cited as *Mudon Centenary Journal*)

[9] Tin Naing Toe, *မြန်မာပြည်တစ်ခွင်လမ်းညွှန် (A Guide Across Myanmar)*, Yangon, Mizzima Publishing, 2013, p. 349 (Hereafter cited as Naing, *Myanmar*)

[10] Su, "Socio-Economic", p. 3

[11] bid, p. 2

Although had wide town walls and moat as the town dweller increased and expanded residential area, the old town wall and moat faded and disappeared among populous quarters. The place of Kwanton school at Kwanton ward, Myoma (2) ward, Mudon, is a central part with Royal hill and palaces and Kawhaparauk, Kawthabyu Buddha image (Nyaungbin Yat Buddha Image), the vicinity of primary school is inside the town wall. There were two doors on the east and west of town wall and the door in the west reached from today Kokkodan ruined temple to new temple, Lawkamarazein Buddha image. The moat was situated along the town wall and there was rubble of town wall discovered in some properties at Kwanton.[1]

The place of moat and its stream near Kwanton Monastery was previously accessible from Shin Saw Pu Road to Donkani Rice mill by boat. Now in the west of Kwanton Monastery, there is a creek leading to Kwin Villages since.[2] In the silt-up creek near today Kawlebin pagoda, a mouse catcher[3], found seventy coins[4] of Pyu Era. Moreover, in the vicinity of such a place, there were some old wooden boards, old ropes and anchors subsided in the soil discovered. Therefore, it can be concluded that it was an old commercial port town having commercial relationship not only with Mottama thirty-two Towns but with other Mon Towns such as Hanthawaddy, Dagon, Thanlyin, Dalla and Sriksetra Pyu Town.[5] Those coins were assumed as Pyu coins because there was a symbol of Srivatsa on those coins.[6]

The King Anawrahta of Bagan Dynasty established the first nation of Myanmar, covering Takaung and Ngasaungchan in the north town, Thalinkyae in the south, Missagiri Mountain (Chin Mountain Range) in the west and Thanlwin River in the east. Thalinkyae means the cape Salang at northern edge of Malay peninsula, and therefore, the regions of Mon people such as Bago, Mottama, Mawlamyine, Ye, Dawei, Myeik were fallen under the reign of Myanmar King. Mottama Town, then, was a big town with thirty-two Satellite Towns and twelve Zars[7].[8] After Bagan Dynasty, in AD 1281, at the time of King Wareru, Mottama became the royal capital and Mon Towns and Villages of Ramanya region went to be flourishing again.[9] In Ramanya region, lower part of Myanmar, monarchy was prevalent in Hanthawaddy (Bago) while, in parallel, in the upper Myanmar, similar monarchy prevalent in Innwa, Taungoo, Nyaungyan and Konbaung.[10] In AD 1287, the era of Hanthawaddy, the King Magadu of Wareru Dynasty was inaugurated with the title of "Binnya Waru" and reigned all parts of Ramanya regions and founded Sriyadanapuya Town.[11] The King Magadu, composed Mon Dhamathat Kyan (code of

---

[1] (a) *The History of Mudon Township,* p. 3
(b) Interviewee with U Ngwe Hlaing (Old Member of Commune), a Resident of Kwanton Neighborhood, Mudon Township (6 February 2023)

[2] (a) Ohmar, "History of Mudon Township", p. 3
(b) Interviewee with U Kyaw Soe Moe, one of the Local People in Kwanton, Myoma (2) Ward, Mudon Town (4 March 2023)

[3] In 1978, the name of mouse catcher who lived in Kawthabin was U Tun Oo

[4] U San Win, *ဦးစံဝင်း၏လက်ရွေးစင်စာတမ်းများ (Selected Monograph of U San Win)*, Department of Historical Research and National Library, Yangon, Aung Kyaw Moe Colour Press, 2020, p. 106 (Hereafter cited as Win, *Monograph*)

[5] (a) *Chronicle of Mon State (1981)*, p. 19
(b) Su, "Socio-Economic", pp. 2-3

[6] Mr, Robinson and L.A, Shaw, *The Coins and Banknotes of Burma*, England, Lancashire and Cheshire Numismatic Society, 1980, P. 9 (Hereafter cited as Robinson and Shaw, *The Coins and Banknotes of Burma*)

[7] Zar means Suburban Area (village)

[8] Sein, *Past and Present*, p. 152

[9] U Myint, *မုဒုံမြို့နယ်၊ ရှေးဟောင်းသမိုင်းဝင် ကန်ကြီးစေတီတော် (Mudon Township, Historical Kangyi Pagoda)*, 3rd Edition, Yangon, Thihabahu Press, 2015, p. 59 (Hereafter cited as Myint, *Kangyi Pagoda*)

[10] Win, *Monograph*, p. 78

[11] Mottama was once called Sriyadanapura

law), re-established Mottama Town with thirty-two Satellite Towns and twelve Zars.[1] The eight successive Mon King of Wareru Dynasty, Binnya U, moved royal seat from Mottama Town to Hanthawaddy (Bago Town). At the time of Binnya U, Mottama thirty-two Towns were renovated.[2]

Lebin had commercial relation not only with Mottama thirty-two Towns but with Hanthawaddy (Bago), Thanlyin, Dagon, Dalla, Sriksetra (Pyay).[3] At that time of Binnya U, so as to make Ramanya region more orderly, the administration of *"Mandala"* [4] in which thirty-two Towns as satellite towns was initiated and then there were three Mon of three Mandala including *"Kuthima" "Kuthinagaya"* (Pathein) thirty-two Mandala towns,[5] Hanthawaddy (Bago) thirty-two Mandala towns,[6] Mottama thirty-two Mandala towns[7]. Mottama Mon was called Mon Da, Hanthawaddy Mon was called Mon Daing and Pathein Mon was called Mon Nya.[8]

In Ariyarwontha Treatise, it is described three Mon- Mon Daing, Mon Da, Mon Nya. There is a discourse of ninety-nine Mon Towns. In three Mon regions, there were ninety-nine Mon towns, out of which, there were thirty-two Towns including Mottama, thirty-three towns including Hanthawaddy and thirty-three towns including Pathein, in total of ninety-nine towns.[9] Each Mandala had their respective ruling kings and therefore, there are in total of ninety-nine kings including three kings of each Mandala and of ninety-nine towns. Such Mandala administration system was also practiced in other Monarchy in South East Asia under Asia-India cultural influence.[10]

Therefore, Mottama duke administered Mawlamyine, Zayar, Wakharu, Ye, Lamaing, Bilu Kyun Towns. In 1563, Myanmar - Thai war and warfare, Mottama thirty-two Towns, notably Tungwun, Mottama, Mawlamyine, Bilu Kyun, Lebin, Zayar, Wakharu, Lamaing, Ye, Lakonebyee, Hlaing Bwe, Htar Kai, Thazine, Paung, Myawaddy, Zweya, Kyeik, Gyaing, Kawt Bain, Attaran, Zami, Taung Poet, Winyaw and Kon Towns were affected, became battleground and the local economy, social lives and peacefulness went down. As a result, residential area and inhabitants there became disappeared. According to revenue inquest at the time of Bodawpaya, Lebin Town, on account of all-round deterioration, was not included on the list of Mottama thirty-two Towns and instead it was described in the name of Zayar Town.[11]

Around half of Mon people inhabited in Mottama thirty-two Towns area moved to neighboring country. At the time of Bodawpaya (Badon Min), in collecting data for *Sittan*, it

---

[1] *တိုင်းရင်းသားရက်စဉ်သမိုင်း (မွန်) (Ethnic Historical Records (Mon))*, Ministry of Culture, Department of Historical Research, 1st Edition, Yangon, Shwe Minthar Press, 2013, p. 7 (Hereafter cited as *Ethnic Historical Records*)

[2] Sein, Past and Present, pp. 152-153

[3] *Chronicle of Mon State (1981)*, p. 18

[4] Mandala means Regions, Provinces or States

[5] Appendix I

[6] Appendix II

[7] Appendix III

[8] Marmaka (Researcher), *မွန်တို့ဌာနေရာမည (The Indigenous Place of Mon Ramanya)*, 1st Edition, Yangon, Tet Lan Publishing House, 1997, p. 7 (Hereafter cited as Marmaka, *The Indigenous Place of Mon Ramanya*)

[9] *တိုင်းရင်းသားမွန်လူမျိုးများအကြောင်း၊ သမိုင်းကောက်နှုတ်ချက်၊ ဆောင်းပါး၊ စာတမ်းပေါင်းချုပ် (About Mon Ethnic Group, the Historical Extract, Article, Collection of Treatises)*, Ethnic Affair Committee of Mon State Parliament, p. 523 (Hereafter cited as *About Mon Ethnic Group*)

[10] Win, *Monograph*, p. 87

[11] Sein, *Past and Present*, p. 156

describes both inhabited towns and villages and uninhabited towns and villages. According to Mottama thirty-two Towns Survey, in eastern part of Mottama, Kawt Bain and Kon Towns were inhabited towns while Zweya Town, Kyeik Town, Taung Poet Town, Myawaddy Town, Paung Town, Thazine Town, Htar Kai Town, Hlaing Bwe Town were uninhabited. In the southern part, Mawlamyine, Attaran Town, Winyaw Town, Wakharu Town, Lamaing Town, Ye Town, Bilu Kyun Town were inhabited whereas Kon and Zami Towns were uninhabited. In the northern part, Lakonebyee Town, Myaing Town, Binhlaing Town, Yinnyein Town, Kawt Town, Tungwun Town, Eiphyit Town, Eiwae Town, Taikkalar were uninhabited while Yinohn Town and Tungtami Town were inhabited. Therefore, Lebin Town was uninhabited ruined town, which was not on the list of Mottama thirty-two Towns in the *Sittan* at Bodawpaya period.[1]

Colonial Impact and Transformation

In AD 1826, in the First Anglo - Myanmar War at the time of Sagaing Min (Bagyidaw), the British Annexed Yangon, Thanlyin, Bago, Mottama, Ye, Dawei, Myeik regions. Taking advantage of such circumstance, Thai invaded and captured 16000 people from southern part of Mottama and brought them to Yahine and Chaingmai. As a result, the southern region of Mottama such as Mawlamyine, Lebin, Bilu Kyun, Zayar, Wakharu, Lamaing and Ye Towns became ruined and abandoned for years.[2]

After First Anglo - Myanmar War with Yandabo Treaty in 1826, British government tried to control the township in Thaninthayi region to be stable and peaceful. In place of Myanmar traditional administrative system, the hierarchical administrative system with divisional Commissioner (Wunshintawmingyi), District Administrator (Deputy Commissioner), Gazette Officer of Sub-divisional Rank, Myo Paing, Circle Head Man, Village Head was initiated. Then, Mawlamyine was the seat of Divisional Commissioner and District Administrator Offices. Then, in Kyaikkhami District, eight townships such as Mawlamyine, Bilu Kyun Township, Zayar Township, Attaran Township, Wakharu Township, Ye Township, Haungthayaw Township, Kyainseikgyi Township were included.[3]

The dwellers in Lebin and Zayar Towns had to leave their houses and flee due to conflicts during 1774 - 1826. The worst years were 1774, 1814 and 1826. After the First Anglo - Myanmar War of 1827, the town population increased with people from Yangon, Thanlyin, Dalla, Twantay and Bilu Kyun migrated to Kwanton area while people from Attaran, Kyaikmaraw migrated to Kyaung Thit area. Following that people from Attaran, Kyaikmaraw, northern Mottama Area such as Sit Taung, Taikkalar, Donwun, Got, Yinnyein and Ayeyawady Delta region migrated into the town along with the migrating of some Indian and Chinese people. Thereby, Zayar Town and its vicinity became flourished.[4]

---

[1] (a)Win, *Monograph*, p. 89
(b)U Pyinyar, *မုတ္တမရာဇဝင်ပေါင်းချုပ်နှင့် မုတ္တမစစ်တမ်းဟောင်းကျမ်း (Mottama Yarzawin Paung Chote and Old Mottama Sittan)*, 1st Edition, Thaton, Thuwanawaddy Pitakas Press, 1289, pp. 28-29 (Hereafter cited as Pyinyar, *Mottama Yarzawin Paung Chote*)

[2] Sein, *Past and Present*, p. 159

[3] Sein, *Past and Present*, p. 168

[4] *Chronicle of Mon State (1981)*, p. 19

When British government re-demarcated the boundary of townships, Naungkhari Village, Kawya Village, Kawkhani Village and southern nine Villages were included into Zayar Township which made Zayar region a township with 40 miles length from south to north. In 1833, British government built 55 miles long Mawlamyine - Kyaikkhami road which eased, despite no motor vehicle then, the travelers on carts and on foot.[1] As population increased, the residential ward of Lebin Town expanded. The ward expanded to the northern edge of town was called in Mon language as "*Mote ngin*" (edge of town), which was then changed into Mudon[2] with an ease in transportation and administration, and the growth of population there, in 1843, Mudon was destinated to be the seat of Township Administrator Office.[3]

In 1872, around 30,000 Mon people from Thanlyin, Twantay, Dalla led by Thanlyin Myowun Naing Sat with the title of Thameinparu, Twantay Mayor U Htawlay and other Mon elders such as Thanlyin lighthouse officer Kin Wun Phoe Maungngan and U Phoe Saw migrated into Mawlamyine area with over 500 boats. Out of them, Kin Wun Phoe Maungngan and his group established the villages such as Kamaroak, Wegali, Kamarcheik, Pyinmagon, Balauk-nyaungwaing, Kawparan, Katonpaw, Kin Chaung, Kamarthin, Kamarpate along the fertile region of costal and other riverine area of Zayar Region (today Mudon Township). Later, agrarian villages appeared in the southern and northern coastal regions in Mudon Township and the area was populous again.[4]

Zayar Town is situated in the Mon State and three Mon (Mondaing, Monda, Monnya) inhabited there, all local names and terms are in Mon language.[5] With the migration of thousand people, previously uninhabited town became populous again. New places and new villages emerged and Kwanton Village (Lebin Town) was promoted to be Mudon Administrative Unit (Circle). Afterwards, several wards such as Mintan Ward, Sarshin Ward, Botel Ward, Laysu Ward, Donkani Ward, Lanmagyi Ward sprang up leading to conjunction of Kyaikkhami - Mawlamyine Road and Mudon - Chaungngakhaw Road.[6]

Previously Zayar Township was started as the village and it was at the edge of the town, Mon language, it was called *"Mote Ngin"* derived from the term *"Mu Tein". "Mu"* means the edge and *"Tein"* means the town. Therefore, the term *"Mutein"* means the edge of the town which over time changed, in Mon sound, *"Mutein"* to *"Mudon"*.[7] They were Mawlamyine's head Kaylusu, Wakharu Town's head Nga Sonpar, Zayar Town's head Nga Baw, Bin Hliang Town's Head Nga Pa Sat[8] while Lebin Village was included in Zayar Township, as described in *Sittan* of town's head Nga Baw. Later, Zayar Township of jurisdiction became Mudon and the place of Zayar Town became Kamarwet Town.[9]

---

[1] Ohmar, "History of Mudon Township", p. 161
[2] *Mudon Centenary Journal*, p. 5
[3] Ibid, p. 6
[4] (a) Interviewee with U Kyi Sein (Retired), the Secretary of People Council, Mawlamyine,Mon State (31 January 2023)
(b) Sein, *Past and Present*, p. 160
[5] *The History of Mudon Township*, p. 3
[6] Ohmar, "History of Mudon Township", pp. 30-31
[7] Su, "Socio-Economic", p. 2
[8] *မုဒုံမြို့နယ်မဂ္ဂဇင်း (Mudon Township Magazine)*, No. (1), Mudon Township Magazine Publishing Committee, Yangon, Fugiko Press, 2012, p. 34 (Hereafter cited as *Mudon Township Magazine*)
[9] Naing, *Myanmar*, p. 349

Then, the nephew of Min Maung Ngan[1], Lighthouse officer Kin Wun, U Shwe Aye was appointed as a town administrator (*Myooke*). The name of the township, Zayar, was continued. It is known that for the purpose of revenue collection, it was classified as different circle such as Kawkhani circle, Pa-Auk circle, Kin Chaung circle, Mudon circle, Kun Hla circle.[2] In 1901, British government, in order to make administration and transportation functions to be more effective, changed Zayar Township of Kyaikkhami District (today Mawlamyine District) to be Mudon Township, changed Attaran Township to be Kyaikmaraw Township, changed Bilu Kyun Township to be Chaungzon Township, changed Wakharu Township to be Kyaikkhami Township.[3] In 1932, Kwanton, Kamarwet, Kalawtthawt, Tagondaing and Pa-Auk five villages were included in Kyaikkhami jurisdiction area.[4]

Previously Mon state was formed with two districts; Thaton District and Mawlamyine District, covering ten townships. In Thaton District; Kyaikto, Bilin, Thaton and Paung Townships were included while in Mawlamyine District; Mawlamyine, Chaungzon, Kyaikmaraw, Mudon, Thanbyuzayat, Ye Townships and Lamaing and Khawzar sub-townships of Ye were included.[5] In April 2022, today Mon State was formed with four districts; which were Kyaikto, Thaton, Mawlamyine and Ye Districts. Kyaikto District covers Kyaikto and Bilin Townships while Thaton District covers Thaton and Paung Townships. In Mawlamyine District, Mawlamyine, Chaungzon, Mudon, Kyaikmaraw, Thanbyuzayat Townships are included and in Ye District, Ye Township is included.[6] Mudon Township covers two towns; Mudon Town and Kamarwet Town. In 2014, Kamarwet Village of Mudon Township was promoted to be Kamarwet Town under notification by Ministry of Union Office, Ministry of Home Affairs.[7]

Conclusion

The historical evolution of Zayar Township, now present-day Mudon, reflects key developments in Mon history, including the rise and fall of Mon kingdoms, the impact of wars, and transformations during British colonialism. Strategically located and agriculturally fertile, the area has long been a hub for trade and settlement. Zayar Township, part of the Mottama Thirty-Two Towns, was devastated by wars with Ayutthaya, Burmese rulers like King Anawrahta and King Bodawpaya, leading to population declines and abandonment.

Following the First Anglo-Myanmar War in 1826, British annexation brought stability and infrastructure improvements, such as the construction of the Mawlamyine-Kyaikkhami road in 1833, reviving the township. Migration from other regions, including from India and China, boosted the population and economy. By 1843, Mudon became an administrative and agricultural hub, attracting Mon settlers from the south and evolving into a prosperous region.

[1] Min Maung Ngan is a Grandson (Lighthouse Officer) of Banyadala, the last dynasty of Hanthawaddy Dynasty

[2] Sein, *Past and Present*, p. 161

[3] (a) *Mudon Centenary Journal*, p. 7
(b) Ayo Gu stone inscription of U Shwe Aye, Khaung Thit Ward

[4] Naing, *Myanmar*, p. 350

[5] *Regional Situational Report*, 2010, P. 2

[6] Notification No. (329/2022) dated (30.4.2022) of the Ministry of Home Affair, Mawlamyine Distrist, Mon State obtained from the General Administration Department

[7] *Regional Specifics of Kamarwet Township*, p. 3

Acknowledgements

First of all, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Rector Dr. Tin Maung Tun for his encouragement in pursuing this research. My special thanks also go to Professor Dr. Toe Hla (Part-time Professor, Department of History, University of Yangon), Professor Dr. Kyaw Win (Retired Professor and Head, Department of History, University of Yangon), Professor Dr. Myint Thein (Part-time Professor, Department of History, University of Yangon), and Professor Dr. Margaret Wong (Retired Professor and Head, Department of History, University of Yangon) for their invaluable suggestions and guidance. Additionally, I am deeply thankful to Dr. Thin Thin Aye (Professor and Head, Department of History, University of Yangon) for her encouragement and support throughout this research.

APPENDIX I

PATHEIN THIRTY-TWO TOWNS[1]

1. Atithinsar Nargar (Pathein Town)
2. Kyaiktung Hlantar (Myannaung Town)
3. Kyaiktaw (Kanaung Town)
4. Kyaiktaitarrwor (Hinthada Town)
5. Tunandabal (Kwingauk Town)
6. Angpu (Okpho Town)
7. Durae Town
8. Kyaiktaw Taman Tapura (Zalun Town)
9. KyaikThalonpondownphyu (Danubyu Town)
10. Kyaik Thimuthaw (Thamyinkone Town)
11. Kyaikzayaetaung (Myaungmya Town)
12. Kyaikpwon (Seikgyi Town)
13. Kyaikkhcan (Kheibaung)
14. Kyaik Palaung taung (Mae laung)
15. Kyaik Kpi (Pathein Subarban place)
16. Kyaiksaw (Takaunghpaya)
17. Kyaikbamaw (Pantawyaekyi)
18. Kyaikmawdhaw (Kyonpyaw)
19. Kyaik Hkmepuur (Htaunglon)
20. KyaikhkaanTala (Ahthoke town)
21. Kyaikhkaantaungtone (Htanbu Magyikone)
22. Kyaikhkraantaw Kyaephyu (Zeehpyukwin)
23. Kyaiktalanthantawor (Kyaukchaunggyi)
24. Kyaikawhaan (Taikthikwin)
25. Zalellkyaiktagaw (Zanerarkyun)
26. Kyaik Htuuparrone Kautphyu (Hlaytan Town)
27. Kyaiktaungkaw (Lemyethna)
28. Kyaiktawpyuptaw
29. Kyaiktamon Kyonetone (Kyonetone Kandy Town)
30. Kyaikkranhaynan (Kaynan Town)

---

[1] Kyi Mya Lwin, *မွန်ဘဝဓလေ့နိဒါန်း (Introduction of Mon Lives and Customs)*, 1st Edition, Mawlamyine, Ramanya Publishing Press, 1976, pp. 24-25 (Hereafter cited as Kyi, *Introduction of Mon Lives and Customs*)

31. Kyaikhkaram (Hpayar Hla)
32. Kyaikto (Maekarae Town)

APPENDIX II

HANTHAWADDY THIRTY-TWO TOWNS[1]

1. Kyaukmaw Town (Bago)
2. Ann Town (Rakhine)
3. Donzarik Town
4. Kyieku Town (Bago, Kyauksayit Town)
5. Sittaung Town
6. Din Mae Town
7. Zaithabon Town
8. Atar Town
9. Mawlone Town
10. Lakonebyee Town
11. Arhkarain Town
12. Maau Town
13. Ramanagor Town
14. Rammawatty Town (Rakhine, Rambre Town)
15. Hmawbi Town (Yangon)
16. Hlaing Town (Yangon)
17. Paunglin Town (Bago, Paunglin Village)
18. Htantawgyi Town (Bago)
19. Titut Town (Bago, Titut Village)
20. Zayhta Town
21. Zaungtu Town (Bago, Zaungtu Village)
22. Barai (Ingapu) Town (Ayayarwady, Barai Village)
23. Yenwet Town (Yangon)
24. Tonkhan Town
25. Mayyincanar Town
26. Tannarpaung Town
27. Minyehla Town (Minyehla Village)
28. Koliya Town (Bago)
29. Byter Town
30. Winpyaing Town
31. Yoonzalin Town
32. Hanthawaddy (Zinekanaing)Town (Bago)

[1] Kyi, *Introduction of Mon Lives and Customs*, pp. 23-24

APPENDIX III

MOTTAMA THIRTY-TWO TOWNS[1]

1. Kon Town
2. Zayar Town (Kamarwet Town in Mudon Township)
3. Bin Hlaing Town (Bin Hlaing Village in Mudon Township)
4. Win Yaw Town (Win Yaw Village, Kyaikmaraw Township)
5. Mawlamyine Town
6. Wakharu Town (Wakharu Village Thanbyuzayat Township)
7. Lakonebyee Town (Weapaban Village, Mottama Township)
8. Kyaing Town (Kyaing Village, Kawkareik Township)
9. Kawt Town (Kawt Village, Kyaikto Village)
10. Bilu Kyun Town (Taungzon Village, Chaungzon Township)
11. Ye Town
12. Attaran Town (Attaran Village, Kyaikmaraw Township)
13. Myaing Town (Myaing Village, Kawkareik Township)
14. Tungwun Town (Tungwun Village, Thaton Township)
15. Kyeik Town (Kyeik Village, Kyaikto Township)
16. Tungtami Town (Tungtami Village, Kyaikmaraw Township)
17. Eiphyit Town (Eiphyit Village, Hpa-An Township)
18. Zami Town (Zami Village, Ye Township)
19. Taung Poet Town (Taung Poet Village, Ye Township)
20. Taikkalar Town (Taikkalar Village, Thaton Township)
21. Daye Town (Daye Village, Bilu Kyun Town)
22. Thazain Town (Kawkareik Township, Thazain Village)
23. Zweya Town (Kawkareik Township, Zweya Village)
24. Htar Kyaing Town (Htar Kyaing Village)
25. Yin Nyein Town (Thaton Township, Yin Nyein Village)
26. Eiwae Town (Hpa-An Township, Eiwae Village)
27. Hlaing Bwe Town (Hpa-An Township, Hlaing Bwe Town)
28. Yin Ohn Town
29. Kawt BainTown (Kyaikmaraw Township, Kawt Bain Town)
30. Lamaing Town (Ye Township, Lamaing Town)
31. Myawaddy Town
32. Paung Town

[1] U Aye Kyaw, *မုတ္တမ (၃၂) မြို့စစ်တမ်း၊ တက္ကသိုလ်ပညာပဒေသာစာစောင်* (*Mottama Thirty-Two Towns Inquest, Tagatho Pyinya Padathar Journal)*, *Volume 5*, Section 1, Without Town and Press Name, 1970, pp. 242-243 (Hereafter cited as Aye Kyaw, *Mottama Thirty-Two Towns*)

References

Primary Sources (English)

B.O.Binns, Mr., - *Burma Gazetteer, Amherst District*, Volume A, Rangoon, Superintendent, Government Printing and Stationery, Union of Burma, 1962

Robinson, Mr. and Shaw, L.A, - *The Coins and Banlnotes of Burma*, England, Lancashine and Cheshine Numisnatic Society, 1980

Primary Sources (Myanmar)

ကမာဝက်မြို့၊ ဒေသဆိုင်ရာအချက်အလက်များ (Regional Specifics of Kamarwet Township), Mudon Township General Administration Department, Mawlamyine District, Mon State, 2019

မုဒုံမြို့နယ်သမိုင်း (The History of Mudon Township), Township Law and Order Restoration Council, Mudon Town

မွန်ပြည်နယ်ဖြစ်စဉ်မှတ်တမ်း (၁၉၈၁) (Chronicle of Mon State (1981)), General Administration Department, Mudon Township, Type Writing Copy

M.A (Thesis), M.Res, Ph.D (Myanmar)

Ngwe Su, Ma, (M.Res) - "မုဒုံမြို့နယ်၏ လူမှုစီးပွားရေးအပေါ် ပဏာမလေ့လာချက် (၁၉၆၂–၁၉၇၄)" ("A Study on the Socio-Economic History of Mudon Township (1962-1974)"), Department of History, Mawlamyine University, 2002

Ohmar Khin, Ma, (Ph.D) - "မုဒုံမြို့နယ်သမိုင်း (၁၉၀၁–၁၉၂၇)" ("History of Mudon Township (1901-1927)"), Mawlamyine University, Department of History

Secondary Sources (Myanmar)

Kyi Mya Lwin, - *မွန်ဘဝလေ့နိဒါန်း (Introduction of Mon Lives and Customs)*, 1st Edition, Mawlamyine, Ramanya Publishing Press, 1976

Kyi Sein, Mg, - *ဘုန်းသစ်နိုးပါနှင့် အတိတ်ပစ္စုပ္ပန် ရုပ်ပုံလွှာစာစုများ (Awake Bhone Thit and Past and Present Pictorial -Journals)*, 1st Edition, Mawlamyine, Swe Moe Press, 2017

Marmaka, - *မွန်တို့ဌာနေရာမည (The Indigenous Place of Mon Ramanya)*, 1st Edition, Yangon, Tet Lan Publishing House, 1997

Myint, U, - *မုဒုံမြို့နယ်၊ ရှေးဟောင်းသမိုင်းဝင် ကန်ကြီးစေတီတော် (Mudon Township, Historical Kangyi Pagoda)*, 3rd Edition, Yangon, Thihabahu Press, 2015

San Win, U, - *ဦးစံဝင်း၏လက်ရွေးစင်စာတမ်းများ (selected monograph of U San Win)*, Department of Historical Research and National Library), Yangon, Aung Kyaw Moe Color Press, 2020

Tin Naing Toe, - *မြန်မာပြည်တစ်ခွင်လမ်းညွှန် (A Guide Across Myanmar)*, Yangon, Mizzima

Publishing, 2013

Pyinyar, U, - *မုတ္တမရာဇဝင်ပေါင်းချုပ်နှင့် မုတ္တမစစ်တမ်းဟောင်းကျမ်း (Mottama Yarzawin Paung Chote and Old Mottama Survey)*, 1st Edition, Thahtone, Thuwanawaddy Pitakas Press, 1289

- *ကျိုက်ဇယ်စေတီတော်သမိုင်းအကျဉ်း (A Brief History of Kyaikze Pagoda)*, Myanmar Year 1369

- *တိုင်းရင်းသားမွန်လူမျိုးများအကြောင်း၊ သမိုင်းကောက်နုတ်ချက်၊ ဆောင်းပါး၊ စာတမ်းပေါင်းချုပ်* (*About Mon Ethnic Group, the Historical Extract, Article, Collection of Treatises*), Ethnic Affair Committee of Mon State Parliament

- *တိုင်းရင်းသားရက်စဉ်သမိုင်း (မွန်)* (*Ethnic Historical Records (Mon)*), Ministry of Culture, Department of Historical Research, 1st Edition, Yangon, Shwe Minthar Press, 2013

Journals

Aye Kyaw, U, - *မုတ္တမ (၃၂) မြို့စစ်တမ်း၊ တက္ကသိုလ်ပညာပဒေသာစာစောင် (Mottama (32) Towns Inquest, Tagatho Pyinya Padathar Journa)l*, Volume 5, Section 1, Without Town and Press Name, 1970

- *မုဒုံမြို့နှစ် (၁၀၀) ပြည့် အထိမ်းအမှတ်စာစောင် (The Journal Marked the Centenary Year of Mudon Town)*, Mudon *Township* Department of General Administration, 1901-2001

Magazines - *မုဒုံမြို့နယ်မဂ္ဂဇင်း (Mudon Township Magazine), No. (1)*, Mudon Township Magazine Publishing Committee, Yangon, Fugiko Press, 2012

Interviewee

U Kyaw Soe Moe, one of the local people in Kwanton, Myoma (2) ward, Mudon Town (4 March 2023)

U Kyi Sein, (Retired), the Secretary of People Council, Mon State, Mawlamyine Town (31 Janyuary 2023)

U Ngwe Hlaing (Old Member of Commune), a resident of Kwanton neighborhood, Mudon Township (6 February 2023)

J. Myanmar Acad. Arts Sci. 2026 **Vol. XXIII. No.5**

THE TRADITIONS AND CUSTOMS OF *TWIN-YOE TWIN-ZARS* IN YENANCHAUNG TOWNSHIP

Myint Myint Moe[1]

Abstract

This paper describes the Traditions and Customs of *Twin-Yoe -Twin-zars* in Yenanchaung Township. They became a distinct social class during the reign of king Badon in Konbaung Period. In Late Konbaung Period. The oil industry has been existed in Yenangyaung since the days of Bagan Period. Along with the emergence of the industry, there also came to appear a distinguished class of the people, by the names of "*Twin-Yoe*" and "*Twin-zar*". Concerning with the appearance of these people, all records through the ages pointed and used since Bagan Period. The present paper presented all the affairs concerning with *Twin-Yoe Twin-zars* as much as possible, incorporating matters from the days of their emergence to the disappearance on 1 April 1965, where the nationalization of their industry occurred. In doing so, the paper is divided into, focusing their traditions and customs in Konbaung Period, colonial period and independence era. From this research project, it is expected that an identity of Yenanchaung has been partially revealed. It also to be concluded that further reliable documents will be searched for clear revelation to researchers.

Keywords: Traditions, Customs and Status

Introduction

Twin-yoe Twin-zar community has been existed since the olden days, but actually emerged only in the reign of King Anawrahta (1044-1077), in early Bagan Period. There were two social classes namely the ruling social class and the ruled social class. Of the many social status in Myanmar society, one social status is found confined to only a region, which was *Twin-Yoe Twin-zars* or the hereditary earth oil diggers and owners of Yenanchaung *Twin-Yoe Twin-zars* had done the digging of earth oil as the mean for their living, since the days of Bagan Period. Though the number of *Twin-Yoe Twin-zar* families increased, they did not mingle with other peoples, not in association with others, not dine with other people and not marry to others. The precedence of *Twin-Yoe* succession dictated that women in the male line of *Twin-yoe* descendant and men in the female line of *Twin-Yoe* descendant could not succeed the hereditary right of *Twin-Yoe Twin-zars*. This practice finally caused to appear the practice of trading the *Twin-Yoe Twin-zars* right.

Research Objectives

This research was written and presented with the following objectives:

-To examine the lineage of the *Twin-Yoe Twin-zars*

-To study the social status of the community in Yenanchaung

-To know about the Myanmar's traditional heritages as a cultural research

Research Questions

Who became a distinct social class in Konbaung Period?

What kinds of secular auspicious occasions were held?

[1] Department of History, Yenanchaung University

Data and Research Methods

In compiling this paper, the researcher used primary and secondary sources. The necessary data such as Historical Publications, Yenanchaung University library and Department of History. And then personal interviewees. The research will be conducted using a historical analysis approach, which involves the various steps such as Literature Review, Document Analysis, Content Analysis.

The Traditions and Customs of *Twin-Yoe Twin-zars*

Like the Kings of Myanmar monarchy, *Twin-Yoe Twin-zars* in their cultural tradition usually paid homage to the elders, teachers and parents three times a year at the new year in Tagu, at the start of Buddhist Lent in Wazo and at the end of Buddhist Lent in Thadingyut. In matrimonial affairs, *Twin-Yoe Twin-zars* were lightly bounded by the tradition of intermarriage among the community. In order not to mix with other people, *Twin-Yoe Twin-zars* married their son and daughter to near or far relatives, mostly step brother and sister. *Twin-Yoe Twin-zars* usually held three auspicious days of wedding, cradle hanging and novitiation/ear borning wonderfully and grandiosely. At such occasions, grandparents gave oil wells to their grandsons and granddaughter. *Twin-Yoe Twin-zars* had made a range of donations such as ordination hall and stairways and so on. These people usually held funeral services grandiosely. It can be deduced that *Twin-Yoe Twin-zars* and their community was a privileged class and community.

Some held recitation of paritta suttas at the waxing day of a month and New Year paritta suttas recitation, where elders were invited and paid homage to them and entertained them with foods and snacks.[1] The ceremony of worldly matters the cradle blessing ceremony , ear-boring ceremony, marriage, and the burial ceremony are done extraordinarily. Before Colonial period, the alms-giving ceremony of wealthy people with or without musical instruments offered food to the attendance in the consecration hall and the ten righteous are also offered. Wealthy *Twin-Yoe Twin-zars* held the twelve secular auspicious occasions grandiosely, but some held it only modestly by inviting each seven houses from cardinal direction. Of these, wedding, cradle hanging, novitiation and funeral services were held pompously. The social control of *Twin-Yoe Twin-zar* community was that they usually intermarried among the member of their community, as they wished to maintain the community in tact. In this way, *Twin-Yoe Twin-zar* community in Yenanchaung became a secluded community. The secluded privileged class of *Twin-Yoe Twin-zar* and the influential Salin *thu-gaungs* were in one aspect the same, that is, their wedding tradition. Salin *thu-gaungs* intermarried themselves and if one married to other person outside of their circle, this person was not recognized as *thu-gaungs*.[2]

Wedding

In matrimonial affairs, *Twin-Yoe Twin-zars* were lightly bounded by the tradition of intermarriage among the community.[3] Likewise, Salin *thu-gaungs* also intermarried themselves among their circle. In order not to mix with other people, *Twin-Yoe Twin-zars* married their son

---

[1] Twinyo U Naing, "*Yenangyaung Myo Ye-nan Twin-yoe Twin-zar-mya Tha-mainghnint Da-le-htone-san Yin-kye-hmu*" (The History of *Twin-Yoe Twin-zar*: their Tradition and Culture), Yenanchaung, Handscript, 1970, p.58 (Henceforth: Naing, *1970*)

[2] Daw Ohn Kyi, "*Salin Thugaung Tha-maing A-kyin*" (The History of Salin Thu-gaung (brief), Miscellaneous Myanmar History, Mandalay, Typescript, 1982, p.77

[3] MBK, An Outline of Burma's Oil History, Rangoon, Myawaddy Press, 1982, p.15

and daughter to near or far relatives, mostly step brother and sister. They accepted marriage by exchange.[4] Wedding tradition of *Twin-Yoe Twin-zars* were found different from other people, especially in those of ceremonial style and accoutrements. As they regarded themselves "the secluded community", they were prisoners of vain glory, such as keeping their tradition, doing intermarriage only and holding pompous wedding. But *Twin-Yoe Twin-zars*, were dignified by their wealth and high living standard in the social circle in Yenanchaung.[5]

The auspicious day of cradle hanging

Twin-Yoe Twin-zars usually held three auspicious days of wedding, cradle hanging and novitiation/ear borning wonderfully and grandiosely.[6] When cradle hanging ceremony was held, they put their child in silver cradle, decorated with flowers. If the child was boy, toys of sword, gun and so on were placed at the side of the cradle and if girl, stone slab, *thanakha* and other toys were placed at the side of cradle, along with books and ballpen. While rocking the cradle, grandparents usually recited some Dhamma (teachings of the Buddha) verses. The child was given water with silver cup. These children were to use their own cup, till they came of age. At the ceremony of cradle hanging, monks were usually invited and offered alms foods and then visitors were treated with foods and snacks. Grandparents usually gave one or two gold coins to the child, some even gave oil well to the child. If it was oil well, the child became owner of oil well, effectively became *Twin-zars* since childhood. This practice of giving oil well to child was especially done, at the ceremony of cradle hanging. It was keeping one of the traditions of *Twin-Yoe Twin-zars*, but showing the power of wealth of the community.[7]

Novitiation and Ear-boring Ceremony

In holding novitiation and ear boring ceremony, there were entertaining words, consecration, and concluding entertaining words, which were exclusively performed by the persons of *Twin-Yoe Twin-zars*. Whenever feeding ceremony was held, rice feeders and rice food holders were wealthy, child bearing *Twin-Yoe Twin-zars*.[8] Some had it made invitation with cloth, where it was interwoven with invitation letters and kept if for remembrance. In novitiation ceremony, novice to-be wore tiara, gold sash and gold girdle and near him were placed the eight requisites of a monk. Gold girdle had a buckle, on which was embossed the figure of novice-to-be's birth date representative animal. Ear boring girls wore gem studded ceremonial frock and under the "Sibon" (Myanmar ceremonial head-dress for girls) ceremonial head-dress wore gold diadem, on which was inscribed the name of the girl. These girls also wore gold girdle, on the buckle of which was embossed the representative figure of the girl's birth date. After the ceremony, the novice-to-be and ear boring girls were given what they wore of gold sash, gold girdles and gold diadem.[9] At such occasions, grandparents gave oil wells to their grandsons and

[4] Consecration hall (betel server with stand, best man, brides maid, bachelor's room, maiden's room)

[5] Interview with (*Twin-Yoe)* Daw Khin Nwe Nwe, (B.E.H.S, Retired), 86 year old, Shwe Kyar Ngon Quarter, (3.8.2024)

[6] *Yenangyaung Myo-ne Phyit-sin Hmat-tan* (Records of Yenangyaung Township), Yenangyaung, Kawi Mahein Press, 1969, p.7

[7] Interview with (*Twin-Yoe*) Dr. Myint Myint Than, (Thant Zin Oo Clinic) 80 Year Old, Shwe Kyar Ngon Quarter, (3.8.2024)

[8] "Tha-shin-pyu Mingalar A-khan-a-nar A-si-a-sin" (Narites of novitiation Ceremony (1973)), Dr. Yin Yin Tun Collection, handwriting, p.15

[9] Twin-yoe U Yoe Pe's novitiation and ear boring ceremony interviewed with Daw Khin Nwe Nwe, aged 77, on 20.5.2011

granddaughter, and grandparents and relatives gave lands and money to their grandchild, which was recorded on a *parabaik.* Before the novice-to-be and ear boring girls were taken to their mentor, they were to pay homage to the guardian Nat (God), known as Bobogyi.[10] At the ceremony, Sayadaws were invited and offered alms foods, children were consecrated and boys were ordained into the Order. Invited guests were entertained with foods and snacks.[11] *Twin-yoe Twin-zars* had made a range of donations such as ordination hall and stairways and so on. In 1869, son of Wunshindaw Yenangyaung Myo-zar Bohmu Myinwun Mingyi, four towns governor (Yenangyaung, Wetmasut, Kyaukye and Pakhannge) *Twin-zar* U Maung Maung Lay and his wife donated a bell, worth 31,506 kyats, at the Auk-taw-ya Monastery, in honour of the ceremonies of making novice and ear boring for their son, Maung Maung Ba. As a record of donation, they inscribed an inscription on the outer surface of the *Atighosamakuta-ghamda-raja* Bell in 1869. The inscription written in Pali and Myanmar languages kept fourteen lines of letters. The Bell took the leading role among the Bell inscriptions in Yenanchaung's area for tracing the Town's events.[12] Wealthy *Twin-yoe Twin-zars* usually held and observed their traditions with pomp and romp.

Donation (erections of pagodas, building of monasteries and inscription sheds)

In 1908, *Twin-zar* U Thakan and *Paramiphet* Daw Khin Thin and their son U Thant Zin and wife Daw Ma Ma Gyi donated stone inscriptions of 114 slabs of Vinaya(discipline or code of conduct for Buddhist monks), 124 slabs of Suttanta and 213 slabs of Abhidhamma (Buddhist doctrine embodied in the third basket of Tipitaka), totalling 451 stone inscriptions with the shed.[13] This inscription shed can still be seen in Ponnagon Ward, in the north part of Yenangyaung. They also donated Pyinsamarazein Pagoda, the upper Nat shrine with figures of Indra, four guardians, dragon, garuda, ogre, and the lower Nat shrine with figures of Bobogyi, Shwepyingyi and Shwepyinlay, Kyeponna, seven queens and Ma Hnelay. *Twin-zar* U Thant Zin and wife Daw Ma Ma Gyi repaired their parent's donation of inscription shed. Since 1996, grandson of *Twin-zar* U Thant Zin and Daw Ma Ma Gyi, Maj. Tin Maung (Rtd.) and wife annually donated 300,000 kyats to the reparation trustee of inscription sheed. In 1909, Mindon's Queen Kyemyin repaired a monastery in the Mahāvisutāyama Taik at Inngan, in the east section of Mandalay. This monastery is known as Kyemyin Monastery till present. Great grandsons and daughters of Queen Kyemyin go on maintain their great grandmother's donation nowadays.[14]

In 1914, a total of Twenty-four *Twin-Yoe Twin-zars* had established *Sasanahita Catupissaya* (*Yoma*) daily alms offering association, by dedicating an oil well for it. When the British gave oil wells to Twenty-four *Twin-Yoe Twin-zar*, they divided these wells among them and an oil well came out extra. When they discussed about the extra oil well, to use it for the establishment of the association, went against the plan. Thus shares of the four were bought by *Twin-zar* U Bo Htun and Daw Phwa for the share of *Twin-Yoe* U Yo Set, Salin Seinban monastery donor Daw Meinmagyi for the share of *Twin-Yoe* U Shwe Din, *Twin-zar* Saya Ywe

---

[10] The legendary founder of earth oil, who after death, became a Nat, looking after *Twin-Yoe Twin-zar* relative

[11] Twinyoe U Yoe pe's record on the novitiation and ear boring ceremony, 1973, 4

[12] Kyaw Swe Oo, An investigation of Yenanchaung in the context of Stone and Bell inscriptions, Yenanchaung Degree College, Research Project, 2017, p.4

[13] U Win Kyi (Yenangyaung), "Yenangyaung Myo Hma Pi-ta-kat-taw-son Kyauk-sayon Dham-ma Sa-di-mya Tha-maing (Yenangyaung)" (History of Pitaka Inscriptions in Yenangyaung), *Yenatha Annual Magazine*, Yangon, Colour Zone Press, 2006, p. 10

[14] Field Survey on 2. 8.2024

and wife for the share of *Twin-Yoe* U Thagado and Daw Ma Ma Gyi, wife of *Twinzar-yo* U Thant Zin for the share of Fatama Bi Bi and donated to the association.[15] The oil well donated to the association was Grant Number 3955. British Burma Petroleum Co. paid advanced money of 5000 kyats, to do the oil well, in joint venture with the association. BBPC dug it with machine and the oil well number of it was No.44. Sasanahita Catupissaya association was added the word "*Yoma*", to indicate, it was established based on the advanced money of 5000 kyats. First chairman of the association was U Yoe Pe and secretaries were also *Twin-Yoe Twin-zars*. Elder members led by U Yoe Pe, supervised association and three persons were alternately assigned annually to do the operation of the association. They made the association's fund increased, by means of operating money lending. On 23 January 1924, *Twin-zar* Pyinmana Prince and wife Htayanka Hteikkhaungtin Prince donated 2000 kyats to the Catupissaya association, in dedication of mother Queen Kyemyin.[16]

In 1921, *Catupissaya* association formed a sub-association of *Sasanahita Dhammānuggha* Exam Association. On 22 September 1928, *Twin-zar* Ma Phwa Nyein donated her oil well with the Grant-No.355, to this association, which located at Twin-gon Aungban Ward.[17] When the Revolutionary Council nationalized all oil wells, these associations lost their oil wells. Thus these associations began to dwindle, far their wherewithal sources were being cut off. In 1971, under the lead of *Twin-zar* U Kyi Sein, traders and businessmen reinvigorated the association, with U Khine as chairman. Since them, Catupissaya association can go on their daily alms offering to sangha. The association goes on run till present day. *Twin-zar-yo* Daw Thet Su, son U Ba U (ex. upper house deputy and lawyer) and Daw Ahma built a brick monastery called Yadanabonmyint in Shweminwun Taik, Yenanchaung. As it was bit by a bomb during World War II, grandsons and daughters repaired it. All these indicate that *Twin-yoe Twin-zars* had been found maintained donations of their forefathers.[18]

Whenever these people made any donation, they invariably prefixed their appellation of *Twin-yoe*, *Twin-zar* and Salin *Thu-gaungs*, before their names. Their donations had exalted them, by assuming such appellations of pagoda donor, Sima (Buddhist Ordination Hall) donor, monastery donor and so on, which were possible only by the power of earth oil. With regard to religion, *Twin-yoe Twin-zars* might be attributable as devout devotees to the Sāsanā. They were also found to be believers in Nat worship. Whenever an oil well was to be dug out, they worshipped Bobogyi Nat and seven queens and prayed for the good exploitation of earth oil. Thus, *Twin-yoe Twin-zars* can be said of devout Buddhists as well as Nat worshipers.[19]

Funeral Ceremony

Twin-yoe Twin-zars usually performed the inauspicious affair of funeral ceremony, according to their traditions and customs.[20] When someone in the household died, the style of preparation of funeral was different, dependent upon who died, such as household head or sons or daughters or son-in-law or daughter-in-law or servants. If it was house owner or household

---

[15] *Yenangyaung Myo Tha-tha-na-hi-ta Satupassaya Yoma A-thin U-pa-de* (Rules of Yenangyaung Sasanahita Catupissaya Yoma Association), Mandalay, Tampadipa Division, Pitaka Press, 1978, p.6

[16] 23 January 1924, donated to the Catupissaya Association

[17] 22 September 1928, donated to Sasanahita Dhammānuggha Exam Association

[18] Field Survey (3.7.2024)

[19] Kyaw Soe, "*Twin-yoe Twin-zar Tha-maing*" (History of Twin-yoe Twin-zar), M.A Thesis, History Department, University of Yangon, 1987, p.2 (Henceforth: Kyaw Soe, 1987)

[20] Kyaw Soe, 1987, p.40

head, the funeral was prepared at about the middle of the house, and other persons such as sons, daughters, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, brother, sister, uncle, auntie and so on of relatives, the funeral was prepared in the roofed extension of the house. If it was house servant, who had been in the house since the days of forefathers, the funeral was placed on the house. If the servant arrived the house, only in time of household head, the funeral was placed on the ground at the side of the house, where temporary shed was built. However, if any visitor, relatives or stranger, had died, the funeral was placed outside the house, well away from the line of caves. The corpse of *Twin-yoe Twin-zars* shall not keep more than three days. If it desires to keep more, the corpse shall bury only on the seventh day. If one dies on new moon day, he/she shall bury on the same day and hold food offering to the monk in dedication of the deceased. Also if it was a new mother, died within seven day of delivery and the one died of violent death, shall bury within the day of death. Besides, death by small pox, leprosy and virulent disease and children less than 10 years of age, shall bury within the day. No funeral ceremony shall be held for these persons.[21]

At the funeral of *Twin-yoe Twin-zar*, musicians have to play the dirge, to the accompaniment of the "*Byaingtaung*" [22]drums, which are restricted to the funeral only. The bier pavilion where the coffin was placed, was shouldered by friends and relatives, some of them drew the rope, extended from the bier. At the day of the bury of the corpse, monks were to be invited according to the age of the deceased. At the place of bury, four banana trees were to be planted. After the corpse had been lowered in the ground, relatives and friends filled the pit with earth and stone, mind full of the law of impermanence. Within the seven days, alms foods offering to the monk in dedication of the deceased shall be done daily. If it built the tomb, the name and the appellation of the deceased were recorded on the tomb. Being a privileged community, *Twin-yoe Twin-zars* have unusual funeral rites, different from those of ordinary people.[23]

Finding and discussion

In presenting the customs and traditions of the current oil well worship ceremonies, it is not solely for the purpose of preserving and adhering to ancient practices. Rather, it is intended to inform and educate about a part of Myanmar's traditional heritage as a cultural research endeavor. Although it cannot be assumed that the traditional practices and customs of the oil well-digging lineage strictly adhere to their ancestral traditions, it is genuinely believed that their cultural heritage should be properly revealed and presented.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Anawrahta had appointed the head of *Twin-Yoe Twin-zars* as *Twinthu-gyi*, decorating him with the title of Naymyothamantayaza, responsible to administer *Twin-Yoe Twin-zars*, to settle and judge all affairs and cases, occurred among the community. *Twin-thu-gyi* had the power to grant anyone to dig the earth oil. *Twin-Yoe Twin-zar* community was a secluded one, to the extent that they did not dine, not marry and not communicate with other peoples. In both line of descendants, only the primogeniture could succeed the line, the eldest son to the male line and the eldest daughter to the female line. When there was no heir, for tear of disappearance of the line, the hereditary right was sold to others, who mostly happened to be members of *Twin-*

[21] Naing, 1970, p.68
[22] Wrapping drums and above with white cloths
[23] Interview with Daw Sint Sint, (Sein Min Press), 78 Year old, Sone taik Quarter (3.8.2024)

Yoe Twin-zars community. There also were some succession disputes. Of the twelve auspicious occasions, cradle hanging, novitiation and wedding ceremonies were grandiosely and pompously held. At such occasions, elders gave a range of gifts from gold coins to oil well. *Twin-Yoe Twin-zars* also donated ordination hall, rest house, and bell, plus the donation of pagodas, monasteries, stairways, archway, and so on. *Twin-Yoe Twin-zars* had it established a religious association, known as Catupissaya (*Yoma*) daily alms food offering association. All these donations and dedications show the fact that *Twin-Yoe Twin-zars* were pious Buddhists. In social area, *Twin-Yoe Twin-zars* were found themselves ostracizing from other peoples, by not relating to, not dining with and not marrying to other peoples. Their observance of those social occasions of novitation, wedding and funeral were different from other peoples. Since them, centuries long traditional livelihood of *Twin-Yoe Twin-zars* was gone forever, but still known the industry and the people in association together forever.

Acknowledgment

I would like to express my gratitude to Dr. Aye Aye Thant, Rector and Dr. Thida Htwe Win, Pro-Rector of Yenenchaung University, for their permission to do this work. I would especially like to thank Dr. Thin Thin Aye Professor/ Head, Department of History, University of Yangon, Dr. Kyaw Swe Nyunt Professor/ Head, Department of History, University of Mandalay and Dr. Kyaw Swe Oo, Professor/ Head, Department of History, Yenanchaung University. And then, thanks are also extended to Daw Khin Nwe Nwe (B.E.H.S Retired), Dr. Myint Myint Than (Twin-yoe) (Thant Zin Oo Clinic) and Daw Sint Sint (Twin-yoe) (Sein Min Press) for their permission to carry out this research paper.

References

Burmese Customary Law, Vol. II, Code. No. 81, Yangon, Ministery of Education, 2000

George Scott and J.P Hardiman, Gazetteer of Upper Burma and the Shan States, Part.I, vol.ii, Rangoon, Government Printing, 1900

Kyaw Soe,"*Twin-Yoe Twin-zar Tha-maing*" (History of *Twin-Yoe Twin-zar*), M.A Thesis, History Department, University of Yangon, 1987

Kyaw Swe Oo, An investigation of Yenanchaung in the context of Stone and Bell inscriptions, Yenanchaung Degree College, Research Project, 2017

MBK, An Outline of Burma's Oil History, Rangoon, Myawaddy Press, 1982

Naing,U, (*Twin-Yoe*) "*Yenangyaung Myo Ye-nan Twin-Yoe Twin-zar-mya Tha-mainghnint Da-le-htone-san Yin-kye-hmu*" (The History of *Twin-Yoe Twin-zar*: their Tradition and Culture), Yenanchaung, Handscript, 1970

Ohn Kyi, Daw, "*Salin Thugaung Tha-maing A-kyin*" (The History of Salin *Thu-gaung* (brief), Miscellaneous Myanmar History, Mandalay, Typescript, 1982

Twinyoe U Yoe pe's record on the novitiation and ear boring ceremony, 1973

"*Tha-shin-pyu Mingalar A-khan-a-nar A-si-a-sin*" (Narites of novitiation Ceremony (1973)), Dr. Yin Yin Tun Collection, handwriting

Yenangyaung Myo Tha-tha-na-hi-ta Satupassaya Yoma A-thin U-pa-de (Rules of Yenangyaung Sasanahita Catupissaya Yoma Association), Mandalay, Tampadipa Division, Pitaka Press, 1978

Yenangyaung Myo-ne Phyit-sin Hmat-tan (Records of Yenangyaung Township), Yenangyaung, Kawi Mahein Press, 1969

Yin Yin Tun, Dr. "*Ye-nan Twin-Yoe Twin-zar Tha*-maing *Hnint Da-le Htone-san Yin-kye-hmu*" (The History of Earth Oil *Twin-Yoe Twin-zar*: Custom, Tradition and Culture), Handscript, 1980

Magazine

Win Kyi, U,(Yenangyaung), "Yenangyaung Myo Hma Pi-ta-kat-taw-son Kyauk-sayon Dham-ma Sa-di-mya Tha-maing (Yenangyaung)" (History of Pitaka Inscriptions in Yenangyaung), *Yenatha Annual Magazine*, Yangon, colour Zone Press, 2006,

Ye-nan-mye Ba Pe "Mindon Min Let-htet-ka Bay-me Pay-khè-thaw Bay-me Ye-nanmye" (Baymē oilfield exempted since the Reign of King Mindon), *Sa-pe Loketha Magazine*, November, 1983

Interviewee

Khin New New, Daw, (*Twin-yoe*) (B.E.H.S, Retired), 86 year old, Shwe Kyar Ngon Quarter, (3.8.2024)

Myint Myint Than, Dr. (*Twin-yoe*) (Thant Zin Oo Clinic), 80 Year old, Shwe Kyar Ngon Quarter, (3.8.2024)

Sint Sint, Daw, (*Twin-yoe*) (Sein Min Press), 78 Year old, Sone taik Quarter (3.8.2024)

EMERGENCE OF TAMADAW GOVERNMENT IN 1962: ANALYZING HISTORICAL TRAJECTORIES AND LESSONS FOR PEACE

Myat Noe Eain[1]

Abstract

The 1962 military came to power in Myanmar marked a significant turning point in the country's history, leading to decades of military rule. This paper aims to analyze the underlying reasons for taking power, examining the political, economic, and international factors that contributed to the military's decision to seize power. The analysis will be drawn on historical references and scholarly works to provide a comprehensive understanding of this significant historical event. This paper aims to explore the complex interplay of political and economic factors that led to the 1962 military power takeover in Myanmar. By examining the historical context and the motivations behind the power takeover, the study seeks to provide a comprehensive analysis of why the military seized power and how this action reshaped the country's future.

Keywords: political, economic, international factors, taking power, military power

Introduction

The 1962 military came to power in Myanmar marked a pivotal shift in the country's political landscape, transitioning from a parliamentary democracy to the Revolutionary Council. This event was orchestrated by General Ne Win and the Burma Socialist Programme Party (BSPP), leading to over five decades of military rule. The power takeover not only altered Myanmar's governance but also had profound implications for its socio-economic and international relations. Understanding the underlying causes of power takeover is crucial for comprehending Myanmar's contemporary political challenges and historical trajectory.

Objectives

- To analyze the political and economic conditions in Myanmar prior to the 1962 military came to power, including the challenges faced by the parliamentary government
- To examine the role of key political figures, including General Ne Win
- To assess how economic instability and nationalist sentiments contributed to the came to power justification
- To explore the impact of institutional weaknesses and ideological factors on the military's decision to seize power

Research Questions

- What were the primary political and economic conditions in Myanmar leading up to the 1962 military came to power?
- How did the weaknesses and challenges of the parliamentary government contribute to the military's decision to seize power?
- What were the immediate and long-term impacts of the 1962 military came to power on Myanmar's political structure and governance?
- In what ways did the 1962 military came to power shape the trajectory of Myanmar's subsequent political movements?

[1] Department of History & Cultural Heritage Tourism, University of Mandalay

Research Method

Historical Analysis: This study will utilize primary and secondary historical sources, including official documents, personal memoirs, and contemporary news reports, to reconstruct the political and economic conditions leading up to the came to power.

Documentary Review: Examination of archival materials such as government records, military communiqués, and international diplomatic correspondence will be essential to understand the internal and external factors influencing the came to power.

Qualitative Research: The research will include an analysis of Myanmar's 1962 came to power.

Thematic Analysis: Thematic analysis will be employed to identify and categorize recurring themes and patterns related to the causes and consequences of the came to power.

The Causes for Military Came to Power

During World War II (1939-1945), Burma transitioned from British rule to Japanese occupation in 1942. Consequently, General Aung San established the Anti-Fascist Organization (AFO) during the Japanese era on 23 August 1944, at his residence in Yangon.[1] The Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League (AFPFL) included the Burma National Army[2], the Communist Party, and the People's Revolutionary Party. Shortly after its formation, they changed their name to the Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League, often abbreviated as "*Pha Hsa Pa La"*. On 26 December 1945, the Myanma Alin newspaper described the abbreviation "AFPFL". The AFPFL Conference was held on 17 January 1946, at Shwedagon Pagoda with the aim of strengthening unity.[3] The political parties and organizations that attended the conference are as follows.[4]

1. Communist Party of Burma
2. Socialist Party
3. *Myochit* Party (Patriotic Party)
4. Karen Central Organization
5. Arakan National Congress
6. Burma Muslim Congress
7. Karen Youth Organization
8. All-Burma Youth League
9. All-Burma Trades Union Congress
10. All-Burma Peasants' Union
11. All-Burma Teachers' Association
12. Women's Leagues
13. People's Volunteer Corps
14. Mon Association

---

[1] Tin Naing Toe, *Myanmar Naingnganye Thamaing Hmattam (1897-1948)* (Myanmar Political History (1897-1948)), Yangon, Sanadi Literature, 2012, p. 400 (Henceforth: Tin Naing Toe, *2012)*

[2] On 15 September 1943, the Burma Defense Army (BDA) changed its name to the Burma National Army (BNA). *Tatmataw Thamaing 1842-1945* (History of the Tatmadaw 1824-1945), Vol. 1, Military History Museum and Office of the Military Archives, Myanmar Alin Printing Press and Guardian Press, 1994, p. 293

[3] Ludu U Hla, *Thatinsarmyar Ka Pyawtae Sitpyi Myanmar Pyi* (Myanmar after the war as reported by the newspapers), Vol. 1, Mandalay, Ludu Press, 1969, pp. 270-271

[4] Hugh Tinker, Burma: The Struggle for Independence 1944-1948, Vol. 1, England, Eyre & Spottiswoode Ltd., Thanet Press, 1983, p. 617-622 (Henceforth: Tinker, *1983*)

15. Burma Chamber of Commerce and Industries, Shan, Chin, and Karen attended the event. On 7 May 1946, a public protest was held at Kantawmin Park, led by the AFPFL.[1]

On 21 September 1946, Governor Sir Hubert Rance met with General Aung San, President of the AFPFL. During the AFPFL executive meeting held on 25 September 1946, at 4:00 p.m., it was decided that Aung San and members of the AFPFL be participants in the Governor's Executive Council (Ministry). However, the Communist Party expressed concerns about this decision, considering it an entry into an imperialist trap that would hinder the freedom struggle and betray the people. The Socialist Party also demanded the expulsion of the Communists from the League with the rule of AFPFL[2]. Despite General Aung San's reluctance to remove the Communist Party from the AFPFL, no resolution was reached. Eventually, on 20 October 1946, the Communist Party was expelled from the AFPFL by a majority vote in the Central Executive Committee.[3] Since then, there have been disagreements between the AFPFL and the Communists. This conflict is believed to be the starting point for the breakdown of national unity in Myanmar's history. Additionally, it is one of the factors that led to military rule in Myanmar after independence.

Under the leadership of the AFPFL, Myanmar gained independence on 4 January 1948, through the Aung San-Attlee Treaty and the Nu-Attlee Treaty.[4] Additionally, forty-three political party organizations emerged during the era of parliamentary democracy after the declaration of independence.[5]

After Myanmar gained independence, U Seinda (from the People's Liberation Party) and Bonpauk Thar Kyaw (from the Red Flag Communist Party) engaged in armed conflict in Rakhine Division. Their actions continued until a parallel government was established.[6] The Burma Communist Party (BCP) and the Communist Party (Burma/ Red Flag) engaged in clashes. While the forces opposing the AFPFL government occasionally disagreed and launched attacks, they also cooperated in their opposition to the AFPFL, which they considered a common enemy. A delegation from the BCP, led by Thakin Than Tun, participated in the Second Congress of the Communist Party of India held in Calcutta, India from 28 February to 6 March 1948. In response to any Communist aggression, the AFPFL government declared that the Communists would face retaliation twice as strong, involving two million Red Army troops.[7] The Burma Communist Party convened the second national conference of the Burma National Peasants' Union from March 13 to March 18, 1948, in the village of Ahlyinlo[8], Pyinmana Township.[9] On March 28, 1948, the Burma Communist Party launched an armed rebellion against the AFPFL government. Within days, the party became well-organized and armed, leading to movements in various areas

---

[1] Toe Tat Yae Journal, no. 25, July 1946, p. 9

[2] According to AFPFL rules, every member party within the federation has the right to freely criticize, but expressing criticism through external newspapers is forbidden.

[3] Kyaw Win, *Myanmar Naingganyee Laylarsansitchat (1948-1988)* Case Study of Myanmar Politics (1948-1988), Yangon, Tagaung Sarpay, *2022,* p. 92

[4] Yebaw Thit Maung, *Pyitwin Thaungkyanhmu Thamaing* (History of Internal Insurgency), Part (2), Yangon, Kyayhmon Press and Guardian Press, 1990, p. 1 (Henceforth: Thit Maung, *1990ii*)

[5] Record of Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League (AFPFL), Union Election Commission, Computer typescript, no date, no press, Appendix (2) (Henceforth: Record of AFPFL)

[6] Bonpauk Thar Kyaw, *Taw Hlanye Khayeewei* (Revolutionary journey), Yangon, Pathein Press, 1975, p. 308

[7] Thein Pe Myint, *Tawhlanye Kala Naingnganyee Atway Akyone* (Political Experiences During the Revolution), Yangon, Pathein Press, 1976, p. 211

[8] It is located 2 miles and 3 furlongs southwest of Pyinmana.

[9] Sagaing Han Tin, *Lonwa Lutlat Thoe* (Towards Totaly Independence), Yangon, PBA Color Press, 1967, p. 117

including Bago, Taungoo, Pyinmana, Myingyan, and Sagaing. Initially headquartered in the Taung Nyo region of Pyinmana, the party later relocated to Leway Township in January 1949.[1]

After Myanmar gained independence, certain organizations[2] were already engaged in armed uprisings. On 3 February 1948, the KNU group requested that the AFPFL government establish a separate Karen state. Subsequently, on 11 February, the KNU organized and led a large demonstration, showcasing the strength of the Karen people.[3] On 28 March 1948, the Burma Communist Party launched an armed rebellion against the AFPFL government, based in the Taung Nyo region of Pyinmana.[4] To solve such political problems, U Nu formulated a peace policy.[5] However, representatives of the Communist Party of Burma and some leaders of the People's Comrade also drew up the Comrade Principle in parallel with U Nu. On 10 July 1948, the People's Comrade League withdrew from the AFPFL after the split between Nu-Mu (U Nu's Policy) and Yebaw-Mu (Comrade's Policy).[6] After that, Minister of the Interior U Kyaw Nyein (Socialist) intervened and arrested Comrade White on 29 July 1948. Consequently, Major Po Kun, along with some leaders and Comrade white, went to underground.[7]

After the independence of Myanmar, the Mon people started striving for a separate state. The Mon Ethnic Association was led by Mon U Po Cho, and the Mon Independence League was led by Nai Ba Lwin (also known as Naing Shwe Kyin). Mon nationals in Mawlamyine held a meeting on 20 March 1948 and demanded a separate Mon state. On 23 April 1948, the Mon National Defense Association was established during a Mon ethnic conference held in Phaok Village, Mudong Township. BengaliMuslims also wanted to create a Muslim region in the Buthidaung-Moungdaw region of northern Rakhine. As a result, the Mujahideen armed group formed and rioted, and from 7 October 1948 to 12 November 1948, they surrounded and attacked Buthidaung.[8] The Karen National Defense Organization (KNDO), which was formed on 16 July 1947[9], took over the Taungoo administration on 27 January 1949. On 2 February 1949, Insein was captured. The KNDO resisted for 111 days (from 31 January 1949 to 22 May 1949) in the Battle of Insein. On 21 February 1949, the KNDO captured Meikhtila, seized two planes, captured Maymyo (Pyin Oo Lwin), and captured Mandalay on 11 March 1949.[10] Because of this, the AFPFL's power was limited to Yangon, so it was even called the 'Rangoon government.' The Burma Communist Party, People's Volunteer Organization, and Underground Force formed the People's Democratic Army on 24 March 1949. After that formation, they occupied the

1 U Kyaw Nyein, *Myanmar Naingnganyee (1948-1958)* (Myanmar's Politics (1948-1958), Yangon, Department of Historical Research and National Library, Books Publication Committee, 2019, p-19 (Henceforth: Kyaw Nyein, 2019)

2 Red Flag Communist Party (Hpyarpon), Red Army under the Communist Party (Pyinmana), Rakhine Red Army (Thandwe), Bonpauk Thar Kyaw's Rakhine Youth Association (Southern Rakhine), Mujahideen Armed Forces (Northern Rakhine)

3 Thit Maung, *1990ii*, 3

4 Kyaw Nyein, *2019*, 19

5 Thit Maung, *1990ii*, 13

2, Part (2), Yangon, Department of Historical Research and National Library, Books Publication Committee, 2021, pp. 16-17 (Henceforth: Kyaw Nyein, *2021b (ii)*)

7 U Nu, *Tar Tay Sanaythar* (Saturday's Son), Yangon, Ngatoe Sarpay, 2013, p. 316 (Henceforth: U Nu, *2013*)

8 U San Tun Aung, *Kyunnote Thithaw Mujarhit, Mayyu Myay Hnit Rohinjar* (The Mujahid I Know: Mayu Land and the Rohingya), Yangon, Moyway Press, 2018, pp. 60-91

9 Fu Ki Do (Robert Zan), *Mann Bazan and the Karen Revolution*, Yangon, Independent Karen History Research Association, 1993, p. 75

10 *Tatmataw Thamaing* (History of the Army), Vol. 4, Yangon, News and Press Printing House, 1996, p. 34

territory of the Mawbi Army near Yangon.[1] The rise of such insurgent groups became one of the factors that planted the seeds of martial law (Military Administration) in Myanmar after its independence.

Facing internal unrest, the Kuomintang White Chinese troops in southern Yunnan invaded Burmese territory at the end of 1949. In February 1951, the Burmese Army launched the Frasos Operation and Lakhun Pen Operation against the Chinese White Camps stationed in the northern "Wa" area and the eastern part of Theinni, forcing them to retreat. Consequently, the Burmese delegation presented the issue of the White Chinese invasion to the 7th General Assembly of the United Nations in April 1953. Regarding that proposal, the Myanmar government received support from sixty countries in the United Nations, with fifty-nine votes in favor and 1 abstention, for the immediate withdrawal of all foreign troops invading Myanmar's territory.[2] However, as the White Chinese troops did not comply with the decision of the Bangkok Conference held on 22 May 1953, to hand over Mineset, Minetong, Mineyang, and Mineyong, the military launched operations.[3]

The Shan Armed Forces came into existence when Sai Nui formed a group of brave Shan youth called Noom Suk Harn on 21 May 1958, at the Thai-Myanmar border.[4] From 1 October 1955 to 31 March 1956, the AFPFL government opened the way for the insurgents to abandon the path of armed conflict and live in peace.[5]

As for the economic sector, rice yields were reduced, making it impossible to export as much as expected. Additionally, taxes could not be collected due to the situation, and insurgents ransacked government treasuries, resulting in a loss of public funds. In response to the deteriorating financial situation, it was decided to reduce the number of employees by 25% and cut salaries in half. Furthermore, due to the actions of the terrorists, public property such as railways, bridges, and government buildings worth 25 crores and more than 448 crores of public property was lost.[6] The value of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 1938-39 was 5,337 million kyats, but by 1950-51, it had decreased to 3,690 million kyats. If it looks at the value of per capita, it was 326 kyats in 1938-39, but only 199 kyats in 1950-51. Additionally, the value of products exported and sold abroad was found to have decreased by 6,882 million kyats between 1950-51 and 1955-56.[7]

According to the economic surveys of the Government of Myanmar, between 1949-50 and 1955-56, the agricultural and fishing industries lost 1,884 million kyats worth of products. Similarly, the timber industry lost 2,838 million kyats worth of products. The metallurgical industry lost 3,450 million kyats worth of products, and the transportation business lost 228 million kyats.[8] Since independence, Myanmar has not been able to fully restore the rule of law

---

[1] Record of AFPFL, 120-121
[2] Kyaw Nyein, 2019, 63
[3] (a) U Nu, *Luhmu Sipwa Meintkhwunmyar Paungchoke (U Nuei Meintkhwunpaungchoke Ahmat-2)* (Collection of Socio-Economic Speeches (Collection of U Nu's Speeches No. 2)), Yangon, Seikku Cho Cho Press, 2017, p.237-242 (b) Hugh Tinker, The Union of Burma, London, Oxford University Press, 1967, 53
[4] (a) Thit Maung, *1990ii* 176-179
(b) Kyaw Nyein, 2021*b (ii)*, 306
[5] Kyaw Nyein, 2019, 180
[6] Ye Tin, "*Nyeinchanye Baetaunee*" (When Will There Be Peace?), *Hanthawaddy Newspaper*, 1 August 1960, p. 6
[7] The wounds of the insurgency, DR 1784, Defense Service Museum and Historical Research Institute, Nay Pyi Daw, p 13 – 14 (Henceforth: The wounds of the insurgency)
[8] The wounds of the insurgency, 16-17

due to armed rebellion, the financial crisis in 1954-55, the lack of supervision and management systems for state-owned business organizations, the lack of skilled personnel to supervise projects, and the demoralization of employees due to the centralized management system. These factors have caused the performance and standards of state-owned business organizations to be low. It appears that Prime Minister U Nu clarified the losses.[1]

Another factor that led to martial law was the split in the AFPFL. On 12 June 1956, U Ba Swe (Socialist) became the Prime Minister. U Nu took the position of AFPFL chairman and planned changes in positions to clean up the AFPFL without consulting anyone.[2] After planning to clean up the AFPFL, the disintegration of the AFPFL started again. On 29 April 1958, U Nu, the chairman of the AFPFL, announced his confession to the country in a broadcast about the conflicts within the AFPFL.[3] Then, on 3 May 1958, an executive meeting was held at Prime Minister U Nu's residence. U Nu presented a seven-point policy[4] to resolve the conflict. The leaders of both sides agreed to the proposal and assigned a four-member committee[5] to consider how to divide the name of the AFPFL. Since then, the Nu-Tin group and the Swe-Nyein group have been divided. Initially, three groups were merged into one under the AFPFL. However, due to differences in policy and personality, they split up and found themselves divided again, even when their strength was weak. Such a division has led to a change in the political situation of Myanmar.

The Clean AFPFL, led by U Nu, continued to maintain state power but faced political instability and armed insurgencies between 9 June 1958, and 27 October 1958. Additionally, during the reign of the Clean AFPFL government, there was mutual suspicion and anxiety between the military and the Clean AFPFL government.[6] In this way, on 28 October 1958, General Ne Win was nominated as Prime Minister and handed over state power. Then, in accordance with Article 56(2) of the 1947 Constitution, the President announced on 27 February 1959, that eleven ministers were appointed as members of the Union of Myanmar government under the leadership of General Ne Win as the second Caretaker Government. The Caretaker Government announced on 19 December 1959 that general elections would be held on 6 February 1960. On 1 April 1960, the caretaker government led by General Ne Win handed over power to the Clean AFPFL, who won the election.[7]

After that, the People's Hluttaw approved the proposal to amend the constitution under the government of the winning party, Clean AFPFL. Even before the Constitution Amendment Committee was formed, the Shan State Government held a meeting on 7 November 1960, in Taunggyi to discuss the amendment of the Constitution. In June 1961, a multi-people conference took place in Taunggyi, during which they strongly demanded the federal principle. They even

---

[1] Myat Thein, Economic Development of Myanmar, Singapore, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2004, p. 14-48

[2] Win Tint Tun, *Ahmaung Kyarka Bamar Pyi* (Burma Between Darkness), Human Society New Democratic Party (Information Department), 2007, p. 178

[3] Kyaw Nyein, *2021b (ii)*, 231

[4] *U Nu ei Kyaynyarchat*, "U Nu's Declaration", *Bamakhit Newspaper*, 7-5-1958, p.7,19

[5] Prime Minister U Nu, Deputy Prime Ministers U Ba Swe, U Kyaw Nyein, and Thakin Tin

[6] Kyaw Nyein, *2019*, 160 - 175

[7] (a) U Kyaw Nyein, *Myanmar Yetsin Thamaing (1945-1948)* (History of Myanmar Chronology (1945-1948)), Vol. II, Part (3), Yangon, History Research and National Library Department, 2021, pp. 1, 32-34, 49 (Henceforth: Kyaw Nyein, *2021b (iii)*)

(b) *1958-1962 Myanmar Politic*, Vol. II, Yangon, Department of Historical Research and National Library, Publications Committee, 2022, p. 425

threatened to leave the Union if their demands were not met.[1] At the Union Cabinet meeting held on 13 February 1962, the Constitutional Amendment Bill on the Federal Principle and the Appointment of State Chairman was not presented to the People's Assembly on 15 February.[2] On 24 February 1962, a meeting of State leaders (Proper and State) took place at the new radio station on Pyay Road. During this seminar, Minister of State and Unity Organization Chairman Sao Khun Cho introduced the federal principle, which received support from U Tun Myint of Shan State.[3] Similarly, concerning the federal principle, a document drafted secretly by one of the States to secede from the Union was presented to Prime Minister U Nu on 28 February 1962, by U Kyaw Nyein, the Vice Chairman of the AFPFL. The document asserts that if the federal principle is not implemented, the State in question will break away from the Union and align with the SETO group.[4] Simultaneously, the question of whether Rakhine and Mon should establish a separate State arose once again.[5]

In this way, U Nu's Pa Hta Sa (Union) government exploited the weaknesses of the capitalist parliamentary democracy system and the immaturity of the people, causing the Myanmar populace to deviate from the socialist path and instead look forward to the development of the capitalist system. Ultimately, this led to the threat of the Union's disintegration. Thus, Myanmar reached a point where it faced multiple crises due to political corruption, economic decline, administrative misconduct, law and order failure, and lack of security. During this period, as the Federal Principle of State separation continued, the country's situation became the worst and most complicated. Consequently, on 2 March 1962, the Revolutionary Council, led by General Ne Win, seized state power and continued to govern the country under the name of the Revolutionary Council Government.

Findings

Political Instability and AFPFL Governmental Weaknesses

1. **Inefficiency**: The parliamentary government led by the Union Party (AFPFL) faced significant issues of administrative inefficiency. These problems undermined public confidence and led to political instability.
2. **Factionalism**: The political landscape was marked by factionalism and infighting within the AFPFL, which weakened the government's ability to address pressing national issues and maintain stability.

Economic Challenges

1. **Economic Decline**: Myanmar experienced economic decline during the late 1950s and early 1960s. Issues such as declining agricultural productivity, rising inflation, and poor economic management exacerbated public discontent.

---

[1] Vidhura Thakin Chit Maung, *Lutlatye Yapyinauk Myanmar Pyi* (Myanmar After Independence), Yangon, Bagan Bookstore, 1969, p. 51

[2] Kyaw Nyein, *2021b (iii),* 217

[3] "Federal Mu Hswe Nway Pwegyi Sa Pyi" (The Federal Debate Has Begun), *Hanthawaddy Newspaper*, 25 February 1962, p. 1

[4] Po Kyaw San, *Parliman Democracy Sanit Hnit Myanmar Naingngan* (Parliamentary Democracy and Myanmar), Yangon, Sanpya Press, 1970, p. 229

[5] Dr. Maung Maung, *Myanmar Naingnganye Khayee Hnit Bochokegyi Ne Win* (Myanmar Political Expedition and General Ne Win), Yangon, Bagan Library, 1968, page 423

Nationalist Sentiments

1. **Ethnic and Nationalist Tensions**: The central government struggled to manage ethnic tensions and nationalist movements, which further destabilized the country and eroded trust in civilian leadership.

Military Motivation and Ideology

1. **General Ne Win's Ambitions**: General Ne Win and the military leadership were driven by a combination of ideological beliefs. General Ne Win's vision of a Socialist Burma and his dissatisfaction with the political system motivated his actions.
2. **Military Doctrine**: The military's ideology, which emphasized stability and nationalism, justified their intervention as necessary to protect the country from perceived chaos and foreign influences.

Institutional and Structural Factors

1. **Weak Democratic Institutions**: The lack of strong democratic institutions and a robust rule of law made the political system vulnerable to military intervention. The inability of civilian leaders to address crises effectively further facilitated the taking of power.

Lessons for Democratic Resilience

1. **Vulnerability of Democracies**: The 1962 came to power highlights the vulnerability of democratic systems to military intervention, especially in the face of institutional weaknesses and socio-economic crises.
2. **Importance of Governance**: Effective governance and the maintenance of democratic institutions are crucial in preventing such came to powers and ensuring political stability.

Conclusion

In Myanmar, the 1962 military rule led to significant political instability and ethnic conflicts, driven by a combination of economic mismanagement and institutional failures. The immediate consequence of the came to power was the dismantling of parliamentary democracy and the emergence of military rule. Additionally, the came to power had a profound impact on Myanmar's political, social, and economic development. An examination of these underlying causes reveals that the came to power was not a sudden event but rather a response to a complex interplay of national crises and the circumstances of the collapse of the Union. Understanding these factors provides valuable insights into the challenges Myanmar faces in its pursuit of stability and democratic governance.

Acknowledgment

Special thanks to the Professors-cum-Head of Department who encouraged me to write the paper, the librarians and staff of the University of Mandalay who helped me find the necessary sources and books, and all my colleagues who filled in the requirements and suggested to me while reading the paper in the department.

References

1958-1962 Myanmar Politic, Vol. II, Yangon, Department of Historical Research and National Library, Publications Committee, 2022

Chit Maung, Vidhura Thakin, *Lutlatye Yapyinauk Myanmar Pyi* (Myanmar After Independence), Yangon, Bagan Bookstore, 1969

Fu Ki Do (Robert Zan), *Mann Bazan and the Karen Revolution*, Yangon, Independent Karen History Research Association, 1993

Han Tin, Sagaing, *Lonwa Lutlat Thoe* (Towards Totaly Independence), Yangon, PBA Color Press, 1967

Hla, Ludu U, *Thatinsarmyar Ka Pyawtae Sitpyi Myanmar Pyi* (Myanmar after the war as reported by the newspapers), Vol. 1, Mandalay, Ludu Press, 1969

Hugh Tinker, Burma: The Struggle for Independence 1944-1948, Vol. 1, England, Eyre & Spottiswoode Ltd., Thanet Press, 1983

Hugh Tinker, The Union of Burma, London, Oxford University Press, 1967, 53

Kyaw Nyein, U, *Myanmar Naingnganyee (1948-1958)* (Myanmar's Politics (1948-1958), Yangon, Department of Historical Research and National Library, Books Publication Committee, 2019

Kyaw Nyein, U, *Myanmar Yetsin Thamaing (1945-1948)* (History of Myanmar Chronology (1945-1948)), Vol. II, Part (3), Yangon, History Research and National Library Department, 2021

Kyaw Nyein, U, *Myanmar Yetsin Thamaing (1948-1958)* (Chronology of Myanmar History 1948-58), Vol. 2, Part (2), Yangon, Department of Historical Research and National Library, Books Publication Committee, 2021

Kyaw Win, *Myanmar Naingganyee Laylarsansitchat (1948-1988)* (Case Study of Myanmar Politics (1948-1988)), Yangon, Tagaung Sarpay, *2022*

Maung Maung, Dr., *Myanmar Naingnganye Khayee Hnit Bochokegyi Ne Win* (Myanmar Political Expedition and General Ne Win), Yangon, Bagan Library, 1968Myat Thein, Economic Development of Myanmar, Singapore, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2004

Nu, U, *Tar Tay Sanaythar* (Saturday's Son), Yangon, Ngatoe Sarpay, 2013

Po Kyaw San, *Parliman Democracy Sanit Hnit Myanmar Naingngan* (Parliamentary Democracy and Myanmar), Yangon, Sanpya Press, 1970

Prime Minister U Nu's speech at the People's Hluttaw; 23 March 1961

Record of Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League (AFPFL), Union Election Commission, Computer typescript, no date, no press

San Tun Aung, U, *Kyunnote Thithaw Mujarhit, Mayyu Myay Hnit Rohinjar* (The Mujahid I Know: Mayu Land and the Rohingya), Yangon, Moyway Press, 2018, pp. 60-91

Tatmataw Thamaing (History of the Army), Vol. 4, Yangon, News and Press Printing House, 1996

Tatmataw Thamaing 1842-1945 (History of the Tatmadaw 1824-1945), Vol. 1, Military History Museum and Office of the Military Archives, Myanmar Alin Printing Press and Guardian Press, 1994

Thant, U, *Pyitawthar Khayee* (The Journey of the Country's Welfare), Vol. 2, Yangon, Sarpay Beikhman Press, 1961

Thar Kyaw, Bonpauk, *Taw Hlanye Khayeewei* (Revolutionary journey), Yangon, Pathein Press, 1975

The wounds of the insurgency, DR 1784, Defense Service Museum and Historical Research Institute, Nay Pyi Daw

Thein Pe Myint, *Tawhlanye Kala Naingnganyee Atway Akyone* (Political Experiences During the Revolution), Yangon, Pathein Press, 1976,

Thit Maung, Yebaw, *Pyitwin Thaungkyanhmu Thamaing* (History of Internal Insurgency), Part (2), Yangon, Kyayhmon Press and Guardian Press, 1990

Tin Naing Toe, *Myanmar Naingnganye Thamaing Hmattam (1897-1948)* (Myanmar Political History (1897-1948)), Yangon, Sanadi Literature, 2012

Win Tint Tun, *Ahmaung Kyarka Bamar Pyi* (Burma Between Darkness), Human Society New Democratic Party (Information Department), 2007

Toe Tat Yae Journal, no. 25, July 1946

Bamakhit Newspaper, 7-5-1958

Hantahwady Newspaper, 1 August 1960

Hanthawady Newspaper, 25 February 1962

J. Myanmar Acad. Arts Sci. 2026 **Vol. XXIII. No.5**

A PHILOSOPHICAL STUDY OF THE THREE NEW APPROACHES TO AESTHETICS*

Thet Ko Win[1]

Abstract

This paper attempts to examine the role of the three new approaches to aesthetic study that extend the scope of aesthetics from artwork to broader realms such as nature and everyday life. The problem is, "Why are these three approaches important in aesthetics?" As to the research findings, aesthetic concepts, aesthetic experience, and aesthetic objects can provide a new vision of aesthetic study that can extend its scope to broader or better applicable realms, such as the natural, environmental, and everyday life of people. To achieve the aim of the research, the descriptive and evaluative methods are used. This paper is supposed to provide the proper knowledge of how the aesthetic concept, aesthetic experience, and aesthetic object contribute to a wide range of fields, from philosophy of art to design, architecture, urban design, digital technology, and environmental conservation. Its interdisciplinary impact makes aesthetic study a more valuable tool for improving both personal well-being and societal development.

Keywords: Aesthetic Concept, Aesthetic Experience, Aesthetic Object, Nature, Everyday Life

Introduction

As philosophy is a wide subject, there are different branches of it. Philosophy literally means 'Love of Wisdom" in Western tradition which also means a pursuit of reality, the search for truth, and the endeavor to live a good life. The study of reality and existence, exploring the nature of being, the world, and the universe, this type of branch is called metaphysics. Concerning the study of knowledge, its nature, sources, and limitations.Which asks, "What can we know?" and "How do we know it?" This branch is called epistemology. Ethics, an axiological study of morality, examining what is right and wrong, good and bad is another important branch of philosophy. It explores how people should act and what values they should live by. Likewise, another study mainly concerned with value judgment is aesthetics, traditionally known as the science of sensuous knowledge or philosophy of art, which focuses on the value study of artwork, beauty, and taste.

The study of reasoning and argument, that focuses on the principles of valid reasoning and the structure of arguments. This type of branch is called logic. The last one is the philosophy of X, in which X stands for many other fields of academics such as politics, science, mind, education, law, or religion. This branch analyzes the foundational problems and conceptual frameworks specific to any given field.

This research is mainly concerned with aesthetics since the purpose of this research is to show that aesthetic objects which are either art or non-art are tasted and judged by using aesthetic concepts for obtaining objective value because aesthetic experience from perceiving aesthetic objects is fundamentally subjective in its nature. The scope of aesthetics extends beyond art to include natural beauty and everyday experiences. It involves critical reflection on art, culture, and nature, and considers criteria like symmetry, harmony, and balance. Aesthetics also intersects with other areas of philosophy, such as ethics and metaphysics, by addressing questions about the

* Special Award(2024)

[1] Department of Philosophy, Dagon University

value and meaning of aesthetic experiences. Aesthetics explores the nature of beauty, art, and sensory experience. It asks fundamental questions such as “What is beauty?”, “How do we perceive and appreciate art?”, and “What is the role of taste and judgment in artistic expression?”. However, it can be extended the scope of aesthetic questions from the three new approaches of aesthetics such as How does scientific knowledge about nature influence our aesthetic appreciation? What is the relationship between aesthetic value and environmental ethics? How do we appreciate the aesthetics of everyday environments, including urban and suburban settings? Aesthetics is intrinsically related to philosophy since it deals with understanding human experience and understanding the world, which may be natural or cultural, from a philosophical standpoint.

What Aesthetics is

Aesthetics is derived from the Greek word *aisthetikos*, meaning “sense perception.” German philosopher E.G. Hegel (1770-1983) defined aesthetics as “Philosophy of Art”, this definition is the most powerful and the best one. In philosophy, aesthetics refers to the study of sensory experiences, particularly as they relate to art, beauty, and taste. It seeks to answer fundamental questions such as: What is beauty? What is art? How do humans perceive and evaluate artistic expressions?

Aesthetics is concerned not only with visual art but also with experiences of nature, music, literature, and even everyday objects. Philosophers debate whether beauty and art are objective, meaning they exist independently of human perception, or subjective, depending entirely on the perceiver’s experience. Aesthetics has been a central topic of inquiry since ancient times. Plato and Aristotle, two foundational figures in Western philosophy, provided some of the earliest reflections on beauty and art. Plato believed that beauty was an ideal form, existing beyond the physical world. According to him, art is merely a copy of reality, which itself is a copy of the ideal forms. Therefore, Plato was skeptical about the value of art, as he felt it could distort the truth and mislead viewers by focusing on the appearance rather than the reality behind it.

Aristotle, in contrast, saw art as an important means of understanding and representing the world. He introduced the concept of mimesis, or imitation, arguing that art imitates life and that this imitation allows people to learn and experience emotions in a controlled environment. Aristotle believed that art, particularly tragedy, plays a crucial role in purging emotions through catharsis, providing critical thinking and emotional benefits to the viewer. In the 18th century, Immanuel Kant further advanced aesthetic theory in his ***Critique of Judgment*** (1790). Kant argued that aesthetic judgments are disinterested, meaning that when someone judges something as beautiful, they do so without personal desire or practical concerns. Instead, one appreciates the object for its own sake. Kant also suggested that judgments of beauty have a universal quality, meaning that if something is truly beautiful, it should evoke a similar response in others, even though individual tastes may differ.

The Subjectivity vs. Objectivity

Subjectivists argue that beauty lies in the eye of the beholder, meaning that what one person finds beautiful, another may not. This view emphasizes personal experiences, cultural influences, and individual preferences in determining what is considered beautiful or artistically valuable.

Objectivists, on the other hand, believe that beauty is a feature of the object itself, independent of individual perception. This means that certain qualities, such as harmony, proportion, and balance, make something beautiful, regardless of who is perceiving it.

Contemporary thinkers often propose a middle ground, suggesting that while personal taste plays a significant role in aesthetic judgments, there may still be some universal principles that guide our understanding of beauty.

For example, the natural human preference for balance could be considered an objective component of aesthetic appreciation, even if individual responses to specific works of art vary.

The Three New Approaches to Aesthetics

The core key concepts of this research are three new approaches to aesthetics, namely the aesthetic concept, aesthetic experience, and aesthetic object. Understanding the interrelation of these three concepts can help to explore how to define beauty, how people's perception engages with art or non-art objects, and the role of aesthetic objects in eliciting aesthetic responses.

The **aesthetic concept** refers to the framework or principles that define what is considered “aesthetics.” It includes the ideas and criteria by which we judge something as beautiful, artistic, or valuable from an aesthetic point of view.

While closely related to the philosophy of art, aesthetics also deals with responses to natural objects and phenomena that are described in terms of beauty and ugliness. The study of aesthetic judgment includes the principles and criteria by which we evaluate and interpret works of art and other objects of aesthetic interest. Aesthetics considers various cultural and historical contexts, recognizing that concepts of beauty and taste can vary significantly across different societies and periods. Hence, it can be said that the scope of aesthetics is wider than the ordinary thoughts of people, which usually refer to the realm of art.

Aesthetic concepts explore the nature of beauty, art, and taste, and how they evoke emotional or intellectual responses.

In painting, aesthetic concept is associated with the use of color, form, and composition creates visual harmony or provokes thought, such as **impressionism** revolves around the fleeting effects of light and color, creating a sense of movement and atmosphere, and a**bstract art** is about evoking emotions and ideas through non-representational means.

In literature, aesthetic concept is associated with the use of language, rhythm, and imagery to evoke emotions or convey profound ideas, such as **romanticism,** a literary movement, emphasizes emotion, individualism, and the glorification of nature while **modernism** is about breaking traditional forms to explore the complexities of human consciousness and experience.

In Music, aesthetic concept is associated with the arrangement of sound and silence to create harmony, rhythm, and emotional resonance, such as **Pop, Rock, and Hip Hop**. Some of the most popular music globally includes pop, rock, and hip hop, which have had significant cultural and artistic impacts and continue to evolve and find success.

In Nature, aesthetic concept is associated with the appreciation of natural forms, patterns, and phenomena as sources of beauty and inspiration, such as **sublime** refers to the awe-inspiring beauty of nature that evokes a sense of grandeur and power while **picturesque** describes landscapes that are charming and visually pleasing, often resembling a picture.

In everyday life, aesthetic concept is associated with finding beauty in ordinary moments, objects, or routines, such as Minimalist Design that is a well-organized workspace can be aesthetically pleasing. **minimalism** emphasizes reducing clutter and clean lines and essential elements that focus on simplicity and functionally. **Culinary Arts** which is the presentation of a dish, like sushi, combines taste and visual appeal.

Fine Art in Aesthetics

Fine Art refers to art created primarily for its aesthetic value and emotional power rather than for practical function or commercial gain. Fine art pieces are generally regarded as high-quality works that reflect deep artistic talent and are appreciated for their ability to convey profound meaning or evoke emotional responses. Some prominent concepts of fine art are –

Cubism: Cubism breaks objects into geometric shapes and presents multiple perspectives simultaneously. See: illustration (1)

Illustration (1): Pablo Picasso's "Les Demoiselles d' Avignon"
Source:https://www.artchive.com/artwork/les-demoiselles-davignon-pablo-picasso-1907/

Realism focuses on depicting subjects as they appear in everyday life, without embellishment or interpretation. See: illustration (2)

Illustration (2): Gustave Courbet's The Stone Breakers
Source: https://birsanatbirkitap.com/art/courbet-the-stone-breakers/

Impressionism: This movement captures the effects of light and color, often with loose brushwork and an emphasis on the momentary. See: illustration (3)

Illustration (3): Claude Monet's "Impression, Sunrise"
Source:https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/becoming-modern/avant-garde-france/impressionism/a/claude-monet-impression-sunrise

Expressionism: Expressionism seeks to represent emotional experiences rather than physical reality, often through distorted forms and vivid colors. See: illustration (4)

Illustration (4): Munch's "The Scream"
Source:https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Edvard-Munch-The-scream-1893_fig1_354657351

Minimalism: Minimalism emphasizes simplicity, using limited colors, shapes, and forms to create a sense of order and clarity. See: illustration (5)

Illustration (5): Sol LeWitt, Two Open Modular Cubes/Half-Off (1972) at Tate Gallery, London.
Source: https://theartling.com/en/artzine/famous-minimalist-art/

Conceptual art: Conceptual art prioritizes ideas over aesthetic form, often challenging traditional notions of art. See: illustration (6)

Illustration (6): A man takes a piece of candy from "Untitled" (Portrait of Ross in L.A.) by Felix Gonzalez-Torres

Source:https://www.felixgonzalez-torresfoundation.org/works/untitled-portrait-of-ross-in-l-a

These concepts illustrate the diverse ways in which fine art can explore and express aesthetic values. Aesthetic concepts are subjective, meaning it depends on cultural, personal, and historical contexts. Aesthetic concepts provide the intellectual for perceiving art and beauty, shaping our understanding of what makes an object or experience aesthetically significant.

Aesthetic experience is a profound and often transformative encounter with art, nature, or any object that evokes a deep sense of beauty, wonder, or emotional resonance.

Sensory engagement lies at the core of aesthetic experience. Paintings and sculptures captivate the visual senses through their vibrant colors, intricate shapes, and thoughtful composition. Music stimulates the auditory senses by weaving melodies, harmonies, and rhythms into an evocative tapestry. Meanwhile, the textures and materials of sculptures or architectural designs appeal to the sense of touch, offering a tactile dimension to the experience.

Subsequently, aesthetic experiences can foster intellectual growth and critical thinking. Through art, individuals are encouraged to delve into interpretation, navigate ambiguity, and embark on intellectual inquiry. This journey enhances analytical abilities while cultivating open-mindedness and a capacity for thoughtful evaluation.

In addition, aesthetic experiences frequently mirror cultural, historical, and societal influences, enabling individuals to gain deeper insights into diverse cultures and viewpoints. They offer a valuable avenue for examining identity, advocating for social justice, and embracing shared human experiences, thereby nurturing a sense of community and connection.

The aesthetic experiences of perceivers encompass emotional responses, sensory engagement, intellectual stimulation, critical thinking, and the cultivation of cultural understanding and social connections. Conversely, the aesthetic experiences of artists involve the creative process, emotional immersion, intellectual challenges, and the attainment of a flow state.

These aesthetic experiences are vital for fostering emotional, intellectual, and social growth. It bridges personal and collective experiences, stimulates creativity, enhances well-being, and offers profound insights into cultural and existential questions.

Aesthetic object is any item or phenomenon that evokes an aesthetic experience, typically distinguished by its beauty, form, or artistic significance. This concept encompasses various art forms—such as paintings, sculptures, music, and literature—as well as elements of nature, like landscapes or sunsets, which inspire aesthetic appreciation through sensory perception and emotional or intellectual involvement.

Moreover, an aesthetic object stimulates feelings of pleasure, wonder, or admiration through its appeal to the senses or the mind, making it an object of aesthetic experience.

The three new approaches to aesthetics for its broader meaning and scope, aesthetic concepts, aesthetic experiences, and aesthetic objects are interconnected. Aesthetic objects are judged using aesthetic concepts, and the interaction between perceivers and the object produces the aesthetic experience. The importance of these three approaches extends far beyond the superficial appreciation of beauty and ugliness.

An Aesthetic Study of "Rose Apple Gatherers" Poem

သပြေသီးကောက်

ဝါဆိုဝါခေါင် ရေတွေကြီးလို့
သပြေသီးမှည့် ကောက်စို့ကွယ်။
ခရာဆူးချုံ ဟိုအထဲက
မျှော့နက်မည်းကြီး တွယ်တတ်တယ်။
မျှော့နက်ဆိုတာ ချိုနဲ့လားကွဲ့
မြွေနဂါးတောင် မကြောက်ဘူးကွယ်။
တို့လဲကြောက်ပေါင် အတူသွားစို့
အုန်းလက်နွားလေး ထားခဲ့မယ်။
သွားကွယ် သွားကွယ်။
မင်းသုဝဏ် (၁၀ ဇွန် ၁၉၃၁)

"**Rose Apple Gatherers**"
July, August-rain and flood
Let's go pick the ripe rose-apple.
Hi! Take care! In thorns and mud,
That's where big, black leeches grapple.
Leeches? Pah! The hornless thing!
I'll fight snakes or serpent-kings.
Who's afraid? Let's all go now.
Come on! Come on!
Translated by G.H. Luce

In this poem, the aesthetic object encompasses both the poem as a whole and the elements within it that are valued for their beauty or importance. Typically, an aesthetic object can be classified into three categories: its form, its content, and its subject matter.

Form: In this poem, lines are conversational, resembling a dialogue between two or more speakers as they prepare to gather rose-apples (သပြေသီးကောက်). This form reflects the casual, energetic tone of the poem. Although the poem is not tightly bound by rhyme, it features some internal rhyming words (e.g., "grapple" and "apple"), which adds a playful rhythm and reinforces the lighthearted nature of the poem. The tone is informal and adventurous. There is an element of excitement and courage as the gatherers face natural obstacles like thorns (ခရာဆူးခွံ့), and leeches (မခြော့နကျမည္ဘး). The repeated phrases like "Come on!" "သွားကွယ်" creates a sense of enthusiasm and urgency, encouraging the group to move forward despite challenges.

Content: The poem captures the scene of a group of people about to gather rose-apples during the rainy season (July and August). The conditions are tough, with thorns (ခရာဆူးခြုံ) and leeches (မျှော့နက်မည်း), but the group is determined and fearless. This sense of adventure is highlighted through their casual dismissal of the dangers, such as leeches (မျှော့နက်မည်း) and snakes (မြွေနဂါး), and their eagerness to continue. The poem uses vivid imagery of the natural environment, describing "big black leeches" (မျှော့နက်မည်းကြီး) and "thorns (ခရာဆူးခြုံ)." These natural elements create a sense of hardship and danger, yet they are not portrayed as overwhelming or insurmountable obstacles. The poem's conversational tone includes a humorous dismissal of dangers like leeches (မျှော့နက်မည်းကြီး) and snakes (မြွေနဂါး), showing the gatherers' playful, fearless attitude. The reference to leaving the "coconut cow" (အုန်းလက်နွားလေး) adds an element of whimsy, implying that they are leaving behind their everyday comforts for an adventurous task.

Subject-matter: The primary subject matter revolves around human beings interacting with the natural world. The gatherers are venturing into a harsh, wild environment during the rainy season, yet they embrace the challenge with confidence and excitement. This reflects a broader theme of the relationship between humans and nature, where danger is met with bravery. Despite the rough conditions, the gatherers exhibit resilience and courage. The poem suggests that life's obstacles, whether they are physical like leeches or metaphorical challenges, can be overcome with determination and camaraderie. The task of gathering rose-apples, a seemingly ordinary activity, is portrayed as an exciting adventure. This conveys a deeper appreciation for the simple pleasures in life, turning a mundane chore into an opportunity for fun and teamwork. The form, content, and subject matter of this poem work together to create an energetic and adventurous tone. The free verse structure reflects the spontaneity of the situation, while the content focuses on the gatherers' interaction with a challenging natural environment. The subject matter highlights themes of courage, adventure, and the joy found in life's simple tasks.

Aesthetic Concept of this poem

Beauty of Nature: The poem vividly describes the natural background, such as the rainy season (ရေတွေကြီးလို့-heavy rain) and the ripening of the rose-apple (သပြေသီးမှည့်), celebrating the beauty of seasonal change and its relationship to human life. Bravery and Adventure: This one also emphasizes overcoming natural obstacles like thorns and mud (ခရာဆူးချုံ) and leeches (မျှော့နက်မည်းကြီး). The idea of facing nature with boldness is central to this aesthetic concept, suggesting that adventure is an integral part of human life.

Community and shared experience: The lines "တို့လဲ ကွဲစေကျပ‌ေါ့ အတူသွားစို့" emphasize togetherness and solidarity, highlighting a collective effort. The sense of community and unity adds to the poem's aesthetic concepts by showing how experiences in nature are shared and enjoyed together. The joy and reward come not only from nature but from the shared experience of facing challenges together.

Simplicity and detachment: The decision to leave the "coconut cow" (အုန်းလက်နွားလေး ထားခဲ့မယ်) can also symbolize simplicity or detachment. This aesthetic concept ties to the idea of focusing on the experience itself (picking the rose-apples) rather than holding onto things that may be unnecessary in the present moment. It reflects an aesthetic appreciation of minimalism.

Aesthetic Experience of this poem

Sensory Engagement: The description of "ရေတွေကြီးလို့" (floods), "ခရာဆူးချုံ" (thorns), and "မျှော့နက်မည်းကြီး (leeches) engages a reader's senses; these can evoke the visualization of the rainy season's challenges. This sensory experience immerses a reader in the scene and makes it feel more real.

Emotional Responses: The poem evokes feelings of excitement and determination through its portrayal of nature's obstacles and the reader's response to bravery. The line "မြွေနဂါးတောင် မကြောက်ဘူးကွယ်" (I'm not afraid of even snakes or dragons) reflects a bold, fearless attitude that encourages in life.

Cultural Understanding and Social Connection: The rainy season and the tradition of gathering fruits like rose-apple would evoke cultural memories. The poem may evoke feelings of nostalgia and shared experiences tied to communal activities and nature's bounty.

The poem's depiction of a challenging but rewarding interaction with nature transforms a mundane task into a powerful aesthetic experience. Through its imagery and tone, the poem conveys the idea that beauty can be found in struggle and perseverance, and that adventure itself is an aesthetic pursuit. By analyzing these elements, perceiver gain a deeper appreciation of both the poem's artistry and its philosophical exploration of human engagement with the world.

Conclusion

Aesthetic objects, experiences, and concepts converge to form the framework through which individuals engage with and interpret the world of beauty, art, and expression. The diversity of aesthetic objects, ranging from natural phenomena to human-made artifacts, illustrates the broad spectrum of stimulate that provokes aesthetic engagement. These objects become central to the formation of aesthetic experience, where the subjective interpretation of beauty and emotion is enacted.

Individual aesthetic experiences are informed by personal, cultural, and contextual factors that shape how they perceive and value aesthetic objects. Aesthetic concepts, such as beauty, the sublime, and the picturesque, function as abstract frameworks that guide this engagement. They serve as perspectives through which aesthetic objects are evaluated and understood, highlighting the importance of cultural, historical, and philosophical contexts in shaping aesthetic judgments. These concepts are not fixed but are instead dynamic, evolving as societal norms, cultural values, and individual preferences change over time.

One key insight derived from this exploration is the relational nature of aesthetic experiences. Rather than being confined to the object itself, aesthetic value emerges from the interaction between the object, the individual perceiving it, and the broader context in which this interaction takes place. This reinforces the idea that aesthetic experience is deeply personal and subjective, though it can be informed by shared cultural or philosophical frameworks. For instance, while one individual may find beauty in a piece of modernist art, another may perceive the same work as chaotic or unpleasant, highlighting the variance in aesthetic experiences.

Furthermore, the significance of aesthetic experience extends beyond mere enjoyment of beauty or artistic value. It encompasses a wide range of emotional and intellectual responses, from awe and wonder to contemplation and critique. The process of engaging with an aesthetic object can lead to deep reflection on broader philosophical, ethical, or existential questions, indicating that aesthetic experiences are not only about passive reception but also about active interpretation and meaning-making. Throughout this paper, many have examined how aesthetic objects, experiences, and concepts are intertwined, shaping human interactions with art and beauty in profound ways. These elements are not isolated phenomena but are part of an interconnected web of perception, interpretation, and appreciation. By understanding this interconnection, man can better appreciate the complexity of aesthetic experiences and the role they play in our lives.

Aesthetic objects provide the foundation for experiences that are subjectively interpreted through aesthetic concepts. These experiences are influenced by individual perception, cultural context, and philosophical ideas about beauty and art. By recognizing the dynamic interplay between objects, experiences, and concepts, we gain a deeper understanding of how aesthetics informs not only the appreciation of art but also people’s broader worldview. The study of aesthetics, therefore, remains an essential inquiry into human existence, reflecting people’s desire to find meaning, beauty, and value in the world around us. To conclude, aesthetic concepts, aesthetic experiences, and aesthetic objects can provide a new vision of aesthetic study that can extend its scope to broader or better applicable realms, such as natural, environmental, and everyday life of people.

Acknowledgment

I want to thank all those who have been a source of encouragement, inspiration, and support during this journey. Special thanks go to Prof. Dr Lé Lé Wynn, Head of the Department of Philosophy, University of Yangon, for her support of brilliant comments, encouragement, and valuable suggestions on writing the paper. I would also like to extend my thanks to those who showed encouragement to me during this study: Prof. Dr. Tin Tin Cho, Head of the Department of Philosophy, Dagon University. Last but not least, I would like to extend my thanks to Myanmar Academy of Arts and Sciences for allowing me the submission this paper.

References

Adorno, Theodor W. (1997). ***Aesthetic Theory***. New York: Continuum.

Dewey, John. (1934). ***Art as Experience***. New York: Perigee Book.

Kant, Immanuel. (trans. by Guyer, Paul & Eric Matthews). (2000). ***Critique of the Power of Judgment***. Cambridge University Press.

Stokes, Philip. (2007). ***Philosophy: The Greatest Thinkers.*** Arcturus Publishing Limited.

Scruton, R. (2009). Beauty: ***A Very Short Introduction***. Oxford University Press.

THE ETHICAL ROLE OF PEACE IN MYANMAR SOCIETY

U Win Oo[1]

Abstract

This paper is to examine the crucial role of peace within Myanmar society. It addresses the question: "Why ethical norms are essential for establishing a peaceful society?" The research highlights that Myanmar currently faces numerous challenges, including terrorism, human rights violations, economic inequality, religious intolerance, social injustice, and oppression of vulnerable groups. To foster peace, it is imperative for citizens to uphold and practice ethical principles such as justice, unity, mutual trust, non-violence, duty, responsibility, and equality. The study employs descriptive and evaluative methods to achieve its objectives, offering insights into the concept of peace and practical approaches for its implementation in Myanmar society.

Keywords: Peace, The Ethical norms, Myanmar Society

Introduction

Throughout history, humanity has sought to comprehend the essence of existence and establish a moral code that upholds nobility and earns respect. To reveal the true nature of human beings, it is essential to first define the term "man" or "human being." By understanding the reality of life and the world, one can aspire to live a life that is virtuous, harmless, blameless, noble, peaceful, and pure. This entails nurturing positive qualities, engaging in good deeds, and aiding others selflessly. Conversely, failing to grasp the true nature of life and one's surroundings inhibits the ability to achieve personal and collective growth, peace, happiness, and success.

The concept of peace encompasses both positive and negative meanings, requiring an understanding of its various dimensions, including personal, social, national, international, and global aspects. Together, they complement each other in creating a comprehensive approach to peace.

Personal or mental peace pertains to inner harmony and tranquility, while social peace relates to justice and progress within a community. National peace signifies stability, progress, and freedom from civil disorder within a country. International peace refers to harmonious relations between nations, while global peace denotes peaceful coexistence among all entities.

In reality, peace is indivisible and needs to be established globally for lasting stability. The existence of peaceful societies is crucial for the survival of humanity as a whole. Thus, it’s crucial to acknowledge both the negative dimension—the lack of violence—and the positive dimension—promoting harmony in every sphere—when pursuing true and lasting peace worldwide.

Inner tranquility reveals a state of unwavering calm and composure, which is attained through embracing virtues such as kindness, empathy, leniency, temperance, humility, pardon, non-aggression, and affection. Most of these virtues imply that "Peace involves transcending the self" or letting go of egotism. It means that even personal peace anticipates harmonious interpersonal relations. Nowadays, this personal peace is lacking, especially in countries influenced by industrial consumerist culture, because it's challenging to find mental peace in our fast-paced lives constantly affected by rapid socio-political and economic changes. In terms of

[1] Department of Philosophy, Meiktila University

societal harmony, no community can sustain lasting tranquility because of ongoing issues such as extremism, joblessness, intergroup and racial tensions, political disagreements, and more.

It is clear that Myanmar, like many other parts of the world, is facing a multitude of crises including issues related to terrorism, human rights violations, economic inequality, racial discrimination, religious intolerance, nationalism, social injustice, poverty, oppression of marginalized communities by the powerful and wealthy, ecological imbalance and natural calamities. The survival of humanity and related peace issues call for adherence to fundamental ethical principles that emphasize our freedom to choose between life and death. Additionally, it requires active participation in decision-making and policy formation while committing ourselves to human values and global peace.

In the modern era, people are surrounded by cruelty, torture, conflict, and violence, which are not natural conditions but rather afflictions that must be eradicated. Ethics teaches us that peace can be achieved by eliminating all forms of violence, such as wars, environmental destruction, human rights violations, abuse against women and children, and exploitation and oppression of the weak, poor, and illiterate.

All human beings share a yearning to live out their lives in peace, but they have reached the crossroads where peaceful living and the healthy future of civilization depend upon obeying ethical principles.

This study tries to prove that ethical norms are essential to observe and practice to establish a peaceful society. The conception of peace has a sound moral foundation based on some primary moral concepts such as self-realization, virtues, duty, non-violence, responsibility, mutual trust, security, unity, wisdom, and reflective thinking, and that is not only normative but also practical for the betterment of peace in Myanmar society.

Nature of Peace

In any case, peace has numerous other meanings beyond tranquility, including justice, good health, safety, well-being, prosperity, fairness, security, good fortune, and friendliness. Defining peace is not straightforward because, like most words, it carries personal connotations. Naturally, peace has many definitions: Peace is the typical, non-conflict state of a nation, group of nations, or the world. It is also an agreement or treaty between warring or opposing nations or groups to end conflict and refrain from further aggression.

Peace denotes a condition of shared accord among individuals or communities, particularly in interpersonal connections—for instance, making an effort to coexist amicably with those nearby. Additionally, peace means the usual absence of civil unrest and violence within a community, ensuring public order and safety. Finally, peace can refer to a mind free from irritation, distraction, anxiety, or obsession; a state of calmness and serenity.

Kinds of Peace: Positive and Negative Peace

Indeed, discussions about peace often utilize negative terms and newly coined words to convey the idea of peace, such as nonviolence, non-war, non-killing, and non-conflict. However, proponents of peace argue that it should be viewed as a fundamental concept linked to cooperation, harmony, and positive human relationships. They emphasize that understanding peace solely in negative terms is a misconception. In the realm of peace scholarship, there is an established emphasis on differentiating between positive peace and negative peace. The concept of positive peace involves ensuring fairness and equal rights across a community. Meanwhile, negative peace focuses on the absence of violence or war but does not necessarily address underlying systemic issues or inequalities.

Peace is often found to be making distinctions between "positive peace" and "negative peace". Negative peace is characterized solely by the absence of warfare or violent confrontation. The calm during an armistice is a clear instance of negative peace. Meanwhile, positive peace involves more than just stopping violence—it includes ensuring justice for all individuals.

Positive Peace

Positive peace refers to the presence of conditions that foster harmony, justice, and sustainable development within societies. It goes beyond merely avoiding conflict, emphasizing the establishment of systems, attitudes, and institutions that promote equality, inclusivity, and resilience. This concept addresses the root causes of conflict and creates an environment where individuals and communities can thrive.

Positive peace, in essence, is about guaranteeing impartiality and equity for all individuals. It does not solely mean the absence of violence, but also emphasizes the presence of justice for everyone without discrimination. Positive peace represents a state where all forms of structural and direct violence are non-existent, and social justice is equally accessible to every individual in society. Furthermore, positive peace entails the fair distribution of power and resources, allowing individuals to realize their true potential without encountering resistance. It envisions a society free from discrimination, inequality, and violence; instead, built on principles of cooperation, harmony, tolerance, and respect.

It's important to recognize that positive peace doesn't signify the absence of conflict; rather, it acknowledges that conflict is inevitable but can be resolved through cooperative means and addressing legitimate grievances primarily through structural reforms. Thus, positive peace promotes cooperative efforts to achieve social prosperity.

Understanding positive peace through virtue ethics means seeing it as an ethical trait intertwined with kindness, forbearance, and generosity**.** It's crucial to understand that peace isn't simply about quietism or passive meditation; Jay McDaniel proposes the idea of "creative peace," emphasizing tension and activity as individuals and cultures engage in listening to one another while interacting constructively.

Negative Peace

Negative peace refers to the absence of direct violence, conflict, or war. It signifies a state where overt hostilities have ceased, but it does not address the underlying causes of conflict or promote long-term harmony. It is often seen as a temporary or surface-level form of peace. While direct violence may be absent, structural violence is still prevalent within negative peace. This type of peace takes a curative approach towards conflict or violence and may have been restored without peaceful means, often involving the use of force or coercion. In a society under negative peace, there is mutual mistrust among parties and it may also suggest that both sides are preparing for potential violence or war.

The Role of Ethical Norms for Peace

Ethics, or morality, is often perceived as a set of guidelines that differentiate between right and wrong actions. Alternatively, ethics can be defined as the study of behavioral norms, explored through disciplines such as philosophy, theology, jurisprudence, psychology, and sociology. For instance, a medical ethicist examines and evaluates ethical standards within the healthcare field. Additionally, ethics can be viewed as a method or framework for decision-making and addressing complex issues. For example, when tackling a multifaceted problem like climate change, perspectives may vary, ranging from economic, environmental, and political to ethical. While an economist might focus on assessing the costs and benefits of climate policies, an environmental ethicist would examine the underlying moral principles and values.

Many professions, organizations, and disciplines follow behavioral guidelines designed to align with their specific objectives. These standards facilitate collaboration among members while fostering public confidence. For instance, ethical codes govern practices in medicine, law, engineering, and business. Similarly, research ethics serve to advance academic goals and provide oversight for researchers, academics, artists, and politicians. Over time, this has developed into an established field dedicated to examining these ethical systems.

Peace is often defined as the absence of aggression, violence, or hostility, viewed through the lenses of both positive and negative peace. Violence, as the extreme manifestation of aggression, encompasses harmful behaviors such as physical assaults, sexual violence, and lethal acts. Its origins can be traced to various factors, including frustration, exposure to violent media, domestic or community violence, and a predisposition to perceive others' actions as hostile, even when they are not.

Violence and other forms of abuse are often understood as patterns of behavior aimed at establishing and maintaining control over family members, household members, intimate partners, coworkers, or individuals and groups. In any form, violence and abuse have a profound impact on a person's health and well-being. The root causes of all violence are embedded in the many types of inequality that persist and worsen in society. Violence and abuse are tools used to establish and maintain power and control over others, often reflecting a power imbalance between the victim and the perpetrator.

To achieve peace in all aspects of life, people must educate themselves and others in the ideals of ethical conduct. Ultimately, it is humanity itself that stands as the greatest obstacle to peace, as the choices between war and peace, progress and decline, creation and destruction, are human decisions, not inevitable historical events. If people desire peace within their inner selves and at every level of society, they must embrace positive qualities or virtues such as love, kindness, self-discipline, sacrifice, humility, non-violence, forgiveness, tolerance, compassion, gentleness, and contentment. Merely knowing about virtues is not enough; embodying them is more important. These virtues should be evident in our thoughts, words, and actions.

At the same time, destructive traits or vices like anger, greed, arrogance, pride, excessive ego, betrayal, and intentional harm to others must be rejected. Cultivating noble qualities and eliminating harmful ones requires comprehensive moral training. Therefore, it is the responsibility of moralists, philosophers, religious thinkers, social reformers, and philanthropists to dedicate their lives to providing this kind of moral education.

Myanmar Cultural Society and the Peaceful Resolution

Myanmar boasts a rich cultural heritage and civilization that has flourished for centuries. The unifying force that has sustained Myanmar as a nation is Theravada Buddhism, which was introduced during the reign of King Anawrahta of the Bagan Dynasty (1044–1077). Since then, Theravada Buddhism has thrived in Myanmar, serving not only as a religion but also as a fundamental way of life. Its moral teachings are deeply ingrained in the fabric of Myanmar's society, shaping interpersonal relationships, family and community structures, as well as artistic and cultural expressions.

Similar to other great global faiths, Buddhism promotes harmony and non-violence. "This principle finds clear expression in the ***Dhammapada***, the Theravadin Buddhist scripture comprising 423 verses of practical wisdom. The fifth verse articulates:"

> Hatred is never appeased by hatred in this world.
> By non-hatred alone is hatred appeased.
> This is an eternal law.[1]

In Buddhist scripture, the Pali term *dhamma* denotes universal truth, encompassing the Buddha's doctrines. Therefore, this verse on non-hostility relates to a core principle of the Buddhist tradition, specifically peace and non-violence. For example, one finds in the ***Lokaniti*,** these verses regarding getting peace of life:

> One should overcome one haughty by civility, one who is bad by goodness;
> a niggardly person by liberality, one mendacious by veracity[2].

According to Buddhist philosophy, hostility and repulsion, much like craving and attachment, originate from delusion. That ignorance is people’s mistaken notion of their own permanent, independent existence. In ignorance, one sees oneself as a separate being, unconnected with others. Blinded to one true state of interdependence and interconnectedness, it is this basic ignorance that keeps one divided. Only practice that leads to overcoming such ignorance will help to free one from the prisons he or she makes for himself or herself and others.

People all harbor prejudices of various sorts. There is no exception to this fact. Not one of them is completely freed of prejudicial attitudes. People don't like certain colors or sounds; they're annoyed by certain circumstances, behaviors, or styles of doing things. People are harsh critics, even of themselves. Preferences and aversions are accepted as a given. Indeed, the ability to discriminate is considered an essential part of what makes them human beings. Humanity, distinct from all other beings, holds the gift of judgment and choice. Autonomy and the ability to choose are regarded as basic rights. So, one might ask, what's the problem?

The issue emerges, as it so often does, when individual preferences crystallize into rigid dogmas, when tentative beliefs ossify into unyielding truths, and when judgments of oneself and others solidify into distorting lenses that alter all human interactions, shaping one's understanding of self, society, and the world at large. This descent into prejudice represents a particularly insidious form, one that perpetuates suffering and injustice for both the self and others. It manifests in fractured relationships, whether personal or communal, in discord over religious doctrines or territorial disputes, and in the subjugation of one group by another, depriving them of freedom. Such occurrences mark a departure from humanity's higher potential, diminishing the essence of what it means to embody the best qualities of human existence.

---

[1] Acharya Buddharakkhita. (1985). The Dhammapada: The Buddha's Path of Wisdom. Kandy, Sri Lanka: Buddhist Publication Society. P.23.

[2] Thu Kha (2014). Lokaniti. Yangon: Thu Kha Sar Pae. P-212.

Prejudicial attitudes and behaviors are both experienced and perpetuated by humanity on a daily basis. For people to endure and thrive on this shared, fragile planet, it is essential to cultivate mutual appreciation and respect, recognizing each other's humanity and striving for peaceful coexistence. While the ideal solution may involve the global disarmament of nation-states, such a transformation can only begin once individuals have first disarmed their own hearts.

In reality, at people’s innermost cores, they are all the same: they are human beings who wish to have happiness and to avoid suffering. Yet, out of ignorance, people go about seeking these goals blindly and without insight. People live their lives seemingly oblivious to their prejudices, even though they are right in front of their eyes. In short, People suffer because they embrace the mistaken notion of their separateness from one another.

The illusion of separateness actively hinders individuals from recognizing the origin of this misguided cycle. Buddhist teachings state that the moment the ideas of 'self' and 'ownership' emerge, so do the ideas of 'not-self' and 'not mine.' In other words, when we think in terms of 'us,' there is automatically a 'them.' Once the concepts of division, distinction, and otherness enter our minds, they continue to shape (both literally and metaphorically) all our future experiences, decisions, and perceptions. People see the world in terms of us vs. them, me vs. everyone else, mine vs. yours. People are immediately caught up in a world of mistaken, logically unfounded, and seemingly uncontrollable hatred and prejudice. These dualistic divisions happen with incredible speed and mostly go unnoticed.

The deeply ingrained nature of this false belief in separateness makes it seem unimaginable to even consider its end. Buddhists accept that by insight, ignorance is destroyed. Thus arises the pivotal inquiry: Is it possible to eradicate sectarian, tribal, and faith-based animosities and biases? The solution, while affirmative, requires confronting deeply ingrained and often subconscious patterns—a challenge of considerable complexity. But it is a task so urgently needed in her or his current situation that it is well worth undertaking.

The dismantling of hateful prejudices begins with the recognition that one does harbor them. Next, one must be willing to look at her or his particular prejudices with honesty and resolve. People need to know how and why they, as particular human beings, came to harbor the specific views they do and, through this understanding, to be willing now to replace them with more positive views and behaviors. Lastly, People need to know that they can indeed make a difference; that they can work together for positive change in their society and the world. Thus, with understanding and with practice comes a softening of their rigid views. Human beings' hearts can open and, ultimately, they can transform themselves into loving individuals and loving neighbors; in short, into human beings at her or his best.

One cannot simply decide to love one's neighbor. Nor are there too many of them comfortable with the notion of loving themselves. Both these injunctions call for methods to enable them to carry them out. Yet, for most of them, it is precisely such methods that are lacking. Throughout history, different religious and philosophical systems have tried to provide practical guidance. One of these traditions, Buddhism, seems to offer, in fact, numerous methods for personal transformation for anyone who wishes to tackle this most serious undertaking.

Hatred is an acquired behavior, and the essential challenge lies in unlearning it. Similarly, racism and racial profiling are behaviors that are taught and must be consciously dismantled. Divisions based on ethnicity and social class are also learned constructs. Genuine understanding arises from acknowledging the shared humanity that unites all individuals.

The cultivation of peace, kindness, and compassion in every interaction holds the potential to create a harmonious culture of peace. However, such a transformation cannot be achieved effortlessly. It requires unwavering commitment, perseverance, mutual collaboration, and consistent practice over time. Individuals possess the capacity to reshape their thoughts, alter their perspectives, and embody peace within themselves. In doing so, they contribute to the broader realization of peace in the world. Yet, there are those who channel their mental energy toward fostering hatred, prejudice, and division—be it through racism, sexism, or other forms of discord. When faced with the severity of the current state of affairs, those who seek change must embrace a resolute determination to counter such negativity and commit themselves to the labor required for peace to prevail.

The pursuit of inner tranquility through Buddhist practices, though an essential and foundational step, is but the beginning of a larger journey. True fulfillment lies not solely in personal serenity but in the active endeavor to extend and disseminate this peace outward. Such an undertaking demands further dedication, intentional effort, and transformative action.

Conclusion

Achieving sustainable peace requires adept diplomacy, collective and individual wisdom, and a steadfast dedication to nonviolence and the preservation of human dignity. The foundation of any peace and human rights movement must rest upon the principles of "justice and equality" for all individuals. Over six decades of armed conflict could finally conclude if political, social, and ethnic leaders, along with their communities, abandon their war-centric mentality and relinquish the antiquated notion of "victory." In the context of our nation, while war may secure battles, it has never succeeded in resolving the underlying conflicts.

Legal systems in most societies are designed to govern behavior, but ethical standards are typically broader and less formal than laws. While laws often enforce widely accepted moral values and share similarities with ethical principles, they are not identical. Legality does not always align with morality, and ethical actions can sometimes challenge unfair laws. Ethical ideas can also be used to evaluate, criticize, or suggest changes to laws. Throughout the past century, many social reformers have urged people to oppose laws they viewed as wrong or unjust. Peaceful civil disobedience has been a method for protesting such laws and expressing political views ethically.

There are several reasons why following ethical standards is crucial. First, norms promote the aims of social peace, such as knowledge, truth, and avoidance of error. For example, rules against fabricating, falsifying, or misrepresenting research data help uphold the truth and reduce mistakes.

Second, since often ethical concepts involve a great deal of cooperation and coordination among many different people in different disciplines and institutions, ethical standards promote the values that are essential to collaborative endeavors - including trust, accountability, mutual respect, and equitable treatment. For example, many ethical norms, such as guidelines for authorship, copyright and patenting policies, data sharing policies, and confidentiality rules in peer review, are designed to protect intellectual property interests while encouraging collaboration. Most researchers wish to be recognized for their work and do not want their ideas to be stolen or revealed prematurely.

Third, ethical frameworks mandate researchers' transparency and responsibility to society at large. For instance, Regulations addressing misconduct, conflicts of interest, human subject safeguards, and ethical animal treatment serve a vital purpose: they enforce the social contract between publicly-funded researchers and the citizens they ultimately serve.

Fourth, Ethical norms generate the positive feedback loops where societal trust reinforces political peace, which in turn strengthens ethical behavior. People are more likely to support a research project when they can trust the quality and honesty of the work.

Finally, many of the norms promote a variety of other important moral and social values, such as social responsibility, human rights, animal welfare, compliance with the law, and public health and safety. Ethical lapses can significantly harm human and animal subjects, students, and the public. Thus, ethical norms are vital for maintaining social harmony.

The matters related to peaceful co-existence are not just the domain of politicians, national leaders, and social scientists, but concern everyone. Every citizen of this global community must recognize their responsibility. This requires adopting a fundamentally new way of thinking—holistic thinking. It is the role of philosophers and ethical thinkers to free people from their deep-seated superstitions, dogmas, and outdated, illogical, or irrational ways of thinking. We must reassess and re-evaluate the relevance of traditional political and national goals, such as patriotism and nationalism, as well as spiritual ideals like personal salvation and self-realization.

The current global landscape demands a thorough review and reconsideration of traditional ideas and values from a global perspective for all decision-makers—from voters to executives, from parents to national leaders, and from national entities to international organizations. The greatest duty of thinkers is to ensure that humanity remains the highest priority. Therefore, it is essential to awaken the conscience at personal, national, and even global levels. The foundations for lasting peace aren't found in diplomatic halls or philosophical treatises, but in the marketplace, the schoolyard, the kitchen table - wherever human hearts practice the radical act of truly seeing one another.

As globalization redefines state sovereignty, cultivating mutual trust between nations becomes not just preferable but necessary for effective governance. Psychology informs people that where divisibility prevails, human beings become isolated and victims of unhappiness and misery. This truth applies to nations as integral parts of the same global system.

For a society to achieve peace, it is essential for all citizens to uphold and practice ethical principles like justice, unity, mutual trust, non-violence, duty, responsibility, and equality. The notion of peace is grounded in a strong moral foundation that includes key values such as self-realization, virtues, duty, non-violence, mutual trust, security, unity, wisdom, and reflective thinking. These principles are not only theoretical but also serve as practical guidelines for fostering harmony and advancing peace within Myanmar society.

Acknowledgment

I want to thank all those who have been a source of encouragement, inspiration, and support during this journey. Special thanks go to Prof. Dr Lé Lé' Wynn, Head of the Department of Philosophy, University of Yangon, for her support of brilliant comments, encouragement, and valuable suggestions on writing the paper. I would also like to extend my thanks to those who showed encouragement to me during this study: Prof. Dr. Soe Soe Htay, Head of the Department of Philosophy, Meiktila University. Last but not least, I would like to extend my thanks to the Myanmar Academy of Arts and Sciences for allowing me to submit this paper.

References

Acharya Buddharakkhita. (1985). ***The Dhammapada: The Buddha's Path of Wisdom***. Kandy, Sri Lanka: Buddhist Publication Society.

Thiroux, Jacques P. (1985). ***Philosophy Theory and Practice.*** New York: Macmillan Publishing Company.

Thittilla, Ashin. (1992). ***Essential Themes of Buddhist Lectures***. Rangoon: Department of Religious Press.

Thu Kha. (2014). ***Lokaniti***. Yangon: Thu Kha Sar Pae.

ဒေါက်တာ တင်းတင်မွန်၊ (၁၉၉၉)၊ ဘဝရည်မှန်းချက်နှင့် ဘဝလမ်းစဉ်၊ မြရတနာစာပေ

J. Myanmar Acad. Arts Sci. 2026 **Vol. XXIII. No.5**

FACTORS INFLUENCING THE LAND VALUES ALONG PYAY ROAD AND KABARAYE PAGODA ROAD IN YANGON CITY*

Aye Su Han[1], Yamin Aye[2], Zin Nwe Myint[3]

Abstract

Yangon City is the commercial hub and currently inhibited by 10 percent of the total population of Myanmar (YCDC, 2022). The population growth rate of Yangon has increased due to rising job opportunities, which in turn led to a greater demand for housing. Accordingly, the government has extended the area of the city by establishing new towns around the city. As such roads connecting these new towns and Downtown of Yangon, as well as with port and airport, become important. Among major roads, the two roads, Pyay Road and Kabaraye Pagoda Road, become important and the land value along these roads become obviously higher as compared with other roads. Against this background, this study aims to examine the influencing factors on land value along these two roads. The main interests of this study are; in which parts of these two roads are highest in land value and what are the reasons of such high land value along these two roads. Both interviews and questionnaire surveys were conducted for data collection and analyzed using Factor Analysis and Relative Important Index (RII) (Sridhar, 2022). The measure of sampling adequacy was also used to test the inter-correlations among the variables. The value of land along the study area is even higher than the average land value of Yangon City. The extremely higher land value inhibits further investment by the foreign enterprises and they move to other ASEAN countries as Vietnam, Thailand and Laos where the land value is relatively cheaper. In this way, the economy of the city can be encountered by the domino effect, the chain reaction of the events.

Keywords: land value, Yangon, new towns, investment, RII

Introduction

Yangon was established as a modern city with grid-pattern of road in 1853, and by 1874, it was officially designated as the **downtown area.** It had pass through many stages of urban expansion through out the long period. During the last few decades, especially after 1988, due to the changes of government policy, the area of Yangon had been dramatically increased by establishing many new towns and industrial zones around the City. Accordingly, the urban land use pattern of Yangon had also changed remarkably in response to the new policies. As a result, the transportation routes become important to commute from one place to another within the city area.

Since 1989, with the transformation of government policy from socialist economy to market-oriented economy, government encourage foreign investments to develop state's economy. At that time, as Yangon has better infrastructure then other places, foreign investment became to concentrate in Yangon and faced with lack of international standards office buildings. To fulfil this need, investors choose privately owned large land plots along Pyay Road and Kabaraye Pagoda Roads which have better accessibility to international airport as compared with other places to build international standards office buildings. Such situations led to the occurrence of mixed-use buildings along these two roads, where apartment rooms for residents,

---

*First Prize(2024)

[1] Department of Geography, East Yangon University
[2] Department of Geography, University of Yangon
[3] Department of Geography, University of Yangon

services activities, office rooms for business, and shopping centers as commercial complex are included. So, investment mainly by foreign companies concentrated along these two roads and it was the reason of higher land values as compared with other places. The emergence of mixed-use buildings had some impact on land value (Interview, 2023).

With the continued growth of city's population and necessity of systematic urban expansion, a comprehensive "Strategic Urban Plan of Grater Yangon Project" was introduced by Yangon City Development Committee (YCDC) in collaboration with Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) in 2013. This strategic plan redefined the previously designated downtown area as the **First Central Business District (First CBD),** serving as a focal point for large-scale urban development and infrastructural transformation initiatives. High population concentration and traffic congestion problem of those Downtown 6 townships has been recognized as development control area for sustainable urban development of Yangon.

In 2022, zoning principles are laid down for Yangon City based on Strategic Urban Plan of Grater Yangon by YCDC and JICA, 2013. Besides, the government has been implementing special development projects of 'Second CBD', 'sub-CBD' and 'Development Promotion Area' at certain part on these two roads. That is why the land values along Pyay Road and Kabaraye Pagoda Road are higher than that of CBD area of Yangon City. Such information that where foreign investors have chosen to invest and urban development project sites has strong impact on today's Yangon land market (Interview, 2023).

According to Land Value Theory of Alonso (1960), land value is high in area close to CBD and low with the increasing distance from CBD. However, in Yangon City the land value has obviously higher in areas distant from the CBD and Sub-CBD, especially along Pyay Road and Kabaraye Pagoda Road.

Against this background, the interesting research questions are first of all, what are the influencing factors of land value along the Pyay Road and Kabaraye Pagoda Road in Yangon? Secondly, what are the impacts of such high land value in Yangon.

Aim

The main aim of this study is to examine the influencing factors of land value along Pyay Road and Kabaraye Pagoda Road.

Study Area

This research will focus on the land value along Pyay and Kabaraye Pagoda Roads and the increasing importance of road transportation due to the residential expansion of Yangon City. Pyay Road starts from Khayapin branch road of Mingalardon Township to the Thayattaw traffic light of Lanmadaw Township, having a length of 10.39 kilometre 6.493 miles (10.39 kilometre). Kabaraye Pagoda Road begins from 8 Mile junction of Mayangone Township to U Htaung Bo circle of Bahan Township and it is 10.2 kilometre (6.375 mile) long. The Study along Pyay Road and Kabaraye Pagoda Road faces serious challenges arising from variation of land values.

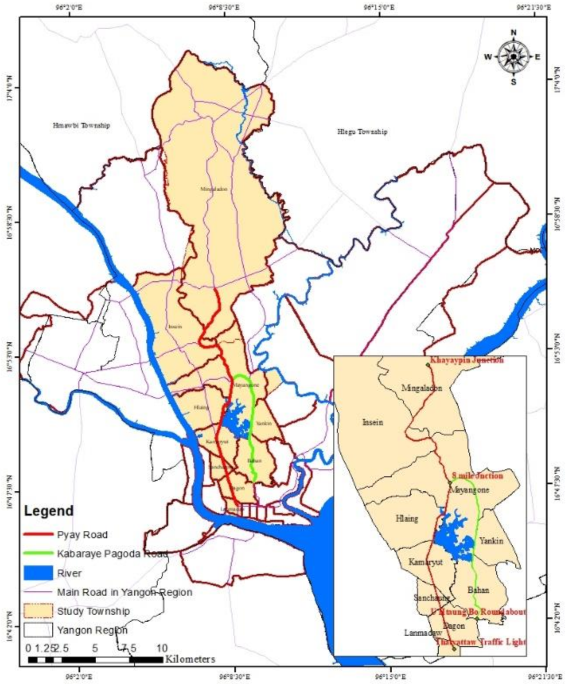


Figure 1. Location of Study Roads in Yangon City

Source: YCDC

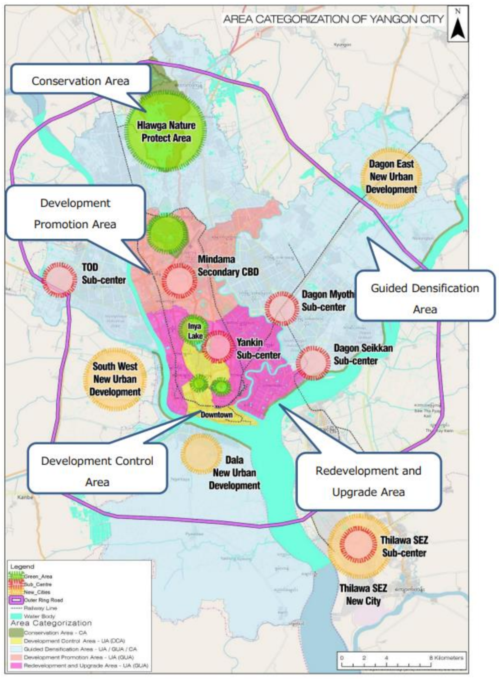


Figure 2. Area Categorization of Yangon City

Source: YCDC (Zoning Handbook, 2022, pg. 8)

Methodology

Due to necessity, both primary and secondary data are used to analyse. The primary data were collected by field observations, open talks, questionnaire survey and secondary data were collected from Yangon City Development Committee (YCDC) and Department of Urban and Housing Development (DUHD).

Many field observations had done on the two roads, Pyay and Kabaraye Pagoda Roads, observing the land use types along the whole road on both sides. The primary data are obtained through structured interviews with the authorities from two main government offices (YCDC and DUHD), real estate companies that have offices in the Yangon City area, and real estate brokers who have experienced in buying and selling of the land plots along the two main roads. Open talks were used with the local residents who have lived at least 5 years and above on these roads, with those who have purchased land plots on these roads for residing or for investment and also with those who have experience in purchasing the land in the recent past.

Applying Randomized Stratified Sampling method, questionnaires are distributed to those who are living near the mixed-use buildings, those who have purchased land on these two roads. There were 583 land plots along Pyay Road and 367 land plots along Kabaraye Pagoda Road. Questionaries survey for local residents was conducted during November and December 2023, distributing 237 questionnaires for local residents in Pyay Road and 191 questionnaires in Kabaraye Pagoda Road. The necessary primary data are acquired through field surveys and questionnaires, based on the calculated sample size by using the formula, n = N/1 + Ne2.

Finally, the collected responses were analyzed through the Factor Analysis and Relative Importance Index (RII). The RII method is extensively utilized in analyzing Likert scale research data to identify the crucial factor. To know the perception level of the resident, Likert scale or the 5-point scale is used as measurement instrument. The 5-point scale, as mentioned below, is simple and easy to give the relevant answer. The mean score and standard deviation of the variables 13 items were computed by SPSS based on the 5-point Likert scale test, where 1 represents “No impact,” and 5 represents “Very highly impact.” A higher score means that respondents were more satisfied. Based on these returned questionnaires influencing factors of land value along Pyay and Kabaraye Pagoda roads in Yangon City is analyzed.

Factor analysis (Pyay Road)

The impact level of residents is important factor for variation of land value. In order to know the perception of resident during real estate, 13 questions related to impact level are asked.

In the assessment of impact level, 5-point Likert scales, ranging from no impact to very high impact are employed, and based on responses to 13 variables. The variables include transportation, neighbourhood characteristic, government policy, environmental condition and location factor. These variables are suitable for the use of Factor Analysis.

Table 1 Factor extraction with an eigen values > 1 and total variance explained > 60.0%

Total Variance Explained									
Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	3.244	24.950	24.950	3.244	24.950	24.950	2.241	17.236	17.236
2	1.508	11.600	36.550	1.508	11.600	36.550	1.951	15.008	32.243
3	1.237	9.514	46.065	1.237	9.514	46.065	1.500	11.540	43.784
4	1.068	8.214	54.279	1.068	8.214	54.279	1.298	9.986	53.770
5	1.015	7.807	62.086	1.015	7.807	62.086	1.081	8.316	62.086
6	0.969	7.456	69.542						
7	0.816	6.280	75.822						
8	0.752	5.782	81.604						
9	0.632	4.861	86.465						
10	0.543	4.178	90.643						
11	0.487	3.749	94.392						
12	0.393	3.025	97.418						
13	0.336	2.582	100.000						
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.									

Source: Calculation from Sample Survey data

Principle components factor analysis was used because the primary purpose was to identify and compute the factors underlying the impact levels of residents, real estate agents and buyers. The initial eigenvalues showed that the first factor explained 24% of the variances, the second factor 11%, and the third factor 9 %. The fourth and fifth factor are 8% and 7% of the variance, respectively. The data shown in the Table 1 represent the extraction of factors with eigenvalues greater than 1, which represented 62.086% of the variance. Over 60 percent of total variances are sufficient criterion for the extraction factors for impact.

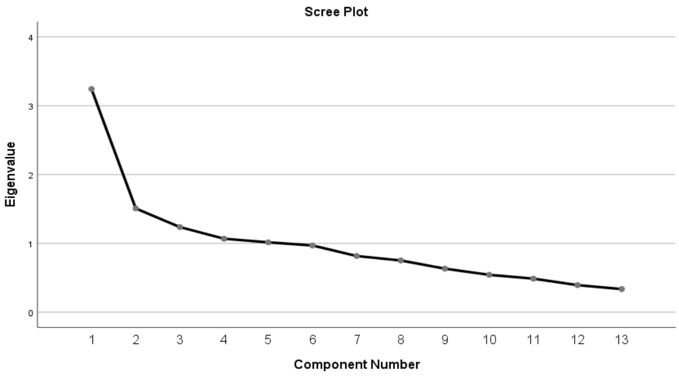


Figure 3. Scree Plot of 13 items of respondent' impact levels of resident's perception on the land value along Pyay Road

Source: Based on Table 1 (variance %)

In presenting scree plot, there were 5 factors with an eigenvalue of more than 1 are extracted for the assessment of cut-off point of factors as shown in Figure (Scree Plot). The purpose of the scree test is to identify the optimum number of factors that can be extracted before the amount of unique variance begins to dominate the common variance structure's (Hair et al., 2006, p.120)

Table 2. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy KMO and Bartletts' Test

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		0.701
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	529.179
	df	78
	Sig.	0

Source: Calculation based on sample survey data

Kaiser- Meyer- Olkin (KMO) method is used to determine whether factor analysis is appropriate. If the calculated result is more than 0.5 it is suitable to use the analysis (Hair et al., 2006). The KMO measure of sampling adequacy was 0.701 and Bartlett's test of sphericity is (x^2 = 529.179). The overall significance of the correlation matrix was 0.000. Thus, the data are suitable for factorization as shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Component Matrix for 13 items of Impact level of resident (N= 237)

Component Matrix[a]					
	Component				
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Distance to Mixed use	0.726	-0.191	-0.054	0.059	0.080
Urban Planning Project	0.705	-0.168	0.026	-0.422	-0.022
Distance to Work Place	0.590	0.302	-0.340	-0.003	0.353
Distance to Educational Institution	0.639	0.374	-0.045	0.107	-0.081
Relative	0.560	-0.114	0.172	-0.128	0.138
Overpass	0.611	-0.163	0.273	-0.442	0.005
Distance to Commercial	0.564	0.271	0.110	0.477	-0.048
Distance to Downtown	-0.305	0.566	0.373	-0.083	0.230
Distance to Air Port	0.346	0.494	-0.490	0.007	-0.016
Distance to Government Office	0.265	0.098	0.766	0.229	0.172
Distance to Recreational Space	0.350	-0.445	-0.022	0.591	-0.199
Land size and shape	-0.232	0.114	-0.039	0.141	0.617
Land Characteristic	-0.016	-0.561	-0.175	0.083	0.594
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.					

Source: Calculation based on sample survey data **a**. 5 components extracted.

The five components result in 62.086% of the cumulative percentage of variance, indicating that they capture the majority of the variability in the dataset. It means that more than 50% of the variance in this model can be explained by these five generated components. Table (3) shows the results of varimax factor rotation. The highlighted variables were significantly loaded onto each factor (with loadings above 0.494), giving a high degree of association between the variables and their respective factors. Factor loadings are the means of interpreting the role each variable plays in defining each factor (Hair et al., 2006). They further recommend that loadings in the range $\pm 0.30\ to\ \pm\ 0.40$ are minimally acceptable and loadings greater than ± 0.50 are generally considered necessary for practical significance.

The five factors are as follows: neighbourhood factors (Factor 1), transportation factors (Factor 2), government factors (Factor 3), environmental factor (Factor 4), and locational factors (Land factors) (Factor 5). These factors explained 62.086 % of the total variance. Neighbourhood Factors (Factor 1) were related to site's attraction due to neighboring facts. This factor accounted for 24.95% variance out of a total variance of 62.086 %, with significant factor loadings greater than (0.560) across seven variables: distance to Mixed-use areas (0.726), presence of urban planning project (0.705), distance to workplaces (0.590), distance to educational institution (0.639), relative's proximity (0.560), Overpass (0.611), and distance to commercial (0.564). Transportation Factors (Factor 2) were associated to site's attraction due to accessible facts. transportation. This factor dealt with the two factors, including distance to downtown area (0.566) and distance to airport (0.494). This factor explained 11.6% of variance with significant factor loadings greater than (0.494). Government factor (Factor 3) contained one item, including distance to government office (0.766). This factor explained 4.17% of the variance. Environment Factor (Factor 4) included one item. This is distance to recreational space (0.591). This factor explained 8.214% of variance. Location Factors (Factor 5) were related to site's attraction due to the land use type. This factor accounted for 7.807% variance. This factor consisted two items, including land size and shape (0.617) and land characteristics (0.594).

Relative Importance Index for Pyay and Kabaraye Pagoda Roads

The thirteen different factors were identified through a detailed literature review and interviews with real estate agents. Of the results derived from Factor Analysis, to identify the most dominant that affects the land value along the two main roads, RII method is applied and these factors were categories into 5 major categories (1) Neighbourhood Factors (2) Government Factors (3) Transportation Factors (4) Environmental factors (5) Location factors. The five points Likert scale was framed to capture the perspective of local resident respondents, with the following options: no impact, little impact, moderate impact, high impact, and very high impact.

Initially a covering letter was followed by 5 sections corresponding to 5 major categories and the last section gathered demographic details of the respondents such as age, gender, experience in the field, number of transactions taken part and the type of stake holder. The RII is used to determine the relative importance among the factors using the formula.

$$\text{Relative Importance Index (RII)} = \frac{(1 \times r1) + (2 \times r2) + (3 \times r3) + (4 \times r4) + (5 \times r5)}{(5 \times (r1 + r2 + r3 + r4 + r5))}$$

Where, r1 is the number of the respondents who have given no impact ratings for a factor. r2 is the number of the respondents who have given little impact, for a factor r3 is the number of respondents who have given moderate impact, for a factor r4 is the number of respondents who have given high impact and for a factor r5 is the number of respondents who have given very high impact ratings for a factor.

Then, the RII is determined for each factor using the given formula. Thus, to highlight the reliability, impact level of a residents, investors and real estate agents on the land value along Pyay and Kabaraye Pagoda roads. The 13 different factors were categorized into 5 major categories were identified through a detail literature review and interviews with respondents.

Table 4. Total respondents' results of Land Value (N-237)

Category	Factor Considered	Respondents rating				
		R1	R2	R3	R4	R5
Neighbourhood Factor	Distance to Mixed use	8	7	25	58	139
Neighbourhood Factor	Distance to Urban Planning Project	9	14	26	53	135
Neighbourhood Factor	Distance to Work Place	6	16	49	126	40
Neighbourhood Factor	Distance to Educational Institution	5	59	78	57	38
Environmental Factor	Distance to Recreational Space	7	47	68	59	56
Neighbourhood Factor	Distance to Commercial	25	39	35	49	89
Neighbourhood Factor	Overpass	13	48	78	67	31

Category	**Factor Considered**	**Respondents rating**				
		R1	**R2**	**R3**	**R4**	**R5**
Location Factor	Land size and shape	11	73	76	45	32
Transportation	Distance to Downtown	17	53	87	56	14
Neighbourhood Factor	Distance to Government Office	49	64	68	39	17
Location Factor	Land Characteristics	24	79	68	48	18
Transportation Factor	Distance to Air Port	35	87	59	36	20
Neighbourhood Factor	Relative	51	41	48	58	39

Source: Field Observation

Table 9. Total Respondents Results of Land Value factor (N – 191)

Category	**Factor Considered**	**Respondents rating**				
		R1	**R2**	**R3**	**R4**	**R5**
Neighbourhood Factor	Distance to Mixed use	1	6	32	59	93
Neighbourhood Factor	Urban Planning Project	5	3	26	68	89
Neighbourhood Factor	Distance to Educational Institution	20	33	31	38	69
Environmental Factor	Distance to Recreational Space	6	41	53	50	41
Neighbourhood Factor	Distance to Work Place	3	11	45	108	24
Neighbourhood Factor	Overpass	12	44	65	50	20
Location Factor	Land size and shape	5	63	53	42	28
Neighbourhood Factor	Distance to commercial	5	44	66	46	30
Transportation	Distance to Downtown	13	43	79	42	14
Government Factor	Distance to Government Office	34	38	45	45	29
Location Factor	Orientation of Land	21	62	42	30	20
Neighbourhood Factor	Relative	46	56	53	23	13
Transportation Factor	Distance to Air Port	30	62	44	35	20

Source: Field Observation (2023)

Table 5. RII of the factors affecting land value Pyay and Kabaraye Pagoda roads

Rank	**Category**	**Factor Considered**	**RII % (Pyay Road)**	**RII % (Kabaraye Pagoda Road)**
1	Neighbourhood Factor	Distance to Mixed use	0.86	0.85
2	Neighbourhood Factor	Urban Planning Project	0.84	0.84
3	Neighbourhood Factor	Distance to Work Place	0.74	0.70
4	Neighbourhood Factor	Distance to commercial	0.71	0.68
5	Neighbourhood Factor	Overpass	0.69	0.65

Rank	**Category**	**Factor Considered**	**RII % (Pyay Road)**	**RII % (Kabaraye Pagoda Road)**
6	Neighbourhood Factor	Distance to Educational Institution	0.65	0.62
7	Environmental Factor	Distance to Recreational Space	0.64	0.74
8	Location Factor	Land size and shape	0.61	0.63
9	Neighbourhood Factor	Relative	0.60	0.59
10	Transportation Factor	Distance to Downtown	0.59	0.60
11	Location Factor	Land Characteristics	0.56	0.56
12	Transportation Factor	Distance to Air Port	0.53	0.49
13	Government Factor	Distance to Government Office	0.52	0.55

Source: Calculation based on sample survey data

The presence of one factor from neighbourhood categories and two factors show government that these are two important categories influencing the land value. The ranking of factors under each category is represented in table 5. In the neighbourhood category, distance to mixed use (RII = 0.86) and Urban Planning Project (0.84) are the important factors influencing the land value along the Pyay Road. The study results illustrate that the distance to the mixed use and urban planning project are the influence factor of the essential criterion of the value of land along the Pyay Road. The land value gradually decreases as the distance from the mixed use. These findings are the notable observations of the study, which point out the impact of the surrounding development on the land value.

The relative importance index ranking method was followed to determine the relative importance of the factors. The resident perception was captured through a questionnaire survey, and the RII ranking method was applied to the collected responses. The most significant factors affecting the land value along the Pyay Road were determined to be the neighbourhood and government categories related factors. Within the two categories, the most important factors are distance to mixed use (RII = 0.86), urban planning project (RII = 0.84). The property investors should consider the extent of urban development of the surroundings and the future development prospectus while making investments. The research findings can help researchers and professionals in the domains of real estate investments, urban planning, local urban bodies, property evaluators, in their respective decision-making. The identified important factors can be utilized further in modelling of land prices.

The ranking of factors under each category is represented in table. In the neighbourhood category, distance to mixed use (RII = 0.85) and urban planning project (RII=0.84) is the influencing factor of land value along Kabaraye Pagoda Road. In the transportation category, distance from downtown (RII = 0.59), distance to airport (RII = 0.53) are the critical factors. The study results illustrate that the distance to the mixed use and urban planning project are the influence factor of the essential criterion of the value of land along the Kabaraye Pagoda Road.

These findings are notable observations of the study, which point out the impact of the surrounding development on the land value. The study determined the factors affecting the land value along the Kabaraye Pagoda Road. The relative importance index ranking method was followed to determine the relative importance of the factors. The resident perception was captured through a questionnaire survey, and the RII ranking method was applied to the collected responses.

The most significant factors affecting the land value along the Kabaraye Pagoda Road were determined to be the neighbourhood and government categories related factors. Within the two categories, the most important factors are distance to mixed use (RII = 0.85), urban planning project (RII = 0.84). The property investors should consider the extent of urban development of the surroundings and the future development prospectus while making investments. The research findings can help researchers and professionals in the domains of real estate investments, urban planning, local urban bodies, property evaluators, and banks in their respective decision-making. The identified important factors can be utilized further in modelling of land prices.

Factor analysis (Kabaraye Pagoda Road)

The impact level of residents is important for variation of land value. In order to know the perception of resident during real estate (13) questions related to Impact level are asked.

In the assessment of impact level, 5-point Likert scales, ranging from no impact to very high impact are employed, and based on responses to 13 variables. The variables include transportation, neighbourhood characteristic, government policy, environmental condition and location factor. These variables are suitable for the use of Factor Analysis.

Table 6. Factor extraction with an eigen values > 1 and total variance explained > 60.0%

Total Variance Explained									
Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	3.259	25.068	25.068	3.259	25.068	25.068	2.372	18.246	18.246
2	1.505	11.578	36.646	1.505	11.578	36.646	2.013	15.486	33.732
3	1.285	9.883	46.529	1.285	9.883	46.529	1.321	10.163	43.895
4	1.174	9.031	55.561	1.174	9.031	55.561	1.298	9.984	53.879
5	1.012	7.786	63.347	1.012	7.786	63.347	1.231	9.468	63.347
6	0.822	6.324	69.671						
7	0.793	6.097	75.768						
8	0.722	5.556	81.324						
9	0.694	5.335	86.659						
10	0.556	4.277	90.936						
11	0.438	3.366	94.302						
12	0.397	3.051	97.353						
13	0.344	2.647	100.00						
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.									

Source: Calculation from Sample Survey data

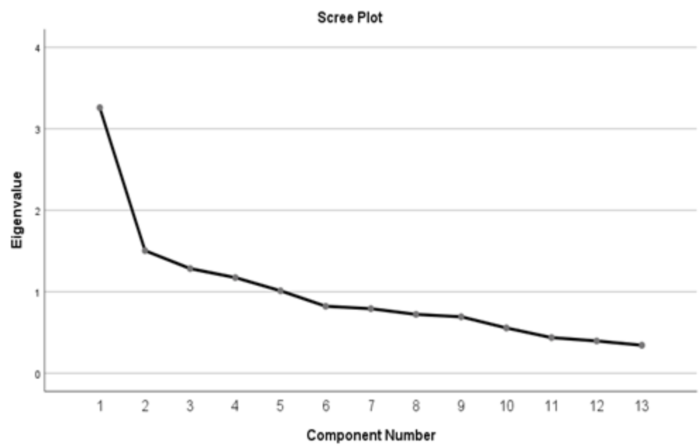


Figure 4 Scree Plot of 13 items of resident's impact on the land value along Kabaraye Pagoda Road

Source: Based on Table 5 (variance %)

Principle components factor analysis was used because the primary purpose was to identify and compute for the factors underlying the impact level of resident, real estate, byers. The initial eigenvalues showed that the first factor explained 25% of the variances, the second factor 11% of the variances and the third factor 9% of the variances. The fourth and fifth factor are 9% and 7% of the variance. The data shown in the table 5 are the extraction of factors from eigenvalues greater than 1 which represented 63.347%. Over 60 percent of total variances are sufficient criterion for the extraction factors for impact.

In presenting scree plot, there were 5 factors with an eigenvalue of more than 1 are extracted for the assessment of cut-off point of factors as shown in Figure (4). The role of the scree test is to identify the optimum number of factors that can be extracted before the amount of unique variance begins to dominate the common variance structure's Hair et al. (2006, p 120)

Table 7. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy KMO and Bartletts' Test

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		0.744
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	448.938
	df	78
	Sig.	0.000

Source: Calculation based on sample survey data

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) method is needed to determine whether to use factor analysis or not. If the calculated result is more than 0.5, it is suitable to use (Hair et al, 2006). The KMO measure of sampling adequacy is 0.744 and Bartlett's test of sphericity is (x2 = 448.938).

The five components result in 63.347 % of cumulative percentage of variance. It means that more than 50% of the variance in this model can be explained by these five generated components. They further recommend that loadings in the range ±.30 to ±.40 are minimally acceptable and loadings greater than ±.50 are generally considered necessary for practical significance. Tebachonick and Fidell (1996) suggested that only variables with loadings of .032 and above can be interpreted, otherwise the choice of the cut-off size of loadings depends on the researcher's preference. Five factors are relatively large numbers of factors to be retained, and the eigenvalues were more than 1.0 for five factor (1.012). The following results of descriptive analysis are to fulfill this study purpose and to evaluate land value along Kabaraye Pagoda Road. The local resident impact level for transportation, investment required and economic condition are presented evaluate the impact level of land value along Kabaraye Pagoda Road. Factors such as transportation, investment required and economic condition are the main factors that determine the choice of living along the road.

The five factors were labelled based on the consideration of resident's perceptions of sites' attributes as follows. These five factors included: resident's perceptions of sites' attributes resident's desires of sites' attributes (Places or sites) These factors explained 63.347% of total variance.

Table 8. Component Matrix for 13 items of Impact Level of Stakeholder (N= 191)

Component Matrix [a]					
	Component				
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Distance to Mixed-use	0.709	-0.368	0.181	-0.032	0.039
Urban Planning Project	0.703	-0.188	-0.020	-0.104	0.084
Distance to Work Place	0.603	-0.301	0.385	-0.095	-0.121
Distance to Educational Institution	0.663	0.307	-0.079	0.048	-0.007
Relative	0.626	0.336	-0.195	-0.203	0.127
Overpass	0.562	-0.138	0.174	0.404	0.005
Distance to Commercial	0.541	0.183	-0.411	0.156	0.140
Distance to Downtown	-0.270	0.555	0.226	0.373	-0.077
Distance to Air Port	0.397	0.510	-0.042	-0.236	0.171
Land size and shape	-0.119	-0.102	0.579	-0.150	0.379
Land Characteristics	0.239	0.454	0.535	0.302	-0.138
Distance to Government Office	-0.036	-0.258	-0.196	0.650	0.455
Distance to Recreational Space	-0.234	0.186	0.159	-0.275	0.675
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.					

a. 5 components extracted.

Source: Calculation based on sample survey data

Component 1 was related to sites' attraction of land value. This factor accounted for 25.068% variance out of a total variance of 63.347%, with factor loadings greater than (0.553) neighbourhood factor on seven variables: Distance to mixed use (0.709), Urban Planning Project (0.703), distance to work place (0.603), distance to educational institution (0.663), relative (0.626), distance to government office (0.562), distance to commercial (0.541).

Component 2 was associated to attraction sites' attributes of transportation factor. This factor dealt with the one factor item, including distance to downtown (0.555) and distance to airport (0.510). This factor explained 11.578% of variance. Component 3 contained two items, including land size and shape (0.579), land characteristics (0.535). This factor explained 9.883% of the variance.

Component 4 included one item. This is distance government office (0.650). This factor explained 9.031 % of variance.

Component 5 was associated with the appreciation of natural resources. This factor consisted of one item that related to land value with 7.786% of variation explained. The label was assigned from one variable with significant factor loadings greater than 0.701 including distance to recreational space (0.675). (Table 8)

Findings and Discussions

According to the Strategic Urban Development Plan of the Grater Yangon, currently, Yangon City is inhabited by 10 percent of the country population or 30 percent of the total urban population in Myanmar. The population growth rate is two times higher than the national average and it has been developing as a Mega City (YCDC and JICA, 2013). With the increasing number of populations, more land is necessary for residents. As such the city area has been extended by restabling new township along the outer rim of the city.

Being the commercial hub of the country, domestic and foreign entrepreneur interested to invest in Yangon City. They need land to construct international standard office buildings, and that was fulfilled by building along Pyay and Kabaraye Pagoda roads. On the other hand, for sustainable development of Yangon, zoning project of the city has laid down and implantation has been carried out since 2013 by YCDC. According to these projects, the construction of new buildings is restricted as development control area. From 8th Mile junction to Mindhamma junction, which include in the study area are likely to develop more in near future and Bahan, Yankin and Mayangone townships are planned to be upgraded as development promotion area (YCDC, 2022). As such, domestic and foreign entrepreneur mainly interested in these areas for investment. Purchasing of land by real estate agents in this project area increase the land value of this area. However, the land value of the areas that has skyline limit due to Shwedagon Pagoda and height limit of Mingladon Airport has been increasing with lower rate as compared the land along these two roads. It is obvious that the abnormal increased of land value in the study area is more concerned with the government policy. Many field observations and secondary data had proved it.

According to Factor Analysis and RII method, the geographic setting of these two roads has strong effect on accessibility to Mingaladon Airport, lowering of transport cost and time due to construction of overpasses which in turn affect the land value.

The influencing factors on the rise and fall of land value along Pyay Road and Kabaraye Pagoda Road are studied, based on 5 categories and 13 variables. Perception levels of the residents are analyzed by Likert scale with 13 variables. In order to reduce the variable included into the response, Factor Analysis is used which control 5 dominant components, neighbourhood, transportation, government policy, environmental and location factors. According to the results, resident's reliability on neighbourhood factor along the study roads are high. Besides, 13 variables derived from Factor Analysis are studied by RII method. Perceptions of the residents are based on the responses to the questionnaires.

According to the results, the most dominant influencing factor of the rise and the fall of land value is the distance from the mixed-use buildings and the second is the distance from urban planning project. The rise in the land value is closely related to the nearness to mixed use buildings and development project areas, which land value is higher ranging between 300,000 and 500,000 kyats per square foot as compared to land values in other areas along these two roads (Interview, Dec 2023). The distance from the mixed-use buildings is also related to the neighbourhood characteristics and government policy on the permission of the construction of such buildings. In their case, government policy is the most dominant factor. The Second CBD and Sub CBD are being implemented by the initiative of the government along the two main roads. In this case the spatial variation of land value along Pyay Road and Kabaraye Pagoda Road is more concerned with the government planning project.

Conclusion

A key stakeholder interview mentioned that, "*As more people purchase land plots the value of land in Yangon City has been increasing. The value of land plot along the study area is even higher than the average land value of Yangon City. The extremely higher land value inhibits further investment by the foreign enterprises and they move to such Asean countries as Vietnam, Thailand and Laos where the land value is relatively cheaper*" (Interview, Dec 2023).

In order to prevent from such move, Internal Revenue Department has fixed the value of land per square foot since 2013. However, the sellers and buyers of the land ignore the set rate. It is learnt that some land plot buyers could not repay the loan from the bank because of being unable to sell out the plots they have purchased due to extremely high price of land.

Another interview mentioned as, "*The cost of construction of housing has risen notably and thus they cannot sell at reasonable value*" (Interview, Dec 2023). As a result, they have to stop further construction work and the construction workers lose their job, increasing amount of unused labour. As a result, Pyay Road and Kabaraye Pagoda Road have become more important for the construction of mixed-use buildings by the foreign investors. The areas along these two roads also have large open plots of land for construction of large mixed-use buildings. After the emergence of mixed-use buildings, over passes were constructed and traffic light system was upgraded by the government to reduce traffic congestion for the smooth flow of people and commodities. In the past, only the road section between Hledan junction and Parami Junction have traffic light system, but no light system for turning to the right or left side. After the emergence of Lottle Hotel, Kantharyar Hospital, Market Palace and Shwehinthar Condominium Building along the road section traffic light system was upgraded Intelligent Traffic System (ITS) and Traffic Impact techniques, enhancing smooth transportation. Thus, the value of land near the mixed-use buildings has increased by 500,000 kyats to 800,000 kyats per square foot (Interview, Dec 2023).

Within the study area there are altogether 21 mixed-use buildings, 15 on Pyay Road and 6 on Kabaraye Pagoda Road. Apart from these buildings other mixed-use buildings also emerged along these roads according field survey. Based on current land value, neighbourhood characteristics are also important in affecting the land value. The change of land value in Yangon City is mostly related to the government policy and urban development project implementation. Second CBD establishment project included in Grater Yangon Strategic Plan and Development Promotion project included is smart city plan affected the land value along Pyay Road and Kabaraye Pagoda Road and the land value has risen up to from 300,000 kyats to 500,000 kyats per square foot. According to Greater Yangon strategic Plan, Land areas are classed into different types based on development level. 8^{th} mile junction is included in the Development Promotion Area while the road section in Yankin Township along Kabaraye Pagoda Road is included in the sub-CBD area. Most real estate agents know these projects and they purchased land plots adjoined with the road section and control the value of the land, increasing the land value.

Likewise, the rapid increase of the population in Yangon City needs more housing. In order to satisfy the need. The government of Myanmar established new towns in the suburban areas and some companies constructed new residential buildings in these areas. However, very few people purchased the apartments of the housing and thus the companies have to face with financial problem, decreasing amount of investment in housing project which can lead to the increasing number of unemployment. Without buyers of the apartments, the construction companies cannot stand for long and may also encounter with losses. In such situation, the companies may not be able to pay the money borrowed from the bank which can lead to the collapse of the banks concerned. In this way, the economy of the city can be encountered by the domino effect, the chain reaction of the events. As one may achieve a comprehensive understanding of the influencing factors along the two main road of Yangon, further research, particularly on real estate and urban economy should be conducted.

Acknowledgements

I am very much grateful to Dr. Nay Win Oo, Rector, East Yangon University, for his systematic guidance and valuable suggestions in this research. A huge support was provided by the Yangon City Development Committee (YCDC) team, particularly Daw Tin Tin Kyi, Director, Urban Planning Department and Dr. Toe Aung, Director, City Planning and Land Administration Department.

References

Alonso, W. (1960): "Location and Landuse" Natural Resource Journal, Volume 6, Harvard University

Hongjie Liu, Yuan Meng and Jing Ma (2019): **"Spatial Distribution of Influence Factors of Residential Land Price in Cangzhou City Based on GWR Model"**, Beijing City University, Chin.

Hair, J. F., Black, W. C., Babin, B. J., Anderson, R. E., and Tatham, P. L. (2006): **Multivariate Data Analysis, Upper Saddle River**, New Jersey.

http://www.degruyter.com/view/j/remav

Hui Jiang, Sheng Hua Jia1, and Yanfeng Huang (2013): **"The study of the Factors Affecting Urban Residential Land Price",** Research Paper, Management school of Zhejiang University,

Johannes A. Boers (2017): **"The Impact of Foreign Direct Investment in Real Estate on Property Prices and Economic Growth" article,** University of Groningen.

Kwame Addee Dapach, Yu Siew Lan (2010): **"Shopping Centres and the Price of Proximate Residential Properties" article,** National University of Singapore.

MB Sridhar, R Sathyanathan (2022): **"Assessment of factor affecting Residential Land Values in the Urban Fringes of Chennai City, India"** SRM institute of Science and Technology University.

Pham Thi Ha and Nguyen Tran Tuan (2022): "**Land Price Regression Model and Land Value Region Map to Support Residential Land Price Management: A Study in Nghe An Province, Vietnam" School of Agriculture and Resources, Vinh university in Vinh, Nghe An, Vietnam**

Tabachnick, B. G., & Fidell, L. S. (1996): **Using Multivariate Statistics** (3rd ed.). New York: Harper Collins.

YCDC and JICA (2013) A Strategic Urban Development Plan of Greater Yangon (The Project for the Strategic Urban Development Plan of the Greater Yangon Final Report I)

LAND USE AND LAND COVER CHANGE DETECTION USING REMOTE SENSING AND GIS TECHNIQUES: A CASE STUDY OF YEBYU TOWNSHIP IN DAWEI DISTRICT*

Zin May Oo[1], Thet Hmoo Nwe [2], July Moe[3]

Abstract

Remote sensing is one of the tools which is very important for the production of Land use and land cover maps through a process called image classification. For the image classification process to be successfully, several factors should be considered including availability of quality Landsat imagery and secondary data, a precise classification process and user's experiences and expertise of the procedures. The objective of this research was to classify and map land-use/land-cover of the study area using remote sensing and Geospatial Information System (GIS) techniques. Nowadays, land use and land cover (LULC) changes due to both human beings and natural environment. Consequently, LULC changes impact on water resources such as forestry, water bodies, agriculture land, wetland, urbanization, industrialization and so on. The aim of this research is To classify and map land use and land cover changes in the study area using remote sensing and GIS, and to assess the accuracy and usefulness of the classification results. ArcGIS 10.4.1 has been used to analyze the images processing and classification. LULC conditions of this area for the time periods 2009 and 2023 have been considered and downloaded from Landsat ETM and Landsat 8 OLI satellites images. Maximum likelihood method has been conducted in supervised image classification technique. The ground truth data or reference points are used to classify the image classification applying Google Earth Pro. Moreover, water bodies, Dense vegetation (forest), light Vegetation (garden land), bare soil, settlement (Built-up), and agriculture land of six LULC classes are identified in this study. Bare soil, light Vegetation and settlement are significantly changed during two periods. Further, dense vegetation (forest) area was decreased to approximately 8.02 % between 2009 and 2023. However, the water bodies of this study area were decreased slightly. LULC by agriculture land was decreased between 2009 and 2023. The study area had an overall classification accuracy of 81.03% and kappa coefficient (K) of 0.67 in 2009 and an overall classification accuracy of 87.33% and kappa coefficient (K) of 0.72 in 2023 respectability. The results of this research paper can contribute effectively about LULC change detection and help decision makers to develop plan in this study area.

Keywords: LULC, Change detection, Image classification, overall classification accuracy, Kappa coefficient

Introduction

Land use and land cover information plays a vital role in policy-making, business, and administrative planning. These data are essential for environmental conservation and spatial planning due to their detailed spatial attributes. Land use classification is particularly significant as it provides valuable input for environmental modeling, including those addressing climate change and policy developments [1]. By combining land use and land cover (LULC) data, a more comprehensive understanding of interactions within geo-biophysical and socioeconomic systems can be achieved [2].

*Second Prize(2024)

[1] Department of Geography, Pathein University
[2] Department of Geography, Pathein University
[3] Department of Geography, Dawei University

Remote Sensing is frequently integrated with Geographic Information System (GIS) technology to offer deeper insights into land cover information. Remote sensing serves as the primary source for various thematic data crucial to GIS analysis, including characteristics of land use and land cover. Aerial and Landsat satellite imagery is commonly used to analyze land cover distribution and update existing geospatial data. With advancements in remote sensing systems and image processing software, the role of remote sensing in GIS has expanded considerably [3]. The rapid growth of remote sensing data and techniques has made geospatial analysis more efficient and powerful, although this complexity also increases the potential for errors. In earlier studies, accuracy assessment was not a key concern in image classification. However, due to higher risks of errors in digital imagery, accuracy assessment has become essential.

Accuracy assessment, or validation, is a crucial step in processing remote sensing data as it determines the reliability of the resulting data for users. The overall accuracy of a classified image is assessed by comparing each pixel classification against ground truth data representing actual land cover. Producer's accuracy measures omission errors, indicating how well real-world land cover types are classified. User's accuracy measures commission errors, showing the probability of a classified pixel matching its real-world land cover type. Error matrices and the kappa coefficient have become standard methods for evaluating classification accuracy, frequently employed in numerous land classification studies, including this research.

The objective of this research is to classify and map the land use/land cover change detection of the study area using remote sensing and GIS techniques and to perform accuracy assessments to evaluate classification effectiveness and interpret the classification's utility

Yebyu Township is located within Dawei District in the Tanintharyi Region of southern Myanmar. The area falls under latitude 14˚9'40.713"N, 15˚11'44.421"E and longitude 97˚43'54.898"N and 98˚27'53. 482"E. The total study area is 6170.454 km2.The township is characterized by a tropical climate, dense forests, and mountainous terrain, with coastal areas along the Andaman Sea. This region has diverse ecosystems, including mangrove forests, freshwater rivers, and rich marine resources. The local economy is largely dependent on agriculture, fishing, and natural resource extraction, with rubber plantations, rice cultivation as the main activities.

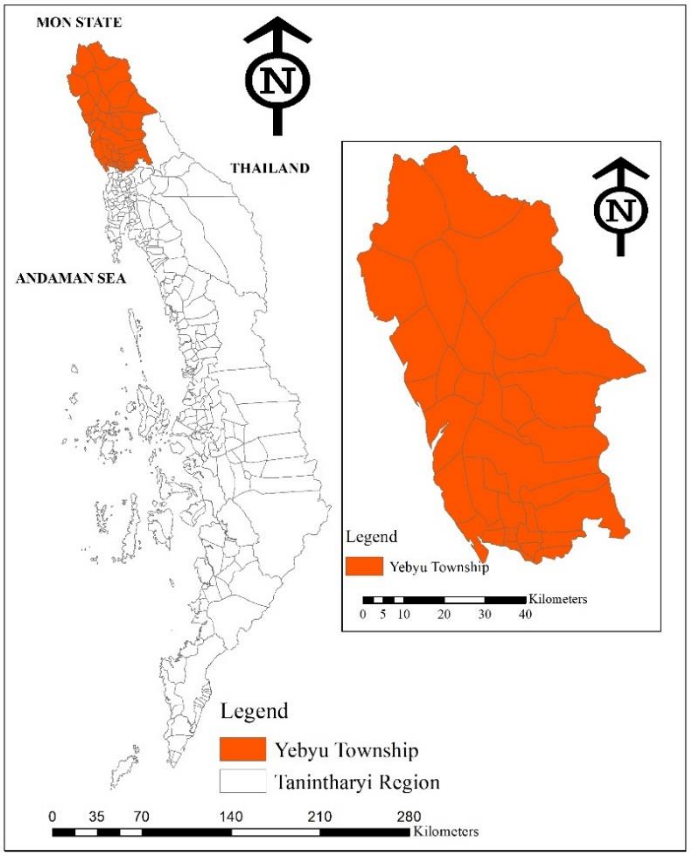


Figure 1 Location of study area.
Source: Myanmar Information Management Unit (MIMU)

. Materials and Methods

This paper focuses on three key components: (1) land use/land cover (LULC) classification, (2) LULC change detection, and (3) accuracy assessment. These analyses were conducted following the methodology illustrated in Figure 2.

The map and other data were obtained from the Government Administrative Department as the secondary data for this study. The Google Earth Pro was used to navigate the location for the ground truth samples. A total of 200 random sample points were collected with their land cover. An error matrix or contingency matrix used showed the information between the actual and prediction that had been classified through the classification for accuracy assessment. Overall accuracy shows the accuracy of the map. The individual classes' accuracy is calculated using the user's accuracy and producer's accuracy. For the user's accuracy, the number of corrected classified pixels was divided by the total number of pixels classified in that class. It measures the probability of the correct classified pixel with the actual class on the ground. While for producer's accuracy is calculated by the number of correctly classified pixels divide with the total number of pixels as the reference data (ground truth point) in the class. It indicates the accuracy of the classifier. Kappa coefficient measures the classifier performance derived from the error matrix without any bias from the chance agreement between the reference data and the classifier output.

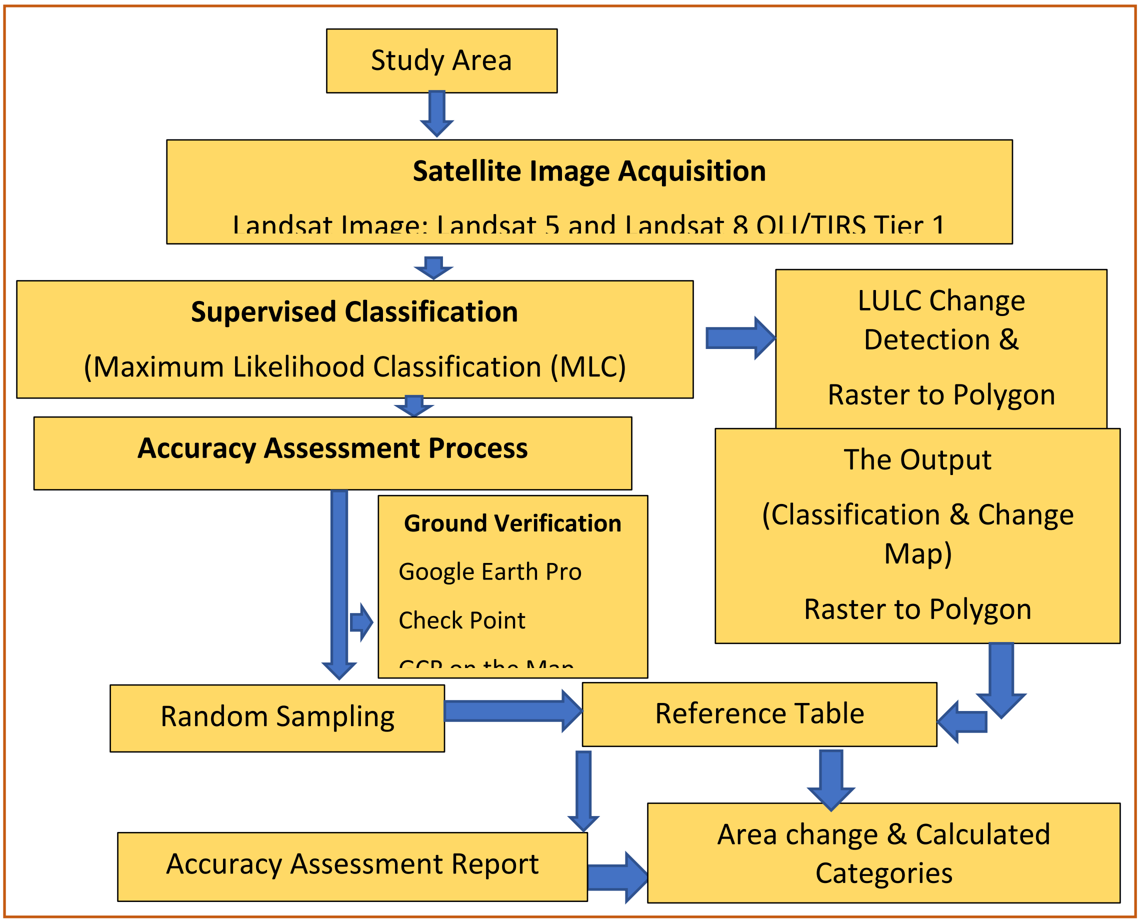


Figure 2 Schematic of work flow for LULC Change Detection and accuracy assessment.

Results and Finding

Land Use/ Land Cover Classification:Image Pre-Processing

Classification process and analysis of the different LULC classes were done using two Landsat satellite images covering the Landsat 8 OLI/TIS acquired on 3 March 2023. These images include; LC8 OLI/TIRS (path 131, rows 50) and LC5 OLI/TIRS (path 131, rows 50) (Table 1). The Landsat images were downloaded from United States Geological Survey (USGS) Earth Explorer (https://earthexplorer.usgs.gov/). The selection of the Landsat satellite images dates was influenced by the quality of the image especially for those with limited or low cloud cover. Each Landsat was georeferenced to the WGS_84 datum and Universal Transverse Mercator Zone 47 North coordinate system. An intensive pre-processing such as geo-referencing, mosaic, and layer stacking were carried out in order to Ortho-rectify the satellite images. The image was then processed; the satellite image of each band was stacked within interpreter main icon utilities with layer stacked function. Then, from the stacked satellite image, the study area image was extracted by clipping the study area using ArcGIS 10.4.1 software.

Table 1 Details of Landsat Data from USGS Earth Explorer

Satellite	Sensor _ID	Path/row	Layers	Date of acquisition	Grid cell size (m)
Landsat 8 OLI/TIS	LC0813105020220309GN00	131/50	11	3 March 2023	30
Landsat 5 TM	LC0513105020100309GN00	131/50	7	3 March 2009	30

The yearly downloaded Landsat images were preprocessed radiometric corrections, haze, and mosaicking the two satellites of the study area and extracting them. Layer stacking, images composition activities had done by using ArcGIS 10.4.1. Results of Images were also converted into Universal Transverse Mercator (UTM Zone 47 N) projection. Extraction of Yebyu map was made vector shape file MIMU in ArcGIS 10.4.1. In this study, land use and land cover (LULC) datasets for the years 2009 and 2023 were generated to analyze changes over a 14-year period. Six classifications of land use and land cover such as water bodies, Dense Vegetation (forest), Light Vegetation (Garden Land), built-up, bare soil and agriculture land for this area were considered. Land use and land cover changes were analyzed to identify spatial and temporal patterns in the study area. The following classification scheme was used to check the change detection in this study. Table 2 shows land use and land cover classification scheme.

Land use/Land cover (LULC) Classification: Supervised

For this study, only supervised classification was performed. Supervised classification according to Tso and Mather (2009) is where “the user develops the spectral signatures of known categories, such as urban and forest, and then the software assigns each pixel in the image to the cover type to which its signature is most comparable”. “Supervised classification is the process most frequently used for quantitative analyses of remote sensing image data” [Jensen (2015)]. The supervised classification was applied after defined region of interest (ROI) which is called training classes. More than one training area was used to represent a particular class. The training sites were selected in agreement with the Landsat Image, Google Earth and Google Map(Figure 3). The basic sequence operation followed on supervised classification was;

Defining of Training Sites: The first step in undertaking a supervised classification is to define the areas that will be used as training sites for each land cover class. This is usually done by using the on-screen digitized features. The created features are called Region of Interest (ROI). The selection of the training sites was based on those areas clearly identified in all sources of images. In this study, one hundreds training sites were been identified.

• Extraction of Signatures: After the training site (ROI) being digitized, the next step was to create statistical characterizations of each information. These are called signatures editors in ArcGIS. In this step, the goal was to create a signal (SIG) file for every informational class. The SIG files contain a variety of information about the land cover classes described. After the entire signature has been created, then the SIG file saved as dialog box (Table 2).

• Classification of the Image (Supervised classification): The supervised classification has been applied after defined training classes. One or more than one training area was used to represent a particular class. During the supervised classification process, the entire signature editor was selected in order to be used on the classification process. Then the classify was selected from the Editor Menu bar, classify/supervised. Non-Parametric Rule was used in this classification. The Image was classified into six classes namely; Waterbody, Built-up areas, Barren/bare land, light vegetation, dense vegetation and Agricultural land (Table 3)

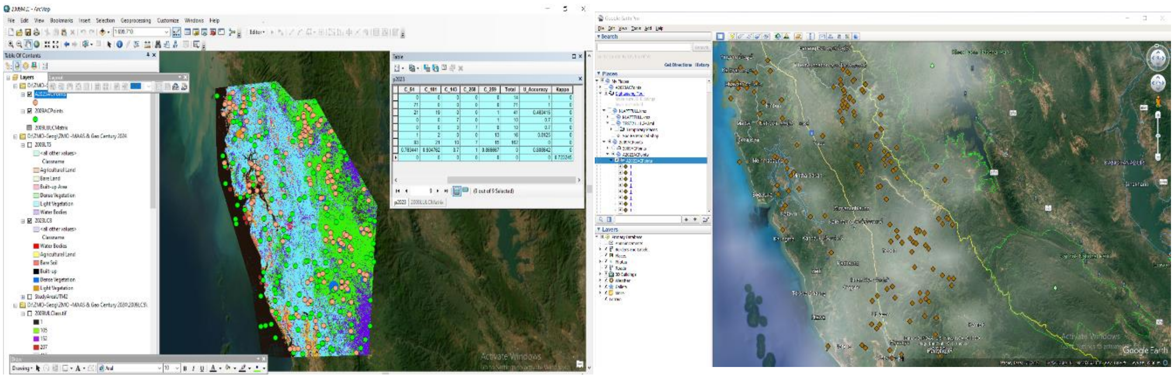


Figure 3 Identification of training sites using Landsat image (ArcGIS 10.4.1 software) and Google earth Pro and Google map

Source: calculated by author

Table 2 Signature editor table for classified image

Class value (2023)	Class name	RED	GREEN	BLUE	Count	Class value (2009)	Class name	RED	GREEN	BLUE	Count
1	Water Bodies	0	92	230	26213	1	Water Bodies	224	176	107	28368
2	Dense Vegetation	56	168	0	134613	2	Dense Vegetation	186	76	229	178381
3	Light Vegetation	170	255	0	77991	3	Light Vegetation	206	252	147	18029
4	Bare Soil	255	235	190	11695	4	Bare Soil	99	83	128	6513
5	Built-up	241	135	222	4325	5	Built-up Area	49	80	136	3239
6	Agricultural Land	255	255	0	29424	6	Agricultural Land	12	200	143	44218

Source: calculated by author

Table 3 Land Use and Land Cover Classification Scheme

Land Use / Land cover	Description
Dense Vegetation (Forest)	Areas covered with dense natural forest
Light Vegetation (Garden Land)	Lands dominated by trees with a percent cover >60% and height exceeding 2 meters, Perennial Tree such as Rubber, Cashew, Betel nut, and Durian land etc
Agriculture	Lands covered with temporary crops followed by harvest period, Crop fields and pastures
Bare soil or Bare soil	Lands with exposed soil, sand or rocks, and never has more than 10% vegetated cover during any time of the year. Bare ground, bare exposed rocks, and gravel pits
Water body	Sea, Lakes, reservoirs, stream, rivers,
Settlement (Built-up)	Land covered by buildings and other man-made structures. Mixed urban or built-up lands

Lulc Classification Results and Discussion

Supervised classification was carried out at study area in 2009 and 2023. The area of each class was calculated taking into account the pixel count and total area (study area). This, allocations of each classified area (percentage) are tabulated in Table 4 Figure 4.

The percentage of areas as classified are; Agriculture (35.51%) and (27.16%), water body (12.94%) and (12.96%), built up areas (4.56%) and (9.83%), Dense Vegetation (31.05%) and (21.03%), Light Vegetation (13.71%) and (22.93%), and Barren/bare land (2.23%) and (4.38%) of 2009 and 2023 in Figure 5. Agriculture was found to be the dominant type of land use classified which covers about (35.51%) and (27.16%) of the total study area, followed by Built-up areas while the least classified was Barren/bare soil which accounts for (2.23%) and (4.38%).

Table 4. Land Use and Land Cover Classification and LULC Changes.

Class Value	LULC	Area_Sq_KM (2009)	Area_Sq_KM (2023)	2009 (%)	2023 (%)
1	Water Bodies	798.28	809.258	12.94	12.66
2	Dense Vegetation	1916.17	1472.104	31.05	23.03
3	Light Vegetation	845.92	1465.860	13.71	22.93
4	Bare Soil	137.47	280.187	2.23	4.38
5	Built-up	281.52	628.555	4.56	9.83
6	Agricultural Land	2191.54	1736.480	35.51	27.16
Total		**6170.89**	**6392.44**	**100.00**	**100.00**

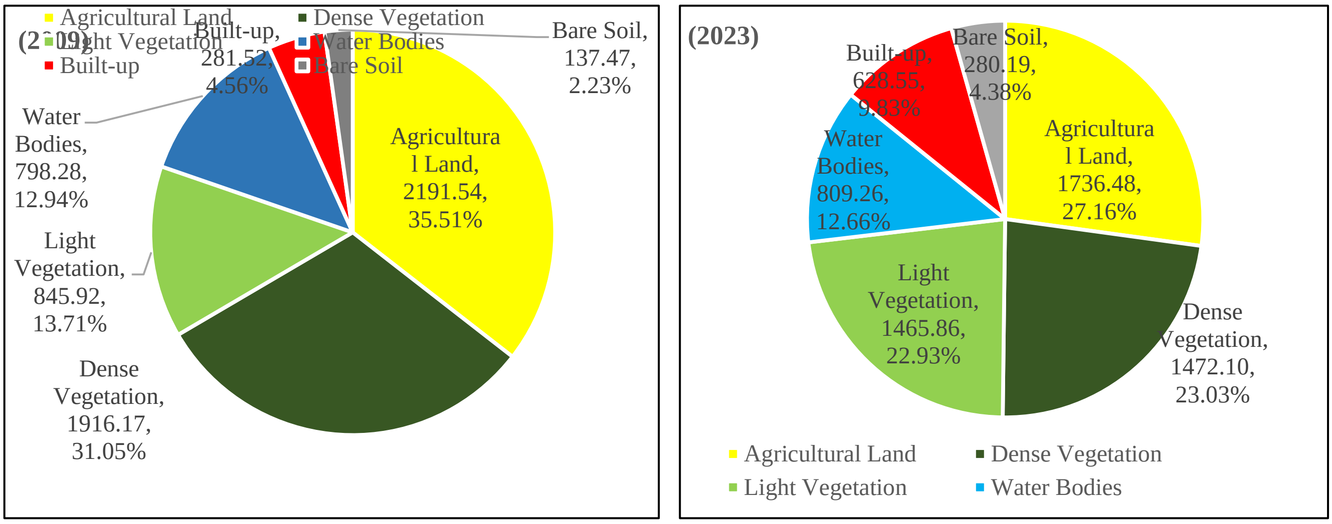


Figure 4 Land Use and Land Cover Classification of 2009 and 2023

Area Changes

In this study, Landsat 5 and 8 satellite images of 2009, and 2023 were used for GIS and RS image analysis. Based on remote sensing and GIS techniques, the images are classified as water bodies, vegetation, settlement, agricultural land and bare land. Temporal land use maps of (2009, and 2023) are shown in figures 4 and table 4.

Change detection was carried out using ArcGIS software. Raster calculator in ArcGIS was used in this process. For the existing study five different LULC classes were involved and 6 LULC change categories were created as the change. In the final analysis, it was reduced into six change categories as agricultural change, water Change, dense vegetation change, light vegetation change, bare soil change and Built-up change (Table 4 and figure 4). Fundamental change categories are defined from one class to another because it is convenient in final assessment in change detection and smooth visual interpretation (Example: vegetation to settlement). The spatial and temporal land use maps of (2009, and 2023) are shown in figures 8.

According to the classification, dense vegetation coverage on 2009 was 1916.17 km^2 and decreased to it was 1472.10 km^2 by total area extent. According to the study period, 107.66 km^2 contributes to Agriculture decrease and the settlement area was increased from 2009 to 2023.

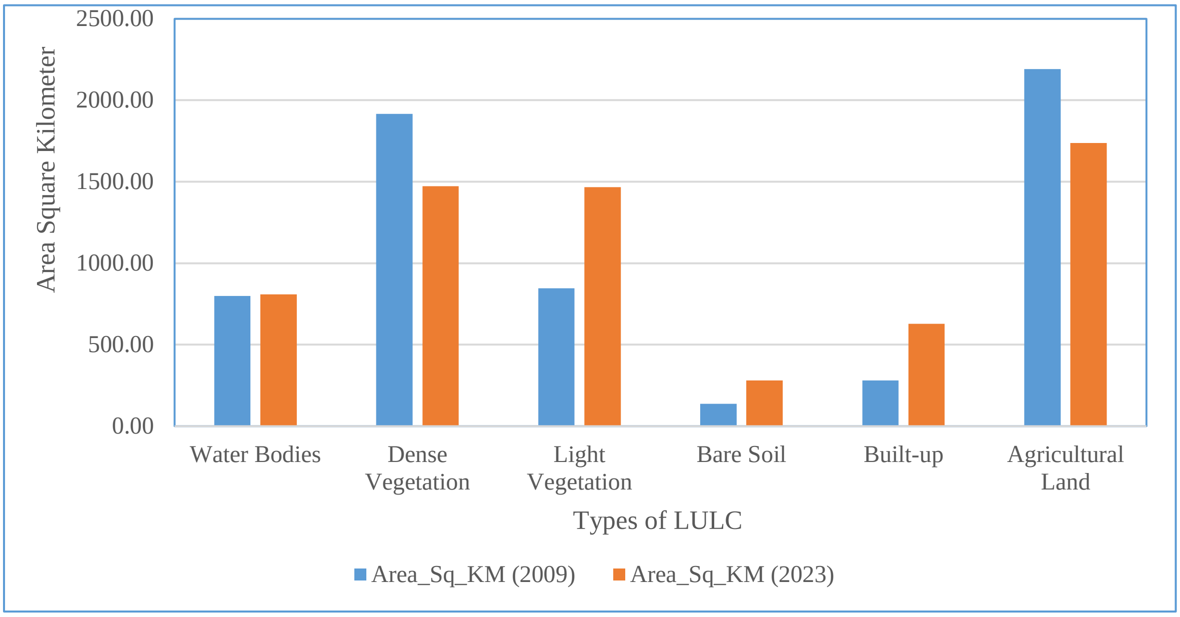


Figure 5 Changes of LULC in 2009 and 2023.
Source: Calculated by author

Classification Accuracy Assessment

One of the most important final steps at classification process is accuracy assessment. The aim of accuracy assessment is to quantitatively assess how effectively the pixels were sampled into the correct land cover classes. Accuracy assessment focused on selecting pixels from areas clearly identifiable in high-resolution Landsat imagery, Google Earth, and Google Maps. A total of 200 points (locations) were created in the classified image of the study area. The Accuracy Assessment Cell Array Reference column was filled according to the best guess of each reference point. Topographic map, and Google earth pro and Google Map were used as reference source to classify the selected points. Table 5 and 6 show the relationship between ground truth data and the corresponding classified data obtained through error matrix report.

Table 5 Category wise accuracy assessment statistical parameters and confusion matrix of the supervised classification in 2009

Class Value (2009)	Class Name	C_1	C_2	C_3	C_6	C_4	C_5	Total	User Accuracy	Kappa	Correct Sample
C_1	Water bodies	16	0	0	0	0	0	16	1.000	0	16
C_2	Dense Vegetation	0	43	2	0	2	0	47	0.910	0	43
C_3	Light Vegetation	0	2	20	1	0	0	23	0.870	0	20
C_6	Agricultura l Land	0	2	20	27	0	0	49	0.550	0	37
C_4	Bare Soil	0	0	2	2	5	0	9	0.560	0	5
C_5	Built-up	0	0	2	3	0	1	6	0.170	0	1
Total		**16**	**47**	**46**	**33**	**7**	**1**	**150**		0	**122**

Class Value (2009)	Class Name	C_1	C_2	C_3	C_6	C_4	C_5	Total	User Accuracy	Kappa	Correct Sample
Producer Accuracy		1.00	0.91	0.43	0.82	0.71	1.000	0	0.75	0	
Kappa		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	**0.67**	
		The Overall Classification Accuracy						0.8133			

Accuracy assessment is one of the most important final steps in the classification process. The purpose of accuracy assessment is to quantitatively evaluate due to have efficiently pixels are sampled in the correct land cover classes. In addition, the main focus for the accuracy evaluation pixel selection is the Landsat image, which is clearly distinguishable in both Google Earth and Google Maps. A total of 150 and 162 training sites of 2009 and 2023 were created on the classified image of the study area. The best estimate of each reference was entered in the reference column of the accuracy assessment cell array. UTM map series of topographic map, Google Earth and Google Map were used as a reference source to classify training samples.

Table 6 Category wise accuracy assessment statistical parameters and confusion matrix of the supervised classification in 2023

Class Value (2023)	Class Name	C_1	C_2	C_3	C_4	C_5	C_6	Total	User Accuracy	Kappa	Correct Sample
C_1	Water bodies	14	0	0	0	0	0	14	1.0000	0	14
C_2	Dense Vegetation	0	71	0	0	0	0	71	1.0000	0	71
C_3	Light Vegetation	0	21	19	0	0	1	41	0.4634	0	29
C_4	Bare Soil	2	0	0	7	0	1	10	0.7000	0	7
C_5	Built-up	0	0	0	3	7	0	10	0.7000	0	7
C_6	Agricultural Land	0	1	2	0	0	13	16	0.8125	0	13
Total		16	93	21	10	7	15	**162**		0	**141**
Producer Accuracy		0.88	0.76	0.9	0.7	1	0.87	0	0.81	0	
Kappa		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	**0.72**	
		The Overall Classification Accuracy						**0.87037**			

Table 5 and 6 show the relationship between ground truth data and the corresponding classified data obtained through error matrix report.

The overall classification accuracy = $\frac{No.of\ correct\ (actual)\ locations}{total\ number\ of\ training\ sites}$

The overall classification accuracy is 81.33% and 87.04% in 2009 and 2023. It measures the almost perfect level of a pixel being correctly classified with the actual class on the ground.

Table 5 and 6 show a theoretical confusion matrix (error matrix) of a LULC classification. The used error matrix or contingency matrix showed the information between actual and prediction separated through classification for accuracy evaluation. Overall accuracy shows the accuracy of the map. The accuracy of each class is calculated using the user's accuracy and the producer's accuracy. For user accuracy, the number of corrected classification pixels is divided by the total number of pixels classified in that class. It measures the probability of a pixel being correctly classified with the actual class on the ground.

Table 8 and 9 show a theoretical confusion matrix (error matrix) of a LULC classification. The columns of the confusion matrix show to which classes the pixels are in the validation set belong (ground truth) and the rows show to which classes the image pixels have been assigned to in the image. The diagonal shows the pixels that are classified correctly. Pixels that are not assigned to the proper class do not occur in the diagonal and give an indication of the confusion between the different land-cover classes in the class assignment. Furthermore, the off-diagonal elements in the rows of the confusion matrix, divided by the total number of pixels assigned to the Landsat image class corresponding to the row, represent the commission errors and describe the confusion between that image class and describes the other land-cover classes. The commission errors describe the chance that a pixel that has been assigned to a particular class actually belongs to one of the other classes. Moreover, this study considered other metrics derived from the error matrix to further describe accuracy assessments including; commission and omission error, sensitivity and specificity, positive and negative predictive power and Kappa statistics. For thorough information of these concepts.

In this research, various statistics related with classification accuracy as well as overall Kappa statistic are computed based on formulation.

The Kappa coefficient measures the classification ability obtained from the error matrix without bias from chance agreement between the reference data and the classification. The Kappa coefficient measures the classification ability obtained from the error matrix without bias from chance agreement between the reference data and the classification.

According to Table 7, the range of the kappa statistic is between 1 and 0, with higher values, is the better the classification performance; 0.59 show (weak), value of Kappa below 0.60-0.79 (moderate) and >0.80 show (strong) level of agreement. The two years result show 0.67 of 2009 and 0.72 of 2023, it means that the almost perfect level of LULC classification.

Table 7. Rating criteria of Kappa statistics

Sr. No	Kappa statistics	Strength of agreement
1	< 0.00	Poor
2	0.00 - 0.20	Slight
3	0.21 - 0.40	Fair
4	0.41 - 0.60	Moderate
5	0.61 - 0.80	Substantial
6	0.81 - 1.00	Almost perfect

Using the formulae furnished on the above section, various accuracy evaluating parameters were computed and tabulated in Table 8 and Table 9. The results from accuracy assessment showed an overall accuracy obtained from the random sampling process for the image of 81.7%. User's accuracy ranged from 57.1% to 97.1% while producer's accuracy ranged from 26.7% to 93.6%. The broad range of accuracy indicates a severe confusion of Barren/bare land with other land cover classes. Moreover, the measure of producer's accuracy (Sensitivity) reflects the accuracy of prediction of the particular category.

Table 8 Category wise accuracy assessment statistical parameters

Parameters (2009)						
Classified Data	**Sensitivity**	**Specificity**	**Commission error**	**Omission error**	**User Accuracy**	**Producer Accuracy**
Water bodies	1.0000	1.00000	0.000	0.0000	1.0000	1.0000
Dense Vegetation	0.9149	0.91489	0.085	0.0851	0.9149	0.9149
Light Vegetation	0.4348	0.86957	0.130	0.5652	0.8696	0.4348
Bare Soil	0.7143	0.55556	0.444	0.2857	0.5556	0.7143
Built-up	1.0000	0.16667	0.833	0.0000	0.1667	1.0000
Agricultural Land	0.8182	0.55102	0.449	0.1818	0.5510	0.8182

Commission error refers to instances where pixels are incorrectly assigned to a category they do not truly belong to. In this study, the highest commission error was observed in the light vegetation class, where 21 pixels were misclassified as dense vegetation in the 2023 map. Conversely, omission error indicates the number of pixels that genuinely belong to a category but were not classified under it. The barren/bare land class exhibited a relatively high omission error of 0.3000, with three pixels that should have been included in this category left unclassified. The overall classification yielded a Kappa coefficient of 0.722, indicating substantial agreement. Beyond overall accuracy, these class-specific metrics provide a more nuanced understanding of the model's performance across individual land cover types, offering valuable insights for researchers working within this domain.

Table 9 Category wise accuracy assessment statistical parameters

Parameters (2023)						
Classified Data	**Sensitivity**	**Specificity**	**Commission error**	**Omission error**	**User Accuracy**	**Producer Accuracy**
Water bodies	0.8750	1.00000	0.000	0.1250	1.000	0.8750
Dense Vegetation	0.7634	1.00000	0.000	0.2366	1.000	0.7634
Light Vegetation	0.9048	0.46342	0.537	0.0952	0.463	0.9048
Bare soil	0.7000	0.70000	0.300	0.3000	0.700	0.7000
Built-up	1.0000	0.70000	0.300	0.0000	0.700	1.0000
Agricultural Land	0.8667	0.81250	0.188	0.1333	0.813	0.8667

Commission error refers to pixels incorrectly assigned to a category they do not truly belong to. In this study, the highest commission error occurred in the bare land class, where four pixels were misclassified as light vegetation and agricultural land in the 2009 dataset. Conversely, omission error indicates pixels that genuinely belong to a category but were not classified under it. The light vegetation class showed a higher omission error of 0.5652, with three pixels excluded from their correct category. The overall classification yielded a Kappa coefficient of 0.67, indicating substantial agreement. Beyond overall accuracy, these class-specific metrics offer deeper insight into the model's performance across individual land cover types, supporting more informed analysis within the study's domain.

User's accuracy measures the reliability of classification from the perspective of the end user and is considered a key indicator of its practical utility in the field. In this study, water bodies and dense vegetation classes demonstrated the highest reliability, each achieving a user's accuracy of 1.00. Commission error refers to points incorrectly assigned to a category they do not truly belong to. The highest commission error was observed in the dense vegetation class, where 31 pixels were misclassified as built-up areas. Omission error, conversely, indicates points that genuinely belong to a category but were not classified under it. The barren/bare land class showed the highest omission error of 0.7333, with 33 pixels excluded from their correct category. An overall Kappa coefficient of 0.722 was obtained, indicating substantial agreement. In addition to overall classification accuracy, these class-specific metrics provide a more detailed evaluation of model performance, offering valuable insights for researchers working with specific land cover categories.

Change Detection Result and Discussion

In this study, Landsat 5 and 8 satellite images of 2009, and 2023 were used for GIS and RS image analysis. Based on remote sensing and GIS techniques, the images are classified as water bodies, dense vegetation, light vegetation, built-up (settlement), bare land and agricultural land. Temporal land use maps of (2009, and 2023) are shown in figures 6 to 8.

Change detection was carried out using ArcGIS software. Raster calculator in ArcGIS was used in this process. For the existing study six different LULC classes were involved and 36 LULC change categories were created as the change. In the final analysis, it was reduced into five change categories as agriculture change, water bodies change, vegetation change, bare soil change and settlement Change (Table 10). Fundamental change categories are defined from one class to another because it is convenient in final assessment in change detection and smooth visual interpretation (Ex: Vegetation to settlement). The spatial and temporal land use maps of (2009, and 2023) are shown in figures 8.

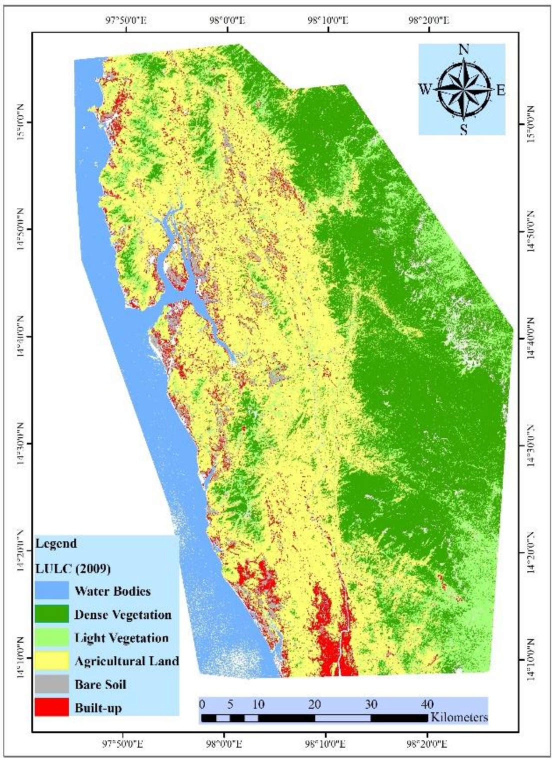


Figure 6. LULC of Yebyu Township in 2009

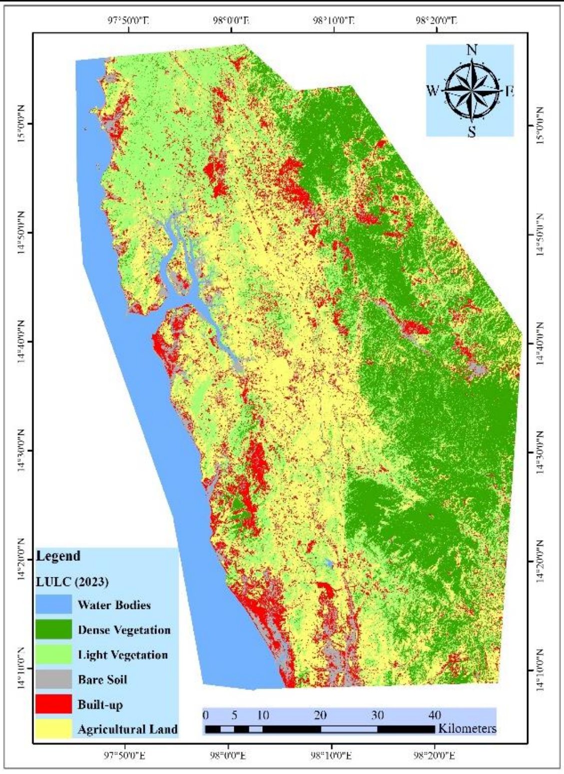


Figure 7. LULC of Yebyu Township in 2023

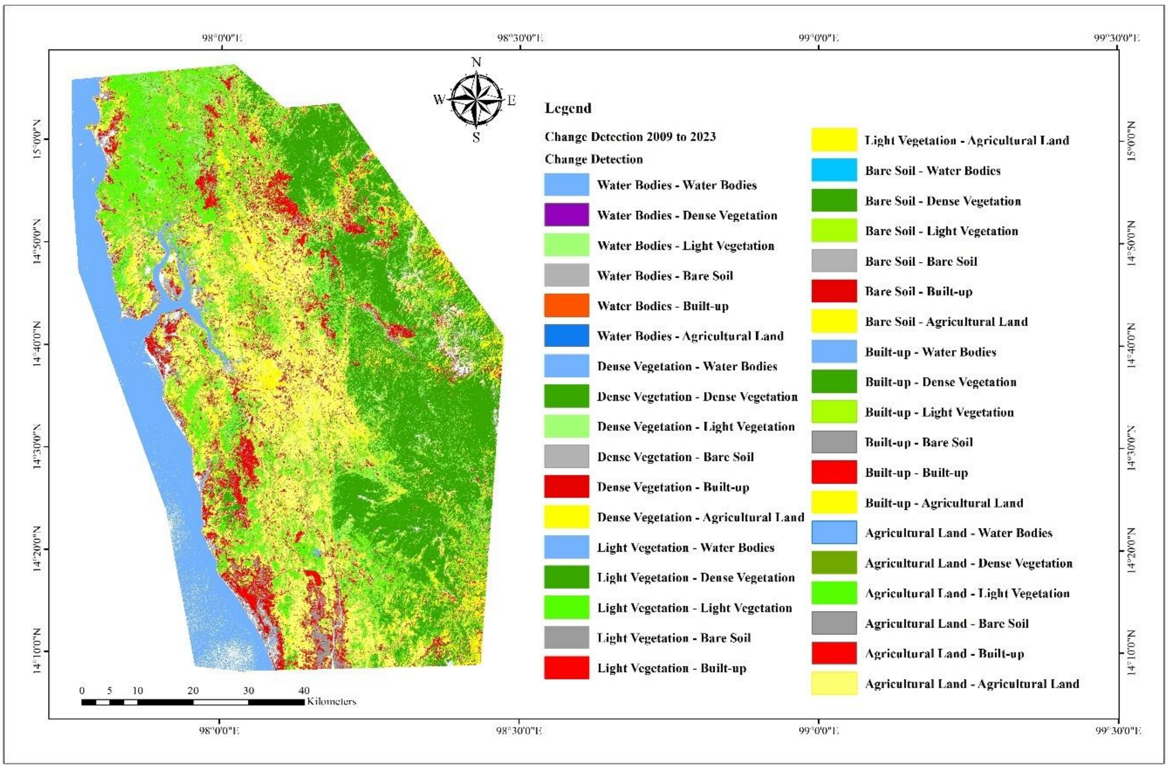


Figure 8 Spatial changes Analysis from 2009 to 2023

Table 10 Change Detection Analysis 2009 and 2023

Change Detection Analysis	**Area Change (Sq-km)**	**Change Detection Analysis**	**Area Change (Sq-km)**
Agricultural Land - Agricultural Land	1126.33	Dense Vegetation - Agricultural Land	132.843429
Agricultural Land - Bare Soil	45.72	Dense Vegetation - Bare Soil	11.324401
Agricultural Land - Built-up	234.16	Dense Vegetation - Built-up	71.580191
Agricultural Land - Dense Vegetation	49.97	Dense Vegetation - Dense Vegetation	1275.862367
Agricultural Land - Light Vegetation	734.12	Dense Vegetation - Light Vegetation	424.378883
Agricultural Land - Water Bodies	1.17	Dense Vegetation - Water Bodies	0.016566
Bare Soil - Agricultural Land	48.23	Light Vegetation - Agricultural Land	326.066685
Bare Soil - Bare Soil	28.02	Light Vegetation - Bare Soil	24.313664
Bare Soil - Built-up	53.31	Light Vegetation - Built-up	122.462434
Bare Soil - Dense Vegetation	0.07	Light Vegetation - Dense Vegetation	129.259688
Bare Soil - Light Vegetation	7.66	Light Vegetation - Light Vegetation	243.642854
Bare Soil - Water Bodies	0.18	Light Vegetation - Water Bodies	0.050203
Built-up - Agricultural Land	68.33	Water Bodies - Agricultural Land	0.03324
Built-up - Bare Soil	76.14	Water Bodies - Bare Soil	30.801202
Built-up - Built-up	105.02	Water Bodies - Built-up	0.482638
Built-up - Dense Vegetation	0.87	Water Bodies - Dense Vegetation	0.010959
Built-up - Light Vegetation	30.91	Water Bodies - Light Vegetation	0.135079
Built-up - Water Bodies	0.25	Water Bodies - Water Bodies	766.739539

Based on the classification results, agricultural land is more prevalent in the northern region, whereas settlement areas are predominantly concentrated in the western part. Dense vegetation coverage on 2009 was 1332.46 km^2. It is occupied by the eastern part of the study area. During the study period, an expansion of 107.66 km^2 in agricultural land was recorded, primarily occurring around settlement zones and forested areas.

Conclusions

Remote sensing is essential for producing Land Use and Land Cover (LULC) maps, primarily through image classification techniques that have evolved significantly over recent decades. Key advancements include the ability to generate maps at multiple spatial scales, the use of sophisticated methods such as pre-field analysis and sub-pixel classification, the adoption of knowledge-based classification systems, and the integration of auxiliary datasets like Digital Elevation Models (DEM), road networks, soil profiles, land use records, and census data. However, achieving accurate and reliable LULC information from Landsat imagery remains challenging due to factors such as the type and quality of imagery selected, the complexity of the landscape, the image processing techniques applied, and the classification approach used.

The accelerated usage of remote sensing data and techniques has made geospatial process faster and powerful, although the increased complexity also creates increased possibilities for error. The objective of this paper was to classify and map the land use/land cover change detection of the study area using remote sensing and GIS techniques and to perform accuracy assessments to evaluate classification effectiveness and interpret the classification's utility.

The supervised classification was performed using Non-Parametric Rule. The image was classified into six classes; water body (283 km^2), dense vegetation (372 km^2), light vegetation (499 km^2), built-up areas (1309 km^2), Barren/bare land (37 km^2) and Agriculture (4638 km^2). Agriculture was the dominant type of Land use classified which covers about 35.51% of the study area.

In this study, accuracy assessment was performed using error matrix. The study had an overall classification accuracy is 87.03% and kappa coefficient is 0.722 of 2023 and overall classification accuracy is 81.33% and kappa coefficient is 0.67 of 2009. The kappa coefficient is rated as substantial and almost perfect hence the classified image found to be fit for further research.

Acknowledgement

We are grateful to Dr. Than Htun, Rector and Dr. Khaing Le Win and Dr Moe Moe Aye, Pro-Rector for their valuable guidance and encouragement to do this research. Thanks are also extended to Dr. Ni Ni Oo, Professor and Head, Department of Geography, Pathein University and Dr Myo Myint, Professor, Department of Geography, Pathein University for their encouragement to present the paper. We also thank to staffs of Administrative of Department, YebyuTownship, Tanintharyi Region for their valuable helps and patient explanation on local facts. Last but not at least, we would like to thank key persons in Yebyu Township for their great help in the field work.

Reference

Congalton, R.G. (1991) A Review of Assessing the Accuracy of Classifications of Remotely Sensed Data. Remote Sensing of Environment, 37, 35-46. https://doi.org/10.1016/0034-4257(91)90048-B

Campbell, J.B. (2007) Introduction to Remote Sensing. 4th Edition, The Guilford Press, New York.

Disperati, L., Gonario S. and Virdis, P. (2015) Assessment of Land-Use and Land Cover Changes from 1965 to 2014 in Tam Giang-Cau Hai Lagoon, Central Vietnam. Applied Geography, 58, 48-64.

Eastman, J.R. (2003) Guide to GIS and Image Processing 14, 239-247. Clark University Manual, USA.

Fielding, A.H. and J.F. Bell. (1997) A Review of Methods for the Assessment of Prediction Errors in Conservation Presence/Absence Models. Environmental Conservation, 24, 38-49. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0376892997000088

Jensen, J.R. (2005) Introductory Digital Image Processing: A Remote Sensing Perspective. 3rd Edition, Pearson Prentice Hall, Upper Saddle River, NJ.

Jenness, J. and Wynne, J.J. (2007) Kappa Analysis (kappa_stats.avx) Extension for ArcView 3.x. Jenness Enterprises. http://www.jennessent.com/arcview/kappa_stats.htm

Jensen, J.R. (1996) Introductory Digital Image Processing: A Remote Sensing Perspective. 2nd Edition, Prentice Hall, Inc., Upper Saddle River, NJ.

Lurz, P.W.W., Rushton, S.P., Wauters, L.A., Bertolino, S., Currado, I., Mazzoglio, P. and Shirley, M.D.F. (2001) Predicting Grey Squirrel Expansion in North Italy: A Spatially Explicit Modeling Approach. Landscape Ecology, 16, 407-420. https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1017508711713

Landis, J.R. and Koch, G.G. (1977) A One-Way Components of Variance Model for Categorical Data. Biometrics, 33, 671-679. https://doi.org/10.2307/2529465

Moran, E. F., Skole, D.L. and Turner, B.L. (2004) The Development of the International Land-Use and Land-Cover Change (LUCC) Research Program and Its Links to NASA's Landcover and Land-Use Change (LCLUC) Initiatives. Kluwer Academic Publication, Netherlands.

Merchant, J.W. and Narumalani, S. (2009) Integrating Remote Sensing and Geographic Information Systems. Papers in Natural Resources, Paper 216. http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/natrespapers/216

Murty, P.S. and Tiwari, H. (2015) Accuracy Assessment of Land Use Classification —A Case Study of Ken Basin. Journal of Civil Engineering and Architecture Research, 2, 1199-1206.

Richards, J. and Jia, X. (2006) Remote Sensing Digital Image Analysis: An Introduction. Springer, Berlin.

J. Myanmar Acad. Arts Sci. 2026 **Vol. XXIII. No.5**

ASSESSMENT ON MARKETING CHAIN OF FISHERY PRODUCTS IN TAUNGGOKE TOWNSHIP

Nwe Yin Min[1] , Swe Yi Khaing [2], Zin Mar Win[3] , Zin Win Phyu [4]

Abstract

This paper evaluates the marketing chain of fishery products in Taunggoke Township, located in the southern part of Rakhine State, which benefits from its coastal location. Fishing is one of the primary economic activities in Myanmar, and local residents earn their livelihoods from this industry, with various fishery products from Taunggoke flowing to other regions of the country. Both fishermen and traders rely on fishery activities for their income. The main products produced in the area include dried fish, ngapi (fish paste), salted fish, shrimp, and crabs. The objectives of this paper are to examine types of fishery products produced in Taunggoke Township, to explore fishery product sent from Taunggoke Township, to investigate marketing chain and flow of fishery products in Taunggoke Township and to predict future prospect on fishery product production of Taunggoke Township. A situational analysis and SWOT analysis were conducted to assess fish production areas. This study utilized primary data collected through field observations, interviews, and semi-structured questionnaires.

Keywords: fishery products, fishery, types of fishery products, marketing chain, production

Introduction

Fish is a major source of food for millions of people on the world. Food derived fishes has high nutritional value as it is rich in protein, fat, mineral, vitamins, etc (Tacon, 2008). Seafood including fishes can make a significant contribution to the nutrient needs and consumption per capita is high in several European countries. The increasing scientific evidence shows its importance of sea food in a healthy diet (Nunes & Batista, 2003).

Both fishery and aquaculture have social implications as more than 37 million people are directly involved in it, and more than 200 million people seek direct and indirect income from fish production (FAO, 2003). Improving the productivity of fisheries and aquaculture is vital to reducing hunger and poverty for millions in the developing world (FAO, 2017).

In 2016-2017, the contribution of fisheries sector to the Rakhine State's GDP represents about 12% of the total GDP (Report on Rakhine State Investment Opportunity Survey-2019). Fish consumption is high and fish trade, nowadays, and it is of very high economic importance.

Taunggoke Township is one of the fishery product producing areas. The nearness to the sea is locational advantage supporting local economy. Fishery producing dried fish, ngapi (fish paste) & salted fish is the second most important economic activity after agriculture. Fishes are mostly consumed fresh locally, but high quality fishes and dried fishes are sent to Yangon. Poor quality and unsold fish are processed into dried fish, ngapi (fish paste), salted fish and animal feeds. Fish and prawn are mostly sent to Sanpya Fish Market, main wholesale fish market in Yangon, and also sent to Pyay Township (Bago Region) and Mandalay Region. The dried fishes are also sent to central Myanmar. Therefore, Taunggoke Township is selected as study area to be presented from geographical point of view.

[1] Department of Geography, Hinthada University
[2] Department of Geography, Dagon University
[3] Department of Geography, East Yangon University
[4] Department of Geography, Yangon University of Education

Research Questions

What are types of fishery products produced in Taunggoke Township?

How are fishery products sent through marketing chain?

Aim and Objectives

The main aim of this paper is to study market chain of fishery products in Taunggoke Township.

Objectives

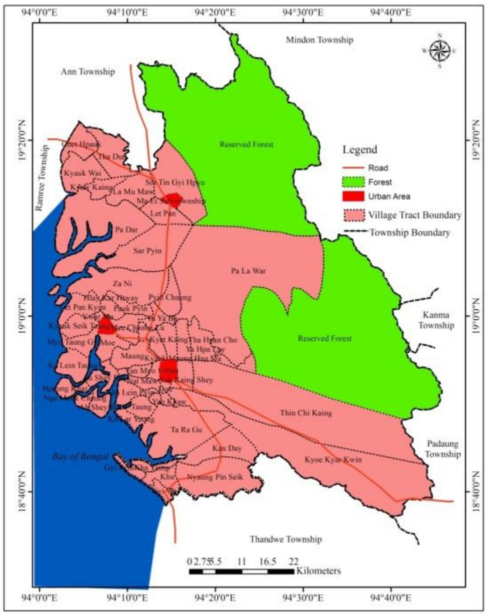
Objectives of the paper are as follows:

- to examine types of fishery products produced in Taunggoke Township
- to explore fishery product sent from Taunggoke Township
- to investigate marketing chain and flow of fishery products in Taunggoke Township
- to predict future prospect on fishery product production of Taunggoke Township

Background of the Study Area

Taunggoke Township is one of the townships of Rakhine State. It is flanked by the Bay of Bangal in the western coastal strip of Myanmar. The township lies between north lat. 18° 38′ 00″ and 19° 20′ 00″ and east long. between 93° 59′ 00″ and 94° 18′ 00″. The area of Taunggoke Township is 5328.25 sq. km (2057.25 sq. miles) including eight wards as well as 53 village tracts (Zin Mar Win, 2021).

Coastal village tracts such as Letpankyun, Kyaukseiktaung, Myotaung, Kaleintaung, Ngamaukchaung, Ahsheybet, Kularyaung, Gyibyin, Gyiwa, Hpaungkhar and Kayaing are close to the sea and the elevation in only about 6 metres (18 feet) above sea- level. The inhabitants of these village tracts earn their living mainly on fishery and agriculture.



Source: Settlement and Land Records Department, Taunggoke Township.

Figure 1. Location of Taunggoke Township

Sources of Data and Methodology

The research work uses primary and secondary data in Taunggoke Township. Before collecting data concerned with fishing product, the information related to fishery sector was firstly acquired from internet website source, journals, and foreign research papers. The necessary primary data were acquired through field survey and interviews and group discussion. To get primary data concerning fishing product, types of products marketing flow, etc structured interviews were done with 30 Fish pond owners in seven village tracts. Five village tracts: Ahsheybet Village Tract (above 400 hectares), Hpaungkar (between 300 and 400 hectares), Myotaung and Kaleintaung village tracts (between 101 and 200 hectares) and Khayaing Village Tract (below 100 hectares) were selected by using stratified sampling. Secondary data were derived from General Administrative Office of Taunggoke Township. Fishery data were collected from Department of Fishery. Situational analysis was used to market chain of fishing product in Taunggoke Township.

Results and Findings

Situational analysis on Present Fishing Industry of Taunggok Township

Fishes and Shrimp Ponds in the Study Area

Currently shrimp culture is being carried out at commercial scale in Rakhine State including Taunggoke Township (Department of Fisheries, 2021).

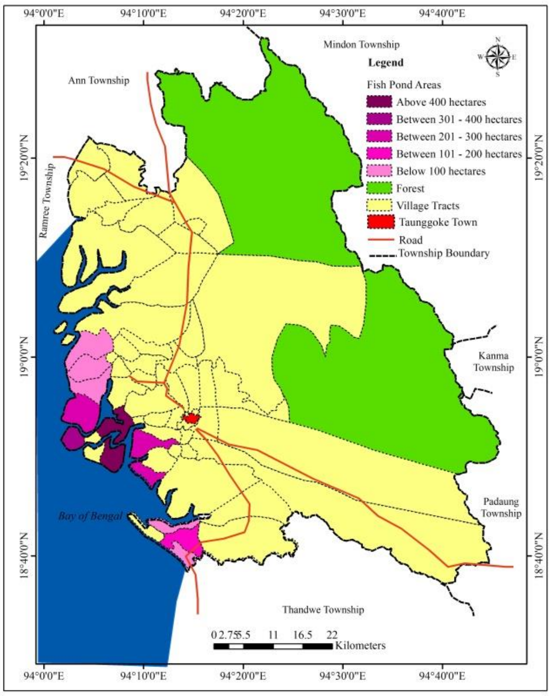
In 2000, Taunggoke Township had only 4 fish and shrimp ponds, which increased to 7 by 2010 and then surged to 94 ponds by 2022. This growth of 90 ponds from 2000 to 2022 can be attributed to the rising population and limited job opportunities during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Table 1. Distribution of Fish and Shrimp Ponds in the Study Area(2000, 2010 and 2022)

Village Tract Name	2000*		2010*		2022	
	pond	hectares	pond	hectares	pond	hectares
1. Thaleinpyin	1	20	1	14	8	178
2. Kularyaung	1	14	1	8	11	137
3. Ahsheybet	1	28	2	26	35	462
4. Kaleintaung	1	12	1	12	12	177
5. Hpaungkhar	-	-	2	40	19	333
6. Kyaukseiktaung	-	-	-	-	3	38
7. Khayaing	-	-	-	-	1	12
8. Myotaung	-	-	-	-	1	81
9. Letpankyun	-	-	-	-	2	30
10. Khu	-	-	-	-	2	126
11. Gyiwa	-	-	-	-	1	16
Total	**4**	**74**	**7**	**100**	**94**	**1590**

Source: *Khin Myo Htay, 2021.
Department of Fishery, Taunggoke Township

Eleven village tracts in Taunggoke have obtained licenses from the Taunggoke Fishery Department, collectively managing 94 fish, shrimp, and crab ponds. Asheybet Village Tract has the highest number of these ponds, with 35 covering 402 hectares, followed by Hpaungkhar Village Tract with 19 ponds across 332 hectares. The other village tracts each occupy less than 300 hectares.



Source: Table 1.

Figure 2. Area of Fishes and Shrimp Ponds in Taunggoke Township

The village tracts selected for detailed study are Asheybet, Hpaungkhar, Kalaintaung, Khayaing and Myotaung.

According to fiddle investigation, the villages of Asheybet village tract started raising fish and shrimp since 8 years ago. The mangrove forest of the area was turned into fish and shrimp ponds and established the depot buying and selling fish, shrimps and crabs 4 years ago. The area of the ponds was 100 acres (40.46 hectares). The fish, shrimp and crabs are caught with the rising tidal water. There are 6 entrances through water can pass. Four regular workers are employed and each has to be paid one lakh kyats per month including food and shelter. If they can catch one kilo of crabs, they get 1000 kyats. The most aquatic species caught are sea peach, *Mugil cephalus* (Kabilu), *Penaeus merguiensis* (Pa zun phyu), *Penaeus monodon* (Tiger pa zun) and crabs. The amount of catch is high from May to December. About 200 viss of Tiger shrimp are caught per month in average.

After two years, the catch amount has decreased due to the degradation of the ecosystem. Now there are 6 ponds that come and sell at the depot. The price difference is 10000 kyats with Yangon market. Every day one tub (75 viss) of the products is sent to Kyimyintdaing Fish Market at Yangon City. The amount of fish catch is high in the period from 12th, 13th day of waxing moon to 5th day of waning moon in the Myanmar months. The price depends on the size of fish and crab. The problems are the lowering of natural breeding and the high cost of labour.

The cost of sanding a Tub of fish from the village to the jetty of motorized boat or own boat.

Table 2. Cost of Sanding a Tub of Fish from the Village to the Jetty

General Sanding Costs	Prices (ks)
Motorized jetty, car gate	3000
Tub	10000
Freight receipt cost	10000
Ice cost	(2500 × 4 begs) 10000
Total Cost	**33000**

Source: semi structure interviews

Fishery Products

The primary fishery products from Taunggoke Township include saltwater fish, dried saltwater fish, shrimp, dried shrimp, crab, freshwater fish, sea snails, mussels, jellyfish, and stone fish.

Crab

Crab farming is prevalent in all coastal village tracts, with crabs primarily exported to China via Mandalay. This seasonal activity peaks around the Chinese New Year. Although crabs are a high-value product, they are delicate and perishable, which can lead to losses if transit takes three to four days. The price of crabs varies based on their size.

Shrimp

Shrimp is the main catch for small-scale fishermen in Taunggoke Township. Collectors purchase dried shrimp at a fixed price but resell it at different prices depending on size. For chilled shrimp, grading occurs at the village level based on size and at the township level based on weight. Chilled shrimp represent the area’s highest value product.

Dried Shrimp

Dried shrimp catches are seasonal, peaking from May to August. Processing involves sorting, drying, and shelling, with women typically handling processing while men focus on fishing. Product quality and size significantly influence pricing, which ranges from 4,000 to 7,000 MMK per viss, depending on quality.

Fish Paste (Ngapi)

In the Khayaing and Myotaung village tracts, shrimp paste (myin) has been produced for 15 years. Myin fish are caught using nets from the 13th waxing day to the 6th waxing day during spring tides, yielding about 3 viss daily. After sun-drying for a day, the fish are pounded with salt and water. Raw shrimp paste sells for 7,000 MMK per viss, while processed shrimp paste can reach 15,000 MMK per viss.

Jellyfish (Yakhu)

The consumption of jellyfish began in Yanbye Town in 1993 and started in Taunggoke about ten years ago. Jellyfish are harvested from March to July, mixed with salt and alum, and sent to Yangon before being exported to Japan. Three companies are involved in this trade, and jellyfish can yield around 30 tons annually. In 2022, jellyfish were priced at 150 kyats per unit, with local prices around 6,000 kyats per viss. They are exported to Thailand via Myeik and Dawei, where the price reaches 86 baht (approximately 85 kyats per bahts).

Source: Interview and Field Survey, (17.12.22) **Plate 1.** Crab caught in Khayiang Village Tract

Source: Interview and Field Survey, (17.12.22) **Plate 2.** *Spiny lobster* (Kyauk Pa Zun) in Khayaing Village Tract

Dried Fish

The daily catch averages about 50 viss, primarily consisting of Nga sit sali and *Otolithies ruber* (Nga poke thin). Approximately 4 viss of fresh fish can yield 1 viss of dried fish, with fresh seali fish priced at 2,500 kyats per viss and dried fish at 10,000 kyats. Small dried fish for chicken feed are priced at 7,300 kyats per viss and are shipped to Pyay City. Pricing for assorted fish varies from 2,000 to 2,500 kyats based on size. Ten years ago, these fish were sent to the Shwe Rakhine depot in Pay City, but now they are primarily sold in Taunggoke due to decreased catches. Fishing is prohibited from March to October, during which time fishermen cultivate chili.

Source: Interview and Field Survey, (7.1.23)

Plate 3. Dry Fish Production in Ashebat village tract

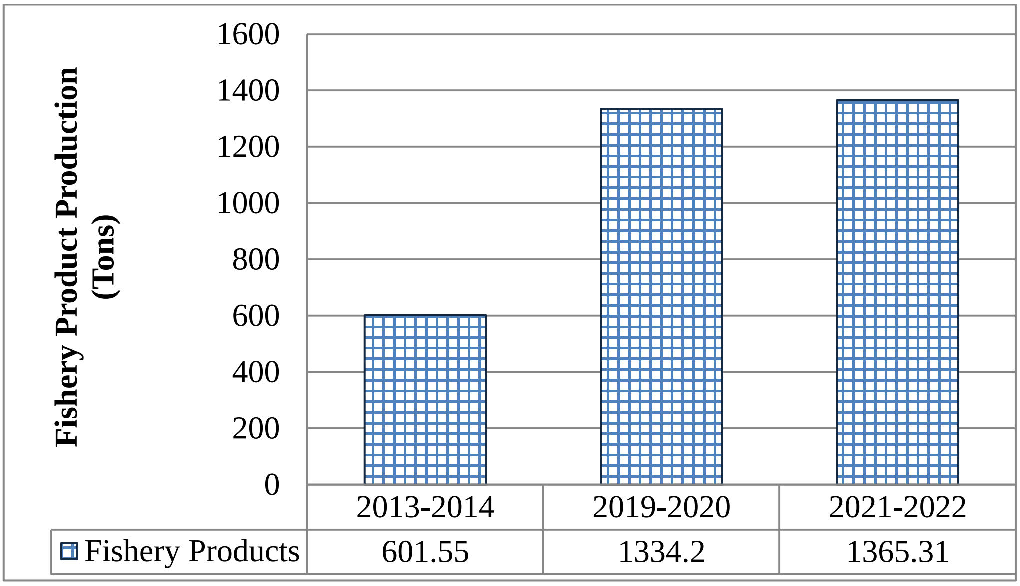
Fishery Product Production

Fishing operations typically occur from May to August, with the highest catches from the 13th waxing day to the 4th waning day of each month. The number of fishermen has increased, utilizing various fishing nets. However, per capita fish catches have declined due to water pollution, rising fisherman numbers, and illegal fishing during closed seasons. To prevent fish extinction, financial support should be provided to fishermen during prohibited fishing periods.

Table 3. Fishery Products Production of Taunggoke Township (2013-14, 2019-20 and 2021-22)

No	Fishery Products	2013-2014	2019-2020	2021-2022
1	Saltwater Fishes	58.77	292.24	286.88
2	Saltwater Dry Fish	13.63	0	48.62
3	Saltwater Prawn	42.16	210.39	238.45
4	Saltwater Dry Prawn	5.70	9.92	7.58
5	Crab	386.36	578.71	490.84
6	Freshwater Fish	2.60	4.01	1.99
7	Kyauk Pa zun Sein	8.83	5.30	3.28
8	Mussel	22.40	100.06	24.71
9	Jelly Fish	0	4.0	168.05
10	Nga Kyet Tike	0.96	3.09	3.96
11	King Pa Zun	0	1.31	0.97
12	Ba Le Crab	60.14	98.17	53.98
13	Vara Crab	0	26.17	35.43
14	Nga Tauk Tu	0	0.83	0
15	Tele Baung	0	0	0.57
	Total	601.55	1334.2	1365.31

Source: Department of Fishery, Taunggoke Township

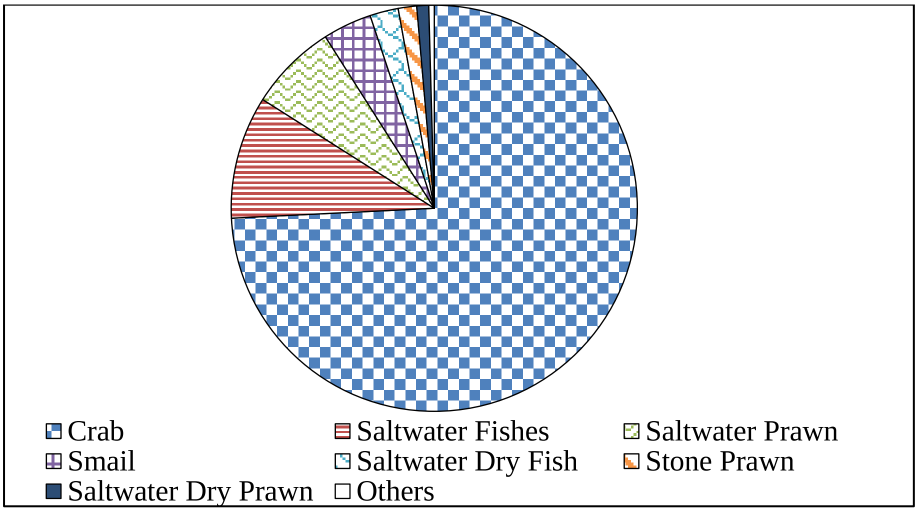


Source: based on Table 3

Figure 3. Fishery Products Production of Taunggoke Township **(2013-14, 2019-20 and 2021-22)**

In Taunggoke Township, amount of fishery product production increased gradually. In 2013-14, amount of fishery product produced in the area was 601.55 tons and it increased to 1334.2 tons in 2019-20 distinctly. Again, it increased to 1365.31 tons in 2021-22. It unfolds that fishery sector supports the GPD of Taunggoke Town and economy of local people.

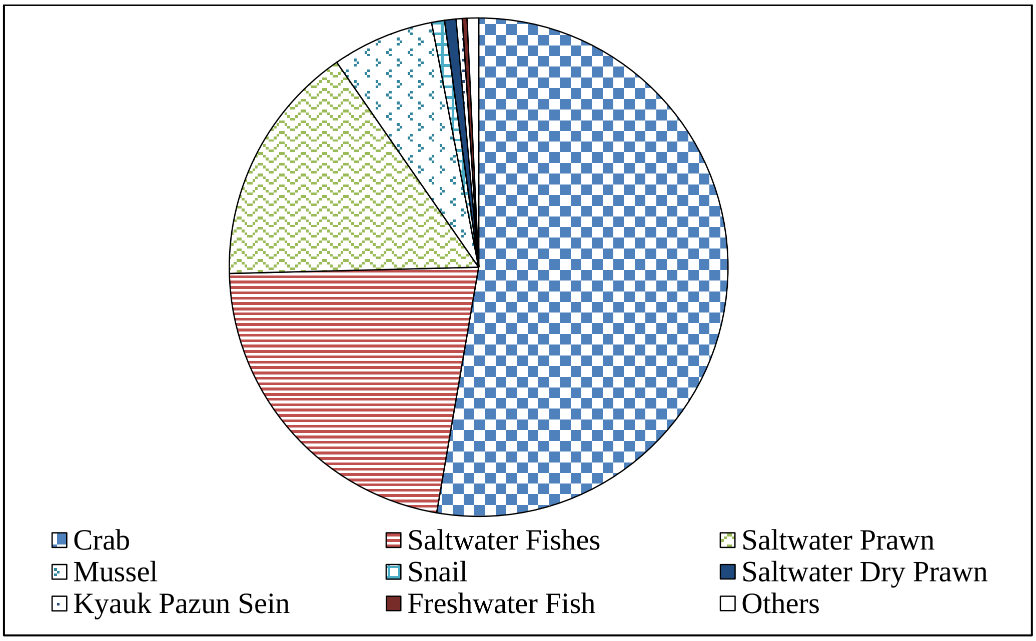
In 2013-14, crab ranks first with total production of 386.36 tons and salt water fishes ranked second with 58.77 tons and salt water prawn third with 42.16 tons. Taunggoke Township has locational advantage because it possesses coastal area supporting salt water fishery. Salt water fishery products also include saltwater dry fish, saltwater prawn, saltwater dry prawn, freshwater fish, mussel, snails, etc.



Source: based on Table 3.

Figure 4. Fishery Products Production of Taunggoke Township (2013-14)

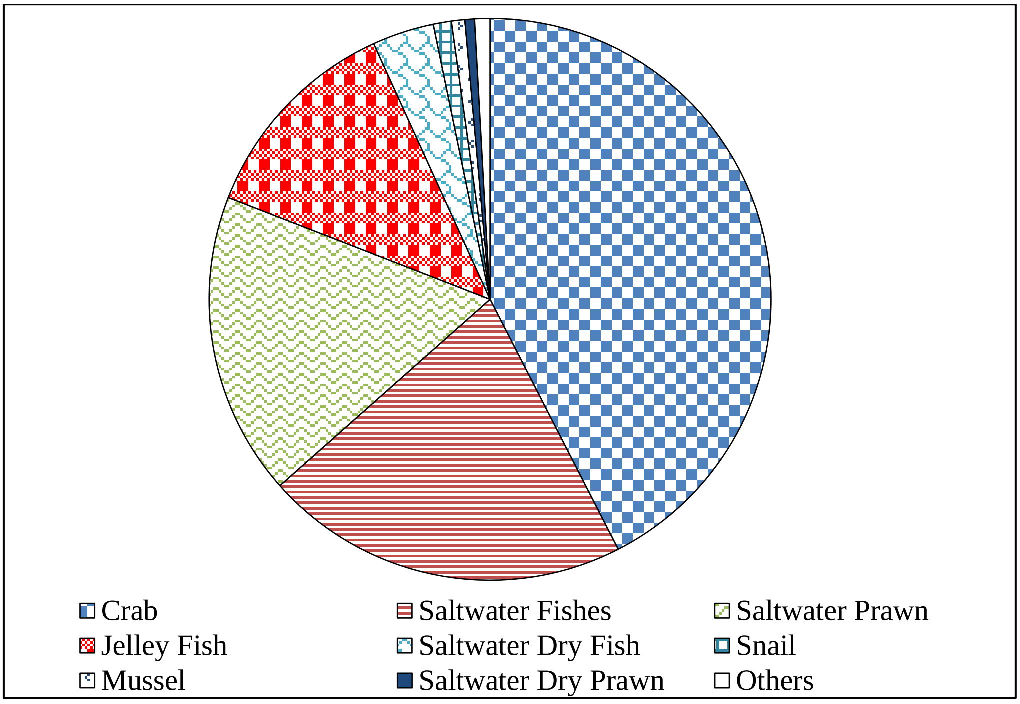
In 2019-20, crab ranks first with total production of 578.71 tons and salt water fishes ranked second with 292.24 tons and salt water prawn third with 210.39 tons. Fishery product production increased distinctly in the area due to better equipment used in fishing.



Source: based on Table 3.

Figure 5. Fishery Products Production of Taunggoke Township (2019-20)

In 2021-22, crab ranks first with total production of 490.84 tons and salt water fishes ranked second with 286.88 tons and salt water prawn third with 238.45 tons. Fishery product production increased distinctly in the area.



Source: based on Table 3.

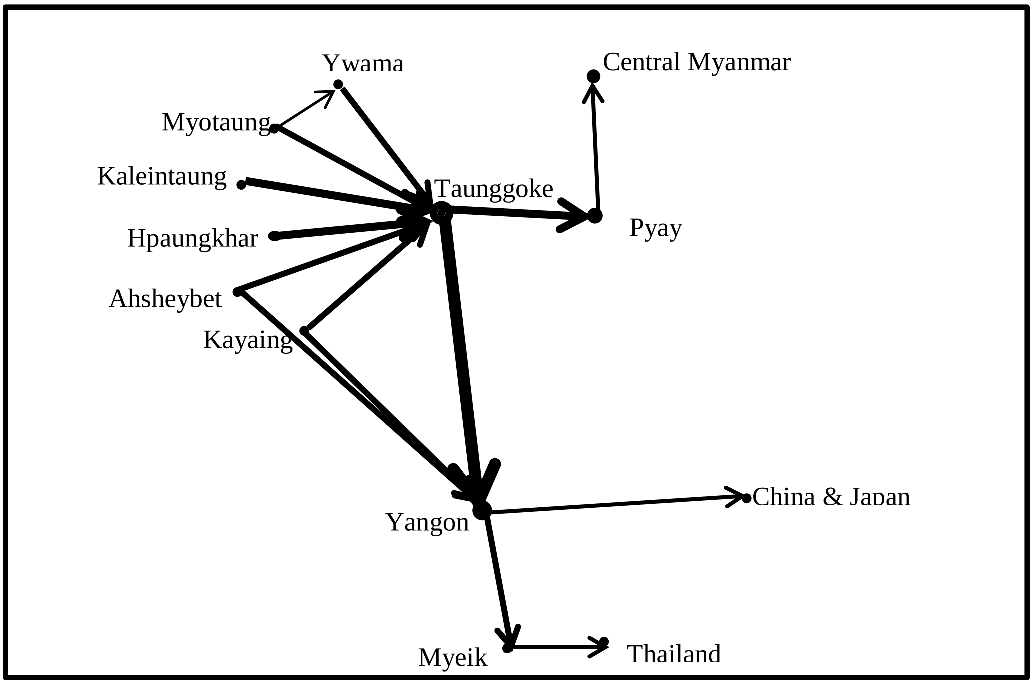
Figure 6. Fishery Products Production of Taunggoke Township (2021-22)

Depot for Fish, Shrimp, and Crab

Khayaing Village Tract has operated a fish, shrimp, and crab depot for 20 years. Fish sent from Taunggoke include *Lates calcarifer* (Ka Ka Dit), *Leptomelanosoma indicum* (Ka Ku Yan), Vara Crab, *Cloridopsis scorpio* (King Pa Zun), and *Spiny lobster* (Kyauk Pa Zun). Prices vary by size, with past products shipped to Yangon now sold locally in Taunggoke. Prices at the village depot start at 50,000 MMK per viss, increasing to 65,000 MMK at the Taunggoke depot and 75,000 MMK in Yangon. For example, the price of *Formio niger* (Ohne Nga Moke) is 6,000 MMK in the village, 7,000 MMK at the Taunggoke depot, and 10,000 MMK in Yangon. Prices for *Lates calcarifer* (Ka Ka Dit) are 10,000 MMK in the village, 12,000 MMK at the Taunggoke depot, and 18,000 MMK in Yangon. Occasionally, exporters to Yangon incur losses due to sudden price drops. *Cloridopsis scorpio* (King Pa Zun), and *Spiny lobster* (Kyauk Pa Zun) are caught during spring tides and are shipped alive to China by plane. Sending shrimp during the laying season from June to September can lead to legal issues.

Fishery Product Flows

According to interviews, 20% from **Myotaung Village Tract** is delivered to the village itself and Ywama Village Tract, while 80% is transported to traders in **Taunggoke**. From **Ahsheybet and Kayaing village tracts**, 20% is sold to local traders, 60% is transported to **Taunggoke,** and 20% is directly transported to **Yangon.** From **Kaleintaung and Hpaungkha village tracts**, the products are transported directly to **Taunggoke**. From Taungkok, 30% is further transported to **Pyay**, and then Pyay to reaching Central Myanmar, 70% is transported to **Yangon.** From Yangon, the products are exported to **Myeik** and **Dawei,** and from there to **Thailand**, as well as by air to **China and Japan**.



Source: semi structure interviews

Figure 7. Flows of Fishery Product in Taunggoke Township

Fish Market Chain

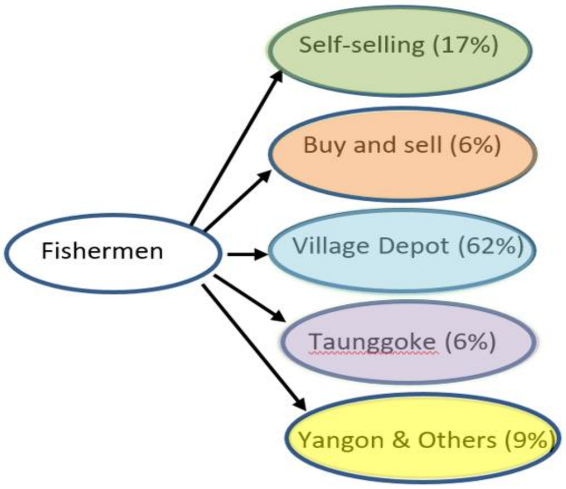
According to responses from semi-structured interviews, fish catches and other aquatic animals are sold at the village fish depot, generating approximately 300,000 kyats per day, although this drops to around 80,000 kyats during the summer. If a fisherman fails to earn at least 100,000 kyats in a day, they face potential losses. The price difference between the village fish depot and Taunggoke Town is 1,000 kyats per viss. Selling at the Taunggoke depot saves time and reduces fuel costs.

At the village depot, fish are priced at 6,000 kyats per viss, while they are sold at 7,000 kyats in Taunggoke. Some depot owners provide advance payments to fishermen, who then sell their catches to the depot. Fishermen who go out daily have the opportunity to sell their fish at the depot. Fishing is prohibited from March to June, but many fishermen continue to catch fish during this period as catches tend to be higher.

The price for Vara crab is 10,000 kyats per viss at the village depot and 15,000 kyats at Taunggoke. Typically, a fisherman catches only one or two crabs per day, making the village depot the preferred selling point to avoid the costs of gasoline and time. Daily fish catches can average around 19 viss on some days but may drop to just one viss on others.

If the catch is low, fish are sold at the local village depot; if the catch is high, they are sent to the Ywama depot. The price of fish in the village ranges from 500 to 600 kyats per 10 tickles, compared to 700 to 800 kyats at Ywama. Ka ka dit is priced higher, at 700 to 800 kyats in the village and 1,000 kyats at Ywama. It takes about 10 minutes by motorboat to reach Thanlwe

Ywama. In the past, each fisherman caught about 10 viss per day, but this has now decreased to around 5 viss.

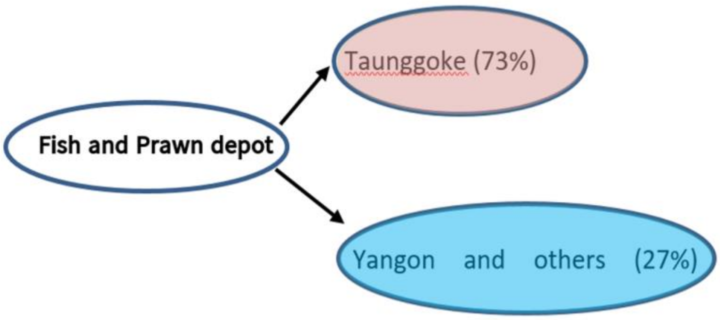


Source: semi structure interviews

Figure 8. Marketing chain of fisherman

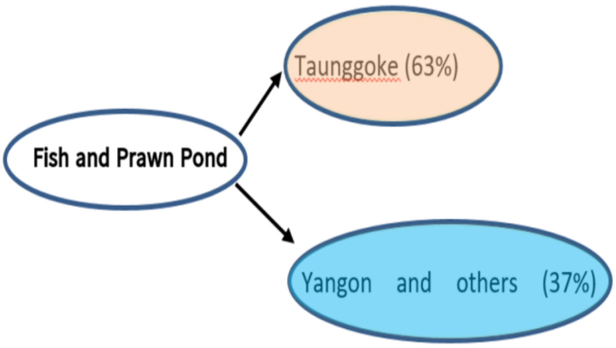
Fishermen sold 17% of the fish and fish product themselves in the nearby villages. Only 6% of the fishes and fish products are sold to local venders and then, they sell nearby villages. Only 62% of the fishes and fish products are sent to depots in the villages and 6% to depots of Taunggoke Township and 9% to depot of Yangon and other townships within Myanmar.

Fish and Prawn depots sent 73 percent of the fishes to Taunggoke Town and 27 percent to Yangon Region, a major market and a high demand area.



Source: semi structure interviews

Figure 9. Marketing chain of fish and prawn depots



Source: semi structure interviews

Figure 10. Marketing chain of fish and prawn pond

Fish and Prawn Pond owners also sent 63 percent of the fishes to Taunggoke Town because of nearness and 37 percent to Yangon Region, a major market and a high demand area.

Harland (1996) defined a supply chain as a network of retailers, distributors, transporters, storage facilities, and suppliers involved in the production, delivery, and sale of a product to consumers. In Taunggoke Township's fishery sector, however, the supply chain consists of only three key players: fishermen, traders (depot owners), and market areas (destination points). Interviews revealed that the marketing chain begins with the fishermen, who send their catch to local depots in villages and towns, and ultimately to other towns in Myanmar and China.

Fishermen face challenges such as inadequate investment for storage and transportation, compounded by insufficient electricity for proper fish storage. They typically sell their catch to depots owned by local traders or traders from other regions who have the necessary capital for fish trading. According to the interviews, local traders and those from other areas reap the most significant benefits in this fishery sector.

SWOT Analysis on Marketing Chain of Fishery Products

Strengths
- Coastal location
- Year round fishing activity
- Household based processing
- Employment opportunities for women
- Local demand

Weaknesses
- Limited cold storage facilities
- Low product diversification
- Lack of modern technology
- Limited finance

Opportunities
- High demand and a major diet
- Growing populations
- Potential for development of aquaculture

Threats
- Declining fish catches
- Price fluctuation in domestic market
- Increasing fuel costs

Strengths are as follows:
- Coastal location and rich inland water resources provide abundant fish supply.
- Year-round fishing activities ensure a steady flow of products to markets.
- Household-based fish processing (drying, salting, fermenting) adds value and creates income opportunities.
- Employment opportunities for women in processing, trading, and retail strengthen livelihoods.
- Local demand for fish is strong since it is a staple food in Myanmar’s diet.

Weaknesses are as follows:

- Limited cold storage and ice-making facilities reduce product qulaity.
- Low product diversification (mostly fresh, dried, or salted fish) limits access to high-value markets.
- Fish product making skills are not well-developed within communities.
- Lack of modern technology in processing, packaging, and preservation weakens competitiveness.
- Limited access to finance for small-scale fishers and traders restricts investment in better equipment.

Opportunities are as follows:

- High domestic demand as fish is a major source of protein.
- Growing populations create demand for value-added fish products.
- Potential for development of aquaculture and sustainable fishing practices to meet market demand.

Threats are as follows:

- Declining fish catches due to overfishing, pollution, and habitat loss.
- Price fluctuations in domestic markets create uncertainty for producers and traders.
- Increasing fuel costs affect sending fish products and price of products

Conclusion

The fisheries in Taunggoke Township provide food, job opportunities, and income for local residents. Various species of fish are caught along the coastline, and there are also fish and prawn ponds in the area. The study area produces a diverse range of fish and fish products, including saltwater fish, prawns, crabs, mussels, and snails. However, fishermen's incomes are generally low, and the benefits of fishery activities primarily favor traders with substantial capital investments. Fishermen receive minimal returns due to inadequate storage facilities stemming from low investment levels. As a result, local fishermen often sell their catches to nearby village and town depots.

Most raw fish are sent to Yangon and abroad, while the production of value-added products is limited by a lack of technology for processing fish. Factors such as post-harvest losses, high transportation costs, and inadequate access to local and international markets hinder the production of value-added products in Taunggoke Township.

Effective management of the fishery sector is essential for both ecological and economic improvement for local communities. Management must involve collaboration among community organizations, fishermen, buyers, and brokers. Price regulation is also necessary to help bridge the income gap between local fishermen and traders.

To enhance the fishery sector in Taunggoke Township, further research is needed on environmental conservation, the socioeconomic status of fishermen, value-added products, price fluctuation and market demand.

Acknowledgement

We would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to Dr. Khin Hnin Phyu, Professor and Head of the Department of Geography at Hinthada University, for her generous permission to conduct this research and for her invaluable guidance. We are also deeply thankful to Professor Dr. Mi Mi Kyi (E.C. member, Myanmar Academy of Arts and Science) for her encouraging advice and support throughout this project. Finally, we sincerely thank the fishermen and villagers who welcomed us and patiently participated in our research interviews. We also appreciate the personnel at government offices and various departments for providing essential secondary data.

Reference

Department of Fisheries, (2021): Report, Sittwe Township, Rakhine State, 2021

Fishery Sector Report, (2019): *Rakhine State Investment Opportunity Survey*, The World Bank, United Nations

Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) (2003) Expert Consultation., "*Diet, nutrition, and the prevention of chronic diseases",* Technical Report Series. 916, 89-90.

Harland, C.M. (1996) *Supply Chain Management*, Purchasing and Supply Management,

Khin Myo Htay, (2021) *Situational Analysis of Mangrove Forest in Taunggoke Township*, M.A Thesis, Department of Geography, University of Yangon (Unpublished)

Nunes, M.L., Narcisa, M. Batista, B.I., (2003) *Fish Products: Contribution for A Healthy Food*

(https://www.researchgate.net/publication/228117766)

San Myint, (2005) *Fishing Industry of Kyaukphyu Township (Rakhine State),* M.A Project Paper, Department of Geography, Sittway University (Unpublished)

Tacon, A.G., Metian, M., (2008) "*Global overview on the use of fish meal and fish oil in industrially com-pounded aqua feeds: Trends and future prospects"*, Aquaculture. 285(1), 146-158.

Zin Mar Win, (2021) *A Geographical Assessment of Land Use and Land Cover Changes in Taunggoke Township*, M.A Thesis, Department of Geography, University of Yangon (Unpublis

J. Myanmar Acad. Arts Sci. 2026 **Vol. XXIII. No.5**

GEOGRAPHICAL STUDY ON RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ROAD NETWORK ACCESSIBILITY AND RESIDENTIAL LAND VALUE IN SITTWAY CITY

Mya Moe Wai[1], Aye Su Han[2], Moe Ommar Lwin[3]

Abstract

One of the important measurements of transportation network is accessibility and geographers think about accessibility as a location feature (Saxena,2005:67). In urban economic models, urban structure is explained as a function of employment. Residential land value, there are many factors that contribute to the value of a location: the characteristic of housing, environment, employment and other social economic opportunities. In today's world economy, real estate determines the value of urban land in both urban planning and real estate industry. Although Sittway City is composed of 34 wards, 33 wards are used for analysis because Kissapa Ward, which established in 2021, the last extended ward was uninhabited. Connectivity Matrix, Shimbel Accessibility Matrix, (D-Matrix) and Total Accessibility (Matrix-T) have been used for understanding the magnitude of network accessibility in Sittwe City. In order to know land values, three hundred fourth two semi-structured interviews were conducted with estate agents and local residents and were collected according to randomized stratified sampling method. Pearson Correlation analysis are preformed to find the relationship between network accessibility, population density and land value. The road network accessibility higher, the higher the land value rather than population density. Therefore, in the study area, road network accessibility has a greater effect on land value than the settlement. This study refers to the future study is city planning, urban design and real estate.

Keywords: *network accessibility, land value, urban planning, real estate industry*

Introduction

A city is place that is built with more efficient infrastructures that connect residential, workplaces, and commercial buildings. These factors not only the main attractions but pull factors of migration. Nowadays, people are considering housing land not accommodation but also marking investments. Investment of highest road network accessibility of city is has become a more reliable for long-term business. Accessibility is the measure of the capacity of a location to be reached from, or to be reached by, different locations. Therefore, the capacity and the arrangement of transport infrastructure are key elements in the determination of accessibility (Rodrigue, 2020:376). Geographer study uneven development between place from a geographical perspective. According to the accessibility of the place, the uneven development is stronger in the city. In addition, different capacity of place, the land value of the place is also diverse.

Smart (1917) described Sittway was founded in 1826 and started six wards in 1844.Today, Sittway comprises 34 wards, 18 wards of which were created due to transportation. Zaw latt Tun and Zin Nwe Myint (2007) presented six wards due to Baluma Bridge in 1858, nine wards due to Satyogya Jetty and three wards to Mayyu Road in 1948. So, Sittway has total area of 21.96 sq kilometre (8.48 sq mile), in which 6.2 sq kilometre (2.40 sq mile) was appeared due to transport. According to Sittway history intra- urban transportation has been a strong impact on

---

[1] Department of Geography, Sittway University
[2] Department of Geography, East Yangon University
[3] Department of Geography, Yangon University of Distance Education

large-scale urban expansion. This study emphasized on relationship between of intra-urban road network accessibility, land value and population density, which becoming a distinct and an important urban transport and urban planning in urban area like Sittway.

The objectives of this research work are as follows;

- To examine residential land value of wards in Sittway City
- To evaluate the accessibility of intra-urban road network in the Sittway City
- To determine the level of accessibility in the city
- To find out relationship between of intra-urban road network accessibility, land value and population density.

Methodology

This study is based on primary and secondary data sources. Primary data are obtained by asking questions to real estate agents, House-agents, Land-agents through interviews, open talk and discussion and field observation. The questionnaire, open talk interviews with some local inhabitants were conducted for selection ward to living perception data and information collection. Secondary data have been collected from General Administrative Department, Development Committee of Sittway Township, Agricultural Land Management and Statistics Department of Sittway Township. Shortest path matrix, Shimbel accessibility matrix, (D-Matrix) and Total accessibility (Matrix-T) have been used to analysis the connectivity and accessibility of Intra-urban road network. For analysis, the junctions that high communicate with other wards have been taken into consideration as a vertex. The value of shortest path matrix, Shimbel accessibility matrix (D-Matrix) and Total accessibility (Matrix-T) for each ward is combined and these results are considering as accessibility grade. Spatial Interpolation maps are prepared using Inverse Distance Weighted (IDW)method and Zonal Statistics method of GIS (Geographical Information Systems) technology to create choropleth map. In order to know land values, semi-structured interviews were arranged with 12 real estate agents and local residents 330 (10 persons in each ward) who have lived at least 5 years. The necessary data for this research work were collected according to randomized stratified sampling method. In order to achieve the aim of this paper, accessibility grade of each ward obtain from intra-urban road network analysis, land value and population density of each ward are set as three variables. Pearson Correlation analysis are preformed to find the relationship between these variables.

Description of Study Area

Sittway 's geographical features play a crucial role in understanding its current situation. Sittway City lies between North latitudes 20° 6′53″ and 20° 12′ 4″ and between East longitudes 92°50′12″ and 92°54′30″. Now it comprises 34 Wards but North Aungmingalar Ward is not continuous with other wards, located in the northwestern part of the Sittway, joining with Mayu Road. The length of the town is 6.8 kilometres (4 miles) from east to west and 6.2 kilometres (3.8 miles) from north to south. It has an area of 21.96 sq kilometres (8.48 sq miles) (Figure 1). According to the 2022-2023 data, Intra urban roads in study area has 154 km (93 miles) of all kinds of roads. These roads may again group into five categories by the type of their surfacing materials as asphalted, concreted, bituminous, crushed rock, earth roads. A total of 17km

(11miles) or 11.04 percent are asphalted road,73km (46miles) or 47.4 percent concreted road,12km (7 miles) are bituminous road,13km(8miles) or 11.68 percent crushed rock road and 34 km (21 miles) or 22.08 percent are earth road.

Results and Discussions

Population Density

In 2023 the population of the city was 121967 persons and with the area of 21.96 square kilometres. The average density was 15554 persons per square kilometre. Table 1 shows the population density of Sittway in 2023. Among 34 wards of the City, Kondan Ward was highest in population density with 24358 persons per square kilometre. The wards with a density of over 20000 persons were South Lanmadaw, Aungmingalar and Katheyar Ward. High population concentration in these wards was due to their location near the city centre being adjacent with Main Road and high concentration of commercial activities. The ward with least population density was Yenwesu Ward with 1093 persons per square kilometre and Pyitawthar Ward with 1388 persons, followed by North Aungmingalar Ward with 2218 persons (Figure 2), (Table 1).

Land Value

Land value refers to the to the monetary worth of a piece of the land based on factors such as its location, size and potential for development. It is influenced by market demand, environmental factors and the availability of amenities or infrastructure such as road, utilities and public services**.** Wards with high land value are clustered in the urban centre of Sittway City. Wards with low land value are found in the northeast of Sittway City. The lowest land value ward is North Aungmingalar Ward. It is located 4.6km (2.8mls) in the northwestern of Sittway City and in Maungnipyin Village Tract area. The highest Land value ward is Kyaypingyi Ward, where Myoma market is located. Most landuse types of this ward is commercial landuse (Figure 3), (Table 1).

Table 1. Population Density and Land Value of Residential Wards in Sittway City (2023)

Ward No	Vertex	Wards	Area (Sq.km)	Total Population	Population Density (Per Sq-km)	Land Value (Per Sq-Ft)
1	V_1	Kyaypingyi	0.52	1539	2960	200000
2	V_2	Mawleik	0.19	1990	10474	100000
3	V_3	Ohdan	0.05	956	19120	200000
4	V_4	Mizan	0.14	1272	9086	200000
5	V_5	SouthYupa	0.05	987	19740	180000
6	V_6	North Yupa	0.07	1274	18200	160000
7	V_7	Myothugyi	0.24	2004	8350	100000
8	V_8	Tayarthesu	0.23	1188	5165	43000
9	V_9	South Lanmadaw	0.17	3430	20176	40000

Ward No	Vertex	Wards	Area (Sq.km)	Total Population	Population Density (Per Sq-km)	Land Value (Per Sq-Ft)
10	V_{10}	North Lanmadaw	0.41	2512	6127	40000
11	V_{11}	Shwepyar	0.19	1396	7347	40000
12	V_{12}	Sinkulan	0.3	5030	16767	40000
13	V_{13}	Ohtapin	0.12	1675	13958	37000
14	V_{14}	Lanthit	0.04	315	7875	100000
15	V_{15}	South Ywagyi	0.19	1827	9616	40000
16	V_{16}	North Ywagyi	0.39	5809	14895	37000
17	V_{17}	Baungdyutharsu	0.09	986	10956	45000
18	V_{18}	Bauktheesu	0.12	1935	16125	180000
19	V_{19}	Kyaukgtatlan	0.16	2333	14581	250000
20	V_{20}	Pyitawthar	3.77	5231	1388	80000
21	V_{21}	West Sanpya	2.65	6894	2602	30000
22	V_{22}	Yenwesu	1.79	1956	1093	40000
23	V_{23}	Magyimyaing	0.89	7657	8603	30000
24	V_{24}	Katheywa	0.14	3370	24071	60000
25	V_{25}	Setyonesu	3.4	13171	3874	70000
26	V_{26}	Kondan	0.24	5846	24358	80000
27	V_{27}	Bawlonekwin	0.18	2008	11156	50000
28	V_{28}	Kyaunggyinlan	0.21	2701	12862	160000
29	V_{29}	Aungmingalar	0.19	4151	21847	100000
30	V_{30}	Setyogya	1.85	13857	7490	60000
31	V_{31}	Dannyawadi	0.29	3781	13038	40000
32	V_{32}	Mingan	2.04	12154	5958	100000
33	V_{33}	North Aungmingalar	0.33	732	2218	20000
34	V_{34}	Kissapa	0.36	0	0	Nil
	Total /Average		21.96	121967	15554	Nil

Source: General Administrative Department, Agricultural Land Management and Statistics Department of Sittway Township and Field Observation (May 2023-September 2023)

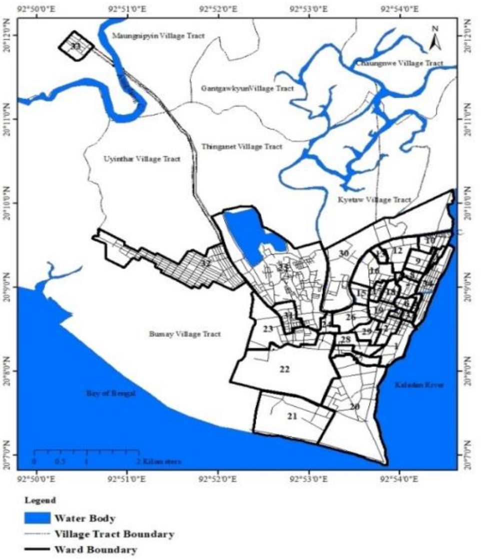


Figure 1: Location of Sittway City and Intra-Urban Roads in Sittway City

Source: Development Committee and Agricultural Land Management and Statistics Department of Sittway Township

Index: Table 1

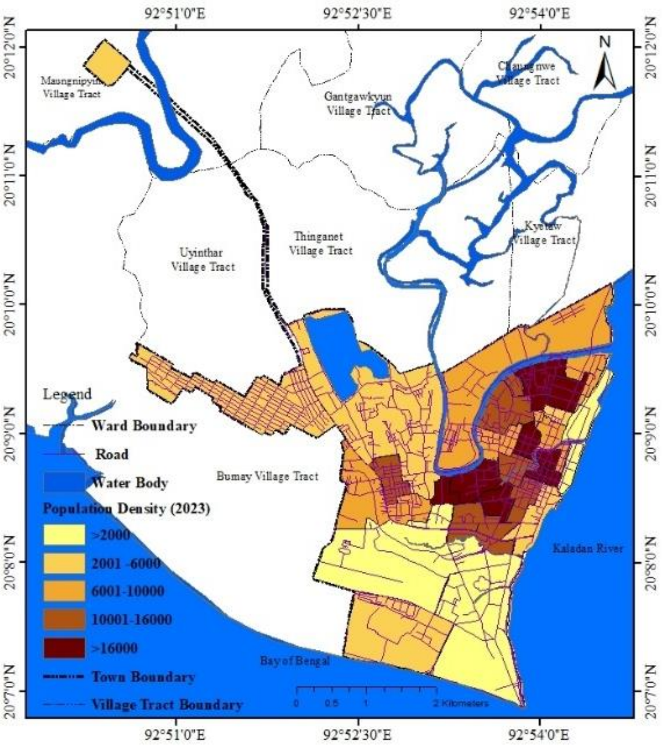


Figure 2: Population Density of Sittway City (2023)

Source: Based on Table 1

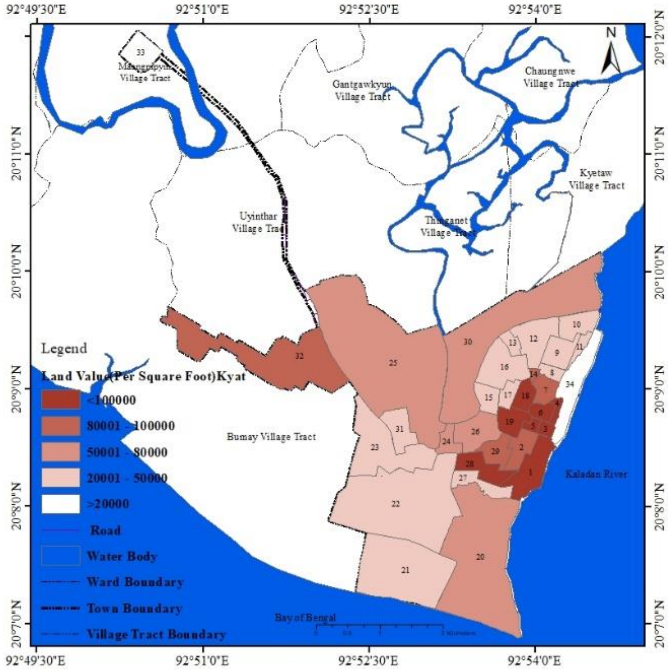


Figure 3: Land Value of Residential Wards in Sittway City (2023)
Source: Based on Table 1

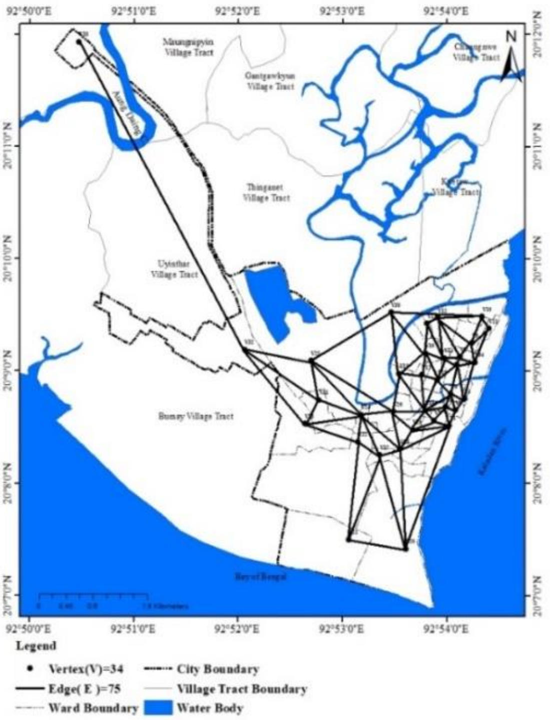


Figure 4: A Simulated Planner Graph for Intra Urban-Roads Network in Sittway City(2023)
Source: Development Committee of Sittway Township

Centrality (Shortest path matrix)

Land value is fundamentally shaped by its location, with centrality and accessibility. In a transport network, the Shimbel number represents the shortest path between nodes, determining the network's centrality by evaluating these paths between all node's pairs. A node with a lower Shimbel number is considered more central. This method does not consider factors like population density, distance, link quality or traffic flow. (Rodrigue,2020) For analysis, the junctions that best accessible with other wards have been taken into consideration as a vertex (Figure 4). The process involves using shortest path algorithms to generate the first-order shortest-path matrix(D)and first- order connectivity matrix (C_1) (Table 2). The final step involves the shortest-path matrix (C_n) and determining the matrix's solution time, which also established the network's diameter. Saxena (2005)˙ prepared topological intra-urban road network is represented as matrix. Number of rows and columns of the matrix equal to the total number of nodes in the prepared graph network of Sittway City. Since the prepared topological network has 34 nodes, the matrix that represents the road network is thirty-four rows by thirty-four columns grid. The horizontal rows of the matrix are defined as a set of origin and vertical columns are regarded as destination nodes. In this matrix, a value of '1' is filled in the cells that have a direct linkage between nodes and a value of '0' is filled in the cell that has no direct linkage. This matrix is commonly referred to as 'C' matrix /original matrix/ direct connectivity (Table 2). In the 'C' matrix table, the total value of Kyaukgtatlan Ward (V_{19}) and Katheywa Ward (V_{24}) have the maximum number of direct linkages with 7 links (Table 2). Therefore, this network, the Shimbel number (shortest-path matrix) analysis shows that Sittway has 34 nodes, with 7 connections between the most distant nodes, leading to a network diameter of '7' and a short-path matrix of D_7 (Table 3). The results reveal that in the intra-urban road network (2023), Kyaukgtatlan Ward (V_{19}) and Kondan Ward (V_{26}) have the lowest Shimbel numbers, designating them as the accessibility centre of wards in Sittway City (Figure 4), (Table 3).

Accessibility (Total accessibility)

This is known as Total accessibility (Matrix-T) by Rodrigue (2013). In a network, each vertex (node) includes the direct and indirect path that shows the total number of paths. In order to measure the accessibility of the network, *firstly*, be constructed the connectivity matrix(C_1) (Table 2). *Secondly*, constructed the second order (two-linkages path) connectivity matrix (C_2). This matrix derived from (C_1 x C_1) and it represents the node vertices with two-linkage paths. *Thirdly*, repeat the construction of N^{th}order connectivity matrices. N^{th}linkage paths are diameter (path between most distant nodes) of this network. *Finally*, the total accessibility matrix is constructed. It is the row summation result of the matrices constructed until N^{th}order (Table 4). This row sum of matrix T represents the accessibility of nodes in the network. The higher the row sum value, the greater the accessibility of that node. The highest accessibility of the intra-urban road in Sittway is Ohdan Ward (V_3) and the least accessible is North Aungmingalar Ward(V_{33}) (Table 4).

Finally, the highest accessible vertex is expressed by the sum of the ranks sum of three matrices (Direct Connectivity Matrix C_1, Shortest-Path Matrix(D), Total Matrix (T)) (Table 5).

The highest accessibility node in this analysis is Kyaukgtatlan Ward (V_{19}), and which is located in eastern part of Satyogya Creek, in the centre part of Sittway City. The lowest accessibility node is North Aungmingalar Ward (V_{33}) which is not clustered with urban wards, and West Sanpya Ward (V_{21}) located at the southern part of Sittway City (Figure 5), (Table 5).

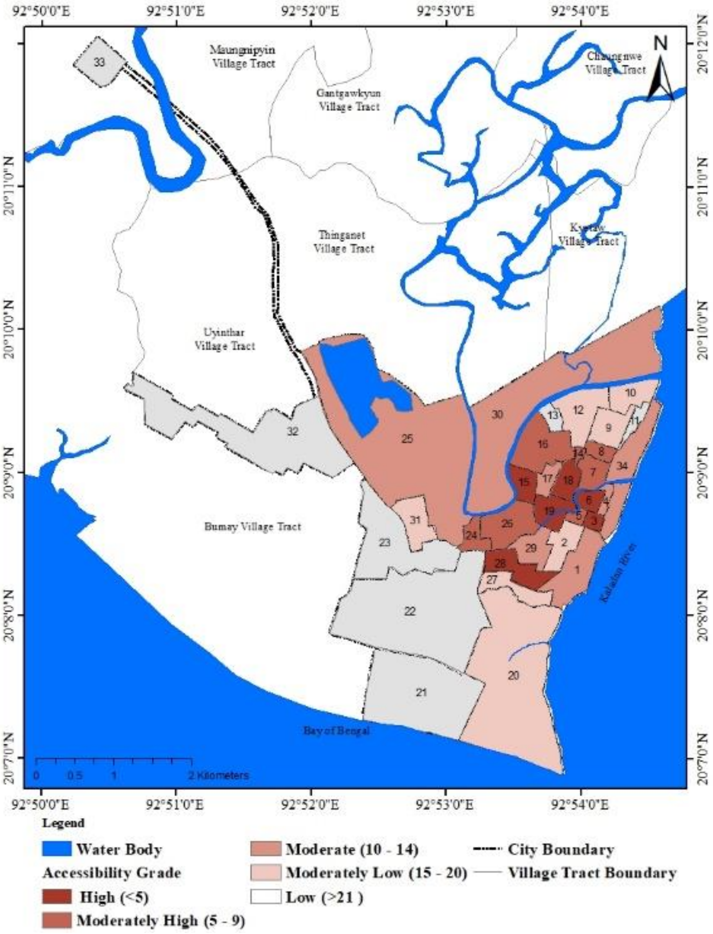


Figure 5: Accessibility Grade for Intra-Urban Roads Network in Sittway City (2023)

Source : Table 5

Table 2. The Connectivity Matrix (C_1) for Inter Urban Roads Network in Sittway City (2023)

V	V1	V2	V3	V4	V5	V6	V7	V8	V9	V10	V11	V12	V13	V14	V15	V16	V17	V18	V19	V20	V21	V22	V23	V24	V25	V26	V27	V28	V29	V30	V31	V32	V33	V34	∑
V1	0	1	1		1															1								1							5
V2	1	0			1														1										1						4
V3	1		0	1	1	1																													4
V4			1	0		1	1																											1	4
V5	1	1	1		0	1													1																5
V6			1	1	1	0	1											1	1																6
V7				1		1	0	1						1				1																1	6
V8							1	0	1			1		1																				1	5
V9								1	0	1	1	1																						1	5
V10									1	0	1	1																		1					4
V11									1	1	0																							1	3
V12								1	1	1		0	1	1																					5
V13												1	0	1																					2
V14							1	1				1	1	0		1		1																	6
V15															0	1	1		1							1				1					5
V16														1	1	0	1	1												1					5
V17															1	1	0	1	1																4
V18						1	1							1		1	1	0	1																6
V19		1			1	1									1		1	1	0										1						*7
V20	1																			0	1						1	1							4
V21																				1	0	1					1								3
V22																					1	0	1	1			1								4
V23																						1	0	1							1	1			4
V24																						1	1	0	1	1	1	1			1				*7
V25																								1	0	1				1	1	1			5
V26															1									1	1	0		1	1						5
V27																				1	1	1		1			0	1							5
V28	1																			1				1		1	1	0	1						6
V29		1																	1							1		1	0						4
V30										1					1	1									1					0					4
V31																							1	1	1						0	1			4
V32																							1		1						1	0	1		4
V33																																1	0		1
V34				1			1	1	1		1																							0	5
	5	4	4	4	5	6	6	5	5	4	3	5	2	6	5	5	4	6	7	4	3	4	4	7	5	5	5	6	4	4	4	4	1	5	

Note * = The highest connected nodes

Source: Calculation Based on Data Obtained from Development Committee of Sittway Township (2023)

Reference: Figure 2

Table 3.The Shortest Path Matrix (D_7) for Intra Urban Roads Network in Sittway City (2023)

V	V1	V2	V3	V4	V5	V6	V7	V8	V9	V10	V11	V12	V13	V14	V15	V16	V17	V18	V19	V20	V21	V22	V23	V24	V25	V26	V27	V28	V29	V30	V31	V32	V33	V34	∑
V1	0	1	1	2	1	2	3	4	4	5	4	5	5	4	3	4	3	3	2	1	2	3	3	3	3	2	2	1	2	4	3	4	5	3	97
V2	1	0	2	3	1	2	3	4	5	6	6	5	4	3	2	3	2	2	1	2	3	4	4	3	3	2	3	2	1	3	4	4	5	4	102
V3	1	2	0	1	1	1	2	3	3	4	3	4	4	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	3	4	5	4	4	3	3	2	2	4	4	5	6	2	98
V4	2	3	1	0	2	1	1	2	2	3	2	3	3	2	4	3	3	2	2	3	4	5	5	4	5	4	4	3	3	4	5	5	6	1	102
V5	1	1	1	2	0	1	2	3	4	5	4	4	4	3	2	3	2	2	1	2	3	4	5	4	3	3	3	2	2	3	4	4	5	3	95
V6	2	2	1	1	1	0	1	2	3	4	3	3	3	2	3	2	2	1	1	3	4	4	4	3	3	2	4	3	3	3	4	4	5	2	88
V7	3	3	2	1	2	1	0	1	2	3	2	2	2	1	3	2	2	1	2	4	5	5	5	4	4	3	5	4	4	3	5	5	6	1	98
V8	4	4	3	2	3	2	1	0	1	2	2	1	2	1	3	2	3	2	3	5	6	6	6	5	5	4	6	5	4	3	5	5	6	1	113
V9	4	5	3	2	4	3	2	1	0	1	1	1	2	2	4	3	4	3	4	5	6	7	7	5	5	5	6	5	5	4	6	6	7	1	129
V10	5	6	4	3	5	4	3	2	1	0	1	1	2	3	2	2	3	4	4	5	6	5	4	4	2	3	5	4	4	1	3	3	4	2	110
V11	4	6	3	2	4	3	2	2	1	1	0	2	3	3	5	4	5	3	5	5	6	6	5	4	3	4	6	5	5	2	4	4	5	1	123
V12	5	5	4	3	4	3	2	1	1	1	2	0	1	1	3	2	3	3	4	6	7	6	6	5	4	4	6	5	4	3	5	5	6	2	122
V13	5	4	4	3	4	3	2	2	2	2	3	1	0	1	2	2	3	2	3	6	6	5	5	4	4	4	6	5	4	2	4	4	5	4	116
V14	4	3	3	2	3	2	1	1	2	3	3	1	1	0	2	1	2	1	2	5	6	5	5	4	3	4	5	4	3	2	4	4	5	2	98
V15	3	2	3	4	2	3	3	3	4	2	5	3	2	2	0	1	1	2	1	3	4	3	3	2	2	1	3	2	2	1	3	3	4	4	86
V16	4	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	3	2	4	2	2	1	1	0	1	1	2	4	5	4	4	3	3	2	4	3	3	1	4	4	5	3	93
V17	3	2	3	3	2	2	2	3	4	3	5	3	3	2	1	1	0	1	1	4	5	4	4	3	3	2	4	3	2	2	4	4	5	3	96
V18	3	2	2	2	2	1	1	2	3	4	3	3	2	1	2	1	1	0	1	4	5	4	4	3	3	2	4	3	2	2	4	4	5	2	87
V19	2	1	2	2	1	1	2	3	4	4	5	4	3	2	1	2	1	1	0	3	4	4	4	2	2	2	3	2	1	3	3	3	4	3	*84
V20	1	2	2	3	2	3	4	5	5	5	5	6	6	5	3	4	4	4	3	0	1	2	3	2	3	2	1	1	2	4	3	4	5	4	109
V21	2	3	3	4	3	4	5	6	6	6	6	7	6	6	4	5	5	5	4	1	0	1	2	2	3	3	1	2	3	5	3	3	4	5	128
V22	3	4	4	5	4	4	5	6	7	5	6	6	5	5	3	4	4	4	4	2	1	0	1	1	2	2	1	2	3	4	2	2	2	3	116
V23	3	4	5	5	5	4	5	6	7	4	5	6	5	5	3	4	4	4	4	3	2	1	0	1	2	2	2	2	3	3	1	1	2	6	119
V24	3	3	4	4	4	3	4	5	5	4	4	5	4	4	2	3	3	3	2	2	2	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	2	3	5	94
V25	3	3	4	5	3	3	4	5	5	2	3	4	4	3	2	3	3	3	2	3	3	2	2	1	0	1	2	2	2	1	1	1	2	5	92
V26	2	2	3	4	3	2	3	4	5	3	4	4	4	4	1	2	2	2	2	2	3	2	2	1	1	0	2	1	1	2	2	2	3	4	*84
V27	2	3	3	4	3	4	5	6	6	5	6	6	6	5	3	4	4	4	3	1	1	1	2	1	2	2	0	1	2	4	2	3	4	5	113
V28	1	2	2	3	2	3	4	5	5	4	5	5	5	4	2	3	3	3	2	1	2	2	2	1	2	1	1	0	1	3	2	3	4	4	92
V29	2	1	2	3	2	3	4	4	5	4	5	4	4	3	2	3	2	2	1	2	3	3	3	2	2	1	2	1	0	3	3	3	4	4	92
V30	4	3	4	4	3	3	3	3	4	1	2	3	2	2	1	1	2	2	3	4	5	4	3	2	1	2	4	3	3	0	2	2	3	3	91
V31	3	4	4	5	4	4	5	5	6	3	4	5	4	4	3	4	4	4	3	3	3	2	1	1	1	2	2	2	3	2	0	1	2	6	109
V32	4	4	5	5	4	4	5	5	6	3	4	5	4	4	3	4	4	4	3	4	3	2	1	2	1	2	3	3	3	2	1	0	1	5	113
V33	5	5	6	6	5	5	6	6	7	4	5	6	5	5	4	5	5	5	4	5	4	2	2	3	2	3	4	4	4	3	2	1	0	6	144
V34	3	4	2	1	3	2	1	1	1	2	1	2	4	2	4	3	3	2	3	4	5	3	6	5	5	4	5	4	4	3	6	5	6	0	109

Note ***** = The lowest Shimbel Numbers

Source: Calculation Based on Data Obtained from Development Committee of Sittway Township (2023) Reference: Figure 2

Table 4. The Accessibility Matrix T_7 for Intra Urban Roads Network in Sittway City (2023)

Vertex	C_1	C_2	C_3	C_4	C_5	C_6	C_7	$\sum$
Kyaypingyi (V_1)	5	21	111	543	2711	13608	1070	18069
Mawleik (V_2)	4	21	97	499	2554	12742	1550	17467
Ohdan (V_3)	4	20	99	498	2520	12767	21441	***37349**
Mizan (V_4)	4	21	105	530	2676	13255	3282	19873
SouthYupa (V_5)	5	25	124	636	3184	16218	2169	22361
North Yupa (V_6)	6	30	159	820	4028	21933	3901	30877
Myothugyi (V_7)	6	31	160	789	3997	19902	5140	30025
Tayarthesu (V_8)	5	27	128	625	3058	15250	4714	23807
South Lanmadaw (V_9)	5	21	98	461	2258	11099	3737	17679
North Lanmadaw (V_{10})	4	17	73	340	1606	7869	2372	12281
Shwepyar (V_{11})	3	14	59	280	1274	6227	2266	10123
Sinkulan (V_{12})	5	19	104	503	2371	11804	3644	18450
Ohtapin (V_{13})	2	11	51	257	1284	5830	3492	10927
Lanthit (V_{14})	6	29	151	737	3651	17999	4485	27058
South Ywagyi (V_{15})	5	25	123	640	3207	16112	1758	21870
North Ywagyi (V_{16})	5	23	121	605	3148	15772	2836	22510
Baungdyutharsu (V_{17})	4	22	123	605	3132	15595	2236	21717
Bauktheesu (V_{18})	6	34	162	894	4320	22544	4358	32318
Kyaukgtatlan (V_{19})	7	34	180	897	4615	23158	3353	32244
Pyitawthar (V_{20})	4	18	85	438	2067	10271	287	13170
West Sanpya (V_{21})	3	13	62	285	1377	6489	69	8298
Yenwesu (V_{22})	4	20	90	426	2011	9638	89	12278
Magyimyaing (V_{23})	4	20	90	419	1962	9305	76	11876
Katheywa (V_{24})	7	35	165	774	3632	17575	296	22484
Setyonesu (V_{25})	5	21	107	519	2499	12320	426	15897
Kondan (V_{26})	5	27	135	654	3190	15567	821	20399
Bawlonekwin (V_{27})	5	23	115	544	2637	12551	111	15986
Kyaunggyinlan (V_{28})	6	30	145	720	3451	18221	578	23151
Aungmingalar (V_{29})	4	23	107	555	2684	13673	869	17915
Setyogya (V_{30})	4	17	82	428	2101	10442	1527	14601
Dannyawadi (V_{31})	4	20	90	423	2041	9524	134	12236
Mingan (V_{32})	4	14	65	301	1428	7262	97	9171
North Aungmingalar (V_{33})	1	4	14	61	301	1425	9	1815
Kissapa (V_{34})	5	18	103	495	2662	13252	4053	20588

Source: Calculation Based on Data Obtained from Development Committee of Sittway Township (2023)

Note * = The highest Accessibility node

Reference: Table 2

Table 5. Three Types of Matrix Analysis on Intra Urban Roads Network in Sittway City (2023)

Vertex	Connectivity	Shortest-Path	Accessibility	Total	Grade
Kyaukgtatlan (V_{19})	7	23	32	62	1
Bauktheesu (V_{18})	6	21	33	60	2
North Yupa (V_{6})	6	20	31	57	3
Kyaunggyinlan (V_{28})	6	18	27	51	4
Ohdan (V_{3})	4	12	34	50	5
South Ywagyi (V_{15})	5	22	23	50	5
Myothugyi (V_{7})	6	12	30	48	6
North Ywagyi (V_{16})	5	17	26	48	6
Katheywa (V_{24})	7	16	25	48	6
Kondan (V_{26})	5	23	20	48	6
Lanthit (V_{14})	6	12	29	47	7
SouthYupa (V_{5})	5	15	24	44	8
Tayarthesu (V_{8})	5	8	28	41	9
Baungdyutharsu (V_{17})	4	14	22	40	10
Aungmingalar (V_{29})	4	18	16	38	11
Kissapa (V_{34})	5	10	21	36	12
Kyaypingyi (V_{1})	5	13	17	35	13
Setyonesu (V_{25})	5	18	12	35	13
Mizan (V_{4})	4	11	19	34	14
Setyogya (V_{30})	4	19	11	34	14
Mawleik (V_{2})	4	11	14	29	15
Sinkulan (V_{12})	5	5	18	28	16
Bawlonekwin (V_{27})	5	8	13	26	17
Pyitawthar (V_{20})	4	10	10	24	18
South Lanmadaw (V_{9})	5	2	15	22	19
North Lanmadaw (V_{10})	4	9	9	22	19
Dannyawadi (V_{31})	4	10	7	21	20
Yenwesu (V_{22})	4	7	8	19	21
Magyimyaing (V_{23})	4	6	6	16	22
Mingan (V_{32})	4	8	3	15	23
Ohtapin (V_{13})	2	7	5	14	24
Shwepyar (V_{11})	3	4	4	11	25
West Sanpya (V_{21})	3	3	2	8	26
North Aungmingalar (V_{33})	1	1	1	3	27

Source: Based on Table 2,3 and 4

Relationship Between Road Network Accessibility, Land Value and Population Density

The Pearson product-moment correlation analysis shows that network accessibility has a stronger positive relationship with land value ***r(33) = .589,p <.001***, compared to population density ***r(33) = .529,p=.001***(Table 6). Both correlations are moderate and positive, meaning that as network accessibility increases, both land value and population density tend to increase as well. However, the correlation with land value is slightly higher, indicating that higher in network accessibility have a more effect on land value than population density.

Table 6. **Pearson Product Moment Correlation Table**

		Population Density	**Land Value**	**Network Accessibility**
Population Density	Pearson Correlation	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)			
	N	33		
Land Value	Pearson Correlation	*.241*	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	*.176*		
	N	33	33	
Network Accessibility	Pearson Correlation	**.529****	**.589****	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.000	
	N	33	33	33

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Findings and Conclusion

In Sittway City, which is composed of 34 wards, Kyaypingyi ward is 13th in terms of network accessibility grade, and the population density is 2960 per square kilometer, so the population density is lower than other centre wards of city but the land value is the highest given on Figure 6. This is because Myo Ma Market is located in that ward, and it is a ward with many commercial landuse types. High landuse efficiency leading to more land value. Therefore, the land value and directly related to economic opportunity in the study area. The wards with the highest population density, network accessibility, and land value are Ohdan, North Yupa Ward illustrated by Figure 6. These wards are located in the centre of Sittway City and are most commercial landuse type. High land value, especially in urban centre, can promote business investment**.** Vice versa, land is valuable, it signals strong economic potential in this area.

Kyaukgtatlan Ward, which has both high network accessibility and land value, has a population density of only 2333 per square kilometre displayed on Figure 6. South Lanmadaw, North Lanmadaw, and Shwepyar Wards, which have high population density, but have a moderately low level of network accessibility and the land value is lower than other wards on the outskirts of the city due to the scarcity of water in the summer. Therefore, urban infrastructure requirement is one of the factors to determine land value.

Although Setyogya Ward is located in the northern part of Sittway City but accessibility grade is moderate level due to two Setyogya Creek bridges. Before these bridges were built, the land value of this ward was 5000Ks per square feet. After the bridges were opened, land value increased to 62500Ks per square feet in 2020. The population density is also 7490 per square kilometre, it is lower density other wards. It is found that road network accessibility has a greater effect on land value than population density. Infrastructure improvements in Setyogya Ward led to a significant increase in land value, underscoring the role of network accessibility in driving economic growth.

North Aungmingalar Ward, which is not contiguous with the city's wards, is found to be weak in terms of population density, network accessibility and land value shown on Figure 6. This showing that distance from the economic core diminishes accessibility and in turn land value. This spatial pattern emphasizes that peripheral wards with low network accessibility face reduced economic potential as demonstrated by lower population density and landuse intensity.

Interviews with residents further underscore the importance of network accessibility, while also highlighting the socio-spatial factors that influence residential choice. Besides accessibility, people prioritize places with familial ties, balanced land value, neighborhood characteristics and social economic status, safety, availability of urban infrastructure and public services, access to school, economic opportunities. Locations expected to benefit from upcoming infrastructure projects of economic developments tend to rising land value. Therefore, Sittway Port, which is included as a transit port of the Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project, is located in Kyaypingyi Ward, so that the neighboring of this ward can have more economic potential in the future.

Land value in urban area is determined by a complex interplay of geographical factors such as location, accessibility, infrastructure, economic potential. These factors combine to create a dynamic pattern of land value that reflect the economic, social and spatial structure of the urban environment.

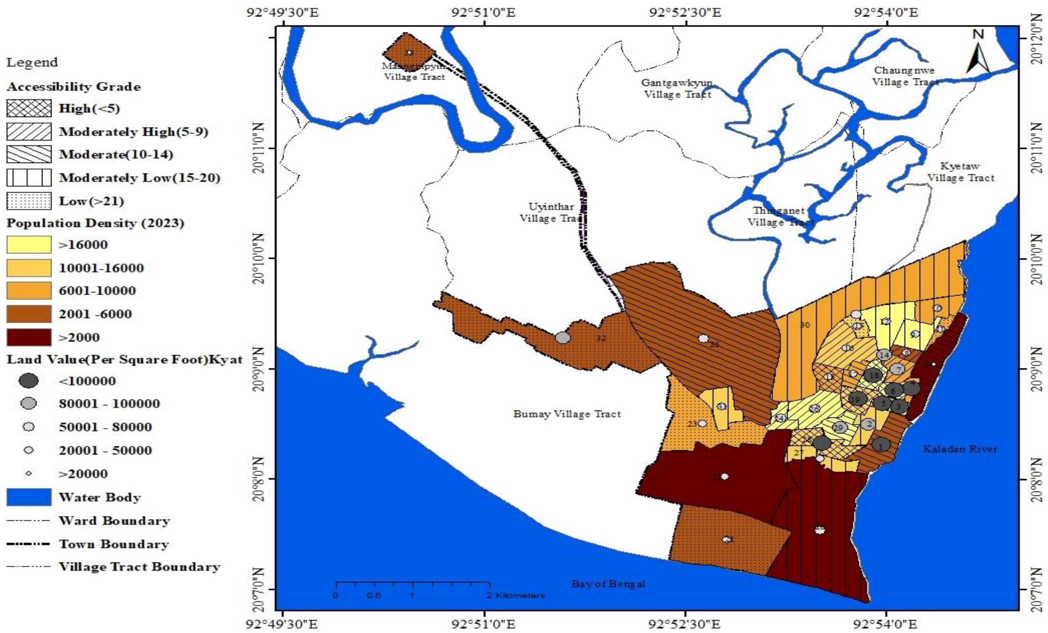


Figure 6: Road Network Accessibility, Land Value and Population Density in Sittway City(2023)

Source: Based on Table 1,5

Acknowledgement

Our thanks also go to the officials in government offices of Sittway Township. They have provided knowledge, observation, comments and statistics when we went to their offices. Their trust and information are indispensable for this research. We also would like to recognize the gratitude indebted to the editors of Myanmar Academy of Arts and Science who give us permission to publish this paper. Our deepest gratitude goes to our teachers and the participants who give us support and good comments about how we could improve our study.

Reference

Rodrigue, J.P (2013) *The Geography of Transport System*, 3rd ed, Dept. of Economic & Geography, Hofstra University, New York

Rodrigue, J.P (2020) *The Geography of Transport System*, 5th ed, Dept. of Economic & Geography, Hofstra University, New York.

Saxena.H.M, (2005) *Transport Geography*. Rawat Publications, Jaipur, India.

Smart, R, B.,& SUPDT (1917) *BURMA GAZETTEER AKYAB DISTRICT.VOLUME A,* Esplanade East, Calcutta (West Bengal).

Zaw latt Tun and Zin Nwe Myint, (2007) A Preliminary Study on Intra-Urban Public Transport of Sittwe: A case of motorcycle taxies. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/309398108

J. Myanmar Acad. Arts Sci. 2026 **Vol. XXIII. No.5**

THE STUDY OF THE SOURCES OF SPORT CONFIDENCE AMONG MYANMAR INTER-UNIVERSITY ATHLETES*

Tin Htun Aung[1]

Abstract

Sport confidence is defined as the beliefs in individual's capability to be successful in sport (Vealey, 1988). This study has been conducted in order to explore sources of self-confidence among university athletes and to determine if there are differences between demographic factors such as age, gender, competitive level of athletes and branches of sport on the sources of self-confidence. A cross-sectional research design was used to examine the sources of sport confidence among randomly selected university athletes (n =200) from inter-university sport competition in Myanmar. Data were collected with the Sources of Sport Confidence Scale (SSCS) developed by Vealey (1988) adapting to Myanmar version Questionnaire, and the values converted into percentage of maximum possible scores. Among the highest rated sources of sport confidence were coaches' leadership (M = 78.67±20.63), mastery (M = 75.05±22.05), physical and mental preparation (M = 74.63±20.21) and demonstration of ability (M = 73.40±21.00). Athletes differed significantly across gender in mastery (p = .02), coaches' leadership, (p=.04), social support (p=.03), with females recording higher scores. Significant differences were observed among university players in their sources of sport confidence, specifically in physical self-presentation (p = .01), social support (p = .02), environmental comfort (p = .008), and situational favorableness (p = .006), as defined by the university. Mastery factor also yielded significant difference (p=.02) between zone level and non-zone level players. The university football players were lower than those who play in sepak takraw as demonstration factor and social support of self-confidence. However, in the environmental factors and situational favorableness of self-confidence university athletes who play in soccer are higher than those who play in sepak takraw. Findings of this study could practically provide for the selection and training process of university athletes in competition.

Keywords: sources of sport confidence, university athletes, gender, players' level, branches

Introduction and Background

Over the years, many trainers, coaches, and sport scientists have acknowledged that the psychological characteristics of athletes are among the primary determinants of success and sustained performance in sports (Whelan et al., 1991; Gould et al., 1999; Ritz, 2012). Self-confidence, defined as a person's belief in their own ability to carry out life tasks, relates to their competence and self-esteem (Moritz, Hall, Martin & Vadocz, 1996; Vealey & Chase, 2008). Sports practitioners, theorists, and researchers have long considered self-confidence a critical mental skill and psychological attribute that influences sport performance (Moritz et al., 1996; Vealey & Chase, 2008). Indeed, a positive relationship between self-confidence and athletic performance has been reported in sport psychology literature (Edwards & Hardy, 1996; Weinberg & Gould, 2003; Woodman & Hardy, 2003).

Sport psychologists define self-confidence as the belief that one can perform a desired behavior successfully. The desired behavior can be anything; the main thing is that one believes in their abilities to get the job done (Weinberg & Gould, 2007, p. 323). In sports, self-confidence

* Special Award(2024)

[1] Department of Psychology, Taungoo University

is defined as a social cognitive construct that can be either trait-like or state-like. Trait-like self-confidence is part of one's personality and changes very little, making it very stable. State-like self-confidence is very unstable, changing from day to day and from situation to situation. According to Vealey & Knight (in Weinberg & Gould, 2007, pp. 323-324), self-confidence can be multidimensional and consist of several aspects. These aspects include confidence in one's abilities to perform tasks requiring physical skills, confidence in one's abilities to use psychological skills, confidence to use perceptual skills (decision making, adaptability), confidence in one's level of physical fitness and training status, and confidence in one's ability to learn and develop skills.

Vealey define sport confidence as the beliefs in individual's capability to be successful in sport (Vealey, 1986). In this regard, Vealey (1986) developed the sport confidence model in which nine sources of sport confidence were identified. These include mastery, demonstration of ability, physical or mental preparation, physical self-presentation, social support, coaches' leadership, vicarious experience, environmental comfort, and situational favorableness.

Mastery occurs when sport confidence is derived from proficiency or improvement of skills. Exhibition of best skills gives better performance in sports competition. When the athlete master on skills of the particular game he can perform better. Proper and regular training is necessary to develop skills and finally to became master on skills. Then athlete can confidently exhibit the skills in the competitions and get good performance. Performance accomplishments have proved to be the most influential source of efficacy information because they are based on one's own mastery experience (Bandura, 1997)

Demonstration of ability is a source of confidence when athletes compare their ability to that of their opponents or demonstrate superiority over opponents. Physical self-presentation indicates an athlete's perception of his/her physical self. The strength, endurance, flexibility, speed is very necessary for the sports performance. All these components are making the athlete fit. Fitness of the athlete is one of the factors to decide the performance in competitions. Fitness builds confidence himself on athlete. Physical or mental preparation reflects the feeling of being physically and mentally prepared with an optimal focus for performance. For every competition the athlete undergoes training plans. It may be short, medium- or long-term training plans. Both the physical and mental training is required for better performance. Physical training improves the strength of the body as well as mental training prepare an athlete mentally for the competitions. Psychological variables like confidence, mental toughness, emotional control, concentration are necessary for a high performer athlete. Before the competition the athlete must actively involve in warming up sessions. It prepares the body and mind for the competitions. Imagery techniques prepare an athlete mentally to perform higher.

Social support involves perceiving support or positive feedback and encouragement from significant others in sport such as teammates, coaches and family. Motivation and encouragement are necessary to make the athlete to perform better. Encouragement by the team mates inside and outside the playing area is to boost the athlete perform well. Understanding between the players improve the combination in the teams. The team combination is the major factor to success in the competition in sports. Family support is also important to an athlete to get in to the training regularly. The coach is to support the trainee otherwise the performance will not gain. Coach is to know everything about the student and according to students the needs he must facilitate. Nicolas (2010) study showed that coaches' autonomy support facilitates self-determined motivation and sports performance.

Coaches' leadership is based on the athlete's belief in the coach's decision making skills. Coach is leader to his trainees. His personality definitely influences on sports persons. Personality of the coach motivates and improves self confidence among students / players. He is the model to the students.

Vicarious experience involves gaining confidence from watching others such as teammates or friends perform successfully. An athlete learns most from the past experiences. Past experience may change attitudes may provide motivation. Experience can strengthen or weaken athlete's confidence. Learning from own experience or learning from others experience is called vicarious experience. Losing a game or winning a game motivate the athlete for higher performance. Suffering an injury can teach an athlete to take better care of their body and appreciate their health.

Environmental comfort is a source of sport confidence that comes from feeling comfortable in a competitive environment where competition will be held such as the particular field, gymnasium or pool. The environment factors like heat, rain, cold, high altitude, wind, air pollution effect on sport performance. An investigation done by Alessandro Pezzoli (2013) and others argued that the weather forecast at different time's term can be used to improve sports performance. The temperature, humidity and wind strongly influence on sports performance. The sport like cycling, shooting is influence by rain and fog. Study says the athletes, coaches and technicians are doing climatological analysis to finalize the sports training well in advance from the date of the event and to get better performance. Situational favorableness involves gaining confidence by feeling that the breaks of the situation are going in ones' favor.

Based on the Vealey's theoretical model a multitude of studies have been carried out on the sources of sport confidence among athletes but the findings are largely inconclusive and conflicting (Clark, 2013; Hays et al., 2007; Krane & Williams, 1994; Lirgg, 1991; Machida, Ward & Vealey, 2012; Michael, 2011; Vargas Tonsing & Bartholemew, 2006; Wilson, Sullivan, Myers & Feltz, 2004; Woodman & Hardy, 2003). Some of these studies such as Machida et al. (2012) and Vealey et al. (1998) proposed that the stability of sport confidence was a function of the sources upon which individuals base their beliefs. These include controllable sources such as mastery and physical/mental experiences which would facilitate stable confidence beliefs, and uncontrollable sources such as environmental comfort and physical self-presentation that would create less stable and weaker perceptions of sport-confidence (Machida et al., 2012; Vealey et al., 1998). Therefore, it appears that the sources of information that athletes use to judge their abilities are critical factors in developing and maintaining a stable level of confidence (Bandura, 1997; Machida et al., 2012; Vealey et al., 1998).

A number of studies indicate that the sources of sport confidence can change due to individual and contextual factors. For instance, while some studies have reported that male athletes demonstrate higher levels of confidence than females on sources of sport confidence (Krane & Williams, 1994; Lirgg, 1991; Meyers, LeUnes & Bourgeois, 1996; VargasTonsing & Bartholemew, 2006), other investigations did not find gender differences on the sources of sport confidence (Cox & Whale, 2004; Perry & Williams, 1998). In Kingston, Lane and Thomas (2010) reported that female athletes relied more on mastery, physical self-presentation, social support, environmental comfort and coach leadership as sources of sport confidence than male athletes. Hays et al. (2007) found that females derived confidence from the coaches' encouragement and positive feedback whereas males' derived confidence more from a belief that the coach would set an appropriate training program for performance enhancement. From the above studies, it appears that male athletes' sources of confidence centered on competition outcomes, while for female athletes' good personal performance was a strong motivating factor. In this regard, researchers have contended that the gender differences in social support could be attributed to social approval cues that influence the confidence of female athletes. Therefore, it is important to establish the sources of sport confidence among university athletes and examine whether it could differ based on gender and other contextual factors. Such information will be quite salient to coaches and technical officials who manage university athletes.

Vealey et al. (1998) found that high school and college athletes gained most of their confidence in sport from physical and mental preparedness, social support, mastery, demonstration of ability and physical self-presentation factors. Machida et al. (2012) also reported that the highest rated in terms of importance sources of sport confidence for the athletes were social support, mastery, physical/mental preparation, coaches' leadership and demonstration of ability among college athletes. However, college athletes placed a greater emphasis on their physical self-presentation than high school athletes. In another study, Demaine and Short (2007) found among collegiate basketball players that the five most popular sources of sport confidence were social support, coach's leadership, physical and mental preparation and mastery. Furthermore, the sources of sport confidence among the players did not differ according to sport involvement factors of age, total years playing, playing time and athletic scholarship.

Research Aims and Questions

Vealey's sport confidence model is very useful for explaining sources of sport confidence. This study initially aims to transculturally adapt the Sport Confidence Inventory (Vealey, 2003) into the Myanmar language for examining the sources of sport confidence among Myanmar university players and to explore their dependence on gender, university, type of sport or branches, and competitive level of the athletes. The research questions for this study are as follows:

1. What are the different sources of sport confidence for male and female university athletes?
2. How do the sources of sport confidence vary among athletes from different universities?
3. How do the sources of sport confidence differ based on players' skill levels?
4. What are the differences in the sources of sport confidence among various types of sports or branches of sports?

In this study, we shall look at how a theory of sources of sport confidence can be applied within the real setting of university in Myanmar. Conducting the study in inter-university sport competition gives an opportunity to examine sources of sport confidence among Myanmar university-level athletes, such as mastery, demonstration of ability, social support, coaches' leadership, physical and mental preparation, physical self-presentation, vicarious experience, environmental comfort, and situational favorableness. Furthermore, the valuable information about demographic data such as gender, age, branches of sport, and players' levels that affect the sources of sport confidence among a variety of university athletes will be presented.

In view of the above background, it is hypothesized that the sources of sport confidence among university athletes will differ based on those demographic variables. The study hypotheses are as follows:

1. There are gender differences in the sources of sport confidence among university athletes.
2. The sources of sport confidence differ among athletes from different universities.
3. There are differences in the sources of sport confidence based on the competitive level of the athletes.
4. The sources of sport confidence vary among different branches of sports.

The findings of the study could be valuable for preparing university-level players for sports competitions. Specifically, this study may provide insights into the different sources of sport confidence related to demographic factors among university-level athletes, which could help maximize their gains and minimize their losses in competitions**.**

Material & Methodology

Study design and Participants' characteristics

A cross-sectional research design was applied in this study using purposive sampling method. This research sample is consisted of 200 university athletes (52 females and 148 males) aged between 18 and 31 years from university student athletes who participated in Inter-University Sports Competitions for the 2023-2024 academic year of the Ministry of Education. The competitions comprise football, volleyball, track & field, Sepak Takraw and table tennis events at Wunna Theikdhi Stadium, gymnasiums and football training grounds in Nay Pyi Taw. The athletes who volunteered to participate in this study were table tennis (n = 83), volleyball (n = 29), soccer (n = 35), Sepak Takraw (n = 48) and track & field (n = 5) players. They belonged to the following age categories: 18-20 (69) (34.5%), 21-23 (112) (56%), and 24-26 (18) (9%) 27 and above years (1) (0.5%). Regarding players' level, 59% had been participating in their sport at the university election level and 41% belonged to the university zone team level. Distribution of the players' general characteristics according to age, gender, players' level and types of sport was described in Table 1.

Table 1: General characteristics of participants (*n* = 200).

		Participation	%
Sex	**Female**	**52**	**26.0**
	Male	**148**	**74.0**
Age (years)	18-20	69	34.5
	21-23	112	56
	24-26	18	9
	27 & above	1	0.5

		Participation	%
Sex	**Female**	**52**	**26.0**
	Male	**148**	**74.0**
Players' Level	Zone University-Level	82	41
	Non-Zone University-Level	118	59.0
Branches of sport	Sepak Takraw	48	24
	Soccer	35	17.5
	Volleyball	29	14.5
	Table Tennis	83	41.5
	Track & Field events	5	2.5

Study Instrument

In order to determine the level and sources of sport self-confidence of the athletes, Sources of Sport Confidence Scale (SSCS) developed by Vealey (1988) was used adapting to Myanmar language for this study. This SSCS Myanmar version was used for data collection and to assess athletes' sources of sport confidence. It consists of 43 items that represent nine sources of confidence in sport: Mastery (five items) demonstration of ability (six items), mental and physical preparation (six items), physical self-presentation (three items), social support (six items), coach's leadership (five items), vicarious experience (five items), environmental comfort (four items) and situational favorableness (three items). The items are scored on a Likert scale ranging from 'not at all important' to 'very important' to assess the importance of each source to the participants in the sport context. Its content and construct validity has already been established for college athletes (Vealey et al., 1988). The reliability of Myanmar version SSCS in the local context test was developed among Myanmar inter-university athletes. Cronbach's alpha coefficient of the answers given by those athletes to 43 items in the scale was calculated as .830.

Data collection procedures

The study included university elite athletes who were playing in inter-university-level sport competition. First of all, the researcher explained the study's objectives and questionnaires item to athletes involved in this study. The participants in the study was voluntary, that their responses would be anonymous and that they could withdraw from the study at any stage. Data were collected from January 11 to 19, 2024. Data collection procedure for each person took approximately 15–20 minutes to complete. The SSCS was subsequently administered to the athletes after the competition matches. The targeted population was Myanmar Inter-University-Level Athletes in 2024 sport competition and sample size was 200, which was considered adequate for the study.

Data analyses

Data were collected with coding and analyzed with Statistical Package for Social Sciences IBM (SPSS) version 25 and descriptive statistics of the data collected in the research (number of people, minimum, maximum, average, standard deviation) were calculated. It has been examined whether sources of sport confidence of athletes show a significant difference according to their genders, competitive level of athletes, variety of university and types of sports or branches. To examine the assumptions of the tests, independent sample t-test was used to check differences in the university athletes' sources of sport confidence defined by gender and type of sport or special branches. Moreover, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to test for differences among student athletes defined by university and competitive level of players. In the difference tests, a probability level of $p \leq .05$ was taken to indicate significance.

Results

The summary scores of inter-university-level athletes on the sources of sport confidence are described in Table 2.

Table 2: Distribution of Mean and SD scores for the various sources of sport confidence (N=200)

Sources of Sport Self-Confidence	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
Mastery	14	35	29.76	4.63
Demonstration of Ability	12	42	34.02	6.3
Physical & Mental Preparation	18	42	35.91	4.85
Physical Self-Presentation	3	21	13.14	4.38
Social Support	15	42	33.29	5.19
Coaches Leadership	11	35	29.88	4.95
Vicarious experience	11	58	26.73	5.78
Environmental Comfort	4	28	20.58	4.69
Situational favorableness	3	21	14.87	4.09

The Percentage of Maximum possible scores of the athletes on the sources of sport confidence are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Percentage of Maximum Possible (POMP) scores (means and standard deviations) for the various sources of sport confidence (N = 200).

Sources of Sport Self-Confidence	Mean	SD
Coaches Leadership:	78.67	20.63
Mastery:	75.05	22.05
Physical & Mental Preparation:	74.63	20.21
Demonstration of Ability:	73.40	21.00
Environmental Comfort:	69.08	19.54
Social Support:	67.74	19.22
Situational Favorableness:	65.94	22.72
Physical Self-Presentation:	56.33	24.33
Vicarious Experience:	33.47	12.30

As shown in table 3, the scores indicate that the highest rated sources of confidence in terms of importance for university athletes were coaches' leadership, mastery, physical and mental preparation and demonstration of ability. However, social support, situational favorableness, physical self- presentation and vicarious experience seem to be the weaker sources of sport confidence among the athletes.

It has been examined whether the sources of self-confidence of athletes show a significant difference according to their genders, university, level and branches. The influence of gender on the sources of sport confidence among university athletes are seen in Table 4.

Table 4; T-test results of the measurement among inter-university athletes calculated for sources of sport confidence across gender (N = 200; Female = 52, Male = 148).

Sources of Sport Self-Confidence	Gender	Mean	SD	T	df	Sig
Mastery	Female	30.98	3.93	2.23	198	0.027*
	Male	29.33	4.78			
Demonstration of Ability	Female	35.27	5.42	1.66	197	0.098
	Male	33.58	6.54			
Physical & Mental Preparation	Female	36.15	5.27	0.43	198	0.668
	Male	35.82	4.70			
Physical Self-Presentation	Female	14.10	4.09	1.85	198	0.066
	Male	12.80	4.45			
Social Support	Female	34.58	4.19	2.10	198	0.037*
	Male	32.84	5.44			
Coaches Leadership	Female	31.04	4.67	1.98	198	0.049*
	Male	29.47	5.00			
Vicarious experience	Female	27.98	4.89	1.83	198	0.068
	Male	26.28	6.01			
Environmental Comfort	Female	21.12	4.97	0.96	198	0.340
	Male	20.39	4.59			
Situational favorableness	Female	15.42	4.01	1.14	198	0.254
	Male	14.67	4.11			

* Significant at $p < .05$

The t-test results described in table 4 show that there were significant differences ($p < .05$) in the sources of sport confidence between male and female athletes according to mastery ($t=2.23$, $df=198$, $p=.027$), social support ($t=2.10$, $df=198$, $p=.037$), and coaches' leadership ($t=1.98$, $df=198$, $p=.049$). Female athletes had high mean scores than male athletes according to the above all factors.

Table 5: One-way ANOVA for the level of sources of self-confidence among inter-university athletes according to their universities.

Sources of Sport Self-Confidence		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Physical Self-presentation	Between Groups	763.456	24	31.811	1.818	.015*
	Within Groups	3061.899	175	17.497		
	Total	3825.355	199			
Social Support	Between Groups	1021.513	24	42.563	1.716	.026*
	Within Groups	4341.667	175	24.810		
	Total	5363.180	199			
Environmental comfort	Between Groups	923.833	24	38.493	1.951	.008**
	Within Groups	3452.887	175	19.731		
	Total	4376.720	199			
Situational favorableness	Between Groups	712.785	24	29.699	1.985	.006**
	Within Groups	2618.570	175	14.963		
	Total	3331.355	199			

* Significant at $p < .05$, ** $P<.01$

Table 5 shows that ANOVA results on athletes who played among inter-university sport competition had significantly superior scores in the following sources of sport confidence according to the university factor: Physical self-presentation (F, 24, 175 =1.82, p = .015), social support (F, 24, 175 = 1.72, p = .026), environmental comfort (F, 24, 175 = 1.95, p = .008), situational favorableness (F, 24, 175 = 1.99, p = .006)

Table 6: One way ANOVA for the difference sources of sport confidence among zone level players and non-zone-level players

		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Mastery	Between Groups	365.107	7	52.158	2.572	.015*
	Within Groups	3893.373	192	20.278		
	Total	4258.480	199			

* Significant at $p < .05$

Regarding the competitive level of athletes, table 6 presents that significant differences are found in mastery of sport confidence with zone-level players and non-zone-level players among inter-university athletes. (F, 7, 192 = 2.57 (p =.015)

Table 7. T-test results of unrelated measurements of university football and volleyball players calculated for sport self-confidence levels.

Sources of Sport Confidence	Branches	N	Mean	SD	t	df	Sig
Demonstration	Soccer	35	34.23	3.78	1.33	62	.037*
	Volleyball	29	32.59	5.69			
Physical & Mental Preparation	Soccer	35	35.89	4.04	.83	62	.042*
	Volleyball	29	34.76	6.28			
Social Support	Soccer	35	33.03	4.02	.77	62	.020*
	Volleyball	29	32.07	5.60			

* Significant at p < .05

According to their branches of sport, table 7 shows that significant difference between university-level football players and volleyball players on the demonstration factors ($t_{(3.78)}$ = 1.33 ; P<0.05), physical & mental preparation factor ($t_{(4.04)}$ = .83; p <0.05), social support factor ($t_{(4.02)}$ = .77; p<0.05) of sources of sport self-confidence were found between those players. In other words, university-level athletes who play soccer is significantly higher than those who play volleyball in the demonstration, physical and mental preparation and social factor of sport confidence.

Table 8. T-test results of unrelated measurements of football and sepak takraw players calculated for the sources of sport self-confidence.

Sources of Sport Confidence	Branches	N	Mean	SD	t	df	Sig
Demonstration	Sepak Takraw	48	34.25	7.01	.02	81	0.05*
	Soccer	35	34.23	3.78			
Social Support	Sepak Takraw	48	33.23	5.90	.17	81	0.046*
	Soccer	35	33.03	4.02			
Environmental comfort	Sepak Takraw	48	19.06	5.79	2.04	81	.005**
	Soccer	35	21.31	3.58			
Situational favorableness	Sepak Takraw	48	13.98	4.78	1.23	81	.005**
	Soccer	35	15.11	3.04			

* Significant at p ≤ .05*, P<.01**

As shown in Table 8, there are significant differences in the sources of sport self-confidence between university-level football and sepak takraw players. Specifically, the demonstration factor ($t_{(7.01)}$ =.02; P <0.05), social support factor ($t_{(5.90)}$ = .17; p<0.05), environmental factor ($t_{(5.79)}$ = 2.04; P<0.01) and situational factor ($t_{(4.78)}$ = 1.23 ; P<0.01) all showed significant differences. In other words, university athletes who play football have lower self-confidence in terms of demonstration and social support factors compared to those who play sepak takraw. However, in terms of environmental comfort factors and situational favorableness factors, football players have higher self-confidence than sepak takraw players.

Discussion

This study indicated that the highest rated in terms of important sources of sport confidence for the athletes were coaches' leadership, mastery, physical and mental preparation and demonstration of ability among Myanmar university athletes. The findings of the study showed that female athletes demonstrate higher levels of confidence than males in sources of sport confidence and female athletes relied on mastery, coaches' leadership and social support as more important sources of confidence than male athletes. These findings did not support previous studies (Krane & Williams, 1994; Lirgg, 1991; Meyers, LeUnes & Bourgeois, 1996; VargasTonsing & Bartholemew, 2006). According to Krane & Williams (1994) have reported that male athletes demonstrate higher levels of confidence than females in sources of sport confidence, other investigations did not find gender differences in the sources of sport confidence (Cox & Whale, 2004; Perry & Williams, 1998). It could be that female athletes often build confidence through social support, coaches' leadership, demonstration, and breaking of gender norms in sports**.** Moreover, they may get positive feedback and strategic guidance from the coaches rather than male athletes. Female athletes may receive and value more emotional support from peers, family, and coaches, which can enhance their self-confidence. They may rely more on intrinsic motivation, finding confidence in their personal goals, passion for the sport, and internal satisfaction rather than external validation. They often focus on personal improvement and mastery of skills, deriving confidence from their progress and development.

Findings of this study showed that student-athletes who played in inter-university sport competition had superior scores in terms of physical self-presentation, social support, environmental comfort and situational favorableness in the sources of sport confidence according to university. It may differ from one university to another according to support nutrition, quality training facilities, equipment and its different cultural backgrounds.

The results found that athletes who had competed at university zone team level had higher scores than those who were not zone-level athletes on the sources of mastery sport confidence. It could be that confidence is heavily influenced by the strength of team bonds, trust among teammates, and effective communication. Zone team athletes may receive specialized training and good preparation for elite competition levels rather than non-zone team levels.

As a specific branch of sport, it was also found that the athletes who play soccer had more confidence in terms of demonstration, physical and mental preparation and social support than those volleyball players. University athletes who play football have lower self-confidence in terms of demonstration and social support factors compared to those who play sepak takraw. However, in terms of environmental factors and situational favorableness, football players have higher self-confidence than sepak takraw players.

Conclusion and Recommendation

This study detected a variety of sources of sport confidence among university election athletes defined by gender, university, level of players and specific branches of sport for the future generation of university athletes in Myanmar. Uncovering the sources of sports confidence among university-level athletes could provide for their selection, training and competition processes. Furthermore, the SSCS questionnaire applied in this study is so reliable that it is particularly effective in evaluating the sources of confidence for university athletes. This study provides valuable information for encouraging athletes by identifying factors related to different sources of sport confidence. It may lead to develop an understanding of athletes' self-confidence and exploring the sources of their self-confidence and how it is operationalized.

By examining the relationship between selected demographics and sport-specific factors with sources of sport confidence, the findings offer practical insights for the selection and training processes of university athletes in sports competitions. University sport committee members and authorized personnel should consider the implications of relevant demographic factors to enhance sport confidence and desired behaviors among student-athletes.

Acknowledgement

I would like to express my special thanks to my mentor, Daw Khin Lat, retired professor and head of the department of Psychology, Dagon University for her valuable time and guidance throughout my academic life. I am grateful to Dr. Myat Nyunt, Rector of Taungoo University for providing me with this wonderful opportunity to work on this paper. I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to all of inter-university athletes team members, teachers and students. The project would not have been successful without their cooperation and inputs.

Reference

Bandura, A. (1997*). Self-efficacy: The exercise of control.* W H Freeman/Times Books/ Henry Holt & Co.

Clark, J. (2013). The psychology of the athlete. New York, NY: Routledge.

Cox, R. H., & Whaley, D. E. (2004). The effect of goal-setting on state and trait sport confidence. Journal of Sport Behavior, 27(3), 304-318.

Demaine, R. A., & Short, S. E. (2007). Sources of sport confidence: A qualitative examination of collegiate basketball players. Journal of Sport & Exercise Psychology, 29(4), 484-497.

Edwards, T., & Hardy, L. (1996). The interactive effects of intensity and direction of cognitive and somatic anxiety and self-confidence upon performance. Journal of Sport & Exercise Psychology, 18(3), 296-312.

Gould, D., Finch, L. M., & Jackson, S. A. (1999). Sources of peak performance in athletes. Journal of Applied Sport Psychology, 11(2), 137-153.

Hays, K., Maynard, I., Thomas, O., & Bawden, M. (2007). Sources and types of confidence identified by world class sport performers. Journal of Applied Sport Psychology, 19(4), 434-456.

Kingston, K. M., Lane, A. M., & Thomas, O. (2010). A temporal examination of elite performers sources of sport confidence. Journal of Sports Sciences, 28(5), 487-496.

Krane, V., & Williams, J. M. (1994). Cognitive anxiety, somatic anxiety, and confidence in track and field athletes: The impact of gender, competitive level, and task characteristics. International Journal of Sport Psychology, 25(2), 203-217.

Lirgg, C. D. (1991). Gender differences in self-confidence in physical activity: A meta-analysis of recent studies. Journal of Sport & Exercise Psychology, 13(3), 294-310.

Machida, M., Ward, R. M., & Vealey, R. S. (2012). Predictors of sources of self-confidence in collegiate athletes. International Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology, 10(3), 172-185.

Meyers, M. C., LeUnes, A. D., & Bourgeois, A. E. (1996). Psychological skills assessment and athletic performance in collegiate rodeo athletes. Journal of Sport Behavior, 19(2), 132-145.

Michael, A. (2011). Sport psychology for coaches. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.

Moritz, S. E., Hall, C. R., Martin, K. A., & Vadocz, E. A. (1996). What are confident athletes imaging? An examination of image content. The Sport Psychologist, 10(2), 171-179.

Mwangi, Francis & Rintaugu, Elijah & Toriola, Abel. (2018). Sources of sports confidence and contextual factors among university athletes. 18. 889-895. 10.7752/jpes.2018.02132Kuloor H. & Kumar A. (2020). Self-confidence and sports. International Journal of Indian Psychology, 8(4), 1-6.

Nicolas, M. (2010). Autonomy support, motivation, and sport performance: The mediating role of passion. Journal of Applied Sport Psychology, 22(3), 292-306.

Perry, J. D., & Williams, J. M. (1998). Relationship of intensity and direction of competitive trait anxiety to skill level and gender in tennis. The Sport Psychologist, 12(2), 169-179.

Ritz, R. (2012). The psychology of champions: How to win at sports and life with the focus edge of super-athletes. Bloomington, IN: iUniverse.

Vargas Tonsing, T. M., & Bartholomew, J. B. (2006). An examination of athletes' sources of confidence and pre-competitive emotion. Psychology of Sport and Exercise, 7(2), 170-192.

Vealey, R. S. (1986). Conceptualization of sport-confidence and competitive orientation: Preliminary investigation and instrument development. Journal of Sport Psychology, 8(3), 221-246.

Vealey, R. S., & Chase, M. A. (2008). Self-confidence in sport: Conceptual and measurement advances. In T. S. Horn (Ed.), Advances in sport psychology (3rd ed., pp. 65-97). Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.

Vealey, R. S., & Knight, B. J. (2007). Self-confidence and sport performance. In D. Gould & R. Eklund (Eds.), Handbook of sport psychology (pp. 222-243). New York, NY: Wiley.

Vealey, R. S., Hayashi, S. W., Garner-Holman, M., & Giacobbi, P. (1998). Sources of sport-confidence: Conceptualization and instrument development. Journal of Sport & Exercise Psychology, 20(1), 54-80.

Weinberg, R. S., & Gould, D. (2003). Foundations of sport and exercise psychology (3rd ed.). Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.

Wilson, M. A., Sullivan, P. J., Myers, N. D., & Feltz, D. L. (2004). Sources of sport confidence of master athletes. Journal of Sport & Exercise Psychology, 26(3), 369-384.

Woodman, T., & Hardy, L. (2003). The relative impact of cognitive anxiety and self-confidence upon sport performance: A meta-analysis. Journal of Sports Sciences, 21(6), 443-457.

Whelan, J. P., Mahoney, M. J., & Meyers, A. W. (1991). Performance enhancement in sport: A cognitive-behavioral domain. Behavioral Therapy, 22(3), 307-327.

J. Myanmar Acad. Arts Sci. 2026 **Vol. XXIII. No.5**

THE EFFECTS OF ENVIRONMENTAL KNOWLEDGE AND SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS ON PRO-ENVIRONMENTAL BEHAVIOR IN MANDALAY

Thiri Hlaing[1], Kyaw Soe Hlaing[2]

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effects of environmental knowledge, and socio-demographic factors on pro-environmental behavior in Mandalay, Myanmar. This study examined the effects of environmental knowledge and socio-demographic factors on pro-environmental behavior by surveying a sample of 280 (162 women and 118 men) respondents from Chanayetharzan, Chanmyatharsi, Aungmyaetharzan and Mahaaungmyae in Mandalay. As hypothesized, women's engaging in private environmental behaviors was even significantly higher than that of men. Results indicated that older respondents engaged slightly more in public environmental behaviors but less in private environmental behavior. Moreover, environmental knowledge was significantly correlated with pro-environmental behavioral.

Introduction

Environmentalism emerged as a global phenomenon in the late 1960s and early 1970s (Buttel 2002; Merting et al. 2002). Since then, scholars have recognized the fundamental importance of exploring how knowledge, beliefs, and attitudes influenced human response to ecological degradation and pollution (Maloney et al. 1975). This awareness led to less public support for the human exemptionalism paradigm (HEP), the notion that humans are free to do as they please because they are exempt from the laws of nature (Catton & Dunlap, 1978a; Dunlap & Michelsom, 2002). Endorsing the HEP implied thinking:(1) humans are separate from environments, (2) environments have only instrumental value, (3) environmental resources are inexhaustible, and (4) humans can control environments (Dunlap & Michelson 2002).

Environmental knowledge can be general in nature such as awareness of environmentally friendly products or more specific knowledge on issues such as recycling. Research indicates that consumers who have greater knowledge are more likely to act in a positive way (Thogersen, 2000). However, several studies found no direct relationship between factual environmental knowledge and environmental behavior (Maloney and Ward 1973; Schahn and Holzer 1990).

Kollumuss and Agyemann (2002) also suggested that "Environmental Knowledge," influences on pro-environmental behavior in an indirect way. The task of "Knowledge" is to affect the factor "Environmental Attitudes and Values" and this leads to positive or negative environmental behavior. The variable "Knowledge" is often used in campaigns to improve environmental awareness or behavior. The According to Schahn and Giesinger (1993), although there is no direct influence of knowledge, it is a necessary variable because pro- environmental action is only possible if people know what they can or could do. Without this knowledge, there will be no chance to act in an environmentally friendly way.

Several socio-demographic factors may also be correlated with pro-environmental behavior. Females are more likely to engage in pro-environmental behavior due to cultural and

[1] Department of Psychology, University of Mandalay
[2] Department of Psychology, University of Mandalay

social-structural factors that make them on average more aware of the interconnections between causes and consequences of environmental harm (Stren et al. 1993; Hunter el al. 2004). More educated people are more likely to engage in pro-environmental behavior because they are exposed to more information about environmental harm through schooling (Scott & Willits, 1994).

In a recent study, Xiao & Hong (2010) examined the relationship between environmental behavior and environmental knowledge. In their study, education and environmental knowledge were the two strongest predictors across models. Respondents with higher education and more environmental knowledge tended to have significantly greater participation in all environmental behaviors. Another recent study by Hong and Xiao (2007a) used a modified version of the 2000 NEP Scale and examined gender differences, using a national sample of the urban population in China. Bivariate analyses revealed higher levels of environmental concern among men, although a subsequent path analysis found that men's higher environmental concern was attributed largely to their relatively higher environmental knowledge. They also found that older and higher-educated respondents tended to be more pro-environment.

Globalization has made expanding this research into international and non-western contexts absolutely essential, and Myanmar is also important place for this research.

Myanmar is one of the developing countries in the world, with a population of approximately 60 million people. Myanmar is rich in natural resources (land and water, biodiversity, minerals and forest resources). However, unsustainable resource exploitation is further adding to the country's development challenges and results in severe environmental degradation, particularly in the form of deteriorating soil quality due to overuse or misuse of land, compounded by widespread deforestation. People whose livelihoods depend most on natural resources find access to them restricted and their environment increasingly degraded. In urban areas, wastewater and solid waste disposal practices are linked to environmental problems. (UNICEF: Child-friendly Schools in Area-Focused Townships in Myanmar, 2003).

The state of environmental degradation in Myanmar warrants a close look at factors affecting environmental behavior among Myanmar citizens. Less research has addressed predictors of pro-environmental behavior in Myanmar than Western countries, however, behavior is the ultimate concern of conservationists. Further, little is known about the effect of urban size on pro-environmental behavior in Myanmar, although people living in different size cities usually face different levels of environmental deterioration due to different stages of economic growth.

In this study, we will examine the relationship between pro-environmental behavior and its socio-demographic predictors in Mandalay. In addition to the socio-demographic predictors that will be used in previous studies abroad, we will assess the impacts of knowledge on pro-environmental behavior. Our findings may provide important implications for managing environmental challenges in Mandalay, and the approaches we used may be applicable elsewhere.

On the based of the available literature, the following hypotheses were formulated:

Hypothesis 1: Older respondents will be more likely to behave pro-environmental behaviour, compared with Younger respondents.

Hypothesis 2: Female respondents will be more likely to behave pro-environmental behaviour, compared with Male respondents.

Hypothesis 3: Respondents with higher environmental knowledge are more likely to engage in pro-environmental behaviour, compared with other respondents.

Methodology

The chapter is divided in to three sections: participants, procedure and measures.

Participants

A group of 280 subjects used for the multiple regression under study included Chanayetharzan, Chanmyatharzi, Aungmyaetharzan and Maharaungmaye in Mandalay. Subjects were 162 women and 118 man respondents ranging in above age from 18 years.

Procedure

Subjects were selected in a three stage stratified cluster sampling design with census blocks as primarily sampling units and households as secondary units. The original sample was stratified by socioeconomic status (lower, middle, and higher) complied by the ward office. The sample consisting of 2013 candidates resulted in 320 cases selected by choosing every third household with participants, a process that included some cluster stages. To contact potential informants, the researcher and research assistants, after arriving in a selected community, knocked on doors, communicating their intentions. Participants were told that they could refuse the questionnaire if they wished. Almost 12.5% of these respondents, mostly high socioeconomic status participants refused to complete the questionnaire once it was started. The final sample was comprised of 280 participants, with lower and middle-class households being overrepresented.

Measures

The questionnaire packet contained three measures: the Myanmar Version of the Pro-Environmental Behavior Scale and the Environmental Knowledge Scale.

Environmental Behavior. Environmental behaviour was measured with the Pro-Environmental Behaviour Scale developed by Xiao & Hong (2010). They formed three behavioral indices using ten survey items. Respondents are asked to indicate whether in the past year they had never, occasionally, or often taken ten different environmentally oriented actions (see Appendix). Judging by the face validity and results of a preliminary principle component analysis, they combined items 1,2,3,4 and 6 to create a private environmental behavior index (the "private index") and then items 5,7,8,9 and 10 to from a public environmental behavior index (the "public index"). For conceptual and comparison purposes, they also created a combined environmental behavior index (the "combined index") with all ten items. The alpha of this scale was .72.

Environmental Knowledge. Environmental Knowledge was measured with the Environmental Knowledge Scale developed by Hong and Xiao (2007a). Respondents were asked to indicate what extent they agree with 10 dichotomous items about environmental knowledge. The reliability was found to be .70 for the Environmental Knowledge Scale.

Demographic Variables. Two demographic variables (gender and age,) traditionally studied in association with pro-environmental behavior (Scott & Willits, 1994, Tarrant & Cordell 1997, Gong & Lei, (2007) were used in this study.

Results

This chapter describes the results of the data analyses and discussion that were conducted.

Table 1 Summary statistics of pro-environmental behavior, environmental knowledge and socio-demographic conditions of respondents

Variables	Description	Mean	SD
PK	Aggregation of responses to 8 questions	7.68	3.70
PB	Aggregation of responses to 10 EP questions	19.55	3.65
Gender	Female=1; Male=2	1.49	1.22
Age	Years	39.32	13.37
Recycle	Never=1, Occasionally=2,Often=3	2.00	0.67
Environmental talk	Never=1, Occasionally=2,Often=3	2.01	0.60
Bring bag	Never=1, Occasionally=2,Often=3	2.54	0.69
Recycling bags	Never=1, Occasionally=2,Often=3	2.16	0.84
Env-donation	Never=1, Occasionally=2,Often=3	1.75	0.67
Env-education	Never=1, Occasionally=2,Often=3	2.40	0.61
Env-campaigning	Never=1, Occasionally=2,Often=3	1.69	0.69
Env-volunteering	Never=1, Occasionally=2,Often=3	1.66	0.70
Env-maintaining	Never=1, Occasionally=2,Often=3	1.56	0.71
Env-litigation	Never=1, Occasionally=2,Often=3	1.78	0.69

SD= standard deviation , PK= environmental knowledge, PB= pro-environmental Behavior

Respondents of the survey had a mean environmental knowledge score of 7.68 and mean pro-environmental behavior score of 19.55(Table 1). The sample was 58% female and mean age was 39.

Among respondents in the sample, more than half reported often engaging in recycling (55%), environmental talk (64%), bring their own shopping bag (65%) and environmental maintaining (57%), while less than half of them reported engaging in recycling bags (44%), environmental donation (50%), environmental education (47%), environmental campaigning (44%), environmental volunteering (47%) and environmental litigation (47%).

Differences between male and female respondents in pro-environmental behavior

As shown in Figure 1, female respondents were significantly more likely to engage in recycling bags ($t=3.01$, $p<.01$) and bringing bags ($t=2.42$, $p<.05$) than male respondents. However, female respondents were significantly less likely to engage in environmental volunteering ($t=-2.36$, $p<.05$) than male respondents. For the other variables, no significant differences were found between the two groups.

Differences between older and younger respondents in pro-environmental behavior

T-tests were employed to examine whether the pro-environmental behavior of older and younger differed significantly. Figure 2 shows that older respondents had a higher pro-environmental behavior than younger respondents. Older respondents were significantly more likely to engage in environmental maintaining (t=-2.56, p<.05), environmental volunteering (t=-2.16, p<.05) and environmental education (t=-2.92, p<.01) than younger respondents. However, older respondents were significantly less likely to engage in recycling bags than younger respondents (t=2.34, p<.05). For the other variables, no significant differences were found between the two groups.

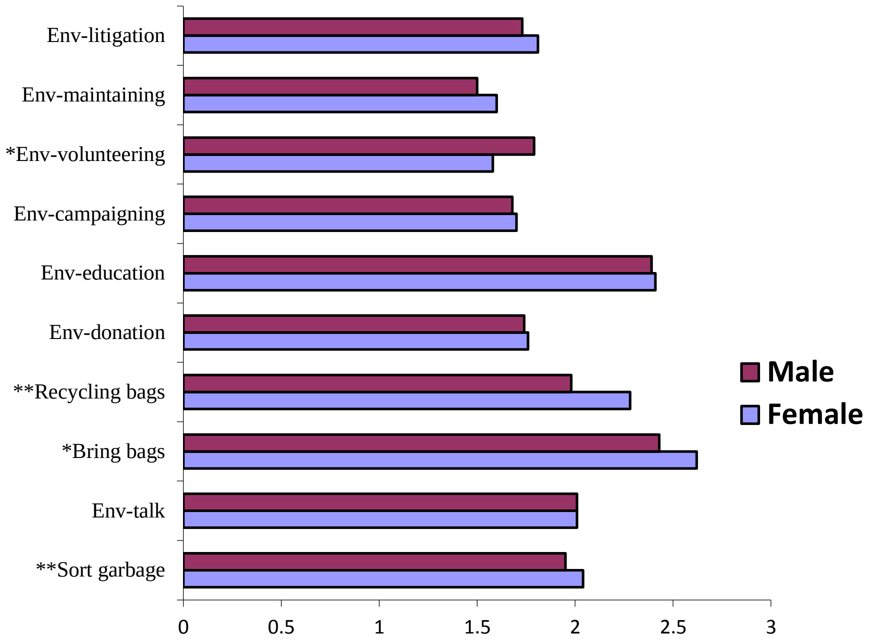


Figure 1: Differences between male and female respondents in pro-environmental behavior

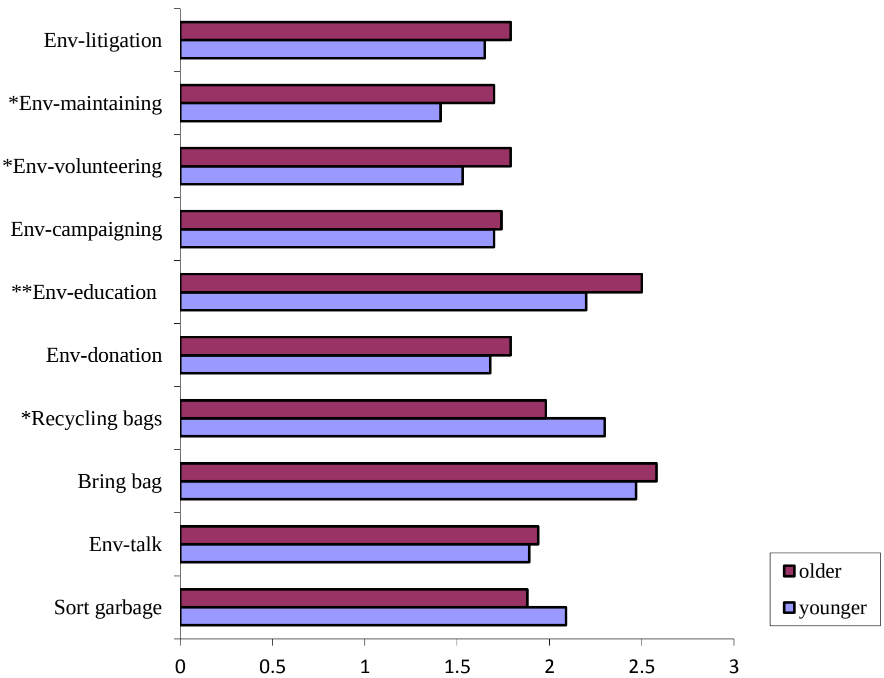


Figure 2: Differences between older and younger respondents in pro-environmental behavior

Different between higher level of environmental knowledge and pro-environmental behavior

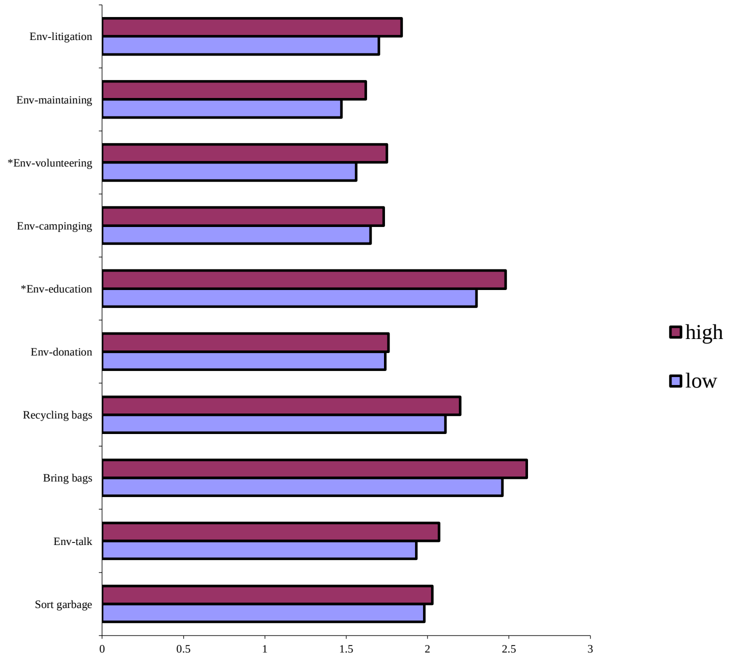


Figure 3: Differences between environmental knowledge and pro-environmental behavior

Figure 3 shows that respondents with higher levels of knowledge were significantly more likely to engage in Env-Education (t=-2.52, p<.05) and Env-volunteering (t=-2.19, p<.05) than lower levels of Knowledge. For the other variables, no significant differences were found between the two groups.

Correlation between environmental knowledge and pro-environmental behavior

Correlations among environmental knowledge and pro-environmental behavior are presented in Table 2. The results indicated that environmental knowledge was significantly positive correlated with pro-environmental behaviors.

Table 2 Correlation between Environmental Attitude and Pro-environmental Behavior

	Pro-environmental behavior	**Environmental knowledge**
Pro-environmental behavior		.29**
Environmental knowledge	.29**	

*p< 0.05, **p< 0.01, ***p< 0.001

Discussion

Study results reveal that overall men and women participated equally in public environmental behaviors while women's participation in private environmental behaviors (environmental behaviors inside of the home) was even significantly higher than that of men. This finding is consistent with the literature on environmental behaviors in Western settings (Dunlap et al. 2000; Lopez et al.2007). Women perform more private environmental behaviors as a part of their daily routines, much like recycling is being routinized in England (Oates and McDonald 2006). We thus suspect that the gender gap observed in private environmental behaviors in our study may be a reflection of the unequal division of domestic duties between women and men.

Furthermore, recall that in Tindall et al. (2003) theoretic models, women were expected to more often participate in environmental behaviors because they tended to express more environmental concern, which is true inside of the home in western settings according to recent research. On the other hand, it was argued that women's greater share of domestic duties may reduce their biographical availability for environmental behaviors outside the home and, therefore, regardless of levels of concern may result in roughly equal behavioral responses across men and women. In the case of these, our results are also similar. Specifically, we found, women to express higher levels of environmental concern. As a result, women's higher levels of participation in private environmental behaviors can be attributed to gender differences in environmental concern. Thus, our hypothesis 2 was partially supported.

The result indicates that there is significance relationship between age and pro-environmental behavior. Thus, providing support for hypothesis 1. Older people tend to take environmental responsible actions more frequently than younger people. This may be related to the fact that older people could have more information and could be more conscious of the importance of taking pro-environmental actions. Moreover, older people seem to be more worried about the environment than younger people. Older people are more likely to have children and they may try to preserve the environment in the long term because their children are the ones who will enjoy a cleaner environment in the future.

Interestingly, correlation analysis revealed that environmental knowledge had significant correlated with pro-environmental behavior. Thus, our hypothesis 3 was supported. Although theoretical knowledge seems to play a significant role in pro-environmental behaviour, the empirical evidence is not so clear (Kaiser and Fuhrer, 2003; Laroche *et al.,* 2001). Results suggest that in urban China, higher levels of environmental knowledge were clearly associated with higher levels of environmental concern.

Our study excluded some smaller cities and rural regions of Myanmar due to lack of data, thus these findings cannot be assumed to extend to these regions and a few provinces where the survey was not conducted. Although we identified potential mechanisms for explaining predictors of pro-environmental behavior in urban Myanmar, future studies should test those mechanisms.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effects of environmental knowledge and socio-demographic factors on pro-environmental behavior in Mandalay, Myanmar. The results of this study tend to support the hypotheses that age, gender and environmental knowledge are positively correlated with the pro-environmental behavior.

Then, the effects of environmental knowledge and socio-demographic factors on pro-environmental behavior in Mandalay, Myanmar were investigated. Study results reveal that overall men and women participated equally in public environmental behaviors while women's participation in private environmental behaviors (environmental behaviors inside of the home) was even significantly higher than that of men. Specifically, we found, women to express higher levels of environmental concern. As a result, women's higher levels of participation in private environmental behaviors can be attributed to gender differences in environmental concern.

Furthermore, the result indicates that there is significance positive relationship between age and pro-environmental behavior. Older people tend to take environmental responsible actions more frequently than younger people.

Finally, correlation analysis revealed that environmental knowledge had significant association with pro-environmental behavior. The finding, however, has major implications in Myanmar where land erosion, flooding, drought and other natural disasters have boomed.

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Dr. Tin Nwe Oo (Professor and Head of the Psychology Department), University of Mandalay for her permission to submit the research paper.

References

Ajzen, I. and M. Fishbein (1980) Understanding Attitudes and Predicting Social Behavior. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Buttel, F.H. (2002) Environmental sociology and the sociology of natural resources: institutional histories and intellectual legacies.*Society and Natural Resources* **15**(3): 205–211.

Buttel, F, H., and Flinn, W, L.(1978b). Social class and mass environmental beliefs: a reconsideration. Environment and Behaviour 10:433-50.

Davidson, D.J. & Freudenburg, W.R. (1996). Gender and environmental risk concerns: a review and analysis of available research, *Environment and Behaviour*, Vol. 28, No.3, pp. 302– 339.

Dunlap and W. Michelson, Editors, *Handbook of Environmental Sociology*. Greenwood Press, Westport, CT, pp. 482–524 (Chapter 15).

Dunlap, R.E., & Jones, R.E. (2002). Environmental Concern: Conceptual and Measurement Issues. In: R.E.

Dunlap, R.E., & Van Liere, K. (1978). The "New Environmental Paradigm": A Proposed Measuring Instrument and Preliminary Results. *Journal of Environmental Education*, 9, 10–18.

Dunlap, R.E., and McCright, A.M. (2008). "A widening gap: Republican and Democratic views on climate change." *Environment: Science and Policy for Sustainable Development* no. 50 (5):26-35.

Dunlap, R.E., Van Liere, K.D., Mertig, A.G., & Jones, R.E. (2000). Measuring Endorsement of the New Ecological Paradigm: A revised NEP Scale. *Journal of Social Issues*, 56(3), 425-442.

Dunlap, Riley E, and Kent D Van Liere. (2008). "The" New Environmental Paradigm"." *The journal of environmental education* no. 40 (1):19-28.

.Hong, D. & Xiao, C. (2007). Sociological analysis on gender difference of environmental concern. *Sociological Studies* 2: 1-19.

Hong, D.Y., & Xiao, C. Y. (2007a). Gender and environmental concern in China. *Sociological Studies*, 3(2), 515-182.

Kaiser, F. G., & Fuhrer, U. (2003). Ecological behavior´s dependency on different forms of knowledge. *Applied Psychology: An international review, 52*(4), 598.

Kaiser, F. G, Wolfing, S. & Fuhrer, U. (1999). Environmental Attitude and Ecological Behaviour. *Journal of Environmental Psychology,19, 1-19.*

Kollmuss**,** A & Agyeman**, J. (**2002). Mind the Gap: why do people act envi-ronmentally and what are the barriers to pro-environmental behavior? *Environmental Education Research, Vol. 8, No. 3,* 239-260.

Lo. & Leung, S.-W. (1998) Environmental protection and popular environmental consciousness in China. In: *China Review*, ed. J.Y.S.

Maloney, M. P., Ward, M. P., & Braucht, G. N. (1975). Psychology in Action: A Revised Scale for the Measurement of Ecological Attitudes and Knowledge. *American Psychologist*, 30, 787-790.

Maloney, M.P., Ward, M.P. (1973). Ecology: Let’s hear it from the people. American Psychologist, 28, 583-596.

Schahn, J. & Holzer, E. (1990). Studies of individual environmental concern: the role of knowledge, gender, and background variables, *Environment and Behaviour*, Vol. 22, No. 6, pp. 767– 786.

Schahn, J. & Holzer, E. (1990*a)*. Konstruktion, Validierung und Anwendung von Skalen zur Erfassung des individuellen Umweltbewusstseins wDevelopment, validation, and application of an environmental concern scalex. *Zeitschrift fu¨r Differentielle und Diagnostische Psychologie* **11,** 185-204.

Stern, P.C., T. Dietz, and L. Kalof. 1993. "Value orientations, gender, and env-ironmental concern." *Environment and Behavior* no. 25 (5):322-348.

Xiao, C & Hong, D. (2010). Gender differdnces in environmental behaviors in China. *Popul Environ* 32:88-104.

J. Myanmar Acad. Arts Sci. 2026 **Vol. XXIII. No.5**

THE IMPACT OF TIME MANAGEMENT ON EXAMINATION ANXIETY OF UNDERGRADUATES AT PYAY UNIVERSITY

May Lwin Nyein[1], Zar Zar Thin[2], Phyu Zin Ei[3], Theint Thiri Pan[4]

Abstract

Effective time management is an essential skill for university students, as it helps to alleviate anxiety about exam. The primary purpose of this study was to explore the impact of time management on examination anxiety of undergraduates at Pyay University in Bago Region, Myanmar. A total of 395 undergraduates from Pyay University participated in this study, completing self-report questionnaires such as the Time Management Scale, Cognitive Test Anxiety Scale, and demographic surveys. The regression analyses indicated that students' time management skills significantly and negatively predicted their cognitive test anxiety levels. The results of this study will provide practical insights into time management and examination anxiety, helping university students manage their exam anxiety more effectively.

Keywords: time management, examination anxiety, undergraduates

Introduction

Examination anxiety is a common issue among students in universities and other higher education institutions (Hyseni Duraku & Hohxa, 2018; Zhang & Henderson, 2014; Steinmayr et al., 2016). Exams serve as a formal method to assess students' academic performance and cognitive abilities (Umar & Haruna, 2021). While some researchers argue that moderate anxiety can enhance academic performance, significant anxiety can negatively impact both performance and well-being (Green et al., 2016; Gilavand, 2018).

Examination anxiety encompasses physiological arousal, psychological and behavioral reactions, tension, and pre-exam and during-exam symptoms like anxiety, worry, and fear of not succeeding the exam (Okogu, Osah, & Umodjere, 2016). Although it is common to feel anxious before an exam, excessive anxiety might be harmful (Dobson, 2012). Students prone to exam anxiety often struggle to concentrate on their academic work (Lena & Kent, 2012), which can affect their exam performance and learning efficiency (Elazizi, Nermin & Sanaa, 2012). Symptoms of exam anxiety include loss of appetite or sleep, sweaty hands, unusual food cravings, and difficulty concentrating (Huberty, 2009).

Several factors contribute to exam anxiety. External factors include uncomfortable test environments and unwelcoming examiner behavior (Sitzmann & Ely, 2011). Internal factors involve poorly written test questions, unclear instructions, lack of lecturer commitment and creativity, unsuitable teaching methods, and insufficient teaching experience. From the students' perspective, exam anxiety can result from weak test performance abilities, insufficient understanding of the course, poor critical thinking capabilities, ineffective time management, and poor study habits.

Cassady (2004) identifies additional causes of exam anxiety, such as poor preparation, negative thoughts, avoidance of social assistance, unsuitable stress relief practices, ineffective

[1] Department of Psychology, Pyay University
[2] Department of Psychology, Pyay University
[3] Department of Psychology, Pyay University
[4] Department of Psychology, University of Yangon

and weak mental imagery, poor self-study skill, harmful stereotypes, and inadequate ability to humor. Exam anxiety can manifest through poor preparation, last-minute cramming, poor study habits, lack of organization, or poorly structured test administration (Akanbi, 2013). Additionally, examination anxiety among undergraduates may be linked to poor time management (Lena and Kent, 2012).

Time is a valuable resource, with only twenty-four hours available each day, limiting what can be achieved. Effective time management is crucial for balancing work, social activities, and rest. Planning and scheduling time effectively can ensure tasks are completed efficiently. This skill is particularly important for college students, as effective time management is key to leading a successful life (Chaturvedi, 2016). Consequently, there is a strong emphasis on time management practices (Macan et al., 2000).

As noted by scholars, time management is crucial for undergraduate students' success in examinations. It is essential to use time wisely to attend classes, complete assignments, and study for tests. Time management encompasses values, practices, abilities, tools, and structures that help individuals maximize their time to achieve excellence (Aduke, 2015). According to Abd el-Aziz, Eid, and Safan (2012), it involves applying skills and methods to accomplish tasks, goals, and projects, such as setting goals, allocating time, analyzing, and organizing.

Effective time management needs to be learned as a crucial skill for every student (Peng and Kamil, 2017). They also suggested that it can become a habit and be effectively used in everyday life. Students have many tasks and need to meet the expectations of different lecturers, with their grades depending on the quality of their work. Time management involves setting goals that address upcoming requirements and targets to achieve these objectives (Burrus et al., 2013). Utilizing time logs can enhance time efficiency by setting both short-term and long-term goals, prioritizing tasks, creating to-do lists, and organizing the workspace (Hellsten, 2012).

Nasrullah and Khan (2015) identified three types of time management behaviors: short-range planning, long-range planning, and time attitude. Short-range planning involves systematically assigning tasks within a short timeframe. Long-range planning requires a long-term perspective, considering important dates and related objectives (Alay & Koçak, 2003). Time management practices are closely linked to an individual's awareness and attitude towards time, reflecting their sense of control over it. Thus, time attitude reflects the perception of having control over time, rather than just managing it efficiently (Karim & Kandy, 2011).

However, Peng and Kamil (2017) noted that many students face academic challenges due to poor time management and often feel overwhelmed by their tasks. This leads to frustration and stress. Students frequently express concerns about not having enough time in their daily lives.

In our developing country, students often absence or are late to school due to social responsibilities and economic challenges. Technology also disrupts their study time with distractions like phone calls, texting, social media, and socializing, which delay assignments and study sessions. These issues lead to poor exam preparation, causing anxiety and stress. Recently, examination bodies have noted the poor academic performance of students. Thus, time management behavior and exam anxiety have become significant social problems for many university students in Myanmar. Immediate action is needed to sustain education in Myanmar. The purpose of this study was to explore the impact of time management on examination anxiety of undergraduates at Pyay University in Bago Region, Myanmar. More precisely, we developed the following hypothesis based on the reviewed literature.

Hypothesis 1: Male and female undergraduates manage their time differently.

Hypothesis 2: Male and female undergraduates experience examination anxiety differently.

Hypothesis 3: Effective time management significantly reduces examination anxiety among undergraduate students.

Methodology

Participants

During the 2023-2024 Academic year, surveys were administered to 395 students from ten departments at Pyay University, including Myanmar, English, Philosophy, Psychology, Law, Economy, Chemistry, Physics, Zoology, and Geology. Out of these, 395 valid responses were collected, comprising 282 females (71.4%) and 112 males (28.4%), aged between 18 and 25 years (M = 1.72, SD = 0.45). The participants included 10.6% first-year students, 48.4% second-year students, 25.8% third-year students, and 15.2% fourth-year students.

Measures

Time Management: The Myanmar version of the 18-item Time Management Scale, originally developed by Britton and Tesser (1991), was utilized to evaluate students' ability to manage their time. Participants rated their agreement with each item on a 5-point Likert scale, from never (1) to always (5). The TMS encompasses three dimensions: short-range planning, long-range planning, and time attitude. The items were translated into Myanmar and reviewed by a supervisor to ensure conceptual alignment with the original. Confirmatory factor analysis results indicated that the Myanmar version of the TMS identified three factors: short-range planning, time attitude, and long-range planning. Cronbach's alpha demonstrated acceptable reliability for the three dimensions in this study: .89 for time attitude, .80 for short-range planning, and .82 for long-range planning. A sample item for time attitude is "I find myself doing things which interfere with my college work simply because I hate to say no to people." A sample item for short-range planning is "I write a set of goals for myself for each day." A sample item for long-range planning is "I have a set of goals for the entire quarter."

Examination Anxiety: The 26-item Myanmar version of the Cognitive Test Anxiety Scale (CTAS), originally developed by Cassady and Johnson (2002), was employed to assess anxiety about examination. Participants rated each item on a 4-point Likert scale, from *not at all (1)* to *very typical of me (4)*. Confirmatory factor analysis revealed that the Myanmar version of the CTAS identified a single factor, with a Cronbach's alpha of .90. For this study, the overall scores from the Myanmar version of the CTAS were used to measure general exam anxiety. An example item for CTAS is, "At the beginning of a test, I am so nervous that I often can't think straight."

Demographic Variables: The demographic questionnaires included demographic variables of particular interest (e.g., gender, age, class, major and accommodation).

Procedure

Undergraduate students were randomly selected from various general units. Permission for voluntary participation during class time was obtained from the heads of ten departments at Pyay University, including Myanmar, English, Philosophy, Psychology, Law, Economy, Chemistry, Physics, Zoology, and Geology. In July 2024, 400 undergraduates were gathered, and survey questionnaires were distributed to all students attending class on the designated day. The survey explained the study's purpose and requested taking part in a set of self-reported questionnaires. Undergraduates were informed their survey answers would stay anonymous and they could choose not to participate at any time. We assured them of confidentiality. Out of the 400 students, 395 provided valid responses, making up 98.75% of the participants.

Results

Correlation Analyses

The intercorrelation between the study variables are summarized in Table 1. First, gender showed a significant correlation with examination anxiety (r =.17, p <.001) and not significantly correlated with time management, that is, time attitude (r = -.09, ns); short range planning (r =.00, ns); long range planning (r = -.01, ns). Regarding student participants' behavior of time management (time attitude, short range planning, and long range planning), significant negative correlations, respectively, were found with cognitive test anxiety (r = -.65, p <.001; r = -.37, p <.001; r = -.50, p <.001).

T-Test Analyses

In order to test hypothesis 1 and 2, the first *t*-test analysis examined whether there were significant differences in time management, encompassing time attitude, short-range planning, and long-range planning, between female and male students. As indicated in Table 2, regarding gender (between male students and female students), undergraduate students did not exhibit significantly different levels of short-range planning (22.62, ±6.42; 22.63, ±5.18), time attitude (19.47, ±6.09; 18.28, ±5.90), and long-range planning (17.06, ±5.12; 16.95, ±4.58). Regarding time management, there was no significant difference between female and male undergraduates. Thus, Hypothesis 1 was rejected.

The second *t*-test analysis examined whether there was a significant difference in examination anxiety between male students and female student. A significant difference was observed in examination anxiety observed between female (62.73, ±13.02) and male (57.70, ±14.63) (see Table 3). Based on result showing female students have been to be highly associated with examination anxiety than male students. Therefore, Hypothesis 2 was supported.

Table 1: Correlations among time management and examination anxiety

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Gender	-								
2. Age	.04	-							
3. Edu	.03	.69***	-						
4. Major	.07	.12*	.36***	-					
5. Accomm.	.09	-.04	.03	.22***	-				
6. TA	-.09	.02	.04	.04	-.03	-			
7. SR-P	.00	.01	-.02	.03	.04	.34***	-		
8. LR-P	-.01	.02	.02	-.01	-.00	.42***	.45***	-	
9. CTA	.17***	-.06	-.08	-.01	.07	-.64***	-.38***	-.50***	-

**p<.05, ***p<.001*

Note: Gender (male=1, female=2), Edu (First Year=1, Second Year=2, Third Year=3, Fourth Year=4), Major (Art=1, Sc=2), Accomm. (live with parents=1, live on-campus=2, live off-campus=3 and other=4), TA (time attitude), SR-P (short-range planning), LR-P (long-range planning), CTA (cognitive test anxiety).

Table 2: Analysis of time management based on the gender of undergraduates

	1 Male	2 Female	*t*- Value
Time Attitude	19.47 (6.09)	18.28 (5.90)	1.80 (ns)
Short-Range Planning	22.62 (6.42)	22.63 (5.18)	-0.03 (ns)
Long-Range Planning	17.06 (5.12)	16.95 (4.58)	0.21 (ns)

Table 3: Analysis of Examination Anxiety based on the gender of undergraduates

	1 Male	2 Female	*t*-Value
Cognitive Test Anxiety	57.70 (14.63)	62.73 (13.02)	-3.34^{***}

$^{***}p<.001$

Regression Analysis

To test hypothesis 3, regression analyses were conducted. In each analysis, gender, age, year, major and accommodation were included as control demographic variables in the first step. In the second step, cognitive test anxiety scale as students' anxiety about examination anxiety were regressed on one of the three factors of time management (time attitude, short-range planning, long-range planning). The predictive effect of time management on examination anxiety is shown in regression equation 1 in Table 4. All the variables together accounted for 45% of the variance. After accounting for demographic variables (gender, age, education, major and accommodation), time attitude significantly accounted for 41% of the variation. Time attitude emerged as a negative predictor of cognitive test anxiety (ß = -.64, p<.001).

Collectively, the variables accounted for 19% of the variance in the dependent variable, as shown in regression equation 2. After adjusting for demographic indicators (gender, age, education, major and accommodation), short-range planning significantly accounted for 15% of the variance. Short-range planning was inversely related to cognitive test anxiety (ß = -.38, p<.001).

Regression equation 3 indicated that all variables together accounted for 29% of the variances. After adjusting for demographic variables (gender, age, education, major and accommodation) long range planning significantly accounted for 25% of the variances. Long range planning was negative related to cognitive test anxiety (ß = -.50, p<.001), supporting Hypothesis 3.

Table 4: Results of regression analysis using the time management scale to predict cognitive test anxiety scale

	R^2	R^2 change	ß	F
Regression equation 1				
Gender	.04		.17***	3.15**
Age			-.01	
Education			-.06	
Art/Sc			.01	
Accommodation			.04	
Time Attitude	.45	.41	-.64***	49.57***
Regression equation 1				
Gender	.04		.17***	3.15**
Age			.01	
Education			-.09	
Art/Sc			-.02	
Accommodation			.08	
Short-Range Planning	.19	.15	-.38***	14.17***
Regression equation 3				
Gender	.04		.17***	3.15**
Age			-.01	
Education			-.06	
Art/Sc			-.04	
Accommodation			.06	
Long-Range Planning	.29	.25	-.50***	25.66***

**p<.01, ***p<.001

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to examine the impact of time management on examination anxiety of undergraduates at Pyay University, Bago Region in Myanmar. According to the results, this study found that gender does not impact undergraduates' time management behaviors. This means that male and female students manage their time similarly. Previous research supports this finding, indicating no gender differences in time management among college students (e.g., Saketi & Taheri, 2010; Razali et al., 2018; Agormedah et al., 2021). Conversely, several studies (e.g., Saketi & Taheri, 2010; Pehlivan, 2013; Kaushar, 2013; Al-Khatib, 2014; Khan et al., 2020) have identified notable differences in time management behaviors between male and female students.

Moreover, differences between genders were found in examination anxiety that female students were more likely to experience in examination anxiety than male students in Pyay

University. This finding aligns with previous research indicating that females exhibit greater examination anxiety compared to males (Adewuyi & Olley, 2012). They proposed that hormonal changes during the menstrual cycle, which male do not experience, could be a factor. Núñez-Peña et al. (2016) also assumed that the distinct social roles assigned to men and women contribute to this phenomenon. Females often face greater academic pressure than males, leading to a heightened fear of failure in exam situations. Another explanation is that men tend to be more defensive about admitting anxiety, as it may be perceived as a threat to their masculinity (Núñez-Peña et al., 2016). The study also revealed no statistical differences in time management between male and female university students. This result is consistent with earlier research, which also found no differences in perceived control of time between male students and female students (Sultana & Shakur, 2022).

The regression analyses revealed that undergraduate students' time management behavior, i.e., time attitude, short-range planning, and long-range planning was negatively associated with their examination anxiety. The current findings support the previous studies. Some researchers explained that effective time management and thorough test preparation can reduce students' stress during exams. Poor time management can cause numerous issues, but with proper time management, students can avoid last-minute cramming (Mani, 2010). Time management skills are considered crucial in the learning process, as they are considered strategic skills that significantly contribute to goal attainment in both professional and academic domains (Claessens et al., 2007).

Conclusion

The results of this study carry several significant implications. Initially, this research presents noteworthy implications for understanding the impact of time management on examination anxiety of undergraduates at Pyay University. The findings highlight significant gender differences in exam anxiety, with female students experiencing more anxiety compared to their male counterparts (Adewuyi & Olley, 2012; Núñez-Peña, Bono, & Suárez-Pellicioni, 2016). This result indicates the need to implement intervention programs and support plans specifically designed to help students with insufficient time management skills cope more effectively with exam-related stress.

The findings of this study indicate that the influence of time management factors—such as time attitude, short-term planning, and long-term planning—on examination anxiety underscores the importance of promoting effective time management skills. Integrating time management training into university programs can assist students in lowering exam-related stress and enhancing their academic success (Mani, 2010). The outcomes of the study also point to that universities should adopt a multidimensional perspective to student support, addressing both academic and psychological needs. This could include workshops on time management, stress reduction techniques, and counseling services to help students balance their academic and personal lives.

While this study provides valuable insights into the effect of time management on the examination anxiety experienced by undergraduate students at Pyay University, multiple limitations should be taken into account when evaluating the results. The study was conducted with a limited sample size from Pyay University, which may not be representative of all university students in Myanmar. Consequently, the findings may not be representative or applicable to other groups. Furthermore, this research is based on data obtained from self-reports, which could lead to biases that include a preference for socially desirable responses and problems with memory accuracy. Participants may have over- or under-reported their levels of examination anxiety and time management practices.

The study opens avenues for further research to explore the underlying causes of gender differences in examination anxiety and to develop targeted interventions. Moreover, future research could explore the long-term impacts of enhanced time management on academic achievement and overall well-being.

Acknowledgment

I want to sincerely thank Dr. Thet Lwin, Rector of Pyay University, Dr. Thet Thet Htun, Pro-Rector of Pyay University, and Dr. Myint Myint Khine, Pro-Rector of Pyay University, for their both significant support, tangible and intangible, that greatly contributed to the success of this study. I am greatly indebted to Dr. Nilar Kyu, Pro-Rector of Yangon University of Distance Education, for her critical comments and valuable encouragement on this paper, which were also essential. I would like to thank Daw Khin Lat, Professor and Head (Ret.), Department of Psychology, Dagon University, for her encouragement and support. Finally, thanks also to students at Pyay University who participated in this study. Without their unfailing help, our study may never be completed.

References

Abdel-Aziz, L.T., Eid, N.M. & Safan, S.M. (2012). Test-anxiety and skills of time- management among faculty nursing students. Journal of American Science, 8(4), 261-269.

Adebayo, F. A., & Omojola, A. A. (2015). Time management and students' academic performance in higher institutions, Nigeria—a case study of Ekiti State. International Research in Education, 3(2), 1-12.

Adewuyi, T. D. O., & Olley, B. O. (2012). Test anxiety and academic performance among secondary school students in Nigeria. Universal Journal of Educational Research, 2(8), 531-536.

Adewuyi, T. D., Taiwo, A. O., & Olley, B. O. (2012). Examination anxiety among secondary school students in Nigeria. Journal of Education and Practice, 3(8), 1-6.

Aduke, A. F. (2015). Time management and students' academic performance in higher institutions, Nigeria—a case study of Ekiti State. International Research in Education, 3(2), 1-12.

Agormedah, E. K., Britwum, F., Amoah, S. O., Acheampong, H. Y., Adjei, E., & Nyamekye, F. (2021). Assessment of time management practices and students' academic achievement: The moderating role of gender. International Journal of Social Sciences & Educational Studies, 8(4). ISSN 2520-0968 (Online), ISSN 2409-1294 (Print).

Akanbi, S. T. (2013). Comparisons of Test Anxiety Level of Senior Secondary School Students across Gender, Year of Study, School Type and Parental Educational Background. Ife Psychologia: An International Journal, 21(1), 40-54.

Al Khatib, A. S. (2014). Time management and its relation to students' stress, gender and academic achievement among sample of students at Al Ain University of Science and Technology, UAE. International Journal of Business and Social Research, 4(5), 47-58.

Alay, & Koçak (2003). Relationship between Time Management and Academic Achievement of University Students. Kuram ve Uygulamada Egitim Yonetimi Dergisi, 35, 326-335.

Anikweze, C.M. (2010). Measurement and Evaluation for Teacher Education (2nd Edition). Constellation (Nig.) Publishers.

Britton, B. K., & Tesser, A. (1991). Effects of time-management practices on college grades. Journal of Educational Psychology, 83(3), 405-410.

Burrus, J., Jackson, T., Holtzman, S., Roberts, R. D., & Mandiogo, T. (2013). Examining the Efficacy of a Time Management Intervention for High School Students. Ets Research Report Series, 2013(2), 1-35.

Busari, A. O., & Osiki, J. O. (2001). Test Anxiety Management for Schools: A Cognitive Behaviour Programme. Llorin Journal of Education, 2(1), 1-9.

Cassady, J. C., & Johnson, R. E. (2002). Cognitive test anxiety and academic performance. Contemporary Educational Psychology, 27(2), 270-295.

Claessens, B. J. C., Eerde, W. V., & Rutte, C. G. (2005). A review of the time management literature. Personnel Review, 34(2), 255-276. https://doi.org/10.1108/00483480710726136

Dobson, C. (2012). Effects of academic anxiety on the performance of students with and without learning disabilities and how students can cope with anxiety at school. Michigan: Northern Michigan University. Retrieved from [URL if available].

Elazizi, t. A., Eid, n. m., & Safan, S.M. (2012). Test Anxiety, And Skills of Time Management among Faculty Nursing Students. Journal of American Science, 8(4), 261-269.

Elazizi, N., Nermin, A., & Sanaa, M. (2012). Examination anxiety and its effects on academic performance among university students. International Journal of Education and Research, 1(2), 1-10.

Faisal Z. M., Abdulla F. A., Mohammad T. (Shadid Masharqa) and Nebil M. E. (2014). The Relationship between Time Management and the Academic Performance of Students from the Petroleum ln Abu Dhabi, The Uae. Retieved Octorber1,2018. from: Http://Www.Asee.Org/Documents /Zones/Zone1/2014/ Student/Pdfs/177.

Gilavand, A. (2018). Evaluation of study habits among general medical students and its relation with test anxiety in Ahvaz Jundishapur University of Medical Sciences, southwest of Iran. Journal of Research in Medical and Dental Science, 1(6), 240–245.

Green, M., Angoff, N., & Encandela, J. (2016). Test anxiety and United States Medical Licensing Examination scores. Clinical Teacher, 13(2), 142–146.

Hamzah, A.R., Lucky, E. O. l., & Joarder, M. H R. (2014). Time Management External Moviation, and Student's Academic Performance: Evidence from a Manaysian Public University. Asian Social Science, 10(13), 55.

Hancock, D. R. (2001). Effects of Test Anxiety and Evaluative Threat on Students' Achievement and Moviation. The Jouranl of Educational Research, 94(5),284-290.

Hellsten, L. A. M. (2012). What Do We Know About Time Management? A Review of the Literature and a Psuchometric Critique of Instruments Assessing Time Management. Time Management. Intech, 1-28.

Huberty, T. J. (2009). Test and performance anxiety. Principal Leadership, 10(1), 12-16.

Hyseni Duraku, Z., & Hoxha, L. (2018). Self-esteem, study skills, self-concept, social support, psychological distress, and coping mechanism effects on test anxiety and academic performance. Health Psychology Open, 5(2), 2055102918799963.

https://doi.org/10.1177/2055102918799963

Karim, S & Kandy, M. (2011). Time Management Skills Impact on Self –Efficacy and Academic Performance. Journal of American Science, 7(12),720-726.

Kaushar, M. (2013). Study of Impact of Time Management on Academic Performance of College Students. Journal of Business and Management, 9(6), 59-60.

Khan, M. J., Ashraf, A., & Nadeem, A. (2020). The effect of time management on the academic performance of students in the higher education of Islamabad. International Review of Management and Business Research, 9(3), 202-211.

Lena, S. K. and Kent, R. (2012). A study of academic anxiety of special need's children in special reference to hearing impaired and learning disabled. International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research, 2(2), 64-72.

Macan, T. H., Shahani, C., Dipboye, R. L., & Phillips, A. P. (2000). College students' time management: Correlations with academic performance and stress. Journal of Educational Psychology, 82(4), 760-768.

Mani, B. (2010). Time management and academic performance. Journal of Educational Psychology, 102(3), 512-520.

Mercanlioglu , C . (2010). The Relationship of Time Management to Academic Performance of Master Level Students. International Journal of Business and Management Studies ,2(1) ,25-36.

Nasrullah, S., & Saqib Khan, M. (2015). The Impact of Time Management on the Students' Academic Achievements. Journal of Literature, Languages and Linguistics, 11.

Okogu, O., & Umodjere, O. (2016). Examination anxiety and students' academic performance: Social studies approach. International Journal of Educational Policy Research and Review, 3(1), 1-5.

Pehlivan, A. (2013). The effect of the time management skills of students taking a financial accounting course on their course grades and grade point averages. International Journal of Business and Social Science, 4(5), 196-203.

Peng, T. Z., & Kamil, B. A. M. (2018). Time Management, Procrastination and Prioritization: A Framework for Service Based Learning Module. E-Academia Journal, 6(2).

Razali, S. N. A. M., Rusiman, M. S., Gan, W. S., & Arbin, N. (2018). The impact of time management on students' academic achievement. In Journal of Physics: Conference Series (Vol. 995, No. 1, p. 012042). ISMAP: IOP Publishing.

Saketi, P., & Taheri, A. (2010). The relationship between time management and academic achievements among bachelor and master students of Shiraz University and Shiraz University of Medical Sciences. Iranian Journal of Medical Education, 10(3), 293-300.

Sitzmann, T., & Ely, K. (2011). A Meta-Analysis of Self-Regulated Learning in Work Related Training and Educational Attainment: What We Know and Where We Need To Go. Psychological Bulletin, 137(3), 421.

Steinmayr, R., Crede, J., McElvany, N., & Wirthwein, L. (2016). Subjective well-being, test anxiety, academic achievement: Testing for reciprocal effects. Frontiers in Psychology, 6.
https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2015.01994

Tambaya, L. (2019). Relationship between examination anxiety and time management among university students (Master's thesis, Near East University).

Umar, A. M., & Haruna, A. (2021). Relationship between test-anxiety and achievement in mathematics among senior secondary school students in Bida LGA, Niger State. Kano Journal of Educational Psychology, 3(1), 142-148.

Zhang, N., & Henderson, C. N. R. (2014). Test anxiety and academic performance in chiropractic students. Journal of Chiropractic Education, 28(1), 2–8. https://doi.org/10.7899/jce-13-20.

J. Myanmar Acad. Arts Sci. 2026 **Vol. XXIII. No.5**

A STUDY ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ADDICTION BEHAVIOR TO SMARTPHONES AND THE LONELINESS OF STUDENTS FROM EAST YANGON UNIVERSITY

Tin Zaw Hlaing[1]

Abstract

The main purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between addiction behavior towards smartphones and the loneliness of students studying at East Yangon University. The study was conducted using the correlational survey method. The study group comprised 216 students, 102 males (47.2%) and 114 females (52.8%). In the study, the smartphone addiction scale developed by the smartphone's functions (Kwon, Lee, Won, Park, Min, & Hahn, 2013) was used to investigate the smartphone addiction levels of the participants. The loneliness scale developed by Russell, Peplau, and Cutrona (1980) measured loneliness levels. According to the results of the study, there were no statistically significant differences between addiction behaviour toward smartphones and the loneliness of students according to males and females. On the other hand, there was a substantial difference between additional behaviour towards smartphones and loneliness according to the students' departments. Looking at the relationship between loneliness and smartphone addiction levels, it was concluded that there was a statistically significant positive correlation between all sub-dimensions of smartphone addiction and smartphone addiction total score.

Keywords: Addiction behaviour towards smartphones, loneliness, and male and female

Introduction

Smartphone addiction is an attachment or addiction behavior towards smartphones that can cause social problems such as withdrawal, difficulties in daily activities, or the occurrence of impulse control disorders in individuals, (Kwon, et al. 2013). Smartphone addiction is an excessive use of cellphone behavior that can be considered an impulsive control disorder that is not intoxicating and similar to pathological gambling, according to Park and Lee (Bian & Leung, 2014). People will play on cell phones when they feel lonely because they don't have friends in the real world, so they vent their loneliness to make friends in cyberspace. Lonely people tend to play cellphones regularly because they think they are isolated and feel that when they play cellphones, they will feel happy because they can forget their loneliness for a moment.

There are many different definitions regarding the concept of loneliness in the literature. Weiss (1973) has addressed loneliness in two ways: social and emotional loneliness. Social loneliness arises from the inability of the individual to feel a part of his/her society and to be a member of a group where common interests and activities are shared (Duy, 2003). Emotional loneliness is caused by the lack of close attachment to another person, and the feeling of anxiety and emptiness (Emineoğlu, 2018).

In other words, Fromm (Reichmann, 1959) described loneliness as a state of intense abstraction experienced by only the artists and patients with some mental problems. Perlman and Peplau (1981) stated the important names in loneliness studies, indicating that loneliness was a serious deterioration in interpersonal relations, either qualitatively or quantitatively, and also an unpleasant and disturbing life.

---

[1] Department of Psychology, East Yangon University

Nowadays, the rapid progress of technology has caused people to feel lonely by removing them from society and, later on, creating various addictions. In addition, family structure, the attitude of the family members, environmental factors, personality structure, and negative conditions can cause individuals to be addicted. Kwon, Kim, Cho, and Yang (2013) stated that addiction is an obsessive activity that causes a disorder in the daily activities of the individual and shows a picture similar to drug addiction.

From the addiction types, smartphone addiction, which we will discuss, is an excessive telephone use situation that reduces the enjoyment of daily activities, which can be uncomfortable in cases of inaccessibility (Sata, Celik, Ertürk, & TaS, 2016). Overuse of smartphones, which are used as an effective method to deal with loneliness and provide emotional support, leads to addiction (Sar., 2013). Some symptoms result from excessive telephone use. Casey (2012) listed these symptoms as ignoring the harmful consequences, the mind being overwhelmed continuously with the phone, the extreme desire for the addicted object, the loss of the individual's productivity, and the feeling of anxiety. Experiencing these situations means that the individual is addicted.

In the literature, there are many findings on whether loneliness causes smartphone addiction or smartphone addiction causes loneliness. However, individuals who are self-isolated from society, have psychological problems, lose their self-confidence, feel alone, and are in many negative situations may be more likely to be addicted. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the relationship between loneliness levels and smartphone addiction among university students.

Smartphone Addiction

Smartphones have become an important part of individuals' lives with their numerous features and all the applications they offer to users. Especially young people use this technology to increase their social mobility and expand their communication network. However, this situation brings addiction and many negative emotions. Researches reveal that 99.2% of users become anxious if they leave their phones (Thomson, 2021), while 75.4 of users are addicted to their smartphones (Abbott, 2020). As the use of smartphones increases, the number of people who are addicted is increasing and society is starting to experience problems (Hong et al., 2012).

Strong addiction to smartphones is a distinct and complex problem that researchers are working on explicitly and implicitly. Today, as smartphones become more advanced with all their functions, young people use their smartphones not only for access and communication but also for other functions such as entertainment and multimedia. Thus, they become more and more dependent on their smartphones, which can sometimes be a decision-maker and sometimes a guide for them.

Loneliness

People need social behaviors such as communication, cooperation, and interaction. However, they can also enter a process where these social behaviors are disrupted, this is called loneliness. Loneliness is defined as the perception of deterioration in terms of quantity and quality in the relationship of the individual with other individuals or society (Peplau et al.,1979). Loneliness deteriorates interpersonal relationships, and when there is an inconsistency between actual and perceived expectations, a complex, unpleasant, and emotionally distressing psychological experience emerges (Fitts et al.,2009). Being a university student is an important stage when physical separation from family and friends begins and loneliness becomes evident. Lonely people prefer being alone to social activities and spending more time on the internet, so loneliness and internet addiction seem to be significantly related. According to Engelberg and Sjoberg (2004), people who use the internet more frequently have weaker social skills. A similar situation is thought to be possible for smartphone addiction.

The Relationship of Smartphone Addiction and Loneliness

In India, Dr. Mrunal Bhardwaj and Miss. Sode Jaimala Ashok (2015) examined mobile phone addiction and loneliness among teenagers. Random sampling method was used by researchers to select the sample which were 100 teenagers from different colleges in Mumbai city, Maharashtra. Out of the sample, there were 50 male students and 50 female students. A survey model was used to administer the subjects. The survey is designed to evaluate the mobile phone addiction scale (Mobile Phone Addiction Scale (2012)), loneliness (Loneliness Inventory (2010)), and personal information form. Correlation and T-test were calculated to analyze the data. Results revealed that there was a significant correlation between mobile phone addiction and loneliness among college students. Besides, there was no significant difference found in the study when loneliness and mobile phone addiction among college students were examined according to gender.

In Japan, Satoko Ezoe1 and Masahiro Toda (2013) conducted a study investigating the factors contributing to Internet addiction. The sample involved 105 Japanese medical students (40 males, 65 females) who are from the Faculty of Medicine at Shimane University, Japan. Ages of 19.3 ± 2.0 were the mean (±SD) ages for the males and 18.7 ± 1.0 years for the females. The self-reporting questionnaire is used to administer the subjects. The questionnaire is designed to evaluate demographic factors, Internet addiction (Young's Internet Addiction Test), loneliness (UCLA-Loneliness Scale -Version 3), mobile phone dependence (Mobile Phone Dependence Questionnaire), depressive state (Beck Depression Inventory-II), health-related lifestyle factors (Health Practice Index), and patterns of behavior (Tokai University Type-A Pattern Scale). The possible associations between Internet addiction and each factor such as demographic characteristics, loneliness, depressive state, health-related lifestyle, patterns of behavior, and mobile phone dependence were identified by using Univariate and subsequent multivariate logistic regression analyses. According to the study, there was a significant positive correlation between Internet addiction and mobile phone dependence. Besides that, there was a significant positive correlation between loneliness and Internet addiction. As a result, the research showed that mobile phone dependence and loneliness were positively associated with a level of addiction (Ezoel & Toda, 2013). The outcome of this study shows that Internet addiction is associated with mobile phone dependence and loneliness among Japanese students. However, their multivariate logistic regression analysis results showed that depressive state was not significantly related to Internet addiction (Ezoel & Toda, 2013).

On the other hand, in Turkey, previous research named "Loneliness and Mobile Addiction", authored by Cetin Tan, Mustafa Pamuk, and Aysenur Donder (2013), aimed to examine the level of loneliness according to gender, daily phone use time, and mobile phone addiction among university students. Data were gathered from 527 students who were from Firat University, Turkey. All of the participants had mobile phones (100%). A survey model is used in this research. The survey is designed to gather data, such as personal information form, UCLA-loneliness scale (UCLA-LS), and Problematic Mobile Phone Use Scale (PMPUS). Correlation, one-way variance (ANOVA), and T-test were used to analyze the data, and Scheffe's test was used to find out the differences among groups. Results revealed that when the loneliness of university students was examined according to gender, the loneliness scores of male students were found higher than the scores of female students. According to the added findings of this study, there was a significant difference between university students' loneliness and mobile phone usage. There was a significant difference between mobile phone addiction and university students' loneliness (Tan, Pamuk, & Donder, 2013). The students' loneliness scores were found to be higher than those students of non-addicts, compared to the students who have been addicted to mobile phones each question normally; or choosing different answers to two questions containing similar meanings, or the respondents are over 30 years old (Bian & Louis, 2014). Therefore, 414 university students were the total valid sample size. In the total valid sample, there were consisting of 159 males (38.4%) and 255 females (61.6%) (Bian & Louis, 2014). To measure smartphone addiction in this research, a 27-item Mobile Phone Problem Use Scale, 20-item Internet Addiction Test, and 35-item Television Addiction Scale were applied to the questionnaire. A short form of Revised UCLA-Loneliness Scale-Version 3 was used to assess loneliness. A linear regression analysis was used to assess how smartphone use is influenced by demographics, psychological attributes (such as shyness and loneliness), and symptoms of smartphone addiction. Results revealed that those university students who scored high on loneliness and shyness will have a higher likelihood in addicted to smartphones.

Objectives

This research aims to explore the relationship between addiction behavior towards smartphones and the loneliness of students from East Yangon University.

Hypotheses

H1: There will be a positive relationship between addiction behavior towards smartphones and Loneliness.

H2: There will be a correlation between the use of duration (year) and loneliness.

H3: There will be differences in addiction behavior towards smartphones between males and females.

H4: There will be differences in loneliness between males and females.

H5: There will be differences in smartphone among education level.

H6: There will be differences in loneliness among education level.

Methodology

Participants

The study group consists of a total of 216 participants for this research. A total of 102 males (47.2%) and 114 females (52.8%) from East Yangon University students were selected as the respondents of the study.

Instruments

Smartphone Addiction Scale – Short Version (SAS-SV)

The smartphone addiction scale is a 10-item scale that measures smartphone addiction. Kwon, Lee, Won, Park, Min, and Hahn developed this scale in 2013. This scale is a 6-point Likert scale ranging from 0-6. Each item of the test consists of responses from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree”. The maximum score is 60 points. The test reveals that the higher the score higher the person’s addiction.

UCLA-3 Loneliness Scale (Version 3)

UCLA-3 Loneliness Scale is a 20-item measure that measures the loneliness of an individual. Russell, D, Peplau, and Fergusson M.L. 1978 developed this scale. This scale is a 4-point Likert scale ranging from 0-4. This scale has a reverse scoring for some of the items. Each item of the test consists of responses from “I often feel this way” to “I never feel this way”. The maximum scores are 80 points. The test reveals higher the score the higher the person’s loneliness.

Procedure

The subjects were given questionnaires to complete to collect their responses. The participants received guarantees that their answers would be kept confidential and used exclusively for study. They were instructed to adhere to the questionnaire’s instructions as needed. It took about 20 minutes.

Data Analyses

Data collected is analyzed using the Statistical Package of Social Science (SPSS). Participants’ item scores and total scores from SAS-IV and UCLA-3 will be shown in mean, standard deviation, and frequency for descriptive statistics. As for inferential statistics, independent sample t-test, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA), and Pearson correlation were used to obtain statistical results among different variables.

Results and Discussion

Results

Table 1. Demographic profile of Respondents (N=216)

Description		Frequency	Percent
Gender			
	Male	102	47.2
	Female	114	52.8
Education			
	First Year	10	4.6
	Second Year	86	39.8
	Third Year	75	34.7
	Fourth Year	45	20.8
Use of Duration (Year)			
	0 – 2 Year	80	37.0
	3 – 5 Year	112	51.9
	6 - above	24	11.1

In Table 1, there were three kinds of demographic data such as gender, education, and Use of Duration (Year). The participants include males (102) (47.2%) and females (114) (52.8%). The response was education, First years (10) (4.6%), Second years (86)(39.8%), Third years(75) (14.4%), and Fourth years(45) (20.8%). Most of the respondents use duration (Year) 0-2 years (80) (37.0), 3-5 years (112) (51.9%), and 6- above (24) (11.1).

Table 2. Showing the correlation between addiction behavior towards smartphones and loneliness

Variables	Pearson(r)	sig
Addiction behavior toward smartphones and Loneliness	**.353**	**.0001**

*=P<0.05 ** = P<0.01

Table 2, shows a correlation analysis between Addiction behavior towards smartphones and loneliness. The correlation is significant at the 0.0001 level. Since the coefficient .353 is a positive value, it can be concluded that there is a direct correlation between addiction behavior toward smartphones on loneliness.

Table 3. Showing the correlation between Use of duration (Year) and loneliness

Variables	Pearson(r)	sig
Use of Duration (Year) and Loneliness	**-.046**	**.501**

*=P<0.05 ** = P<0.01

According to Table 3, correlation between the use of duration (Year) and loneliness. The correlation is not significant.

Table 4. Showing the differences in addiction behavior towards smartphones and loneliness between male and female

Variables	Male (N=102)	Female(N=114)	t-value	sig
	Mean (SD)	Mean(SD)		
Addiction behavior toward smartphone	24.38(9.8860)	26.15(9.563)	1.334	.184(NS)
Loneliness	36.36(8.989)	24.88(9.991)	1.166	.245(NS)

*=P<0.05 ** = P<0.01

As shown in Table 4, male participants were 102 and female were 114 respondents. The mean scores (Standard deviation) of addiction behavior towards smartphones for gender were male (24.38) (9.8860) and female (26.15) (9.563) respectively. The mean scores of loneliness for gender were male (36.36) (8.989) and female (24.88) (9.991) respectively. The t-value of addiction to smartphones is 1.334 and the t-value of loneliness is .245, that is, there were no significant differences between male and female participants between addiction towards smartphones and loneliness.

Table 5. Differences in addiction behavior toward smartphones among education-level

Variables	Education	N	Mean	SD	f-value	sig
Addiction Behaviour towards Smartphones	First Year	10	27.00	5.715	.155	.927(NS)
	Second Year	86	25.43	9.326		
	Third Year	75	24.88	9.981		
	Fourth Year	45	25.44	10.943		

In table 5, variables were not significantly differences in addiction towards smartphone among education level. The analysis is compared the mean differences of addiction towards smartphone among education level based on one – way ANOV. The mean scores and standard deviations for each group are report in table 5. The f-value was .155 and there were not significantly differences among education level, which is not significant at the .927 level.

Table 6. Differences in Loneliness among education level

Variables	Education	N	Mean	SD	f-value	sig
Loneliness	First Year	10	27.90	9.723	.693	.557(NS)
	Second Year	86	24.21	9.250		
	Third Year	75	24.24	9.194		
	Fourth Year	45	23.11	10.656		

The analysis is compared the mean differences of loneliness among education level based on one – way ANOVA. The mean scores and standard deviations for each group are report in table 6. The f-value was .692 and there were not significantly differences among education level, which is not significant at the .557 level.

Discussion

This study aims to examine the relationship between addiction to smartphones and loneliness at East Yangon University. The participants were divided into gender, education level, and use of duration (Year).

Hypothesis 1 “There will be a positive relationship between addiction behavior towards smartphones and Loneliness”. It is accepted because addiction toward smartphones and loneliness were significantly correlated based on Table 2. The more the smartphone is used, the higher the loneliness.

Hypothesis 2 “There will be a correlation between the use of duration (year) and loneliness” was not supported but there will be a negative correlation between the use of duration (year) and loneliness.

Hypothesis 3 “There will be differences in addiction behavior towards smartphones between males and females” was not confirmed because there were no significant differences between males and females.

Hypothesis 4: “There will be differences in loneliness between males and females”. It was not confirmed in this study based on Table 4.

Hypothesis 5: “There will be differences in smartphone among education levels” was not accepted because addiction towards smartphone and education factors were not significantly differences among education level.

Hypothesis 6: “There will be differences in loneliness among education levels” was not confirmed because there was no significant among education level. According to the result, the a positive relationship between addiction to smartphones and loneliness. The higher the level of smartphone addiction, the higher the tendency to be lonely; or the lower or lower the level of smartphone addiction, the lower the tendency to be lonely. These findings are consistent with previous research.

The results of this research show that there is a significant positive correlation between addiction to smartphones and loneliness among students from East Yangon University. The findings were consistent with the previous study in which Casey (2012) stated that smartphone addiction may cause someone to feel lonely. This is because loneliness is an undesirable feeling that derives from inconsistency between wished and accomplished levels of social connection (Perlman & Peplau, 1981). Smartphone addiction might influence the way people communicate and cause social stress (Perlman & Peplau, 1981). Furthermore, through smartphones, people can easily communicate with others by individual to individual and concurrently sending short message service (SMS) or using smartphone communication tools rather than face-to-face communication (Casey, 2012). Smartphone addiction may influence an individual to have loneliness.

Conclusion

This study aimed to find out the relationship between addiction to smartphones and loneliness. Our study has found that there is no gender difference in both smartphone addiction and loneliness among East Yangon University students. There is a correlation in the relationship between smartphone addiction and loneliness.

The previous studies provide support and evidence to the aspect of smartphone addiction which aids the researchers in predicting and correlating the loneliness level of students from East Yangon University. The ability to recognize the consequences of being addicted to smartphones would increase the loneliness level. Communication skills and the communication network are of great importance in realizing these situations and this can be achieved mostly by smartphones. Communication can be provided mostly by smartphones. For this reason, depending on the use of the smartphone, there can be physical pain in fingers and eyes, disruption of daily work, feeling unrest when not being with the phone because of the continuous use, and communication is often done through smartphones and this situation may be able to prevent face to face communication. The reason for the lack of a significant difference between' Relieving oneself ' and loneliness level is that individuals should be more likely to use smartphones due to work, not to use too much in times other than work, and not to feel lonely because they are always in contact with people. According to the results of the analysis of the effect of loneliness levels of students on smartphone addiction, it was concluded that loneliness predicted smartphone addiction. The result was that loneliness caused smartphone addiction. So, loneliness affects addiction. According to the results of the analysis of the effect of loneliness levels of students on smartphone addiction, it was concluded that loneliness predicted smartphone addiction. In other words, smartphones that are used for various purposes may increase the use of smartphones as it allows individuals not to think about difficult conditions by sparing the majority of their time for smartphone usage.

The result was that loneliness caused smartphone addiction. So, loneliness affects addiction. Ultimately, as the loneliness levels of the students studying at East Yangon University increased, the levels of smartphone addiction increased.

Limitations

The current study has some limitations, the most important of which are:

1. Because of the correlational design of the study, there was no possibility of controlling the confounding variables, and these variables might be effective on how students respond.
2. Since the study has been carried out on a limited sample of students and only in a specific city, hence, the results should be generalized with caution.

Further Research

This study has revealed several possible areas for future research, particularly in the methodology used to undertake a study of this nature. It is suggested for future research to employ a causal interpretation design in place of the current correlational design. Addiction behavior towards smartphones and loneliness can be investigated based on different variables. Comparative studies can be carried out to evaluate the relationship between addiction behavior toward smartphones and the loneliness of students studying at different faculties of universities.

Acknowledgment

I would like to express my deep gratitude and appreciation to Dr. Htar Htar Khin, Professor and Head, Department of Psychology, East Yangon University, for her patient advice, guidance, and valuable suggestions for completing this paper. Especially, I would especially like to express my thanks to Dr Thida Kyaw, Professor, and Department of Psychology, East Yangon University, who supervised and helped me to complete this study.

References

Al Khatib, S. A. (2012). Exploring the relationship among loneliness, self-esteem, self-efficacy, and gender in United Arab Emirates college students. *Europe's Journal of Psychology,* 8(1), 159-181. doi: 10.5964/ejop. v8i1.301

Al-Barashdi, H. S., Bouazza, A., & Jabur, N. H. (2014). Smartphone Addiction among University Undergraduates: A Literature Review. *Journal of Scientific Research & Reports,* 4(3), 210-225. doi: 10.9734/JSRR/2015/12245

Bian. M., & Leung, L., (2014). Linking Loneliness, Shyness, Smartphone AddictionSymptoms, and Patterns of Smartphone Use to Social Capital. *Social Science Computer Review* 1-19 DOI: 10.1177/ 0894439314528779

Casey, B. M. (2012). *Linking psychological attributes to smartphone addiction, face-to-face communication, present absence, and social capital.* Graduation Project, Graduate School of the Chinese University of Hong Kong.

Choi, J., Lee, H. J., Sajjad, F., & Lee, H. (2014). The influence of national culture on the attitude towards mobile recommender systems. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, 86, 65-79.

Davis, S. (2012). Addicted to Your Smartphone? Here's What to Do. *WebMD Feature.* Retrieved from http://www.webmd.com/balance/guide/addicted-your-smartphonewhat-to-d

Duy, B. (2003). *The effect of cognitive-behavioral approach group psychological counseling on loneliness and dysfunctional attitudes.* Unpublished Doctoral Thesis. Ankara University, Institute of Social Sciences. Ankara.

Emineoğlu, M. (2018). *The mediating role of psychological resilience between social and emotional loneliness and peer bullying in adolescents.* Published Master Thesis. Bayburt University, Institute of Social Sciences. Bayburt.

Griffiths, M. D. (2013). Adolescent mobile phone addiction: A cause for concern? *Education and Health,* 31(3), 76-78.

Griffiths, M. D. (2013). Adolescent mobile phone addiction: A cause for concern? *Education and Health,* 31(3), 76-78.

Kim, D., Lee, Y., Lee, J., Nam, J. K., & Chung, Y. (2014). Development of Korean smartphone addiction proneness scale for youth. *Plops one, 9(5), e97920.*

Kwon, M., Lee, J. Y., Won, W. Y., Park, J. W., Min, J. A., Hahn, C., ... & Kim, D. J. (2013). Development and validation of a smartphone addiction scale (SAS). *PloSone, 8(2), e56936*

Oktuğ, Z. (2012). Gender Differences in Internet Addiction and Tendency to Express Emotion. *The Online Journal of Counseling and Education*, 1(4), 39-53. Retrieved from http://www.tojce.com/ articles/pdf/v01i04/toctober5.pd

Park, N., & Lee, H. (2014). Nature of Youth Smartphone Addiction in Korea. *Journal of Communication Research,* 51(1), 100-132. Retrieved from http://sspace.snu.ac.kr/bitstream/10371/92844/1/04.pd

Pawłowska, B., & Poremski, E. (2011). Gender and severity of symptoms of mobile phone addiction in Polish gymnasium, secondary school and university students. Current Problems of Psychiatry, 12(4), 433-438

Perlman, D., & Peplau, L. A. (1981). Toward a social psychology of loneliness. *Personal Relationships, 3*, 31-56.

Perry, S. D., & Kevin, L. C. (2007). Mobile phone text messaging overuse among developing world university students. Communication: *South African Journal for Communication Theory and Research*, 33(2), 63-79. doi:10.1080/02500160701685417

Reichmann, F. F. (1959). Loneliness. *Psychiatry, 22*(1), 1-15.

Russell, D. (1996). UCLA Loneliness Scale (Version 3): Reliability, validity, and factor structure. *Journal of Personality Assessment*, *66*(1), 20-40.

Sar., A. H. (2013). Examination of loneliness and mobile phone addiction problems observed by teenagers from some variables. *The Journal of Academic Social Science Studies International Journal of Social Science*, *6*(2), 1207-1220.

Sata, M., Celik, I., Ertürk, Z., & TaS, U. E. (2016). Adaptation study of smartphone addiction scale (ATBÖ) for Turkish high school students. *Journal of Measurement and Evaluation in Education and Psychology, 7*(1), 156-169.

J. Myanmar Acad. Arts Sci. 2026 **Vol. XXIII. No.5**

ADAPTATION OF THE MINNESOTA MULTIPHASIC PERSONALITY INVENTORY – 3 (YPI-23) (SHORT FORM)

Nu Lay Wai[1], Dr. U Thaung Kyi[2], Dr. Lin Lin Latt[3]

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to adapt a personality inventory which was suitable for Myanmar culture in Myanmar language, and to explore personality traits of people who were living in Yangon, Myanmar. This research approach was a quantitative in the study. A total sample size of 512 participants who were living in Yangon was used in this study. Their age ranged from 18 years and above 60. The 22 subscales out of 52 subscales from Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory – 3 (MMPI-3) was used to assess the personality of participants in Yangon. There was total 181 items from 22 subscales. This test contained True/False response format. Factorial analysis of data, Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient, test-retest reliability, descriptive and percentage methods was used with SPSS. According to the result of Pearson (r) value is over 0.70, 20 subscales of YPI-23, except THD and ASB, are acceptable indicating that there is a strong relationship between 2 variables and there is a positive relationship, meaning as one variable increases, the other tends to increase as well. Items with lower than 0.7 values are less acceptable meaning that there is not strong relationship between 2 variables and there is a negative relationship, meaning as one variable increases, the other tends to decrease. Nevertheless, as the result of factor analysis, all 181 items from 22 subscales involved in YPI-23 except these four items (EID-173, THD-14, NFC-48, and AGGR-18) were acceptable to measure personality. Therefore, YPI-23 scale had high reliability and validity. It can be used as an instrument in the Myanmar cultural setting. Moreover, cultures have very different attitudes toward mental health, societal expectations, and emotional expression. The MMPI-3 adaptation should take into account local standards about psychological well-being. The YPI-23 is a multi-step process that requires collaboration among Union Civil Service Board, Central Institute of Civil Service of Myanmar, Officer Testing Team, and Mental Health Hospital.

Keywords: Personality trait, reliability, validity.

Introduction

Personality is an individual's collection of interrelated behavioral, cognitive and emotional patterns that biological and environmental factors influence; these interrelated patterns are relatively stable over long time periods, but they change over the entire lifetime (Corr, Philip J, et al., 2009). Personality plays an important role in how individuals view and interact with the others. The study of the personality psychology attempts to explain the tendencies that underlie differences in behavior. Personality psychologists strive to understand the factors that contribute to individual characteristics, explore how personalities develop and change and help individuals understand their own personalities so they can make decisions that suit their best interests (*Friedman, Howard, et al., 2016).*

Personality can be determined through a variety of tests. Two main tools to measure personality are projective tests and objective measures. Projective tests assume personality is primarily unconscious and assess individuals by how they respond to an ambiguous stimulus. Examples of projective tests are story-telling, drawings, or sentence-completion tasks (Murray,

[1] Department of Psychology, University of Yangon
[2] Department of Psychology, University of Yangon
[3] Department of Psychology, University of Yangon

Henry A, 1943). Objective tests assume personality is consciously accessible and that it can be measured by self-report questionnaires. Research on psychological assessment has generally found objective tests to be more valid and reliable than projective tests (Butcher JN, Bubany S, et.al., 2013). One of the most common self-report inventories is the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI).

Although numerous personality theories exist, most major ones fall into one of four major perspectives; psychoanalytic perspective, humanistic perspective, trait perspective, and social cognitive perspective. Each of these perspectives on personality attempts to describe different patterns in personality, including how these patterns form and how people differ on an individual level.

Sigmund Freud's psychodynamic perspective of personality explain that personality is based on the dynamic interactions of these three components: the id, ego and super-ego. The id acts according to the pleasure principle, demanding immediate gratification of its needs regardless of external environment; the ego then must emerge in order to realistically meet the wishes and demands of the id in accordance with the outside world, adhering to the reality principle. Finally, the superego inculcates moral judgment and societal rules upon the ego, thus forcing the demands of the id to be met not only realistically but morally. The superego is the last function of the personality to develop. (Carver, et al., 2004).

The humanistic perspective of personality focuses on psychological growth, free will, and personal awareness. It takes a more positive outlook on human nature and is centered on how each person can achieve their individual potential. Humanistic therapy can effectively treat various mental health conditions, including anxiety, depression, interpersonal issues, and personality disorders (Elliott R, 2016).

The social cognitive perspective of personality emphasizes the importance of observational learning, self-efficacy, situational influences, and cognitive processes. Social cognitive theory is also utilized in the field of public health to develop programs aimed at health promotion. Understanding how observational learning and self-efficacy influence health behaviors allow researchers to create programs that foster healthier behaviors and choices (Robinson MD, Klein RJ, et al., 2019).

Finally, the trait perspective of personality is centered on identifying, describing, and measuring the specific traits that make up human personality. By understanding these traits, researchers believe they can better comprehend the differences between individuals (Fleeson W, Jayawickreme E, 2015). MMPI is a psychological test which assesses personality traits and psychopathology. In this study, some of the items from the MMPI-3 had been used.

Objectives

The main objectives of the present study were to adapt a personality inventory which is suitable for Myanmar culture in Myanmar language, and to explore the personality traits of people ranging from 18 years and above 60 who are living in Yangon, Myanmar.

Methodology

Participants

This research encompassed sum total 512 participants residing in diverse regions of Yangon (Total N=512). This study was structured in two distinct trials. For the test-retest phase, the initial trial commenced with 60 participants in the first round, and in the subsequent round, 47 participants persisted in the study (N=47). They answered this questionnaire twice after 2 weeks passed. In the second trial, 467 participants were enlisted (N=465). The participants were students, teachers, staff from University of Yangon, employees and employers from Samparoo Company Limited, owners and workers from pawnshops, gold and jewelry shops, groceries, Botahtaung Hostel and persons with physical disabilities. Their age of oldest participant was 77 years and the age of youngest participant was 18 years. Their education levels were from middle school level to Post Graduate level.

Instruments

This research approach was a quantitative in the study. It contained True/False response format and took around 15 to 30 minutes to answer all the items. Participants were administered using demographic form. The 22 subscales out of 52 from Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory - 3 (MMPI-3) used to assess personality of the participants.

No.	Trait	Description	What is measured	Total Item
1.	EID	Emotional / Internalizing Dysfunction	Problems associated with mood and affect	12
2.	THD	Thought Dysfunction	Problems associated with disordered thinking	9
3.	BXD	Behavioral / Externalizing Dysfunction	Problems associated with under-controlled behavior	4
4.	ASB	Antisocial Behavior	Rule breaking and irresponsible behavior	4
5.	PER	Ideas of Persecution	Self-referential beliefs that others pose a threat	7
6.	HPM	Hypomanic Activation	Over activation, aggression, impulsivity, and grandiosity	10
7.	SUI	Suicidal / Death Ideation	Direct reports of suicidal ideation and recent attempts	7
8.	HLP	Helplessness / Hopelessness	Belief that goals cannot be reached or problems solved	7
9.	SFD	Self-Doubt	confidence, feelings of uselessness	7
10.	NFC	Inefficacy	Belief that one is indecisive and inefficacious	9

No.	Trait	Description	What is measured	Total Item
11.	STR	Stress	Problems involving stress and nervousness	4
12.	CMP	Compulsivity	Engaging in compulsive behaviors	7
13.	ARX	Anxiety-Related Experiences	Multiple anxiety-related experiences such as catastrophizing, panic, dread, and intrusive ideation	12
14.	ANP	Anger Proneness	Becoming easily angered, impatient with others	10
15.	BRF	Behavior-Restricting Fears	Fears that significantly inhibit normal behavior	7
16.	SFI	Self-Importance	Beliefs related to having special talents and abilities	10
17.	DSF	Disaffiliativeness	Disliking people and being around them	7
18.	SHY	Shyness	Feeling uncomfortable and anxious in the presence of others	7
19.	AGGR	Aggressiveness	Instrumental, goal-directed aggression	11
20.	PSYC	Psychoticism	Disconnection from reality	10
21.	NEGE	Negative Emotionality / Neuroticism	Anxiety, insecurity, worry, and fear	14
22.	INTR	Introversion /Low Positive Emotionality-Revised	Social disengagement and anhedonia	6

There are 5 scales in this assessment. They are (1) Higher-Order (H-O) Scales, included EID, THD, BXD, (2) Restructured Clinical (RC) Scales, included ASB, PER, HPM, (3) Internalizing Scales, included SUI, HLP, SFD, NFC, STR, CMP, ARX, ANP, BRF, (4) Interpersonal Scales, included SFI, DSF, SHY, and (5) Personality Psychopathology Scales, included AGGR, PSYC, NEGE, INTR.

Procedure

Departments of Myanmar, English, and Psychology from University of Yangon, helped for the translation of MMMPI-3 into Myanmar Language. The data collection procedure was as follows. At first, participants were informed that the participation is voluntary, the data they provide will be kept confidential and that data will be used only for research purpose. They were also reassured that they can withdraw from the study at any time. After getting their permissions, the questionnaires were distributed to participants. They completed the questionnaires manually and the data were collected grouped.

At the beginning of each questionnaire, an overview will be provided. All participants must be filled in a demographic form. The researcher disclosed how to answer the items first. The chosen answer is to be indicated by a tick (✓) in the appropriate chart on the answer sheet. This test took around 15 to 30 minutes to answer all the items. The responses of each participant were scored according with the scoring key. After completing the score procedure, the obtained data were computed with Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The same data collection procedure was employed for the test-retest analysis in this study. For test-retest, the time interval between the first trial and the second trial was two weeks.

Results and Discussion

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Respondents (N=465)

Demographic Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	158	34.0
Female	307	66.0
Age		
18 to 20	244	52.5
21 to 40	177	38.1
41 to 60	39	8.4
Above 60	5	1.1
Religion		
Buddhism	433	93.1
Christianity	20	4.3
Islam	6	1.3
Hinduism	6	1.3
Education		
Middle School	38	8.2
High School	81	17.4
Under Graduate Degrees	302	64.9
Post Graduate Degrees	44	9.5
Marital Status		
Single	376	80.9
Married	88	18.9
Divorce	1	0.2

In Table 1, out of 465 respondents, more than half were females with 66% and males were 34%. In the context of religious status, 93.1% were Buddhism 4.3% were Christianity, Islam and Hinduism were each 1.3% of participants. For educational status, 9.5%were postgraduate, 64.9% were undergraduate as well as high school graduate and middle school were 17.4% and 8.2% respectively. Regarding to marital status, 80.9% respondents answered “single”, 18.9% answered “married” and 0.2% answered “divorce”.

Table 2 - Showing test-retest reliability (N=47), Alpha reliability and Validity (N=465)

No.	Trait	Total Item	Deleted Item	Alpha Reliability	Retest Reliability	Sig	Validity
1.	EID	12	1	**.59**	**.79**	.0001	**.64**
2.	THD	9	1	.44	**.67**	.0001	**.67**
3.	BXD	4	0	.07	.17 (NS)	.243(NS)	**.54**
4.	ASB	4	0	.32	.50	.0001	**.58**
5.	PER	7	0	**.58**	**.83**	.0001	**.65**
6.	HPM	10	0	**.65**	**.83**	.0001	**.56**
7.	SUI	7	0	**.80**	**.89**	.0001	**.68**
8.	HLP	7	0	.51	**.78**	.0001	**.72**
9.	SFD	7	0	**.76**	**.88**	.0001	**.64**
10.	NFC	9	1	**.67**	**.81**	.0001	**.54**
11.	STR	4	0	.24	**.76**	.0001	**.71**
12.	CMP	7	0	.31	**.74**	.0001	**.68**
13.	ARX	12	0	**.75**	**.90**	.0001	**.65**
14.	ANP	10	0	**.78**	**.89**	.0001	**.72**
15.	BRF	7	0	.53	**.65**	.0001	**.55**
16.	SFI	10	0	**.77**	**.89**	.0001	**.61**
17.	DSF	7	0	**.64**	**.79**	.0001	**.67**
18.	SHY	7	0	**.58**	**.71**	.0001	**.69**
19.	AGGR	11	1	**.55**	**.83**	.0001	**.56**
20.	PSYC	10	0	**.65**	**.75**	.0001	**.63**
21.	NEGE	14	0	**.80**	**.88**	.0001	**.59**
22.	INTR	6	0	.52	**.72**	.0001	**.65**

According to table 2, the results of the test-retest reliability, it was found that all 21 scales were significant at 0.0001 level except BXD. These results show that all of scales except BXD can discriminate between high-scoring individuals and low-scoring individuals on the scale. But according to the result of validity value, all scales were high level of validity meaning that all items of 22 scales were accurately measuring what it is intended to measure. In other words, the results can be trusted to reflect the true concept being assessed. According to the result of factor analysis, 4 items were discarded from this assessment. Although the reliability values of my test, Yangon Personality Inventory-3 (YPI-23), including test-retest reliability and Cronbach’s alpha, are slightly lower than expected, the validity remains strong when compared to the original MMPI-3. Considering the strong validity evidence from the original scale and the relevance of the items, all 181 items will be used in the final version of the test.

Discussion

Table 1 shows participants' demographic information including gender, age, religion, education, and marital status of participants.

The results of factor analysis are as follows.

(1) Emotional/Internalizing Dysfunction Scale (EID;12 items) – principal components factor analysis was performed on the 12 items EID Scale, resulting the identification of 4 factors: factor I (4 items), factor II (4 items) factor III (2 items) and factor IV (1 item). One item (EID 173) was removed from the scale due to its failure to exhibit significant loading on any of these factors.

(2) Thought Dysfunction Scale (THD; 9 items) – principal components factor analysis was performed on 9 items of THD Scale, leading to the discovery of 3 distinct factors: factor I consisting of 3 items, factor II comprising 2 items, and factor III including 3 items. However, one item (THD 14) had to be removed from the scale because it did not exhibit sufficient loading on any of the factors.

(3) Behavioral/Externalizing Dysfunction Scale (BXD, 4 items) – principal components factor analysis was conducted on the 4 items of the BXD Scale, resulting the identification of two factors: factor I (1 item) and factor II (3 items).

(4) Antisocial Behavior Scale (ASB,4 items) – principal components factor analysis was conducted on the 4 items of ASB Scale, resulting a single dominant factor.

, (5) Ideas of Persecution Scale (PER; 7 items) – principal components factor analysis was conducted on the 7 items of PER Scale, resulting the identification of two factors: factor I (5 items) and factor II (2 items).

(6) Hypomanic Activation Scale (HPM; 10 items) – principal components factor analysis was performed on the 10 items of HPM Scale, resulting the identification of two factors: factor I (7 items) and factor II (3 items).

(7) Suicidal/Death Ideation Scale (SUI; 7 items) – principal components factor analysis was performed on the 7 items of SUI Scale, resulting a single dominant factor.

(8) Helplessness/Hopelessness Scale (HLP;7 items) – principal components factor analysis was performed on the 7 items HLP Scale, resulting the identification of three factors: factor I (3 items), factor II (2 items) and factor III (2 items).

(9) Self-Doubt Scale (SFD; 7 items) – principal components factor analysis was performed on the 7 items of SFD Scale, resulting a single dominant factor.

(10) Inefficacy Scale (NFC; 9 items) – principal components factor analysis was performed on the 9 items of NFC Scale, resulting two factors: factor I (7 items) and factor II (1 item). However, one item (NFC 48) had to be deleted from the scale due to insufficient loading on any factors.

(11) Stress Scale (STR;4 items) – principal components factor analysis was performed on the 4 items of STR Scale, resulting two factors: factor I (2 items) and factor II (2 items).

(12) Compulsivity Scale (CMP; 7 items) – principal components factor analysis was performed on the 7 items of CMP Scale, resulting three factors: factor I (4 items), factor II (2 items) and factor III (1 item).

(13) Anxiety-Related Experiences Scale (ARX; 12 items) – principal components factor analysis was performed on the 12 items of ARX Scale, resulting three factors: factor I (4 items), factor II (5 items), and factor III (3 items).

(14) Anger Proneness Scale (ANP; 10 items) – principal components factor analysis was performed on the 10 items of ANP Scale, resulting three factors: factor I (5 items), factor II (3 items) and factor III (2 items).

(15) Behavior-Restricting Fears Scale (BRF;7 items) – principal components factor analysis was performed on the 7 items of BRF Scale, resulting 2 factors: factor I (6 items) and factor II (1 items).

(16) Self-Importance Scale (SFI;10 items) – principal components factor analysis was performed on the 10 items of SFI Scale, resulting 2 factors: factor I (8 items) and factor II (2 items).

(17) Disaffiliativeness Scale (DSF;7 items) – principal components factor analysis was performed on the 7 items of DSF Scale, resulting 2 factors: factor I (4 items) and factor II (3 items).

(18) Shyness Scale (SHY;7 items) – principal components factor analysis was performed on the 7 items of SHY Scale, resulting three factors: factor I (3 items), factor II (3 items), and factor III (1 item).

(19) Aggressiveness Scale (AGGR;11 items) – principal components factor analysis was performed on the 11 items of AGGR Scale, resulting three factors: factor I (5 items), factor II (3 items), and factor III (2 items). However, one item (AGGR 18) had to be deleted from the scale due to insufficient loading on any factors.

(20) Psychoticism Scale (PSYC;10 items) – principal components factor analysis was performed on the 10 items of PSYC Scale, resulting three factors: factor I (5 items), factor II (3 items), and factor III (2 items).

(21) Negative Emotionality/Neuroticism Scale (NEGE;14 items) – principal components factor analysis was performed on the 14 items of NEGE Scale, resulting three factors: factor I (7 items), factor II (3 items), and factor III (3 items).

(22) Introversion/Low Positive Emotionality-Revised Scale (INTR;6 items) – principal components factor analysis was performed on the 6 items of INTR Scale, resulting two factors: factor I (2 items) and factor II (4 items).

According to the table 2, as a result of Cronbach Alpha value is over 0.60, 14 subscales of YPI-23 including EID, PER, HPM, SUI, SFD, NFC, ARX, ANP, SFI, DSF, SHY, AGGR, PSYC, and NEGE indicated a good level of internal consistency reliability for the set of items or variables being measured. However, the remaining 8 subscales, which their alpha value are under 0.60, it generally suggested a lower level of internal consistency reliability for the set of items or variables being measured.

As a result of Pearson (r) value is over 0.70, 20 subscales of YPI-23, except THD and ASB, are acceptable indicating that there is a strong relationship between 2 variables and there is a positive relationship, meaning as one variable increases, the other tends to increase as well. Items with lower than 0.7 values are less acceptable meaning that there is not strong relationship between 2 variables and there is a negative relationship, meaning as one variable increases, the other tends to decrease. Nevertheless, as the result of factor analysis, all 181 items from 22 subscales involved in YPI-23 except these four items (EID-173, THD-14, NFC-48, and AGGR-18) were acceptable to measure personality.

Conclusion

The purpose of the present study was to adapt the Myanmar version of personality test which was named as YPI-23, based on MMPI-3. This inventory included 22 subscales from MMPI-3. A cohort of 512 participants residing in various regions of Yangon included in this research. This inventory contained True/False response format. To obtain data, the participants must be filled in a demographic form and must be answered all questions. It took around 15 to 30 minutes to answer all items. The responses of each participant were scored with scoring key. Then the obtained data were computed with Statistical Package for Social Sciences statistical method. From the results of factor analysis, four items (EID-173, THD-14, NFC-48, and AGGR-18) were discarded from YPI-23. From the result of the test-retest reliability, all scales from YPI-23, except BXD, were significant at 0.0001 level.

In conclusion, the present study provided a new personality test for Myanmar people based on MMPI-3. The YPI-23 was developed as a first step in Myanmar. It is mentioned that this YPI-23 scales had high reliability and validity. It can be used as an instrument in the Myanmar cultural setting. Moreover, cultures have very different attitudes toward mental health, societal expectations, and emotional expression. The MMPI-3 adaptation should take into account local standards about psychological well-being. Because Myanmar has different attitudes on mental health, psychologists who use the MMPI-3 must be cautious when interpreting scores for conditions such as depression, anxiety, stress, etc. The YPI-23 is a multi-step process that requires collaboration among Union Civil Service Board, Central Institute of Civil Service of Myanmar, Officer Testing Team, and Mental Health Hospital.

Limitations

Limitations in this study mostly lies on sampling method. Since data collection process was done, it was impossible to choose participants from specific townships or sub regions. It was only possible to collect data from those who match the criteria of living in Yangon rather than systematically selecting participants from specific townships or sub regions.

Further Research

Further studies should carry out in different regions in order to gain data insight of Myanmar people personality as a whole. Moreover, it is important to note that this study utilized only 22 subscales out of 52 in the MMPI-3 assessment tool. Therefore, future researchers should incorporate all 52 scales from the MMPI-3 to yield a more accurate and nuanced assessment of human personality.

Acknowledgement

I would like to express my deep gratitude and appreciation to Dr. Lin Lin Latt, Professor and Head, Department of Psychology, University of Yangon, for her patient advice, guidance and valuable suggestions to complete the thesis paper. Especially, I would like to express my thanks to supervisor Dr. U Thaung Kyi, Professor, Department of Psychology, University of Yangon, who supervised and helped me to complete this study.

Reference

Allport, G. W. (1961). Pattern and Growth in Personality. Fort Worth TX: Harcourt College Publisher.

Archer, R. P. (2016). Assessing adolescent psychopathology: MMPI-A/MMPI-A-RF (4th ed.). New York: Routledge Press.

Ben-Porath, Y. S., & Tellegen, A. (2020a). Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory-3 (MMPI-3): Manual for administration, scoring, and interpretation. University of Minnesota Press.

Butcher JN, Bubany S, Mason SN (2013). Assessment of personality and psychopathology with self-report inventories. In: Geisinger KF, Bracken BA, Carlson JF, Hansen JIC, et al., eds., APA handbook of testing and assessment in psychology, Vol. 2. Testing and assessment in clinical and counseling psychology.

Carver, C., & Scheier, M. (2004). Perspectives on Personality (5th ed.). Boston: Pearson.

Corr, Philip J; Matthews, Gerald (2009). The Cambridge handbook of personality psychology (1. publ. Ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Elliott R. (2016). Research on person-centred/experiential psychotherapy and counselling: summary of the main findings. In: Lago C, Charura D, eds. McGraw-Hill/Open University Press.

Friedman, Howard; Schustack, Miriam (2016). Personality: Classic theories and modern research. USA: Pearson.

Fleeson W, Jayawickreme E. (2015). Whole trait theory. Journal of Research in Personality, 56(0092-6566).

Geisinger KF. Reliability. Geisinger KF, Bracken BA, Carlson JF, Hansen JC, Kuncel NR, Reise SP, Rodriguez MC, editors. (2013). Washington, DC: APA; APA handbook of testing and assessment in psychology.

Hogan, Thomas P. (2019). Psychological Testing: A Practical Introduction*. John Wiley & Sons, Incorporated.*

Mellenbergh, G.J. (2008). Chapter 10: Surveys. In H.J. Adèr & G.J. Mellenbergh (Eds.) (with contributions by D.J. Hand), Advising on Research Methods: A consultant's companion (pp. 183-209).

Murray, Henry A. (1943). Thematic Apperception Test manual. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Robinson MD, Klein RJ, Persich MR. (2019). Personality traits in action: A cognitive behavioral version of the social cognitive paradigm. Personality and Individual Differences, 147:214-222.

Schilling R, Casper ST. (2015). Of psychometric means: Starke R. Hathaway and the popularization of the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory. Sci Context, 28(1):77-98.

Sellbom M, Anderson JL. (2013). The Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory-2. In R. P. Archer & E. M. A. Wheeler (Eds.). Forensic Uses of Clinical Assessment Instruments. Routledge/Taylor & Francis Group, 21-62.

University of Minnesota Press. (2020). Privacy Policy, The University of Minnesota is an equal opportunity educator and employer.

Urbina, Susana; Anastasi, Anne (1997). Psychological testing (7th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Yossef S. Ben-Porath (2012). Interpreting the MMPI-2-RF. U of Minnesota Press

J. Myanmar Acad. Arts Sci. 2026 **Vol. XXIII. No.5**

A STUDY ON VIETNAM'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MODEL (1986-2021)*

Su Sandi Aung[1]

Abstract

Vietnam, officially the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, is a country at the eastern edge of mainland Southeast Asia, with an area of 331,212 square kilometers (127,882 sq mi) and a population of over 100 million, making it the world's fifteenth most populous country. Vietnam shares land borders with China to the north, and Laos and Cambodia to the west. It shares maritime borders with Thailand through the Gulf of Thailand, and the Philippines, Indonesia, and Malaysia through the South China Sea. Vietnam is considered wise based on its strategic location, natural resources, and sea outlet. And then, Vietnam built good relations even with the enemy countries, the US and China for the country's development. Vietnam has been a development success story. Economic reforms since the launch of Doi Moi in 1986, coupled with beneficial global trends, have helped propel Vietnam from being one of the world's poorest nations to a middle-income economy in one generation. Between 2002 and 2021, GDP per capita increased 3.6 times, reaching almost US$3,700. Poverty rates declined from 14 in 2010 to 3.8 percent in 2020. This paper aims to analyze the Vietnam government's actions to develop Vietnam and the progress of Vietnam. The qualitative research method is mainly used in this research and applies secondary and tertiary sources. This paper tries to examine what development strategies have helped Vietnam to gain remarkable achievements and to what extent Vietnam's economic sectors have been developed. Finally, the research also considers that the role of the government in a country is very important to be able to success. If the government works to improve the country's economic strength, the country is peaceful and stable and people are satisfied, even though it is a one-party system.

Keywords: Doi Moi, middle-income economy, one-party system.

Introduction

After North Vietnam controlled South Vietnam in April 1975, leading to the abrupt fall of the government of South Vietnam. The nation was officially reunified in January 1976, and in July of the same year, the Socialist Republic of Vietnam was established. The reunification of the North with the South brought together two very different economic systems. The North practiced a state socialist centralized economic system, whereas the South practiced its decentralized market economic system. The communist government attempted to impose the northern model on the South, the so-called "transition to socialism", collectivization of agriculture, nationalization of industries, state monopoly over trade, etc., etc. As early as 1977, it was becoming clear that such a strategy was not working. Since then, Vietnam started the Doi Moi (Renovation) reform process in 1986, to transform the economy from a socialist model into a market-oriented one. Institutional changes aiming to improve the microeconomic foundations of Vietnam's burgeoning market economy and macroeconomic stabilization have been among the key focal points of the Government. Vietnam also adopted an "open-door policy", pursuing proactive integration into both the regional and global economies. This paper tries to explain the key policy changes and institutional reforms to achieve the economic development of Vietnam,

*First Prize(2024)

[1] Department of International Relations and Political Science, University of Mandalay

and examine to what extend Vietnamese government's measures particularly Doi Moi reform contributed to the development of Vietnamese economy.

Literature Review

The economic development of Vietnam following Doi Moi has been written about by various scholars. In the paper "Doi Moi Policy and Socio-Development in Vietnam, 1986-2005," written by Tran Nhuan Kien and Yoon Heo, the authors describe the review and evaluation of the structure and performance of the Doi Moi policy. Vietnam has attained significant achievements in the areas of economic growth, openness to trade, poverty reduction, and human development. It also stated that weaknesses and challenges to the economy are emerging

The paper "Vietnam as a Role Model for Development" expressed by John Thoburn analyzed Vietnam's development performance since the early 1990s has been one of the strongest in the world, following the introduction of its Doi Moi (renovation) economic reform programme in 1986. The core of Vietnam's economic strategy has been rapid integration into the world economy, with a diversified portfolio of exports and the attraction of direct foreign investment. This open approach has been combined with successful domestic agricultural growth and a strong, continued role for state-owned enterprises while encouraging growth of the private sector.

KAI M. SCHELLHORN expressed in his article "Political and Economic Reforms in Vietnam", reforms adopted by communist states, intended to ensure the survival of their regimes, have had a mixed record over the past few years. For Vietnam, the lessons of the fall of the communist regimes in the former Soviet Union and the Eastern European bloc have led it to cautiously adopt an admixture of economic and political reforms that are now beginning to have a salutary impact on Vietnamese society. This article analyzed the various reforms adopted by the Hanoi government over a decade-long period, sets out their societal consequences, and details some of the competing pressures on the Communist Party of Vietnam. This article provided economic and political sectors of Vietnam. Unlike these papers, this paper efforts to express the Vietnam government's actions, study on Vietnam's economic development model, and lessons learnt for Myanmar.

Research Questions and Argument

The main objective of the study is to examine a study on Vietnam's economic development model (1986-2021). In doing so, the study tried to answer the following questions:

- How have the development strategies helped Vietnam to gain remarkable achievements?
- What are the characteristics of transformation? And to what extent were these economic sectors developed?

The paper argues that Vietnam closed the door as a communist country, but after 1986 Doi Moi, Vietnam practiced an open-door policy and made reforms in the economic sectors. The Vietnamese government made a lot of policies and strategies to improve equally in all economic sectors. This paper clarifies that to which these sectors were developed.

Research Methodology

The qualitative research method and case study design are mainly used in this research. Literature reviews on secondary sources and tertiary sources are done. Moreover, other reliable sources from the official websites, documents, and books are also used. The historical studies are also used to study the development model of Vietnam since 1986. Examining and interpreting the collected sources and data, the research on how the development strategies have helped Vietnam to gain noticed achievements has been described and explored.

Conceptual Framework

The Vietnam Communist Party's ideologies are a mix of three types: Marxism-Leninism and Nationalism, and Ho Chi Minh's ideology. Good government is a cornerstone of socio-economic stability and strength. Vietnam is inevitably affected and influenced by Nationalism. Vietnam needs to arouse national consciousness and genuine nationalism, focusing on patriotism and national pride to create a great motivation to protect the country and develop a prosperous and happy nation. Marxism–Leninism was introduced to Vietnam in the 1920s and 1930s. Marxism-Leninism has represented the intellectual and theoretical foundation for Vietnam's tremendous historical achievements during the Doi Moi (renewal) period. Vietnam, a Socialist country, instituted this program of comprehensive economic and social reforms oriented toward developing a market economy in 1986. Under Doi Moi, the Vietnamese state is attempting to create a market economy while retaining the one-party rule of the Vietnamese Communist Party. In the process, the state is focusing on development as a major theme and as justification for its continued legitimacy. During this huge social project, very few, very small private non-governmental organizations (VNGOs) focusing on various aspects of development are beginning to form. The Communist Party of Vietnam espouses Marxism-Leninism and Ho Chí Minh's ideas, the ideologies of the late Ho Chí Minh. The two ideologies serve as guidance for the activities of the party and state. According to the Constitution, Vietnam is in a period of transition to socialism. And Vietnamese culture has been led under the banners of patriotism and Marxism–Leninism.

Marxism–Leninism involves the creation of a one-party state led by a communist party, as a means to develop socialism and then communism. The communist party is the supreme political institution of the state. Marxism–Leninism asserts that the people's interests are fully represented through the communist party and other state institutions. Marxism–Leninism aims to create an international communist society. Vietnam is a one-party state but practices open-door policy and maintains relations with big powers as one of Vietnam's core development strategies.

Findings and Discussions

Historical Overview

Vietnam, a strip of land shaped like the letter "S", lies on the eastern part of the Indochinese peninsula. In 1973, the United States withdrew from Vietnam and signed a cease-fire agreement. After the US ended the country's Vietnam War, North Vietnam overtook South Vietnam and joined the country under Northern Vietnam's communist leadership. Since widespread reforms in 1986, Vietnam has embraced economic liberalization and privatized business, and the government has worked to protect human rights. During the Sixth Congress of the VCP near the end of 1986, the general principles of the Doi Moi reform were outlined. Most of the important principles concerned economic reforms, even though there were some signs of political reforms. The basis of Doi Moi was not to change the political system. The point of the reform was to fix the mistakes of previous leaders who chose to follow the Soviet economic model, not to reform the country into a democratic government. But to adjust to economic reforms, Vietnam also made political and social reforms. This paper only focuses on economic reforms.

Economic Reform under Doi Moi or Renovation

The "socialist transformation" program in the South, along with the impulse of the so-called "socialist relation of production" in the whole country, had economically failed, especially in agriculture. Since Vietnam was typically an agricultural country, the fall in agricultural output directly affected the living standard. Burdens of the wars with Cambodia and with China became extremely heavy for the exhausted economy. Ten years into the new era, Vietnam had gone through extreme difficulties and a severe economic crisis. In 1986, the hyperinflation peaked at over 700%, with an annual economic growth rate of 3%, and the country ran a current account deficit. Moreover, the economic slump had been aggravated by the Vietnam Communist Party's failure to adopt an appropriate foreign policy and efficiently command the economy.

Vietnam was ranked among the countries with the poorest standards of living in the world. From the outset, Vietnam's Doi Moi policy followed the movement of social and economic relaxation among the socialist countries led by the Soviet Union's reform in the mid to late 1980s. The main objective of this reform was to revitalize the economy under government control. This characteristic was conceptualized as a mixed economy in a transitional period in the initial stage of a socialist evolution. In 1986, Vietnam initiated the Doi Moi policy and commenced the social and economic reform to revitalize the stagnant economy, and Doi Moi aimed to establish a "socialist-oriented market economy". Doi Moi was the first step in the still ongoing transitional period of Vietnamese socialism, termed the socialist-oriented market economy. Initial efforts of Doi Moi focused on the decollectivization of the agricultural sector, price liberalization, and diversification of ownership rights. The concept of a multi-sector economy was introduced, comprising the state sector, collective sector, small-scale individual business sector, private capitalist sector, and state-capitalist sector. The government had abandoned its system of economic command and control, but did not adopt a replacement. The budget deficit swelled to 10 percent of the gross domestic product. Savings were negative, and the value of exports was less than half of the import bill for 1988. Inflation remained at its peak of three digits, and macroeconomic policies were out of control. It was not until late 1988 that the Vietnamese government made a turnaround into the array of market-oriented transformation, and implemented a series of accelerated reform measures. Official price controls were abolished for almost all goods and services in the economy, and consumer goods sold through state outlets were priced at the free market level. The Dong was devalued drastically to bring the official rate in line with the prevailing market rate. State-owned enterprises were granted more autonomy, and official state allocations and planning targets were abandoned.

One radical change introduced by Doi Moi was the opening of the economy to foreign investment. Due to this feature, Doi Moi is well known as the "open door policy." The Vietnamese government hoped foreign investment would aid the ailing economy and improve its economic environment. The Law on Foreign Investment (LFI) was enacted on December 29, 1987, and was recognized as one of the most liberal foreign investment laws among developing countries. The LFI was the first economic legislation ever enacted by the Vietnamese Congress. The LFI has played an important role in developing and reforming the Vietnamese legal system for a market economy. Foreign direct investment was to be attracted by this new law. The LFI expressly guarantees that the invested capital and assets of foreign investors will not be requisitioned or expropriated, and that an enterprise with foreign invested capital will not be nationalized. Direct foreign investment may be made through one of the following forms under the LFI: (i) Joint Venture Company, (ii) Wholly Foreign Owned Company, and (iii) Business Cooperation Contract.

Build-Operate Transfer Company is often referred to as another investment form, although it essentially falls into the former category. Foreign investment projects are only authorized to commence business upon the issuance of the investment license. The encouragement of foreign investment reflects both Vietnam's political preference and strategy. The domestic private sector was ideologically disfavored and had been constrained for several years. The Vietnamese government looked to foreign capital as a proper means to revitalize the ailing economy. In addition, by jointly participating in foreign investment projects through state-owned enterprises, the Vietnamese government hoped to supervise this economic activity. State capitalism was a preferred concept and way of doing business. Therefore, in the initial stage, the LFI required businesses in most areas to be set up in the form of a joint venture in which state-owned enterprises held at least 30 percent of the contributed capital. The joint venture company's board of management was to make the most important business decisions on a unanimous basis. This decision-making mechanism gives minority shareholders, normally Vietnamese state-owned enterprises, a veto right. Many joint venture companies needed to convert into wholly foreign-owned companies under government approval at a later stage.

Along with the policy on foreign investment encouragement, Vietnam's recognition of a multi-sector economy legitimizes private businesses and farming households. This recognition initially brought about significant progress in agriculture. The collectives were decentralized, which left farming households responsible for production. Farming households were allocated land and given the right to dispose of their crops, thus allowing farmers to benefit from their productivity. This led to increased agricultural production, and the country was able to meet its requirement of food requirements for the first time, particularly concerning imported rice. Self-financed business households were emerging in various production and service areas, signaling the increase in business activities. The Law on Companies and the Law on Private Enterprises, enacted on December 21, 1990, allowed private investors to start up and run their business as a limited liability company, shareholding company, or "private enterprise". The limited liability company is essentially a privately held corporation, while the shareholding company is based on the structure of a public corporation. Nevertheless, private investors showed their reluctance to invest, especially in production, because of a lack of a guaranteed business environment and a lack of confidence in the stability of state policies. As a result, the government did not promote private businesses. During this period, one rarely saw any government policies, administrative or economic, that supported private businesses. Consequently, this primitive market and cumbersome bureaucracy paralyzed private businesses. This gave rise to the most difficult and continuous reform, the reform of the state economic sector.

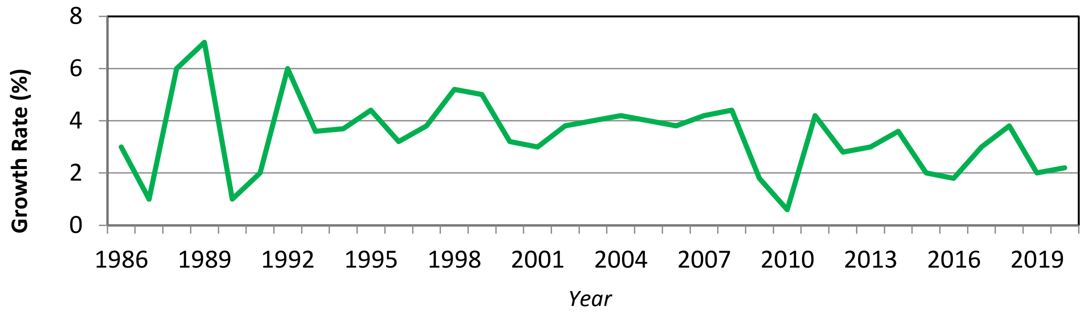
The state-owned enterprises sector is one of the pillars of Vietnam's economy. A large number of state-owned enterprises (SOEs) had been set up without considering efficiency. SOEs had strong social and political motivations to function as job generators under the government's umbrella. In the transitional period, the Vietnamese government planned to allow SOEs to operate autonomously, where they would be largely subject to market forces. In 1987, the Vietnamese government stopped subsidizing SOEs for the most part. As a result, the top-down state plans and targets were reduced substantially. Rather than providing direct funds, the government funded SOEs through bank loans, and in return, SOEs must repay these loans with interest. The SOEs' management was authorized to direct day-to-day business activities, with the sponsoring ministries' power being limited to state management over SOEs. That was the first step aimed at separating the ownership rights and the management rights of SOEs. Many people compared the autonomy of the SOEs with the self-management rights of farming households. The government's decision breathed a new spirit into the operation of SOEs, and SOEs began to produce most of the national output. Specifically, SOEs played a significant role in encouraging foreign investment, notwithstanding the absence of a strong private sector. In practice, however, SOEs have never gone beyond state interventions or been able to overcome their bureaucratic style of management. Thus, SOEs continue to be at the forefront of Vietnam's economic reforms.

The energy sector plays a key role in promoting the country's socio-economic development. Vietnam has large reserves of primary energy resources, such as coal, oil, natural gas, and water for hydropower generation. It also has a high potential for renewable energy resources, such as biomass, solar, and wind. In 2012, the total national primary energy supply was around 58.0 million tons of oil equivalent (Mtoe), of which noncommercial energy accounted for 14.0 Mtoe. The share of total national primary energy by fuel type was coal (26%), crude oil and petroleum products (27%), gas (14%), hydropower generation (8%), and noncommercial energy (25%). Vietnam national energy development strategy 2020, approved in 2007, with an outlook to 2050, has the following objectives: ensure national energy security; supply sufficiently high-quality energy for socioeconomic development; exploit and manage domestic primary energy resources efficiently; diversify energy investments and business models; establish and develop a competitive energy market; promote new and renewable energy sources; and develop energy resources effectively and sustainably with consideration for environmental protection.

Agricultural reform was regarded as a key constituent due to problems with inconsistent and unpredictable yields. Doi Moi in the agricultural sector has three main components: (i) Farmers were given land use rights on a longer-term basis. In addition, they were also allowed to own other means of agricultural production. (ii) Farmer households became self-supporting economic units. Farmers were responsible for their production activities, from the cultivation to the sale of their products. (iii) The cooperatives served only as service providers and received fees from farmers who purchased those services. Not until 1988 were major policy changes in agriculture introduced. In April 1988, the Politburo promulgated Resolution 10 on reforming the agricultural economy. This Resolution was a radical extension of the earlier policy (Resolution 100) in 1981. It allowed farming households to have long-term (15 years) contracts on land and permitted them to decide their farming activities. This policy resulted in the de-collectivization process, in which the state cooperatives shrank in size and number while farming households became the dominant force in agriculture. In November 1988, the Government announced that, except for tax obligations on agricultural output, farming households were free to sell their products in the market to private traders and state companies. Private traders were guaranteed equal treatment as state trading companies. The Government also dropped its food grain subsidy to government employees, thus dropping the two-tier price system and enabling liberalization in the agricultural output market. In addition, the agricultural input market was finally liberalized by December 1988, when private traders were allowed to sell machinery, fertilizers, and other input supplies to farmers. During the 1990s, there was one major policy reform in agriculture: The Land Law. Since 2000, Vietnam’s agriculture has entered a new phase of shifting from extensive to intensive production, aiming at higher productivity and quality. This is also a new period of Vietnam’s international economic integration. In addition to the agricultural restructuring scheme, there are several policies and plans to accelerate the reforms of the agricultural sector, such as the agricultural restructuring plan for the period 2017-2020.

The Vietnam Forestry Development Strategy (VFDS) is one of the country’s most important plans for the forestry sector. Vietnam’s first forestry development strategy, introduced in 2006, aimed to transform the forestry sector, moving it away from a traditional approach that valued forests only for direct benefits like timber, towards a recognition of wide-ranging indirect benefits like environmental services. In 2020, Vietnam had exceeded a number of the goals set out in VFDS 2006–2020, including: (i) accelerating the growth of production value in the sector; (ii) increasing the export value of wood and forest products; (iii) increasing domestic wood production; and (iv) planting protection forest (PTF) and special-use forests (SUF). However, the forestry sector still faces many challenges when it comes to other key performance indicators.

In addition, the 2005 Prime Minister Decree 27 supported the establishment of marine and inland waters protected areas that are important breeding, nurturing, and biodiversity conservation areas. These and several other decrees and decisions have been promulgated about the statutes in Vietnam’s 2003 Fisheries Law. Until any new information is available that could change the situation, the Government’s current plan is to try to limit the fish catch to the currently estimated MSY of about 2.15 million tons. This will require controlling the number of fishing boats by controlling the issuance of fishing licenses, for which, at present, there are no effective controls. These controls need to be put into place. Nearly all fish caught from inland capture fisheries are consumed domestically. Government objectives and strategy for the sector are described in the government's “Strategy of Vietnam’s Fisheries Development to 2020,” which outlines a path forward to protect and develop the sector through modernization and technical support.



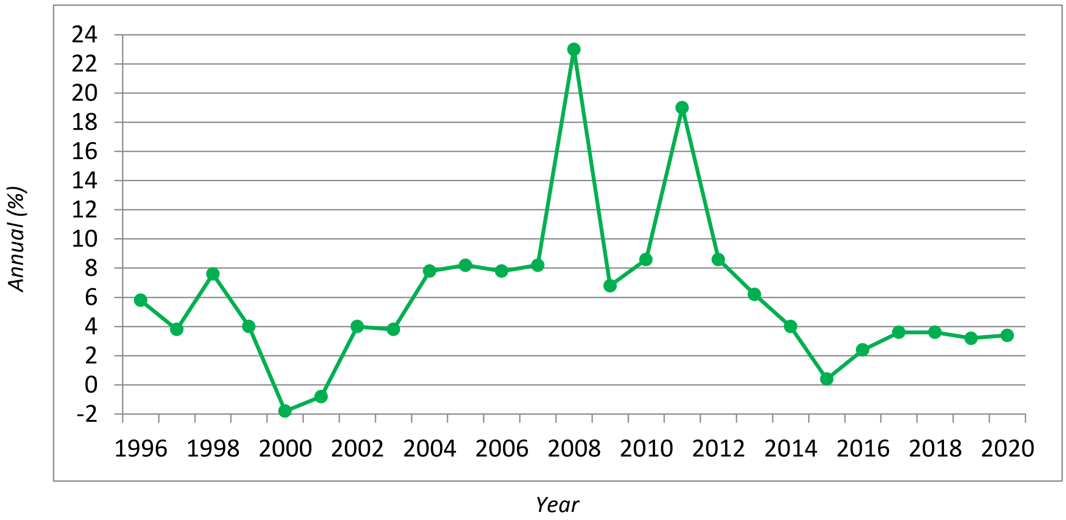
Graph-1: Growth rate of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fishery (%) 1986-2020

Source: https://vietnam.opendevelopmentmekong.net/topics/economy-and-commerce/.

According to Graph 1, Vietnam focused on sustainable agriculture and forestry, developing climate change adoption and resilience. The growth rate of agriculture, forestry, and fishery was 2.79% in 1986, and increased to 6.88% in 1992, after Doi Moi. But dropped 4.77% in the Asia Financial Crisis and 4.69% in the Global Financial Crisis. The government has made efforts to manage this situation using policies and laws.

Banking law is another important part of the legal framework supporting the market system. Early reforms to Vietnam's banking sector were part of the broader set of market-oriented reforms that the government began implementing in the mid-1980s. A number of these reforms focused on decentralizing and privatizing financial activities. The banking reforms were introduced in the wake of the Global Financial Crisis (GFC) in 2008. Before that, the banking sector was booming as new banks entered the market, and rural banks were transformed into full commercial banks. However, the sector was marked by significant inter-bank cross-holding. Vietcombank held 11 percent of the Military Bank, 8.2 percent of Eximbank, and 5.3 percent of Saigon Bank. However, the rapid credit growth resulted in rising non-performing loans, a situation aggravated by the Global Financial Crisis. The banking reforms yielded good results, especially up to 2018. The non-performing loan ratio declined to 8.4 percent by December 2016. The government also implemented a legal framework that enables the Vietnam Asset Management Company (VAMC) to buy and sell non-performing assets. The enhancement of Anti-Money Laundering/Combating the Financing of Terrorism (AML/CFT) measures also bolstered investors' confidence. At the same time, the State Bank of Vietnam pursued more market-oriented monetary policies, especially regarding the foreign currency exchange. The Vietnamese banking system is still "treading water" despite these achievements. Problems of the "zero dong" banks (GPBank, OceanBank, and CBBank), which would have defaulted if they had not been bailed out by the government, persist. While these banks are tasked with clearing their losses, their accumulated losses are increasing over the years. This is mainly because they have been restricted from engaging in new business activities, which prevents them from generating the necessary income to reduce their losses and make profits.

Vietnam has maintained GDP growth throughout the late 1990s and early 2000s, often exceeding 7% annually. The global financial crisis in 2008 led to a slowdown, with growth dipping to 5.7% in 2008 and 5.4% in 2009. The economy has recovered in subsequent years, achieving growth rates above 6%. However, the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 caused a significant slowdown, with GDP growth at 2.9%.



Graph 2: Vietnam inflation, consumer prices (annual%), 1996-2020
Source: https://vietnam.opendevelopmentmekong.net/topics/economy-and-commerce/

According to Graph 2, the Vietnamese Dong (VND) has depreciated by 30% against the US dollar over the last ten years. Inflation (measured by the consumer price index) has also been volatile, peaking in 2008, with 23.12% and again in 2011, with 18.68%. Therefore, the State Bank and the Government have worked to manage inflation using monetary policy since 2015. By 2020, inflation reached only 3.23%.

Foreign Trade and Investment of Vietnam

Since Doi Moi, Vietnam has gradually opened its economy to foreign trade and investment. Economic integration had four milestones. First, in July 1995, Vietnam became a member of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA). Vietnam was signatory to an array of FTAs under the ASEAN Plus framework. At the end of 2015, Vietnam joined the ASEAN Community. In August 2019, Vietnam was active in negotiating the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) between ASEAN and China, the Republic of Korea, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, and India. Second, Vietnam negotiated and signed the Vietnam–United States (US) bilateral trade agreement in 2000, which induced Vietnam to prepare for regional FTA-based integration and the World Trade Organization (WTO) process and gave Vietnam better access to the US, its largest export market, implying improved competitiveness relative to other major exporters. Third, Vietnam became a member of the WTO in January 2007. The greatest pressures under the WTO are related to institutional reforms and the service sector. To fulfil its WTO commitments, Vietnam had to amend or promulgate many laws, ordinances, and decrees related to domestic institutional regulations. Fourth, since 2008, Vietnam has focused on bilateral and plurilateral FTAs. It negotiated or signed, amongst others, the Economic Partnership Agreement with Japan and FTAs with the EU, Chile, Korea, and the Eurasian Economic Union. Whilst the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPP), signed in 2016, could not proceed due to the US's withdrawal, Viet Nam signed the CPTPP in March 2018, and ratified it in November 2018. Vietnam was the

United States' 28th-largest goods export market in 2020. Vietnam was the United States' 6th-largest supplier of goods imports in 2020. Exports to main markets, namely the EU, ASEAN, and ROK, plummeted. In 2020, the total value of exports was 281,441 million. The total value of imports was 261,309 million.

Table 1: Vietnam's Top 5 Export Countries in 2020

Country	**Export USD$**
United States	77,072 million
China	48,880 million
Japan	19,269 million
South Korea	19,125 million
Hong Kong	10,436 million

Source:https://wits.worldbank.org/CountryProfile/en/Country/VNM/Year/LTST/ Summarytext.

According to Table 1, Vietnam's main exports in 2020 were telephones, mobile phones, shipments, and textiles. Others included computers and electrical products, shoes and footwear, and machinery, instruments, and accessories. Main export partners were the United States (19% of the total exports), China (16%), Japan (8%), South Korea (7%), and Hong Kong (4%).

Table 2: Vietnam's Top 5 Import Countries in 2020

Country	**Import USD$**
China	84,198 million
South Korea	46,862 million
Japan	20,277 million
Other Asia	16,704 million
United States	13,764 million

Source:https://wits.worldbank.org/CountryProfile/en/Country/VNM/Year/LTST/ Summarytext.

According to Table 2, Vietnam's main imports in 2020 were computers, electrical products and machines, instruments, and accessories. Other included telephones, mobile phones and textile fabrics, and iron and steel. Main import partners were China (28% of the total import), South Korea (22%), Japan (8%), other Asia countries (6%), and the United States (4%).

Since the inauguration of Doi Moi in 1986, Vietnam has been proactive in its pursuit of regional and global economic integration. In actualizing such a transformative process, attracting FDI is among the crucial measures. Along with the country's official adoption of a multi-ownership economy, FDI is critical for national development. Indeed, the promulgation of the Foreign Investment Law in 1987 reflected its importance to the Government of Vietnam. The Law subsequently underwent four revisions in 1990, 1992, 1996, and 2000. These revisions were implemented to increase the rights of foreign investors, to make the investment environment more favorable, and to narrow the policy gap between foreign and domestic investors.

However, during 2003, the implemented capital of FDI projects in Vietnam increased slightly from over USD 2.4 billion to over USD 2.6 billion. Since 2004, FDI inflows into Vietnam have begun to increase. In particular, the WTO accession in 2007 enhanced the growth prospects of Vietnam, leading to a faster surge in FDI inflows to the country. Due to the removal of some preferential treatment statutes on foreign investment in the revised Foreign Investment Law in 1996. Total registered capital went up even more quickly, from over USD 4.5 billion in 2004 to above USD 12 billion in 2006, before peaking at USD 71.7 billion in 2008. Similarly, implemented capital increased more rapidly than in previous years, to US$4.1 billion in 2006, and US$11.5 billion in 2008, as compared to about US$2.8 billion in 2004. Due to the negative impact of the global financial crisis and Vietnam's domestic economic downturn since late 2008, the pace of new FDI registration and the implementation of several FDI projects, particularly large ones, slowed significantly. From 2005 to 2015, FDI, in both the number of projects and registered capital, increased steadily, with average growth rates of 8.1 percent and 13.4 percent, respectively. The share of FDI in gross investment increased from 14.9% in 2007 to 23.4% in 2018. In 2020, despite the crisis caused by COVID-19 having a strong impact on the global supply chain, the total registered capital by foreign investors in Vietnam still reached 31 billion USD. FDI capital continues to maintain positive results in 2020, showing that the section of foreign investors for Vietnam is an attractive and safe destination.

Outcomes from Vietnam's economic reforms

The world economy has gone through an extremely difficult period since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, according to the latest data from the World Bank, Vietnam's GDP per capita in 2021 reached $3,694.02."It can be seen that Vietnam is one of the few economies that has survived the impact of the pandemic," Forbes assessed. Accordingly, in 2019, Vietnam's GDP per capita was $3,425.09, then increased to $3,526.27 in 2020, and $3,694.02 in 2021. The GDP per capita of Vietnam has increased dramatically since 2005. The World Bank calculates Vietnam's GDP per capita growth in constant local currency. Therefore, if Vietnam's annual GDP per capita growth rate is calculated in dollar terms at the moment, the data would not match the annual growth rate provided by the World Bank. For the period 2020-2021, the GDP per capita growth rate of Vietnam is 1.72%/year if calculated according to the fixed value of the Vietnamese dong. In current dollar terms, the annual GDP per capita growth rate is 4.76%.

According to Table 3, the annual GDP growth rates during this period were diverse, with a maximum of 82.55% in 1986 and a minimum of -75.79% in 1989. The average annual GDP growth rate of Vietnam's GDP per capita from 1986 to 2020, for 35 years, is approximately 11.72%. From 2019 to 2020, Vietnam's annual GDP per capita growth rate was 2.01%. Although the growth rate during this period slowed down compared to the annual growth rate of the period 2018-2019 (6.13%), it is still extremely positive. From 2006 to 2021, Vietnam's GDP per capita increased by nearly 371%, corresponding to an increase of nearly 5 times. Vietnam's GDP per capita has grown extremely impressively.

Table 3: Vietnam GDP Per Capita-Historical Data (1986-2020)

Year	GDP Per Capita (US$)	Annual Growth Rate (%)
1986	$430	82.55%
1987	$585	36.06%
1988	$397	-32.17%
1989	$96	-75.79%
1990	$97	0.61%
1991	$141	45.40%
1992	$141	0.54%
1993	$185	30.98%
1994	$225	21.30%
1995	$281	25.15%
1996	$329	17.03%
1997	$353	7.27%
1998	$353	-0.04%
1999	$367	4.07%
2000	$395	7.47%
2001	$409	3.78%
2002	$435	6.18%
2003	$485	11.65%
2004	$552	13.69%
2005	$639	25.60%
2006	$791	14.05%
2007	$913	15.52%
2008	$1,158	26.80%
2009	$1,226	5.85%
2010	$1,684	37.38%
2011	$1,954	16.01%
2012	$2,190	12.12%
2013	$2,367	8.09%
2014	$2,559	8.08%
2015	$2,595	1.42%
2016	$2,761	6.38%
2017	$2,991	8.38%
2018	$3,267	9.20%
2019	$3,491	6.85%
2020	$3,586	2.73%

Source**:** https://www.macrotrends.net/countries/VNM/vietnam/gdp-per-capita

Lessons learnt for Myanmar

Myanmar can learn several lessons from Vietnam's economic development model, particularly its transition from a centrally planned economy to a market-oriented economy after Doi Moi in 1986. Myanmar can adopt economic liberalization, balancing state control with private sector development. Vietnam actively welcomed FDI by creating policies and laws, such as tax incentives, special economic zones (SEZs), and business regulations. Myanmar can upgrade its FDI policies, particularly in sectors like manufacturing, agriculture, and the digital economy, to attract foreign investors. Vietnam transformed agriculture through land reforms, rural credit programs, improved technology, created marketplaces for farmers, and became the world's second-largest rice exporter. Like Vietnam, Myanmar is an agricultural country. Myanmar should invest in modern farming techniques, better irrigation systems, and agro-processing industries to increase productivity and rural incomes. Vietnam prioritized transport, energy, and digital infrastructure, enabling faster economic growth and urbanization. Myanmar also needs to upgrade roads, ports, electricity supply, and internet access to support business activities and attract investment. Vietnam's economic success is built on gradual reforms, openness to trade, investment in infrastructure, and human capital development. If Myanmar utilizes similar strategies while addressing its challenges, Myanmar can achieve sustainable economic growth and greater integration into the global economy.

Conclusion

Vietnam declared independence in 1975, and at this time, Vietnam was one of the world's poorest countries. However, in a period of 15 years, Vietnam transformed from an agricultural-based society into a transitioning lower-middle-income country. Poverty rates declined sharply from 79.7% in 1992 to 6.6% in 2018. Vietnam began actively integrating itself into global trade starting in 2000, when it signed the Vietnam-US Bilateral Trade Agreement. Vietnam joined ASEAN in 1995 and the World Trade Organization in 2007. Joining the WTO was a major turning point in its economic reform process, strengthening Vietnam's private and export-oriented sectors, which became the engine of growth. WTO commitments led to the privatization of Vinamilk, a state-run dairy company, to open markets. Vietnam also shifted toward an export-oriented economy, focusing on agricultural products, textiles, and raw materials. Considered a success story by the international community, Vietnam lifted over 45 million people out of poverty and boosted living standards during this period. After a prolonged period of high growth, Vietnam was recognized as a lower-middle-income country in 2010. Growth continues to accelerate. Growth continued at 2.73% in 2020, despite the COVID-19 pandemic.

Vietnam posted a slight trade deficit from 1990-2011, but this shifted to a surplus from 2012-2019. Total trade, exports, and imports have grown rapidly, at 18% annually during 1991-2019. In 2019, total trade reached a record value of US$51 billion. Vietnam rose from 39th place in 2009 to 23rd place in 2019, among the world's top 50 merchandise traders. This improvement was primarily due to the nation's active participation in global value chains, particularly in manufactured goods. Foreign Direct Investment is another driver of Vietnam's economy, attracting capital and expertise to value-added industries in Vietnam. The manufacturing and processing industries have replaced mining as the primary beneficiaries of FDI. Reasonable labor costs and increasingly improved business conditions have made Vietnam a popular destination for FDI. It is also considered one of the world's most dynamic and open economies with 16 Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) joined, including the two "new-generation" FTAs –the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) and the EU-Vietnam Free Trade Agreement (EVFTA). Some challenges remain, including underdeveloped infrastructure and slow public sector reform, while the banking system and business environment could be further improved. With all these advances in various sectors, numerous issues arise, and Vietnam must address these challenges wisely.

Acknowledgement

The researcher would like to express the greatest thankfulness to Dr. Win Mar Hlaing (Professor/ Head of Department of International Relations and Political Science, University of Mandalay) for her encouragement. I also would like to thank all of my professors from the Department of International Relations and Political Science, University of Mandalay, for their valuable advice. I would like to express the deepest appreciation to my Professor Dr. Thinn Thinn Aye (Pro-Rector, Hpa An University) for her help and support. Finally, I would like to express my greatest thankfulness to all the people who have helped in the completion of my work, and I will always be grateful to them.

References

"*Asia Focus: Banking Reform in Vietnam*," accessed April 11, 2023, https://www.frbsf.org/ banking/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/june-banking-reform-in-vietnam-June-2011.pdf.

Andrew Keough, "*Reform or Die: Doi Moi, TPP, and the Legitimacy of Power in Vietnam*," accessed March 22, 2023, file:///C:/Users/acer/Downloads/Fall2016_Reform.pdf.

Bao Pham, *THE ECONOMIC REFORM IN VIETNAM IN 1989: "SHOCK THERAPY" OR GRADUALISM?* (San Diego: University of California,2000), 13, PDF e-book.

"*Economy and Commerce*," accessed May 1,2023, https://vietnam.opendevelopmentmekong.net/ topics/economy-and-commerce/.

Embassy of Vietnam in South Africa," *Economic Renovation: Doi Moi*," accessed April 1,2023, https://www.vietnam.co.za/about-vietnam/economic-renovation-doi-moi-blank/.

"*Foreign Direct Investment in Vietnam*," accessed April 22,2023, https://www.bot.or.th/ Thai/Monetary Policy/NorthEastern/DocLib_seminar56/Tran%20Dinh%20Lam-Foreign%20Direct%20 Investment %20in%20Vietnam.pdf.

"*International Economy*," accessed April 27,2023, file:///C:/Users/acer/Downloads/A-review-of-foreign-direct-investments-in-Vietnam-and-implications-for-improvement-min.pdf.

Le Quoc Phuong, "*Impact of Covid 19 on Vietnam Trade and Policy Responses*," accessed April 23, 2023, file:///C:/Users/acer/Downloads/part_1-05_Le_Quoc_Phuon%20(1).pdf.

Prema-chandra Athukorala, *Trade Policy reform and structural Protection in Vietnam* (Australian National University: Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, 2005), 1, PDF e-book.

Truong Lang, "*A guideline to Vietnamese State-owned Enterprises*," accessed April,3, 2023, https://www.viettonkinconsulting.com/general/a-guideline-to-vietnamese-state-owned-enterprises/.

Thanh Tri Vo and Duong Anh NGUYEN, *Experiences of Vietnam in FDI Promotion: Some Lessons for Myanmar* (Thailand: Bangkok research center, 2012), 132, PDF e-book.

"*Vietnamese Agriculture before and after Opening Economy*," accessed March 30,2023, https://www.scirp.org/journal/ paperinformation.aspx?paperid=99651.

"*Vietnam Forestry Development Strategy*," accessed May 2,2023, https://www.cifor.org/ publications/ pdf_files/OccPapers/OP-213.pdf.

"*Vietnam GDP per Capita*," accessed April 30, 2023, https://www.febis.org/2022/11/28/forbes-vietnam-s-gdp-per-capita-saw-impressive-growth/.

J. Myanmar Acad. Arts Sci. 2026 **Vol. XXIII. No.5**

MYANMAR-INDIA POLITICAL RELATIONS UNDER THE USDP GOVERNMENT

Aye Thandar Tun[1]

Abstract

Myanmar and India tried to cultivate friendly relations between them since the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1948. With their common policy of peaceful co-existence and mutual cooperation, Myanmar and India tried to improve their relations from 2011 to 2015 by changing and adjusting their foreign policies. The aim of this research is to examine the bilateral relations between Myanmar and India from 2011 to 2015 focusing on political sector. Although the bilateral political relations became strained in late 1988 due to India's clear stand on the democracy movement in Myanmar, China's growing influence in Myanmar and its Look East Policy pushed India to change its approach from that of confrontation to engagement with it. Myanmar's changing relationship with China offered India an opportunity to engage more constructively with Myanmar. Between 2011 and 2015, Myanmar and India saw a strengthening and broadening of their political ties, driven by a growing number of high-level state visits. The political relations between Myanmar and India were widely seen as landmark under the USDP government.

Keywords: Myanmar, India, political relations, foreign policy, USDP government

Introduction

Myanmar is situated in mainland Southeast Asia and shares common border with five countries: Bangladesh, China, India, Laos and Thailand. The bordering regions between Myanmar and India are Northwest Myanmar and Northeast India. Northeast India is a gate way of commerce and culture that links India overland to East and Southeast Asia. Myanmar is geopolitically significant to India, as it stands at the center of the India-Southeast Asia. Myanmar's location at the tri junction of Southeast Asia, West Asia and East Asia creates security and economic imperatives for India. It is the only Southeast Asian country which shares a 1,643-kilometre land border with north-eastern India and a 725-kilometre maritime boundary in the Bay of Bengal. Moreover, Myanmar is located in a crossroads of Asia, surrounded by the Indian subcontinent, China and the Southeast Asia. India sees Myanmar as an important "land-bridge" on its path to the consolidation of ties with Southeast and East Asia.

Conceptual Framework and Literature Review

Foreign policy is important to formulate a state's strategy and to implement these policies concerning with other nations, encompassing diplomacy, defense, economic relations and international cooperation. In the book of Professor Dr. Tarik Oguzlu, *Foreign Policy Analysis*, "Chapter 6: Foreign Policy Preferences of States", he finds out "states think they can achieve their foreign policy interests through close interactions and cooperation with other states in the system." The high-level exchanges build trust and bilateral and multilateral relations between state leaders that serve as strategic instruments of diplomacy. It strengthens alliances and opens new channels of cooperation. Under the USDP government, there have been a lot of interactions

[1] Department of International Relations, Yadanabon University

between the top levels of Myanmar and India including exchange visits, MoUs and regional summit meetings.

In the book *Foreign Policy Analysis: A Toolbox*, "Chapter 5: To What Extent is Foreign Policy Shaped by Institutions?", Jean-Frederic Morin and Jonathan Paquin express "Foreign policy decisions are always made within an institutional framework, which shapes actors' preferences and behavior." In the parliamentary visits, parliamentary delegations engage in soft diplomacy, foster inter-parliamentary dialogue and people-to-people connections and influence foreign policy through legislative support. The Myanmar and India parliamentary delegations' exchange visits contribute to foreign policy by promoting mutual understanding and legislative cooperation. Such visits enhance transparency and accountability in bilateral relations and influence policymaking and promote democracy ways.

In the study "Reshaping defence diplomacy: New Roles for Miliary Cooperation and Assistance", Andrew Cootey argued that external defence diplomacy assistance plays a role in supporting conflict prevention, the reform and democratization of armed forces and peacekeeping capabilities. The military officers' exchanges build mutual trust and reduce threat interstates' perceptions. The military training joint cooperation upgrades the ability of military exercises and intelligence sharing. These exchanges support in building confidence, developing interoperability between armed forces and aligning defense strategies. The 2013 bilateral exercises between Myanmar and India and military officers' visits enhance security and peace along the border and strengthen the mutual trust among the military engagements. The interactions of high-level, parliamentary and military exchange of visits serve strategic and substantive purposes that ranges from alliance-building and defense cooperation to norm-setting and mutual trust-building.

Research Methodology

To implement the aim of this research that is to investigate the high level exchange of visits of Myanmar and India, and then the visits of parliamentary delegations and military personnel between them under the USDP government, this research was made in a qualitative research method by collecting the primary and secondary sources from the MoUs, the newspaper, records of exchange visits and agreements. In using the acquired data, descriptive research design is best suited to examine how the relations between Myanmar and India in the political sector developed from 2011 to 2015. And by using analytical research method, this research explores the political relations that shaped the Myanmar - India relations from 2011 to 2015 under the USDP government.

Historical Background of Myanmar-India Relations

Myanmar and India established formal diplomatic relations on 4th January 1948 when Myanmar became an independent state. Myanmar and India share profound historical and cultural links. During the colonial period, both countries were under British India. After their independence, the two countries cultivated a close relationship that culminated in the signing of two kinds of compromises respectively: (i) a five year Treaty of Peace and Friendship on 7th July 1951 and (ii) a Trade Agreement. India's first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru and Myanmar's Premier U Nu shared common views on many issues regarding the conduct of international politics and pioneered the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). Myanmar and India were close allies in the NAM in the 1950s and the warm friendship between Prime Ministers Jawaharlal Nehru and U Nu contributed to close consultations and frequent exchange of visits.

Although the relations remained warm and stable in the 1950s, Myanmar - India bilateral relations were seen ups and downs from 1962 to1988. General Ne Win's nationalization programme of the 1960s resulted in the eviction of thousands of people of Indian origin from Myanmar, causing frictions in the relationship. However, a number of agreements enhancing bilateral cooperation have been signed between the two countries. Myanmar and India also signed the Land Boundary Agreement in 1967 and the Maritime Boundary Agreement in 1986 due to the exchange of high level visits between them. The visit of the Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi in 1987 laid the foundations for a stronger relationship between Myanmar and India.

After taking State power on 18 September 1988, the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC) government announced that it would continue to pursue an independent and active foreign policy. Under the SLORC government, Myanmar abandoned socialist economic system and its traditional neutrality. Myanmar foreign policy towards India has been largely based on its desire to diversity to external engagement at that time. Myanmar was seen by India as a counter - weight neighbor to reduce its dependence on China in the region. When the Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP) government came to power in Myanmar in 2011, the government made reforms to push the country toward democracy and recast the government's foreign policy to wean the country away from China. Under the USDP government, as declared in *the 2008 Constitution*, the principles of Myanmar foreign policy, which were independent, active and non-aligned, has been continued. Myanmar's transformation processes offered a unique opportunity for a major readjustment of India's foreign policy towards Myanmar. For India, Myanmar is a gateway to the ASEAN States. In 2014, India has shifted from its "Look East" to "Act East" policy (AEP).

The "Look East" Policy (LEP), which was launched in 1991 by the Narasimha Rao Government, was part of the development paradigm of the new economic reforms in India. India's LEP is the policy towards the Southeast Asian region, where is abundant in natural resources and plays a role in support for India in the Asia-Pacific regional strategy. Myanmar, which is considered "a bridge" between India and Southeast Asia, has an important role in the LEP of India. Therefore, India improved and increased cooperation relations with Myanmar in the political, economic and social fields especially restricting the China's strategic advantage which is increasing in Myanmar. Myanmar is considered an important "bridge" between India and South East Asia and a successful key of the LEP on all fields of economy, politics and diplomacy. As to the politics and diplomacy, Myanmar - India relations have been also improved. Through Myanmar, India can strengthen ties with Southeast Asian countries and lifts the political position of India from a nation with one ocean to a nation with two oceans. Besides, the relations with Myanmar help India clear the road to the Asia-Pacific region and overcome the difficulties that India is meeting in South Asia. The Myanmar's position is very important for India in curbing China and ensuring the political security position of India on the international arena. The success of the LEP facilitates India by increasing relations with ASEAN countries through Myanmar. This would bring the most benefit not only for Myanmar but also for India's LEP to reduce the China's control. The success of India's LEP not only brings the practical effects of economy, politics and societies for Myanmar and India, but also can draw the useful experiences for the ASEAN countries to perform a new foreign policy.

The essence of India's LEP was to build on the stagnant diplomatic and trade relations with Southeast Asia, wherein the northeastern region was to facilitate as the gateway to these countries. The Prime Minister Modi government revitalized the LEP. The Act East Policy (AEP) was introduced in 2014 to deepen India's economic integration with the Southeast Asian neighbors. The focus of the LEP was to increase economic integration with the Southeast Asian countries and the area was just confined to Southeast Asia only. On the other hand, the focus of the AEP is economic and security integration, and focused area increased to South East Asia plus East Asia. India's extended neighborhood acquired special attention as the Prime Minister Modi government articulated a "Neighborhood First" policy with a pledge to take a more "integrated and holistic approach" to its cross-border regional engagement. Indian has a vision for creating a connected and collaborative neighborhood. Therefore, AEP, Neighborhood First policy and good relations with Myanmar have become important factors for India. Myanmar is an important part of the AEP as it plays a key in the geographical connection between India and Southeast Asian countries. Therefore, India carefully took advantage of the opportunities available to develop relations between Myanmar and India. In this way, Myanmar is the main actor in the implementation of India's AEP. India prioritized the AEP to expand its influence in the Bay of Bengal and Southeast Asia.

Findings and Discussion

High Level Exchange of Visits during the USDP Government

From the late 2010 onwards Myanmar's political landscape underwent significant changes: national and local elections were held, a new parliament was convened, and U Thein Sein became elected President and the USDP government took power in 2011 and continued to pursue an independent, active and non-aligned foreign policy. In addition, under the USDP government, a new policy had been put in place to re-engage with international organizations and reintegrate into the international community. This objective is not in conflict with the existing ones nor does it seek to replace them, but rather endeavors to supplement them to make Myanmar's foreign relations more active, dynamic, and international community. Myanmar has also sought to improve its international relations as it has made a number of reforms within the country for transition to democracy.

The political changes in Myanmar opened up new opportunities for India to pursue its interests and avoided the risks and pitfalls that plagued its policy towards Myanmar for many years. Since 2010, India turned to adopt an approach of making decisions based on rational calculations of costs and benefits, and it abandoned the previous approach of supporting democratic forces and engaged the SLORC and the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) governments. India's policy towards Myanmar has always been a delicate balance between a refusal to renege on its earlier commitment to democracy and democratic ideals and maintaining good relations with the government of Myanmar. India's foreign policy objectives in Myanmar include: (i) balancing against China's growing economic and strategic footprints in the region; (ii) exploring the possibility of tapping Myanmar's rich hydrocarbon reserves; (iii)convincing the Myanmar government to flush out Indian insurgents from their shelters; and

(iv) obtaining guarantees of smooth passage for goods and services moving between India and Southeast Asia. Reconciliation between Myanmar and Western democracies has augured well for India's foreign policy towards Myanmar, producing tangible benefits by the ways of much increased investment in Myanmar's infrastructure. Myanmar's role is pivotal if India's Northeast is to benefit from the LEP. This benefit demands huge investments in Myanmar's infrastructure so that the Northeast can connect physically with the more prosperous markets of Southeast Asia. In 2014 India's new AEP signaled a major shift from its former "Look East" approach towards a more proactive stance. Therefore, political, economic and social cooperation between Myanmar and India were improved after 2011.

Under President U Thein Sein, Myanmar saw a liberalization period with the release of the majority of political prisoners. Restrictions were reduced in many sectors including political, economy and media area. The National League for Democracy (NLD) re-emerged as a legal political party and won 43 seats in parliament in the 2012 by elections. These changes prompted enthusiastic responses from supporters of a greater Indian engagement with Myanmar, as well as internationally. In 2012, President U Thein Sein suspended a Myitsone dam project. U Thein Sein's diplomatic readjustment was accelerated by China's assertive actions over territorial claims against some ASEAN nations in the South China Sea. Growing wariness about China's policy of expansion had more favorable for between Myanmar and India. The political transition towards a democratic system in Myanmar had acted as a catalyst and provided an opportunity for India to engage its neighbor more intimately.

As a steadily increasing number of Western politicians paid visits to Myanmar and talk of easing sanctions began, Indian government circles and ex-diplomats spoke up in favor of greater Indian involvement in Myanmar. A dominant line of argument was that India needed to strengthen its approach and engagement, in light of China's comparative strategic advantages. Again, the notion of a 'Sino-Indian Great Game' in Myanmar became center stage on the Indian side. Indeed immediately following the announcement of Myanmar's new government in 2011, India's Minister of External Affairs, S.M. Krishna, became the first foreign dignitary to visit Nay Pyi Taw, and after taking up office in six months President U Thein Sein visited India. Prime Minister Manmohan Singh travelled to Myanmar in 2012, and significantly supported both the new government and its opposition through meetings with President U Thein Sein and Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. A steadily increasing number of agreements had been entered, with 12 new MoUs signed during Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's visiting to Myanmar.

High level visits have been a regular feature of Myanmar - India relations for several years. After the formation of the new government in Myanmar, President U Thein Sein accompanied by some Union Ministers and ambassadors visited India from 2 to 15 October 2011. President U Thein Sein and Indian Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh discussed the matters of mutual interest between the two countries at the Conference Room of Hyderabad House in India. The two countries issued a Joint Statement on 14 October 2011. During the visit, the two documents were signed: the MoU for the up gradation of the Yangon Children's Hospital and Sittwe General Hospital; and the Programme of Cooperation in Science & Technology for the period of 2012-2015.

From May 27 to 29, 2012, Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh visited to Myanmar as the first prime ministerial level visit since that by Rajiv Gandhi in 1987. The two governments announced several new initiatives and signed 12 MoUs and agreements which were used to signal a significant deepening of relations. The 12 MoUs and agreements were as follows:

No	Item
1	MoU regarding US$ 500 million line of credit
2	Air Services Agreement between India and Myanmar
3	MoU on the India - Myanmar Border Area Development
4	MoU on establishment of a Joint Trade and Investment Forum
5	MoU on the establishment of the Advance Centre for Agriculture Research and Education (ACARE)
6	MoU on establishment of Rice Bio Park at the Department of Agricultural Research in Nay Pyi Taw
7	MoU towards setting up of a Myanmar Institute of Information Technology
8	MoU on cooperation between Dagon University and Calcutta University
9	MoU on cooperation between the Myanmar Institute of Strategic and International Studies and the Indian Council of World Affairs
10	Agreement on cooperation between the Myanmar Institute of Strategic and International Studies and the Institute for Defense Studies and Analysis
11	Cultural exchange programme (2012-15)
12	MoU on establishing of Border Haats (markets) along the border between Myanmar and India.

Source: New Light of Myanmar, 29 May, 2012

The 12 MoUs and agreements were signed to form the cornerstone of tangible interaction between Myanmar and India for a deeper relationship and the speed with which they were implemented that reflected the political will on both sides. MoU between India and Myanmar for Advance Centre for ACARE was signed on 28th May 2012. Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI) was responsible for training, monitoring, and curriculum, procurement of equipment and setting of laboratories and providing full time on-site Advisor for 5 years. ACARE benefited all the stakeholders of Myanmar agriculture through enhancement in agricultural production and productivity, enhancing agricultural income, improved employment opportunities and creating a pool of skilled agricultural scientists and managers. MIIT was also established in Mandalay in 2015. It was an initiative under the friendship project Myanmar and India. It focused to transform higher education in Myanmar and MIIT is home to students from across the nation. Offering undergraduate programmes in Computer Science and Engineering (CSE) and Electronics and Communication Engineering (ECE), it is a place for young minds to experience a transformative journey through learning.

The two countries issued a Joint Statement on May 28, 2012 .The decision to demonstrate a deepening of ties through a prime ministerial visit was intended to herald an exponential expansion in linkages. India rendered assistance in development of transport and infrastructures in the border areas. Multifaceted cooperation continued for the stability of border regions in the mutual interest of the two countries. In exercising democracy, Myanmar had to develop its democratic experience and practices and prioritized state peace and stability and national economic development. Steps were being taken for all political forces to be able to take part in political processes for peace and stability, and to make peace with national ethnic armed groups. In so doing, the aim of the government was that all the Myanmar people, including national race armed groups, must be able to live equally within the framework of law. The Indian Prime Minister praised Myanmar for its success in national reconsolidation efforts and fully supported those efforts. He expressed his wishes to see more cooperation between the two countries in regional and international issues, to further strengthen the relations with ASEAN and to invite President U Thein Sein to attend ASEAN - India Summit to be hosted in India. Both sides cordially discussed the signing of bilateral agreements and MoUs, India’s investment in road, water and air transports, industrial and economic sectors and technological development, and opportunities for cooperation with the international community in peace, development and national consolidation efforts.

The second part of Dr. Manmohan Singh’s visit was his undeniably most important engagement with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. The two leaders accepted a forward looking and constructive approach. He spelt his visions of the bilateral relations as a partnership for progress and regional development along with the promotion of democratic norms and characterized that Myanmar and India are ‘natural partners linked by geography and history. The two sides frankly discussed matters related to joint projects, commercial and economic cooperation, trade, investment, communications, education, science and technology, industry, culture, livestock and fisheries, defense, religious affairs, electricity, health, agricultural cooperation, finance and revenue, transport, oil and gas, ASEAN - India relations, and cooperation in regional and international arena.

Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh paid again a two day official visit to Myanmar from 3 to 4 March 2014 to attend the 3rd BIMSTEC Summit. On 3 March 2014, President U Thein Sein and Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh and his party discussed for further providing technical assistance for development of information technology, education, agriculture and industrial sectors, cooperation in energy sector and banking industry, defense security cooperation and development of SMEs and agricultural sector. President U Thein Sein clarified progress of political and economic reforms and peace making process in Myanmar. The Prime Minister disclosed that he fully supported Myanmar’s democratization and efforts for national reconsolidation and pledged that India would cooperate with Myanmar. On 11 November 2014, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his party arrived at Nay Pyi Taw International Airport to attend the 9th East Asia Summit and related meetings in Nay Pyi Taw. Prime Minister Modi attended the 9th East Asia Summit and related meetings in Myanmar.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s visit to Myanmar in November 2014 was a welcome step in a new direction of Myanmar-India relations. Although Modi’s primary reason for coming to Myanmar was to attend the ASEAN meeting and the East Asia Summit (EAS), there were also bilateral talks with President U Thein Sein. According to him, having stronger relations with Myanmar was a priority area for India. India signaled rhetorically that it was serious about a new definition of its relations towards its smaller neighbors that had been neglected in the past, particularly Myanmar.

In 2014, Myanmar chaired the ASEAN for the first time in seven years after its membership of the association. Indian Prime Minister Modi highlighted the shifts of policy from "Look to Act East" at the summit. This policy aims to move beyond its traditional limited focus on ASEAN and ASEAN - centric forums. To implement effectively from the "Look to Act", Prime Minister Modi highlighted a major paradigm shift in India's foreign policy to Act East focusing with 3 Cs, connectivity, commerce and culture at the East Asia Summit hosted by Myanmar in 2014. Myanmar - India cooperation in 3Cs can be observed in the regional groupings like ASEAN, BIMSTEC and Mekong Ganga Cooperation.

Exchange Visits of Parliamentary Delegations during the USDP Government

In the exchange of parliamentary delegations, there had been exchanges of parliamentary delegations and the speakers of the Hluttaw visited India, and numerous contacts had been taken place at ministerial level since 2011. On December 11, 2011, Pyithu Hluttaw (Lower House) Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann led a high level parliamentary delegation to India at the invitation of Speaker of the Council of State Mohammad Hamid Ansari and Speaker of House of Representatives Meira Kumar (Smt) of the Republic of India. The objective of the visit was to share India's experience in parliamentary practices and procedures with the visiting Myanmar delegation.

On 13 February 2013, President U Thein Sein received an Indian delegation led by Lok Sabha Speaker Honourable Smt. Meira Kumar at Credentials Hall of the Presidential Palace. They discussed the implementation of Kaladan Project, sooner completion of India-Myanmar - Thai highway construction, gearing up of the repair works of Moreh-Tamu-Kalay- Kalewa - Mandalay route, effective cooperation for ensuring peace and stability in border region, further cooperation in Information and Communications, and Technology (ICT) sector with the Ministry of Science and Technology. Smt. Meira Kumar's visit to Myanmar from 12 to 15 February 2013 was designed to strengthen relations not only between the two parliaments but also between the two countries. Chairperson of Pyidaungsu Hluttaw's Rule of Law and Tranquility Committee Daw Aung San Suu Kyi also met an Indian parliamentary delegation led by Speaker Lok Sabha Honourable Smt. Meira Kumar. They had a cordial discussion on India's parliamentary experience, the exchange of experiences between the two parliaments, conducting parliamentary training courses, cooperation in flourishing developing a culture of democratic practices and providing necessary stationery for Myanmar's parliament. Speaker of Pyidaungsu and Amyotha Hluttaws U Khin Aung Myint received an Indian parliamentary delegation led by Speaker Lok Sabha Honourable Smt. Meira Kumar. Both sides discussed on Information Technology (IT) development, cooperation in agricultural and human resources development, parliamentary affairs between the two countries and study of India's parliamentary experience. Pyithu Hluttaw Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann met a delegation led by Speaker Lok Sabha Honourable Smt.

Meira Kumar. The pace and growing momentum in Myanmar - India relations indicated that the bilateral ties would be indeed poised to flourish in the future.

Exchange Visits of Military Personnel during the USDP Government

In the exchange of visits of military personnel, following the political liberalization enacted by the U Thein Sein government, some new momentum had been injected into bilateral ties between Myanmar and India. This was apparent especially after the visit to Myanmar by former Indian Defence Minister A.K. Antony in January 2013. In March, Myanmar and India agreed to bilateral exercises and coordinated patrolling in the southern Bay of Bengal. During the visit, Antony highlighted the importance of enhancing bilateral ties with Nay Pyi Taw in all the fields, especially defense. He underlined that the visit of all three Service Chiefs of India to Myanmar in 2012 was reflective of India’s desire to strengthen ties with Myanmar. While interacting with the delegation, the President U Thein Sein stated that Myanmar would not allow its territory to be used by anti-India insurgent groups. The ongoing cooperation between the armed forces of both the countries anticipated an enhanced interaction between the two navies and the air forces. On 30 October 2013, President U Thein Sein and Chief of the Army Staff of the Indian Army General Bikram Singh discussed a wide range of matters including modernization of Myanmar’s Tatmadaw and the border security between the two nations. They implemented the works in accord with the bilateral agreements during the visits of Myanmar President to India and Indian Prime Minister to Myanmar. India assisted Myanmar for the development of human resources and offered a large number of scholarships to servicemen of Myanmar’s Tatmadaw to take training courses in India for cementing bilateral relations between the two armies. In the meeting, the two countries discussed about military modernization and border security issue.

On 30 October 2013, Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing met with the Chief of Army Staff of the Indian Army. He said not only Myanmar but also India would not accept any acts that can harm stability and security of the two countries. The Indian Army made cooperation with Myanmar's army in border regions stability and development, disaster risk management and other emergency matters, and health care in border regions. Chairman of the Indian Chiefs of Staff Committee Air Chief Marshal NAK Browne paid a goodwill visit to Myanmar in November, 2012 and so did Indian Defence Minister Mr. AK Antony in January, 2013. Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing also paid a goodwill visit to India in August 2012. He talked with the Indian Army Chief on bilateral relations between the two armies and further cooperation in border security.

In Myanmar - India political relations, several visits of high-ranking persons, party delegations and military personals enhanced mutual interest between the two countries and the achievement of parliamentary practices and procedures, and military modernization for Myanmar. A number of agreements enhancing bilateral cooperation had been signed between the two countries. Myanmar and India would not accept any acts that can harm stability of the two countries. The change of government in India in 2014 there was an opportunity for a completely fresh start in relations between India and Myanmar. Therefore, the year 2014 regarded as the remarkable year for Myanmar - India political relations. The USDP government attempts to improve bilateral political relations with India in order to counter China. It examines Myanmar's changing relationship with China offered India an opportunity to engage more constructively with Myanmar. The political relations between Myanmar and India from 2011 to 2015 have strengthened and expanded based on the increasing exchange of high-level state visit between them. The political relations between them were widely regarded as “Landmark" under the USDP government.

Under the USDP government (2011-2015), there were interactions among the top leaders of Myanmar and India. There were several visits between them. Among these visits, President U Thein Sein visited two times and Prime Minister of India Manmohan Singh visited Myanmar twice in total and he visited Myanmar for the first time in May 2012 and met President U Thein Sein and signed 12 MoUs. For the second time, he attended the BIMSTEC meeting in March 2014 and signed three MoUs. In November 2014, India's Prime Minister Modi visited Myanmar for the first time attending the 12th ASEAN Summit and 9th East Asian Summit in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar and met with President U Thein Sein and Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.

Chairman of the Indian Chiefs of Staff Committee Air Chief Marshal NAk Browne visited Myanmar as a good will visit in November 2012 and Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior General Min Aung Hlaing also visited India in August 2012. They discussed the promotion of military cooperation between the two countries and security and peace along the border. In January 2013, the military relationship between the two countries became more prominent after the Ak Antony, the Minister of Deference of India had visited to Myanmar. In March 2013, India and Myanmar held bilateral military exercises and agreed to conduct regular patrols in the Southern part of the Bay of Bengal. Antony emphasized the importance of cooperation in the defence sector to enhance bilateral relations. Myanmar government did not allow Indian insurgent groups to carry out terrorist activities against India within Myanmar’s territory. Regarding military cooperation, they expected better reciprocal relations between the navies and air forces of the two countries.

In order to strengthen the relationship between the two armies, India has given many scholarships for Myanmar Army personnel to attend training courses in India. Under the USDP government, Myanmar and India signed a MoU on border cooperation on 8 May 2014. The agreement included plans to provide a framework for security issues, information and intelligence sharing and coordination, and expanded framework for the border region. Under USDP the government, the political relations between India and Myanmar was significantly improved from 2011 to 2015. The political relations between high ranking officials, military personnel and people between Myanmar and India led to mutual understanding and personnel ties between them.

Conclusion

After gaining their independence, Myanmar and India cultivated a close relationship. However, these relations were strained during the Myanmar socialist era (1962-1987). The relations were further strained in late 1988 when the military oppressed pro-democracy movements. Myanmar was included in India’s new regional geopolitical vision that was redefined in the LEP. In the period of 1988-1992, relations between Myanmar and India further deteriorated. India initially took an approach similar to that of Western countries and scaled down its diplomatic contacts with Myanmar. In the period of 1991 – 1992, the foreign policy establishment in India started reviewing its policy towards Myanmar to serve its national interests. During the 1988 Myanmar uprising, India stood firm on the side of the pro-democracy people, and the relations between the two countries remained cold. However, since 1990, India has tried to establish the LEP policy in order to enter Southeast Asia, focusing on its own national interests. Since Myanmar is located as a gateway to Southeast Asia, India has realized the need to increase relations with Myanmar. Myanmar was also blocked by Western countries, so it had to live in isolation and it had to take a lot of help from neighboring China. Later, when trying to deal with other countries, neighboring India became the best neighbor to focus on increasing relations. Since 1990, India tried to increase bilateral relations and during the USDP government in 2011, India welcomed the widespread implementation of political and economic reform in Myanmar.

Since 2011, the bilateral relationship developed in a growth direction and reached a positive peak. With the democratization process in Myanmar, India's vital interest remained to have a stable a reliable partner across its north-eastern border. The continued or increased support for democratization could bring long - term stability and secure friendship with future governments. The years 2012 and 2014 had been widely regarded as "historic milestones" between Myanmar and India. After the election of new governments in India in 2014 and in Myanmar in 2015, new directions in the bilateral relations had been improved. Particularly the proclamation of India's AEP signaled a major shift from its former "Look East" approach, towards a more proactive stance and "Neighborhood First Policy" for good and friendly relations with its immediate neighbors. According to realist and liberal perspectives, India's LEP was clearly aimed at becoming a regional power to get its economic and strategic benefits, simultaneously limiting and competing with China. By changing the LEP into AEP in 2014, India expanded and cultivated its relations with Northeast Asia and South Pacific countries in the political, economic and social fields.

In 2014, Prime Minister Modi renewed the LEP as the AEP and refreshed it with three primary objectives: first, to enhance trade, investment, and cultural relation between emerging India and Southeast Asia, particularly the ASEAN countries. Second, the Policy emphasized creating opportunities and stabilizing India's unstable and conflict-prone Northeastern Region. Third, it endeavors to counter China's growing economic and military power in neighbouring Myanmar, both bilaterally and in collaboration with like-minded ASEAN countries. Therefore, India's policies implications have had many positive effects on Myanmar - India relations. Seeking cooperative relations with two Asian giants - China and India is keen to leverage Myanmar's strategic location to derive maximum benefits, while safeguarding its independence. For India, Look East Policy was shown rather clearly India aimed at becoming a regional power to get its economic and strategic benefits, simultaneously curbing and competing with China. To reach this objective, the LEP was seen as a new direction for India's foreign policy after the Cold War. When the Look East Policy was changed into AEP in 2014, India expanded and improved its relations with Northeast Asia and South Pacific countries in all dimensions: the political, economic and cultural fields. To get stability in the northeast, Myanmar has played an ambivalent role in relations to militants in India's north-east. Myanmar's changing relationship with China offered India an opportunity to engage more constructively with Myanmar. India built on the long-standing historical, cultural and geographical linkages with Myanmar. It helped not only on the economic front with capacity building but also Myanmar's democratic institutions. Engaging with Myanmar could be presented a win-win situation as it helped to open the door to East and Southeast Asia and promoted in its "Look East Policy," that led to improve border situation, boost trade and business ties, access to available energy resources, and gaining ground as a regional power. Therefore, from 2011 to 2015, Myanmar and India were able to successfully align their policies to improve political, economic and social sectors between them.

In fact, the Myanmar-India relations had been moving towards as an upward trend and experiencing a positive peak since 2011. It gained peak during the Prime Minister Manmohan Singh Government and had again gathered momentum during the time of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Political changes in Myanmar combined with a clear desire to diversify its foreign policy and opened up new opportunities for India to pursue its interests and avoid the threats and pitfalls. Political relations between Myanmar and India were strengthened under the USDP government.

Acknowledgement

The researcher would like to express special thanks of gratitude to Dr. Tint Moe Thu Zar, Rector of Yadanabon University and Pro Rectors of Yadanabon University, for giving a chance to write this research paper. In addition, I would like to express deep gratitude to Dr. Moe Yin Yin (Professor / Head, Department of International Relations, Yadanabon University), Dr. Ngae Ngae, (Professor, Department of International Relations, Yadanabon University), Dr. Tin Myo Thwe (Professor, Department of International Relations, Yadanabon University) and Dr. Tin Tin Mar (Professor, Department of International Relations, Yangon University of Foreign Languages) for their encouragement and valuable advice. I would like to extend sincere appreciation to Dr. Thida Tun (Professor/ Head, Department of International Relations, Monywa University) and Dr. Aye Aye Myat (Associate Professor, Department of International Relations, Yadanabon University) for their kindness, supports and moral encouragement. I also expresses sincere thanks to all those involved in conducting this research.

References

Andrew Cootey ,“Reshaping defence diplomacy: New Roles for Miliary Cooperation and Assistance”, https://www.routledge.com.

Aung Myo, Maung. “Myanmar Foreign Policy under the USDP Government: Continuities and Changes.” Journal of Current Southeast Asian Affair, (April/ 2016): 123-150.

Chatterjee, Shibashis. The Look East Policy and India’s Northeastern State, S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, 2014.

Chaw Chaw Sein, Professor. “Myanmar-India Interactions in the context of dynamic international environment.” Accessed May 7, 2021 https:// meral.edu.mm>.

Dr. Tarik Oguzlu, Foreign Policy Analysis, “Chapter 6: Foreign Policy Preferences of States”,http://cagriertan.not

Engh,Sunniva. “India’s Myanmar policy and the Sino-India Great Game.” Asian Affairs, no.1, 2016. Accessed May 7,2021. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/

Gareth Price, India’s Policy towards Burma, London, Chatham House,2013,5,Under, “setting”,www.chathamhouse.org

Gottschlich, Pierre. The India-Myanmar Relationship: New Directions after a Change of Government?, International Asian Studies,Vol 4 (8/2017): 171-202. Accessed May7,2021. http://hasp.ub.uni-heidelberg.de>.

Gottschlich, Pierre. “New Developments in India–Myanmar Bilateral Relations?” Journal of Current Southeast Asian Affairs, 2015. Accessed May 7,2021. https://doi.org/10.11588 /iqas7440.

Haacke,Jurgen. Myanmar's Foreign Policy under President U Thein Sein: Non-Aligned and diversified. Singapore: ISEAS Publishing, 2016.

Jean-Frederic Morin and Jonathan Paquin ,Foreign Policy Analysis: A Toolbox, http://link.springer.com

Jha Gaurav Kumar and Banerjee Amrita. "India–Myanmar Relations: Coming off the Circle." South Asian Survey 19, 2012. accessed January 7, 2019. https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0971523114539583.

Motokazu. "Myanmar deepens India ties to reduce China dependency." Accessed May 7, 2021. http://asia.nikkel.com .politics.

Mishra, Rahul. From Look East to Act East: Transitions in India's Eastward Engagement. International Relations and Asia's Southern Tier. Singapore: Springer, 2018.

Sakhuja, Vijay. "India and Myanmar: Choices for Military Cooperation." India Council of Word Affairs 2, (2/ 2012): 1-9.

News and Periodicals Enterprise, Ministry of Information, Union of Myanmar. New Light of Myanmar, 16 October, 2011.

News and Periodicals Enterprise, Ministry of Information, Union of Myanmar. New Light of Myanmar, 12 December 2011.

News and Periodicals Enterprise, Ministry of Information, Union of Myanmar. New Light of Myanmar, 29 May 2012.

News and Periodicals Enterprise, Ministry of Information, Union of Myanmar. New Light of Myanmar, 16 December 2012.

News and Periodicals Enterprise, Ministry of Information, Union of Myanmar. New Light of Myanmar, 14 February 2013.

News and Periodicals Enterprise, Ministry of Information, Union of Myanmar. New Light of Myanmar, 7 June 2013.

News and Periodicals Enterprise, Ministry of Information, Union of Myanmar. New Light of Myanmar, 9 June 2013.

News and Periodicals Enterprise, Ministry of Information, Union of Myanmar. New Light of Myanmar, 31 October 2013.

News and Periodicals Enterprise, Ministry of Information, Union of Myanmar. New Light of Myanmar, 1 November 2013.

News and Periodicals Enterprise, Ministry of Information, Union of Myanmar. New Light of Myanmar, 4 March 2014.

News and Periodicals Enterprise, Ministry of Information, Union of Myanmar. New Light of Myanmar, 9 March 2014.

News and Periodicals Enterprise, Ministry of Information, Union of Myanmar. India, Dr Manmohan Singh to Myanmar (27-29 May 2012), New Light of Myanmar, 29 May 2012

.

IMPACT OF ELECTORAL SYSTEM ON DEMOCRATIC PRACTICES: CASE STUDY OF INDONESIA

Myo Thet Htun[1]

Abstract

An electoral system plays a crucial role in promoting democratic practices in a country. Its structure and functionality can contribute to advanced democratic practices. A well-organized electoral system fosters democratic practices, including inclusive political representation, the separation of powers and decentralization, citizen participation, freedom of expression and the press, and the peaceful transfer of power. This paper explores the impact of the electoral system on democratic practices in Indonesia. It also aims to provide a brief understanding of the PR system by focusing on the electoral system of Indonesia. Additionally, it seeks to help policymakers in multi-ethnic societies like Myanmar design and implement a more effective and appropriate electoral system to address political needs and promote democratic practices. To achieve these objectives, this paper seeks to answer the research question: "How does the electoral system impact democratic practices in Indonesia?" The study found that Indonesia's electoral system, which blends elements of proportional representation (PR) with direct presidential elections, promotes democratic practices by (1) fostering inclusive political representation, (2) empowering the separation of powers and decentralization, and (3) legitimizing government authority and ensuring the peaceful transfer of power. It employs qualitative and descriptive research methods, relying primarily on secondary sources.

Keywords: Electoral System, PR system, Democratic Practices.

Introduction

An electoral system is a fundamental part of any democratic governance and is crucial for strengthening democratic practices. A well-organized electoral system fosters democratic practices such as inclusive political representation, separation of powers and decentralization, citizen participation, freedom of expression and press, and peaceful transfer of power. Therefore, most of the democratic countries choose and upgrade electoral systems according to their constitutions, state structure, historical conditions, political situations, and political awareness of their citizens to strengthen their democratic practices.

There are different types of electoral systems, such as First-Past-the-Post (FPTP) or Plurality System, Proportional Representation (PR), Majority System, Mixed-Member Proportional (MMP), Single Non-Transferable Vote (SNTV), and Parallel Voting (Mixed-Member Majoritarian). From these systems, PR and FPTP systems are commonly used in the world. Among the 193 countries of the United Nations (UN), 111 countries use the PR system, 74 countries use FPTP or the Majoritarian system, and 8 countries use other electoral systems (Maung Kaung Su, 2022). Therefore, the PR system is the most commonly used, and there is a general argument that the countries that use PR systems are more inclusive, as they represent a wider range of political opinions and give smaller parties a better chance of gaining seats compared to FPTP systems. Moreover, the PR system fosters democratic practices by ensuring inclusive political representation and participation, encouraging multi-party competition, and promoting coalition building and consensus.

---

[1] Department of International Relations and Political Science, University of Mandalay

This paper seeks to explore the impact of the electoral system (which blends elements of PR with direct presidential elections) on democratic practices in Indonesia. It also aims to provide a brief understanding of the PR system by focusing on the electoral system of Indonesia. This paper is significant because (1) it examines the impact of the electoral system on democratic practices in a multi-ethnic country like Indonesia, (2) it enhances understanding of how the electoral system influences democratic development, and (3) it offers insights to help policymakers in multi-ethnic societies like Myanmar design and implement more effective and appropriate electoral systems to strengthen democratic practices. In doing so, this paper first explains the theoretical concepts of electoral systems, with a focus on the PR system. It then presents a historical overview of Indonesia’s electoral system and examines its impact on democratic practices. Finally, the paper concludes with key findings and implications.

Literature Review

In studying the relations between electoral systems and democratic practices, scholars argued that competitive, free, and fair electoral systems lead to inclusive political representation, separation of power and decentralization, legitimizing government power, and peaceful transfer of power (Przeworski et al. 2000; Levitsky and Way 2010; Ridge 2024). Benjamin Reilly (2004) argues that designing appropriate electoral rules is crucial in divided societies because elections influence democratic practices and can encourage multi-ethnic parties and moderate politics. He also argues that “competitive elections are one of the instruments used not only to promote democracy but also to attempt to consolidate a fragile peace in post-conflict society, and they are central parts of state building”.

Many scholars have studied Indonesia’s electoral system and highlighted its challenges. Syafei (2020) found that the 2019 simultaneous elections were too complex, making the process less efficient. Mietzner (2019) pointed to problems such as weak political funding, vote buying, high party thresholds, and low female representation. Pahlevi, Al-Hamdi, Sakir, and Lailam (2021) noted issues in the open-list PR system, including electoral fraud, money politics, and unqualified candidates influenced by wealthy backers. Nasution (2016) observed that while decentralization did not cause major problems, it was poorly planned and implemented. Most studies focus on the weaknesses of the system. Few discuss its positive role in promoting democratic practices. This paper aims to fill that gap.

Research Question and Argument

To study the impact of the electoral system on democratic practices in Indonesia, this paper intends to answer research questions as follows,

(1) How does the electoral system impact democratic practices in Indonesia?

To solve this question, this paper argues that Indonesia's electoral system, which blends elements of proportional representation (PR) with direct presidential elections, promotes democratic practices by (1) fostering inclusive political representation, (2) empowering the separation of powers and decentralization, and (3) legitimizing government authority and peaceful transfer of power.

Methodology

This paper relies on a qualitative research methodology and employs a descriptive method to collect data from reports, websites (including government sources), and scholarly articles or journals, using both primary and secondary sources.

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

An electoral system is "a set of rules that determine how elections are conducted and how the results are determined and interpreted to produce the winner(s)" (Heywood, 2013). Although there are many electoral systems, this paper focuses only on the PR system.

Proportional Representation (PR) is an electoral system where parties gain seats in parliament proportional to their share of votes (Heywood, 2013). It ensures all voters, including supporters of minor parties, receive fair representation. PR promotes genuine competition and is often preferred in multi-ethnic countries. Various PR models—such as party-list voting, mixed-member proportional, and single transferable vote—all aim to align parliamentary seats closely with voter support.

Democratic practices are essential actions and institutions that ensure the proper functioning of democracy. Three key practices include:

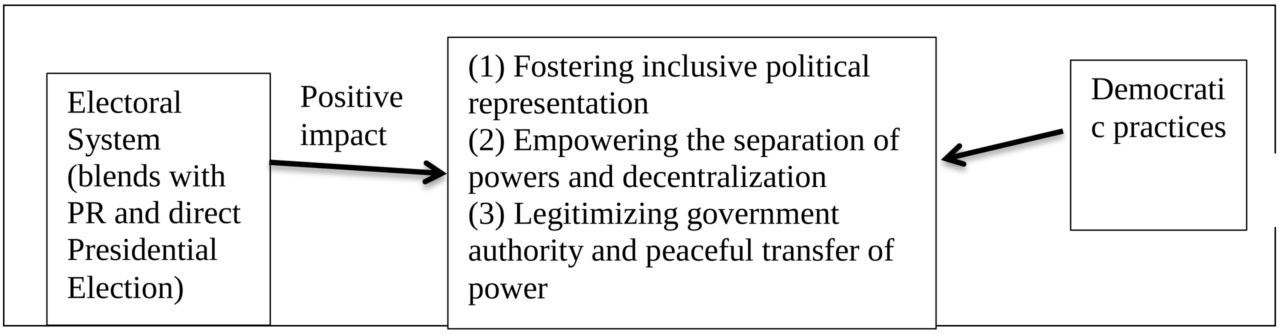
(1) Inclusive Political Representation: According to Robert Dahl (2000), effective democracy requires equal participation and representation to ensure government decisions reflect the will of the people.

(2) Separation of Powers and Decentralization: Democracy is strengthened when power is distributed among different branches of government and levels of administration.

(3) Legitimizing Government Authority and Peaceful Transfer of Power: Free and fair elections legitimize government authority and allow citizens to choose their leaders. A peaceful transfer of power is a fundamental democratic practice that ensures political stability and the legitimacy of government.

From the above literature, theory, and concepts, this paper constructs the following conceptual framework to study the impact of the electoral system on democratic practices in Indonesia.

<u>Conceptual Framework</u>



Source: From Literature Review, Conceptual Framework (Modified by author)

Historical Overview

Indonesia gained its independence on August 17, 1945, and established a liberal representative democracy with a parliamentary system. In September 1955, the first general election was held with a proportional representation system in multi-member constituencies (MMCs). Although the election process was fair and democratic, the outcome was disappointing to those who had hoped it would increase political stability, and it did not solve the chronic political crisis (Sulistyo, 2002). The country had numerous political parties, and none of them was able to secure a stable majority. This led to frequent changes in government and deep political fragmentation. The conflicts between different ideological groups, between parliament and cabinet, and between communal groups created a high political instability (Sulistyo, 2002). As a result, President Soekarno declared martial law on March 14, 1957.

These situations came in response to increasing political instability, regional rebellions, and the failure of Indonesia's parliamentary democracy. President Soekarno later strengthened his control by forming an authoritarian regime also known as "Guided Democracy". In the following years, President Soekarno's authoritarian and leftist nature led to confrontation with the military. On March 12, 1967, Major General Suharto took all power from President Soekarno and formed the "New Order" regime. Under the New Order regime, five general elections (1977, 1982, 1987, 1992, and 1997) were successfully held, and these elections became the government's legitimacy tools. However, none of the elections were competitive and free and fair (Sulistyo, 2002). The potential of opposition was managed with a stick and carrot strategy, and overt opposition was controlled by repressive measures. Therefore, elections served as political machinery for the regime, and did not allow for any meaningful political competition between different parties under Suharto's 32 years (1966-1998) in power.

Suharto's regime stability, however, was ended by the effects of the so-called Asian Crisis, which started to hit Indonesia in the second half of 1997, and by a dramatic financial and economic crisis in 1998. In May 1998, the largest student demonstrations and large-scale riots in six major cities forced Suharto to give up Suharto's one-man rule.

On May 21, 1998, Suharto was replaced by Vice-President B.J. Habibie's transitional government, also known as the Reformation Era. The public also put pressure on the government for the liberalization of the political process. Finally, the process of political transition advanced from the stage of liberalization in late 1998 into a full-blown democratization of the political regime in Indonesia. Since 1999, the free and fair general elections have been held and returned to a multi-party democracy in Indonesia.

Electoral System in Indonesia

The electoral system in Indonesia relies on either a majority vote or a proportional representation (PR) system.

Majority Vote: in which people cast their votes for their preferred candidate, and the candidate who secures more than half of the valid votes will be elected to office. If no candidates secure more than half of the valid votes, a second vote will be held between the two candidates who obtained the highest number of votes.

Proportional Representation: In which people vote for their favored party, and the seats are distributed to each party, depending on their proportion of total votes in each constituency.

(a) Presidential Election in Indonesia

The President and Vice-President are elected together through a direct *majority vote* since 2004. The winning pair must secure more than half of all valid votes (50 percent plus one vote) and achieve at least 20 percent of all valid votes in more than half of Indonesia's provinces (at least 20 provinces). If no pair meets these criteria, a run-off election is held between the two pairs with the highest vote counts (Asia-Pacific, 2024). The President and Vice-President are nominated by a political party or a coalition of parties. They serve a five-year term and can be re-elected for one additional term.

However, on July 3, 2014, the Constitutional Court decided that the rule requiring a candidate pair to win at least 20 percent of valid votes in more than half of Indonesia's provinces does not apply when only two pairs are running (Asia-Pacific, 2024). The Court ruled that the political party coalition supporting the two candidate pairs is representative of all regions of Indonesia. This decision allowed winners to secure an absolute majority in a single-round election in 2014 and 2019.

(b) Legislative Elections in Indonesia

Legislative elections for the National House of Representatives (Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat Daerah, DPR or DPRD) and regional legislatures (Dewan Perwakilan Daerah, DPD) at the provincial and regency/municipal levels use a *proportional representation system*. Citizens vote for political parties, and seats at each level are distributed according to the proportion of total votes each party receives (Asia-Pacific, 2024). For the DPR, only parties that surpass the four percent parliamentary threshold of all valid votes are considered for seat allocation, while this threshold does not apply to regional legislatures.

Regional Representative Councils (DPD) elections use a *single non-transferable vote (SNTV) system.* Voters receive one DPD ballot listing all candidates from their province and mark their choice by punching one hole. The four candidates with the highest vote totals in each province are elected. Although a political party must also nominate DPR or DPRD candidates, DPD candidates may run as independents.

Elected legislative members serve a five-year term. If a member resigns before their term ends, a replacement is chosen from candidates who participated in the legislative elections through a mid-term replacement election.

After the fall of Suharto's one-man rule, Indonesia used two different kinds of proportional representation systems: the Closed-list PR system (1999-2004) and the Open-list PR system (2009-present). A lot of countries apply an Open-list PR system because they assume that it is consistent with the values of democracy and civic engagement.

Findings and Discussion

After the fall of Suharto's one-man rule, Indonesia made many social reforms (Nasution, 2016). First, the authoritarian nature of the regime was replaced by a democratic multi-party system. Second, the dominant role of government was replaced with a market-based economic system and a globalized open economy. Third, centralization of power was changed into decentralization by giving both greater political power and budgets to local governments. Therefore, the fall of Suharto's one-man rule led to the democratic transition in Indonesia, and multi-party elections have been held periodically at certain times.

Nowadays, Indonesia has become the second-highest democracy index score (6.3 to 6.7) among Southeast Asian countries according to the data of the democracy index from Our World in Data. The data combines information on the extent to which citizens can choose their political leaders in free and fair elections, enjoy civil liberties, prefer democracy over other political systems, can and do participate in politics, and have a functioning government that acts on their behalf. It ranges from 0 to 10 (most democratic). This can be seen in *Figure 1*. From the data of the World Bank Group (2022), the political stability and absence of violence/ terrorism index in Indonesia is 43.40 (the indicator rank is 0-100), while China is 42.92, and India is 39.15 (World Bank Group, 2022). Therefore, Indonesia is more stable than China and India. Now, Indonesia enjoys significant political and media pluralism and undergoes multiple, peaceful transfers of power. According to the data of Freedom House (2023), the freedom index of Indonesia is 58 (partly free). It ranges from 0 to 100 (most free). Therefore, Indonesia has become a stable and democratic country.

General elections are the basic principle of democracy and guarantee the implementation of the principle of individual rights, freedom, and equality (Zuhro, 2019). In a democratic country, the people's participation in elections also legitimates the government's power.

This paper first explains how Indonesia's electoral system promotes inclusive political representation by allocating seats based on vote share and reflecting public diversity, including women and minority participation in Parliament.

Secondly, it discusses the separation of powers and decentralization. Finally, it describes the legitimization of government power and peaceful transfer of power as a positive impact of the electoral system on democratic practices.

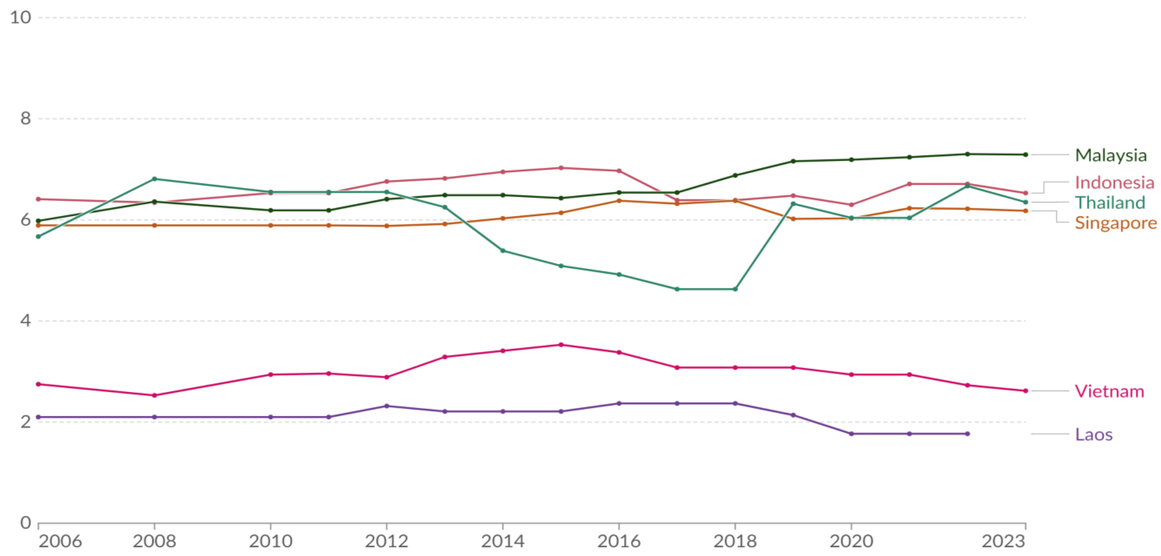


Figure 1: Democracy Index of Some ASEAN Countries

Source: Our World in Data (2023). *Democracy Index*. https://ourworldindata.org/grapher/democracy-index-eiu.

Inclusive Political Representation

Indonesia is a country with a wide range of ethnic groups, religions, and regional identities. However, the political system and electoral system of Indonesia accommodate its multicultural society, balancing the need for national unity with the representation of various groups in parliament.

The Parliament of Indonesia is the People's Consultative Assembly (Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat, MPR). It is a bicameral system and consists of two Houses (Russell, 2020). The more important house is the House of Representatives or the People's Representative Council (Dewan Perwakilan Rakyat, DPR or DPRD), and the upper house is the Council of Representatives of the Regions or Regional Representative Council (Dewan Perwakilan Daerah, DPD).

The House of Representatives (DPR or DPRD) is responsible for making legislation and conducting inquiries. It also oversees the government's performance and ratifies international agreements. It has 575 seats and members are directly elected by a province-based proportional system (PR). This PR system ensures that a wide range of political, ethnic, and regional groups can gain political representation and helps to avoid exclusion and political marginalization. This paper uses the 2019 and 2024 election data to find out the inclusive political representation in Indonesia.

Indonesia, which has a total population of nearly 278 million, conducts the second-largest single-day elections in the world (Kathleen Magramo, 2024). The 2019 General Election of Indonesia was a simultaneous general election in which the presidential, national, and regional elections were held on a single day. In the 2019 General Election, there were 192.8 million registered voters, and they were made up of 18,000 islands (Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), 2024). The following *Table 1* shows the legislative election results in 2019.

Table 1: Parties or Coalitions Winning Seats in the 2019 Elections

Political Group	Total
Indonesian Democratic Party - Struggle (PDI-P)	128
Party of Functional Groups (Golkar)	85
Great Indonesia Movement (Gerindra)	78
National Democratic Party (NasDem)	59
National Awakening Party (PKB)	58
Democratic Party (PD)	54
Prosperous Justice Party (PKS)	50
National Mandate Party (PAN)	44
United Development Party (PPP)	19

Source: Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), 2024. *Indonesia: House of Representatives*. https://data.ipu.org/parliament/ID/ID-LC01/election/ID-LC01-E20190417/.

The 2024 General Election was also the second simultaneous election since 2019. According to the General Election Commission (KPU) data, there are 204.8 million registered voters in the 2024 elections. *Table 2* shows the numbers and seats of political groups in the 2024 General Election.

Table 2: Parties or Coalitions Winning Seats in the 2024 Elections

Political Group	Total
Indonesian Democratic Party - Struggle (PDI-P)	110
Party of Functional Groups (Golkar)	102
Great Indonesia Movement (Gerindra)	86
National Democratic Party (NasDem)	69
National Awakening Party (PKB)	68
Democratic Party (PD)	44
Prosperous Justice Party (PKS)	53
National Mandate Party (PAN)	48

Source: Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), 2024. *Indonesia: House of Representatives*. https://data.ipu.org/parliament/ID/ID-LC01/election/ID-LC01-E20190417/.

According to these tables, no party wins the majority of seats, which cannot lead to majority control in parliament. The PR system allows for minority, ethnic, and religious parties to gain seats in parliament. Prosperous Justice Party (PKS), an Islamic party that advocates for Muslims' rights and broader social issues, gained 50 seats in 2019 and 53 seats in the 2024 elections. United Development Party (PPP), focused on the Islamic minority, gained 19 seats in the 2019 elections.

The women's involvement in parliament also shows inclusive political representation. Women and minority groups play a key role in the 2014 and 2024 elections. In Indonesia, there is a quota of 30 percent female representation for the nomination of candidates for the DPR, DPD, and provincial and regency/municipal DPRDs. The women's involvement in Parliament can be seen in *Tables 3* and *4*. The minority groups also play an active role in campaigning activities and election socialization, and they help raise public awareness of the importance of elections. The youth also play a crucial role in the 2024 elections. According to the General Election Commission (KPU) of Indonesia, the number of first-time voters in Indonesia in the 2024 elections is estimated at over 106.3 million, about 56 percent of the total number of voters in Indonesia. Therefore, Indonesia's electoral system supports the involvement of minorities and young people and encourages inclusiveness in the political process. These situations lead to a positive impact on democratic practices among the diverse community of Indonesia.

Table 3: Members Elected, by Sex in 2019 Elections

Number of men elected	**455**
Number of women elected	120
Percentage of women elected	20.9%

Source: Edward Aspinall, Sally White, and Amalinda Savirani (2021).

Table 4: Members Elected, by Sex in 2024 Elections

Number of men elected	**458**
Number of women elected	122
Percentage of women elected	21.0%

Source: Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), 2024. *Indonesia: House of Representatives*. https://data.ipu.org/parliament/ID/ID-LC01/election/ID-LC01-E20190417/.

(i) Empowering the Separation of Powers and Decentralization

The electoral system of Indonesia also leads to the formation of a coalition government, which encourages compromise and collaboration among parties, as well as empowers the separation of powers among parties. The formation of a coalition presidential government in Indonesia began to take root after the resignation of Suharto in 1998. Suharto's successor, B.J. Habibie's government (1998-1999) included both existing opposition parties and formed the first coalitional cabinet. Although the first democratically elected president, Abdurrahman Wahid (1999-2001), initially signaled that he wanted to head a coalition government, he then proceeded to dismantle this very alliance by constantly firing ministers of coalition parties and practicing a highly erratic and self-centered decision-making process. Consequently, he was impeached in 2001 and replaced by Megawati Sukarnoputri (2001-2004). President Megawati then formed a classic coalitional cabinet which contained most of Indonesia's post-authoritarian parties, delivering stability for much of her term.

Under the rule of President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (2004-2014), an institutionalized coalition presidential government was established and celebrated as a virtue of stable governance. Joko Widodo's government (2014-2024) also relies on a coalition of political parties. Due to the broad coalition of political parties, known as the Indonesia Forward Coalition, Jokowi continues to back his administration. The key parties in Jokowi's coalition government include the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (PDI-P), Golkar Party, National Awakening Party (PKB), Nas Dem Party, United Development Party (PPP), Indonesian Solidarity Party (PSI), and Hanura Party. Therefore, the electoral system of Indonesia forms a coalition government and advances the separation of powers between parties. It also reduces the likelihood of major confrontations between parties.

Indonesia's electoral system also leads to a power balance between the executive and parliament because they are separately elected by popular vote. The President and Vice-President are directly elected by the people, not from the parliament, and thus they are accountable to the people, and there is a check and balance between the executive and parliament. The parliament has the power to make laws, but these laws must also have the preliminary approval of the president. Although the President has the power to make government regulations instead of laws, to remain in force, these regulations must be approved by the DPR at its next session. Therefore, the direct presidential election system and power sharing between the executive and parliament create a checks and balances system that empowers the separation of political power in Indonesia.

In Indonesia, the Regional Representative Council (DPD) represents the regions and is a consultative body on issues related to regional autonomy, legislation, and government policies. Members of DPD are elected directly from a nationwide pool of nonpartisan candidates. This regional autonomy reduces the likelihood of separatist movements and conflicts. Indonesia has 34 provinces, subdivided into 416 regencies and 98 cities (Russell, 2020). Each province has a directly elected governor and provincial assembly; regents and city mayors are also directly elected. In 2000, Indonesia shifted from a highly centralized system to one that gave more power to subnational authorities (Russell, 2020). In Indonesia, regencies and cities, rather than provinces, have significant autonomy and budgets for healthcare, education, and environmental issues. Moreover, the local communities now have more say in matters that concern them, are more in touch with the situation on the ground, and they can take more appropriate decisions (Russell, 2020). Therefore, the direct election of DPD members strengthened decentralization and promoted democratic practices such as the separation of powers and local governance.

(ii) Legitimizing Government Authority and Peaceful Transfer of Power

Although the prospects for a stable and efficient democratic government are not determined by the electoral system alone, the results of an electoral system can contribute to democratic practices in a number of aspects. According to Andrew Heywood, one important reason why regimes bother to hold elections is that elections help to foster legitimacy by justifying a system of rule. In Indonesia, the electoral system also promotes the legitimacy of the government. The direct presidential elections of Indonesia allow the citizens to choose their president and vice-president directly. This system promotes the legitimacy of the elected leaders because it reflects the will of the people. The direct relation between voters and elected officials also fosters a sense of ownership and trust in the government's policies. Moreover, the members of DPR and DPD are also elected by direct elections. This system also enhances a representative democracy where citizens feel that their interests are reflected in the national and regional policy-making process.

Since 2009, Indonesia has used the open-list proportional representation (PR) system. In this system, the voters can choose both a party and a specific candidate from that party. This system ensures that a broad range of political parties and minor parties can gain representation in the legislature. It prevents the domination by one or two parties and promotes political inclusiveness and pluralism. Therefore, Indonesia's electoral system enhances the legitimacy of the government by giving a voice to various segments within society.

Moreover, the democratic legitimacy of the Indonesian government stems from free and fair elections. According to data from the Our World in Data website, Indonesia's free and fair elections index is 0.66 (Our World in Data, 2023). It ranges from 0 to 1 (highest). The popular participation rate in elections also enhances the legitimacy of the government. In Indonesia, the popular participation in elections is above 80 percent. In the 2019 elections, 81.9 percent of the 192.8 million registered voters cast their ballots, and 81.78 percent of the 204.8 million registered voters cast their ballots in the 2024 elections (The Jakarta Post, 2024). A high voter turnout means that a large population participates in electing their leaders, and a stronger mandate is given to the governor. It also shows a higher public trust in the government.

Indonesia's electoral system has played a key role in enabling peaceful transfers of political power since the fall of the Suharto regime in 1998. The introduction of free, fair, and competitive elections—first through indirect mechanisms (1999) and later through direct presidential elections (from 2004 onward)—created an institutional framework for legitimate leadership change (Davidson, Jamie S., 2009). The 2004 constitutional amendments, which allowed citizens to directly elect the president and vice president, marked a turning point. This shift strengthened political legitimacy, reduced elite bargaining behind closed doors, and enhanced public trust in the democratic process. The two-round system (majority-runoff) further ensures that the elected president has broad support, reducing post-election disputes and contributing to political stability.

Over the past two decades, peaceful transitions—such as from Megawati Sukarnoputri to Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (2004), and from Yudhoyono to Joko Widodo (2014)—have demonstrated how a credible electoral system can promote orderly handovers of power (Lee, Dong‐Yoon & Chung, Sang Hwa, 2008). These processes have been largely accepted by competing political actors and the public, minimizing the risk of violence or unrest.

Moreover, the role of independent institutions, such as the General Elections Commission (KPU) and the Constitutional Court, has further strengthened the electoral process by managing disputes and reinforcing transparency. As a result, Indonesia's electoral system has become a cornerstone of its democratic consolidation and peaceful political transitions.

Conclusion

In the post-Suharto era, Indonesia held free and fair multi-party democratic elections. In recent years, Indonesia has become a stable and vibrant democratic country in Southeast Asia.

Although the prospects for a stable and efficient democratic government are not determined by the electoral system alone, the electoral system also promotes democratic practices in Indonesia. The legislative elections through the PR system ensure that a wide range of political, ethnic, and regional groups can gain political representation and help to avoid exclusion and political marginalization. This system also supports the minority and young people's involvement and encourages inclusiveness in the political process.

Indonesia's electoral system also leads to the formation of a coalition government, which encourages compromise and separation of power among parties, potentially leading to more balanced and moderate policies. It also supports checks and balances between the executive and legislature and encourages the decentralization of power. The direct presidential elections also promote the legitimacy of the elected leaders because they reflect the will of the people. The direct relations between voters and elected officials also foster a sense of ownership and trust in the government's policies. Moreover, Indonesia's electoral system has become a cornerstone of its democratic consolidation and peaceful political transitions.

Therefore, Indonesia's electoral system, which blends elements of proportional representation (PR) with direct presidential elections, promotes democratic practices in three ways: (1) fostering inclusive political representation, (2) empowering the separation of powers and decentralization, and (3) legitimizing government authority and peaceful transfer of power. However, every system has its strengths and weaknesses. According to Moch Edward Trias Pahlevi, Ridho Al-Hamdi, Sakir Sakir, and Tanto Lailam (2021), the electoral system of Indonesia also has negative trends such as electoral malpractices, money politics, the absence of the candidate's competence, integrity, ideology, and the influential role of financial owners.

Acknowledgement

First and foremost, I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to Dr. Win Mar Hlaing (Professor and Head of the Department of International Relations and Political Science, University of Mandalay) for her unwavering encouragement. I am also deeply grateful to all my professors from the Department of International Relations and Political Science at the University of Mandalay for their insightful guidance and support. Lastly, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to everyone who contributed to the completion of this work. Your help means a great deal to me, and I will remain forever grateful.

References

Asian Electoral Resource Center (2024), "Electoral System". https://aerc.anfrel.org/country/indonesia/electoral-system/ (accessed September 16, 2024).

Asia-Pacific (2024)"Elections in Indonesia.". (International Foundation for Electoral Systems). https://www.ifes.org/sites/default/files/2024-02/2024_Elections_FAQ_Final.pdf (accessed September 16, 2024).

Davidson, Jamie S. (2009) "Dilemmas of Democratic Consolidation in Indonesia".

Democracy Index (2022). https://ourworldindata.org/grapher/democracy-index-eiu. (accessed September 23, 2024)

Edward Aspinall, Sally White, and Amalinda Savirani (2021). "Women's Political Representation in Indonesia: Who Wins and How?" *Journal of Current Southeast Asian Affairs,* The Australian National University, vol.40, pp.6-10.

Heywood, Andrew (2013), *Politics*. The Plagrave Macmillan, UK.

Indonesia – A wealth of Diversity and Wonders (2018). https://www.brusselstimes.com/51421/indonesia-a-wealth-of-diversity-and-wonders. (accessed September 23, 2024)

Indonesia: House of Representatives. n.d. https://data.ipu.org/parliament/ID/ID-LC01/election/ID-LC01-E20190417/. (accessed September 23, 2024)

Kathleen Magramo, Heather Chen (2024). *The world's largest single-day election is underway. Young voters will be decisive.*https://www.cnn.com/2024/02/13/asia/indonesia-general-election-explainer-intl-hnk/index.html. (accessed September 23, 2024)

Lee, Dong- Yoon & Chung, Sang Hwa, (2008) "Democratic consolidation and electoral reform in Southeast Asia: Philippines, Thailand, and Indonesia".

Levitsky, Steven, and Lucan A. Way (2010). *Competitive Authoritarianism: Hybrid Regimes after the Cold War*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Maung Kaung Su (2022). The *Proportional Representation (PR) system and Myanmar*. https://uec.gov.mm/show_data_content.php?name=PR_UKMO_.pdf&type=page_multiple_photo&code=147&sno=8194&token=de0e32d4cd11716564e7031f46c9b50b5fe016c33168d35ad911d0bff7547b0d9f919f6b9e76df97508498fa4d5256b69014c49906392f080fdf3a77d853e72e (accessed September 22, 2024).

Mietzner, Marcus (2019). "Indonesia's electoral system: Why it needs reform." Australian National University, pp.3-5.

Moch Edward Trias Pahlevi, Ridho Al-Hamdi, Sakir Sakir, Tanto Lailam (2021). "Designing Open-list Proportional System in Indonesia's Legislative Election during the Global Pandemic Era." *Advances in Economics, Business and Management Research*, Atlantis Press, vol. 209, p.12.

Nasution, Anwar (2016). "Government Decentralization Program in Indonesia." *SSRN Electronic Journal*, Asian Development Bank Institute, Tokyo, Working paper, no.601, pp.1-2.

Political Stability and Absence of Violence/ Terrorism: Percentile Rank, Upper Bound of 90% Confidence Interval. (2023). https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/PV.PER.RNK.UPPER. (accessed September 14, 2024).

Przeworski, Adam, Michael E. Alvarez, José Antonio Cheibub, and Fernando Limongi (2000). *Democracy and Development: Political Institutions and Well-Being in the World, 1950–1990*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

R.Zuhro, Siti (2019). "Demokrasi Dan Pemilu." *Jurnal Penelitian Politik* , Indonesia, vol.16, no. 1, pp.69-81.

Reilly, Benjamin (2004). *ELECTORAL SYSTEMS AND CONFLICT MANAGEMENT*, Murdoch University.

Ridge, Emily (2024). "Winners, Losers, and Satisfaction with Democracy: Electoral Fairness and Political Representation in the 21st Century." *Representation* 60 (2): 167–184. https://doi.org/ 10.1080/00344893.2024.2313764.

Russell, Martin (2020). "Political Institutions in Indonesia: Democracy, Decentralization and Diversity." *European Parliamentary Research Service (EPRS)*, p.3.

Siahaan, Mona (2024). *Voter turnout of the national election in Indonesia 2024.* https://www.statista.com/statistics/1452255/indonesia-voters-turnout-of-2024-national-election/ (accessed September 23, 2024).

Sulistyo, Hermawan (2022). "Electoral Politics in Indonesia: A Hard Way to Democracy." *Electoral Politics in Southeast and East Asia*, SEMANTIC SCHOLAR.

Syafe, Muhammad Rafi Darajati Muhammad (2020). "Design of General Election in Indonesia." *Law Reform Jourrnal*, Fakultas Hukum Universitas Diponegoro, vol.16, no. 1, p. 97.

The Jakarta Post (2024). The *2024 Presidential Election turnout is high but stagnant*. https://www.thejakartapost.com/indonesia/2024/06/05/2024-presidential-election-turnout-high-but-stagnant-kpu.html (accessed September 23, 2024).

MYANMAR-THAILAND TRADE RELATIONS (2011-2020)

Chan Nyein Ko[1]

Abstract

Trade is one of the powerful pathways towards economic development for all countries. Growing bilateral trade increases the income levels of both countries, and then the countries become richer. Historically, Myanmar had a complicated relationship with neighbouring Thailand. With the democratization process of Myanmar, both countries have actively collaborated to promote bilateral trade. This study also intends to explore how trade relations between Myanmar and Thailand have contributed to normal trade and cross-border trade. It was conducted by a qualitative research method using both primary and secondary sources. The trade relationship contributed to economic prosperity by generating income, creating jobs, and fostering industrial development. It also became a source of border trade, migrant labour, natural gas, and some profitable Thailand investments in Myanmar. Thus, Myanmar-Thailand trade relations have resulted in a positive impact on the economic progress of both countries.

Keywords: trade policy, ASEAN, cross-border trade, economic cooperation, Myanmar, Thailand.

Introduction

Myanmar and Thailand have long-standing trade relations, with their shared border of over 2,400 kilometres facilitating significant cross-border trade. The relationship between Myanmar and Thailand has been a complex one since Myanmar gained independence in 1948. Historically, there have been periods of tension between them due to the conflicts over borders, resources, and ethnicity, like many other bordering countries. However, both nations had sought to strengthen their ties to foster peace and stability in the region. In particular, economic cooperation had played an important role in strengthening relations between Myanmar and Thailand, and they had been economic partners for many years. This cooperation has led to various initiatives such as increased trade and investment agreements and joint development projects. It had been beneficial to both countries, as it had allowed them to develop their economies in mutually beneficial ways. The two countries are members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), which has facilitated trade, investment, and other forms of economic cooperation between them.

Myanmar had initiated a series of gradual and radical changes of economic reforms since 2011, aimed at comprehensive economic development. Liberalization of trade and foreign investment was an integral part of these economic reforms. Myanmar had been exporting primary products at low prices, and importing manufactured and investment goods. The government of Myanmar was actively encouraging export diversification and promoting downstream processing of primary commodities, improving support services in trade financing, market access, and trade facilitation, as well as removing barriers to inbound foreign direct investment. Increased economic integration into ASEAN did not cause much trade diversion. Thailand remained a main trading partner, while China and India had been increasingly important through border trade. There were significant changes in Myanmar since the year 2011, including both political and economic reforms. The newly formed Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP)

[1] Department of International Relations and Political Science, University of Yangon

government came to power in 2011, and the National League for Democracy (NLD) government won the general elections in 2015. A series of political, economic, and administrative reforms was undertaken during 2011-2020. The 2011 statement of the Myanmar government to make an effort for peace with the country's ethnic rebel groups and to undertake democratization and economic liberalization was welcomed by Thailand. Since then, the USDP government has been trying to promote economic integration and more FDI for the economic growth of Myanmar. On the other hand, Thailand is prepared to concentrate on its neighboring countries and pursue its policy of strengthening the development in Indochina through bilateral and multilateral cooperation. Therefore, both countries have made great efforts in improving their bilateral relationship for their economic benefits.

Trade Policies of Myanmar and Thailand (2011-2020)

Trade policies are the government's rules and regulations that guide and control how trade is done with foreign countries. Trade policies could be used to advance a country's foreign policy interests. They could also have benefits, such as avoiding military force, bringing countries closer together, and spurring economic growth. The government's trade policy interests in foreign trade were influenced by two factors: political and economic motivations. The political reasons included: protecting jobs and industries, national security, retaliating against foreign policies, and protecting their consumers. Their economic motivations included protecting new industries from competition and building strategic policies. Therefore, successive Myanmar governments had embarked on reforms toward liberal democracy, a mixed economy, and reconciliation.

In order to promote the activities of foreign trade, rules, regulations, and procedures were essential measures in doing business export and import with bordering nations. To meet this end, the former rules and regulations that banned the participation of private enterprises in foreign trade were withdrawn by notification NO.1/88 released on 29th October, 1988. Subsequently, the state allowed private enterprises and firms to participate in manufacturing goods as well as in the service sectors. In addition, the state had offered foreign enterprises and businessmen to invest in Myanmar in very potential sectors. Foreign direct investments had been invited to participate in the enhancement of production and marketing. Myanmar's trade promotion policies were also encouraging to promote trade with neighboring countries.

The Ministry of Commerce had established three fundamental economic policies to achieve Myanmar's economic objectives. Firstly, trade activities must be done aiming at the welfare and benefit of the Myanmar people. The second stated that trade activities must not be a burden for people. And thirdly, trading activities must be done to explore long-term sustainable development, not for short-term benefits. Moreover, the Ministry of Commerce also set the four main objectives in formulating trade policies. These were (1) to support internal and external trade activities for the economic development of the country; (2) to upgrade the commercial efficiency of the public and private trading houses; (3) to increase the foreign exchange earnings of the country by export promotion; and (4) to encourage the trading activities of co-operatives and private entrepreneurs.

While Myanmar primarily exported primary products and imported manufactured and investment goods under unfavorable terms of trade, its foreign trade was predominantly with Asian countries. Over 70 percent of total exports were directed to the Asian region, while more than 90 percent of total imports originate from this region. Key trading partners included China, Thailand, Singapore, India, Japan, and South Korea. In line with the government's objective of transitioning Myanmar into a market-oriented economy, the state's role in trade, production, and pricing had been significantly reduced. Private sector activities dominated international trade, with efforts made to encourage their active participation, notably through the abolition of state trading monopolies in November 2011. In line with Myanmar's trade policy, as described by authorities, was to facilitate exports and imports, promote value-addition from primary commodities to increase the value-added content of exports, and promote international trade. Some pieces of economic legislation were outdated-existed since the pre-independence 1948 period, and as the country had economic reforms, several trade and investment-related laws had to be revised, amended, or replaced. The Control of Import/ Export Temporary Law (1947) was replaced on 7th September 2012 by the Export and Import Law. According to the Ministry of Commerce, there were two basic principles for export and import with the promotion measures. The first basic principle of export policy aimed to penetrate the global market by using existing natural and human resources and to produce value-added products rather than normal export items. The second basic principle of import policy was to prioritize capital goods, construction materials, and other essential goods: hygienic materials for people's health, supporting products for export promotion. Other trade-related laws that had been introduced the new Foreign Investment Law and the Foreign Exchange and Management Law (2012). On 19 June 2012, President U Thein Sein declared that the government had started the second phase of the economic reform strategy. The economic reform agenda emphasized good governance, transparency, and accountability while including measures for attracting foreign direct investment, liberalization trade, enhancing regional economic cooperation, reducing the state's economic role, boosting productivity, and balancing equity with efficiency. These reforms were directly related to external trade, exchange rate, finance, banking, business environment, and potential economic strategies, which were vital components of the reform agenda and crucial for Myanmar's sustained economic growth.

Thailand recognized that the global trading system had become much more liberalized, and individual countries' economies were becoming increasingly integrated. To formulate the future direction for trade policy, Thailand had continued to support free and fair trade, which had gradually introduced changes and had also provided to promoted progressive liberalization since 1992. One implication of pursuing a liberal policy was a need to strengthen the competitiveness and efficiency of domestic industries to strengthen the competitiveness and efficiency of domestic industries to be able to compete in the rapidly changing trading environment and be able to prosper amid increasing competition. In addition, Thailand also aimed to promote transparency and good governance by closing loopholes and strengthening the enforcement of the existing laws. An expansion of export markets was one of the key areas for Thailand, by promoting the export of goods and services. To achieve such a goal, the government had held the long-standing practice of close collaboration with the private sector to maintain the momentum of export growth. To attain a strong, accountable, and modern legal framework, the government had placed importance on revitalizing and improving several existing laws, i.e., the Competition Law, Foreign Business Act, and three Insurance-related Acts, which were revied and revised. Some new bills, such as a graft law on safeguards, laws, or regulations on retail and wholesale trade, were submitted to the Parliament for approval. All had been amended or drafted taking into account the full recognition of the role of foreign trade and investment in the Thai economy, as well as common business practices, to build a “level playing field” for all players, both local and international, to ensure that consumers were the ultimate beneficiaries.

As one of the fastest-growing economies in the world, Thailand has long recognized the importance of trade policy in its development. Trade measures had been instrumental in strengthening the competitiveness of domestic industries to compete in the world market. Being an open economy, Thailand had participated actively in various international forums such as the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations, the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum (APEC), and the ASEAN free trade area, since its accession to the World Trade Organization in January 1995. The Thai government had implemented various measures in compliance with its commitments in the WTO. The tariff system had been restructured while a law was enacted by the TRIPs agreement, to be followed by numerous other laws that were being drafted. Promoting the export of goods and services, including an expansion of export markets, had remained one of the key areas for Thailand. To achieve such a goal, the Government insisted on continuing the long-standing practice of close collaboration with the private sector to maintain the momentum of export growth and to enhance it in the future. On the international trade front, Thailand adhered strongly to the principles of free and fair trade. In line with its domestic economic policy, Thailand supported international trade to ensure sustainable economic growth. As in the case of imports, most products could be exported freely, while a few items were subject to the requirements of prior approval for legitimate reasons such as public health, national security, and protection of public morals and natural resources, etc. By the government's trade policy to liberalize trade and minimize trade distortion, most products could be imported freely into Thailand. However, goods that were obscene, dangerous to health, or harmful to the national economy might be prohibited from import by Thailand's international trade rights and obligations. Specific goods might be restricted from time to time, and these require prior government permission before being imported. Apart from that, most goods might be imported after complying with the necessary customs procedures and the payment of customs tariffs, where applicable. Thailand's trade policies had been geared towards promoting exports by limiting export control to a minimum. As in the case of imports, most products could be exported freely, while a few items were subject to the requirements of prior approval for reasons such as public health, economic stability, national security, and protection of public morals, etc. Thailand did not provide any export subsidies to its producers. Moreover, as per Thailand's multilateral trade commitments, export incentives in terms of local content and/or export performance requirements were no longer in place.

Cross-border trade patterns were varied from one country to another; thus, there existed several measures to respond to cross-border trade problems with individual neighbouring countries, which could presumably be regarded as implicit bilateral cross-border trade policies.

These measures had been formulated and implemented by the Ministry of Commerce in dealing with Myanmar in 2013. They were to improve facilities and logistics system to facilitate cross-border trade in Maesod district, Tak province and Sinkhon checkpoint in Prachuab Kirikhan province; to promote closer trade relations between Thailand and Myanmar in the form of Joint Trade Commission and exchange of bilateral visit of Ministers of Commerce; to hold regular consultation for both public and private sectors in order to resolve problems and constraints on cross-border trade; to continually advance cross-border trade through salient policies and implementation including strengthening public-private partnership as well as designating local agencies to facilitate cross-border trade towards international standard; to closely coordinate with Myanmar for establishing border economic zones in order to boost the growth of cross-border trade; to establish Thailand's agency for providing assistance to Thailand businesses and investors in doing business in neighbouring countries similar to JETRO of Japan should be established; to organize Thailand Trade Fair in Myanmar for publicizing the image of Thailand's products as well as inviting Myanmar businesses to participate in Trade Fair in Thailand e.g. Jewelry Fair which could aid Thailand to become a regional jewelry trading center. There was still much to do to promote cross-border trade with Myanmar. This was caused by different stages of development. Political uncertainty in Myanmar might sometimes lead to the one-sided closure of the border checkpoint. Institutional mechanisms to strengthen the close coordination of agencies responsible for resolving problems of cross-border trade locally and nationally should be functional. Financial facilities, e.g., currency exchange and banking services, should be in place. Technical assistance from Thailand in relevant aspects of cross-border trade should be rendered to Myanmar so that simplification of procedures and payments up to international standards could be enhanced. Both countries explored how to bring down trade discrimination or non-tariff trade barriers, particularly from the Myanmar side. Joint border economic zone and cross-border investments linking Maesod district, Tak province, with Myawaddy city, Myawaddy province of Myanmar, should be materialized. Thailand should keep up conferring trade privileges and market access, particularly on agricultural goods, to Myanmar.

Trade Cooperation between Myanmar and Thailand (2011-2020)

In 2011, to access the global markets, the Myanmar government liberalized laws and regulations in the financial sector and the foreign exchange market. Additionally, the government made attempts to develop the economy and industrialization, and enacted new economic policy and industrial policy in 2016. The trade and economic fortunes of Myanmar and Thailand were significantly linked after remarkable political, economic, and social reforms under the President U Thein Sein government and the NLD government.

The sanctions imposed by the U.S. and the EU had pushed Myanmar to rely more on its neighboring countries. Since the sanctions were imposed by the West, cross-border trade, both formal and informal, has become more active. Development of cross-border trade was also attributed to infrastructural development (i.e., especially the road and transport connections with border areas, gas pipelines connecting to Thailand, etc). Such development of cross-border trade had positive impacts on the income and living status of those around the borders who are involved one way or another in border trade activities. The Department of Border Trade (DOBT) launched a new system of border trade comprising normal trade and border trade. To administer border trade more effectively, integrated teams were established at respective border trade posts comprising members from the Department of Finance and Revenue, the Department of Customs, the Myanmar Investment Commission (MIC), the Myanmar Police Force, Department of Immigration. In January 2006, a new "friendship bridge" was opened across the Sai River between Chiang Rai in Thailand and Tachileik in Myanmar. Along with the opening of friendship bridges, Myanmar-Thailand border trade has significantly increased yearly.

With regards to the Memorandum of Understanding, Myanmar and Thailand signed the MoU on the establishment of a joint trade commission on 2 February 1990. The purpose was to hold open discussions and exchange views and opinions to promote bilateral trade relations, especially in the border trade improvement. There were ten MoUs, especially in the trade sector, energy sector, and banking sectors, between 2011-2020. According to the MoU, the meetings of the Myanmar-Thailand Joint Trade Commission (JTC) were held by the Ministry of Economy and Commerce of Thailand. The Myanmar-Thailand Joint Trade Commission meetings were held as follows: the first meeting in Bangkok (1998), the second meeting in Yangon (2000), the third meeting in Bangkok (2002), the fourth meeting in Yangon (2004), the fifth meeting in Bangkok (2010), the sixth meeting in Bangkok (2012), and the seventh meeting in Nay Pyi Taw (2016).

Myanmar and Thailand announced the 65th anniversary of Myanmar-Thailand relations in 2012, and the two sides signed three MoUs at the meeting. The first MoU reaffirmed the Myanmar-Thailand obligations to launch the comprehensive development of the Dawei economic zone and deep-sea port. The second MoU involved economic cooperation in support of Myanmar's human resources development, capacity-building for Myanmar's ASEAN chairmanship in 2014, and infrastructure development inside the country. The third MoU covered an agreement to set up an energy forum to explore further cooperation. In addition, President U Thein Sein and Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra also agreed to further expand economic activity along their common border. This included opening new checkpoints at Kiu Pha Wok in Chiang Mai, Ban Hua Ton Noon in Mae Hong Son, Ban Pu Nam Ron in Kanchanaburi, and a temporary border crossing in Ratchaburi province. At the ACMECS summit in 2013, Prime Minister Yingluck announced that the government had allocated a budget of B15 billion for the development of Myanmar's Dawei deep-sea port, the construction of a land bridge to link Laem Chabang and Myanmar's Dawei Special Economic Zone, and the establishment of infrastructure development to link neighboring countries. The projects included permanent border crossings between Thailand and Myanmar, including the Kio Pha Wok checkpoint in Chiang Mai province, the Ban Huai Ton Nun checkpoint in Mae Hong Son province, and the Ban Phu Nam Ron checkpoint in Kanchanaburi province. On 6 June 2015, Myanmar and Thailand reached an MoU on further cooperation in energy and electric power. It accelerated the 26-year Myanmar-Thailand oil and natural gas cooperation agreement, and benefited the energy efficiency of countries, the development of infrastructure, the cross-border energy sector, and human resources development. Thailand's main energy sources are gas, petroleum, coal, and hydropower. The Governments of Myanmar and Thailand signed a Memorandum of Understanding to improve immigration checkpoints and logistics clearances for cross-border trade in the Myawaddy and

Maesod checkpoints. Thailand and Myanmar officially opened the second Myanmar-Thailand Friendship Bridge to traffic on 30 October 2019. The MoU also aimed to boost the transfer of goods between Myanmar and Thailand across the Friendship Bridge. Thai companies have been major investors in Myanmar, particularly in sectors such as energy, manufacturing, construction, telecommunications, and banking. Some prominent Thai companies operating in Myanmar include PTT Exploration and Production (PTTEP), CP Group, and Bangkok Bank. PTTEP, a subsidiary of Thailand’s state-owned PTT Group, has been involved in oil and gas exploration and production activities in Myanmar.

Thailand’s active participation in regional forums and adherence to trade liberalization principles further underscored its commitment to fostering open and transparent trade policies. However, cooperation of various activities as a partnership for security and development of both countries in the border area had to solve labor, human trafficking, illegal trade, and narcotic trafficking. To improve trade cooperation between the two countries, stability of bilateral trade agreements, transportation facilities, and social welfare are necessary for both countries. As long as Myanmar continued to pursue economic development and integration into the global economy, collaboration with neighboring countries like Thailand had been crucial, offering opportunities for mutual growth and prosperity.

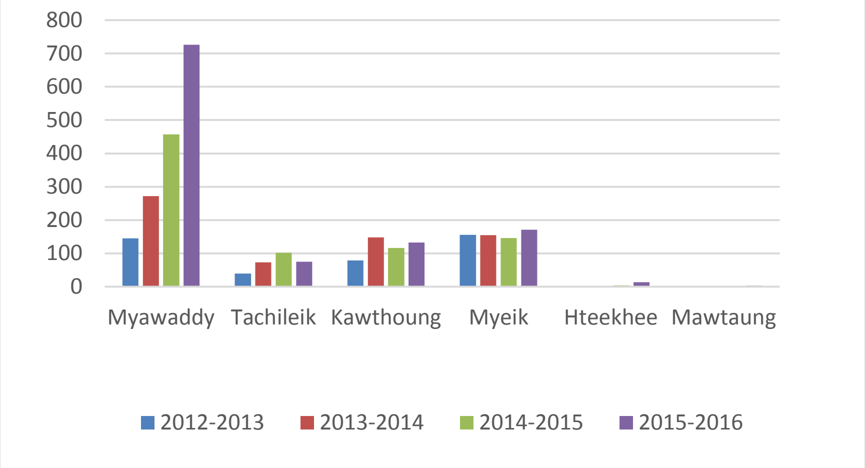
Trade Relations between Myanmar and Thailand (2011-2020)

Normally, Myanmar conducted border trade with Thailand through seven trading posts, which are Myawaddy, Tachileik, Kawthoung, Myeik, Hteekhee, Mawtaung, and Meisei. Myanmar-Thailand Border Crossing Agreement was updated on 24 June 2016 so that the Myanmar-Thailand Border Checkpoints were allowed to enter for citizens of the two countries and citizens of third countries who hold a passport and visa were permitted to enter/ exit via any International Entry/Exit points. Starting from 1 September 2016, Tachileik, Myawaddy, and Kawthaung International Land Border Checkpoints were allowed to enter/exit with an e-Visa. In Myanmar, most of the goods were mainly imported from Thailand were raw materials for manufacturing and construction materials. Myanmar’s exports to Thailand were primarily agriculture and livestock products, and imports from Thailand were mainly non-alcoholic beverages, fabric and yarn, motorcycles and related parts, and construction materials.

Table-1 Border Trade Volume between Myanmar and Thailand (2012-2013 to 2015-2016) (US$ in million)

No	Trade Post	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016
1	Myawaddy	144.802	271.501	456.902	726.112
2	Tachileik	39.736	72.501	101.965	74.589
3	Kawthoung	78.906	148.224	115.697	132.380
4	Myeik	155.101	154.422	145.999	170.999
5	Hteekhee	-	1.493	4.216	13.191
6	Mawtaung	-	1.988	0.663	2.512
7	Meisei	-	-	-	-

Source: Ministry of Commerce, Myanmar



Source: Ministry of Commerce, Myanmar

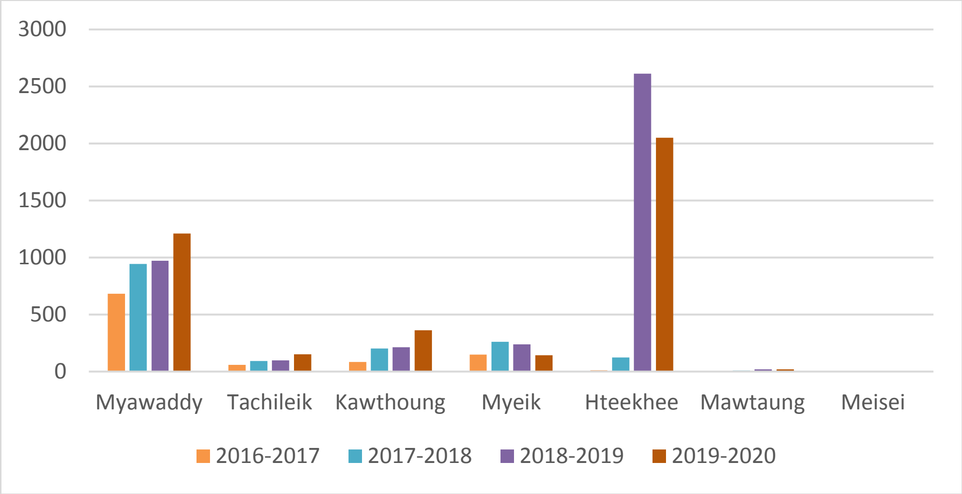
Figure-1 Border Trade Volume between Myanmar and Thailand (2012-2013 to 2015-2016)

According to Table 1 and Figure 1, Myawaddy was the most active border in terms of trade volume. The trade volume grew from $144.8 million in 2012-2013 to $ 726.1 million in 2015- 2016. This reflected the importance of Myawaddy as a major trade hub between the two countries. Tachileik's trade volume increased from $ 39.7 million in 2012-2013 to $101.97 million in 2014-2015. Kawthoung's trade volume initially rose from $78.9 million in 2012-2013 to $148.2 million in 2013-2014. Myeik's trade volume remained relatively stable over the years, ranging between $145.99 million and $170.99 million. Hteekhee and Mawtaung were emerging trade posts, with growing trade volumes by 2015-2016. Meisei had no recorded trade during this period. Overall, Myawaddy's dominance and the development of smaller posts like Hteekhee reflected the increasing importance of cross-border trade between Myanmar and Thailand during these years.

Table-2 Border Trade Volume between Myanmar and Thailand (2016-2017 to 2019-2020) (US$ in million)

No	Trade Post	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020
1	Myawaddy	682.774	942.281	969.842	1209.914
2	Tachileik	57.285	92.743	97.621	149.753
3	Kawthoung	84.660	202.922	214.102	360.520
4	Myeik	147.752	259.446	239.518	141.727
5	Hteekhee	10.577	122.297	2612.032	2050.979
6	Mawtaung	2.239	7.419	19.086	18.84
7	Meisei	0.181	0.529	1.447	2.782

Source: Ministry of Commerce, Myanmar



Source: Ministry of Commerce, Myanmar

Figure-2 Border Trade Volume between Myanmar and Thailand (2016-2017 to 2019-2020)

According to Table 2 and Figure 2, Myawaddy continued to be the most important trade hub, with trade volumes increasing each year. Trade grew from $682.774 million in 2016-2017 to $1.21 billion in 2019-2020. This reflected strong and growing cross-border trade, driven by improved infrastructure and the strategic location of Myawaddy. Trade at Tachileik also increased significantly during this period, from $57.285 million in 2016-2017 to $ 149.753 million in 2019-2020. This indicated growing cross-border trade activities at this post, though it is smaller compared to Myawaddy. Trade at Kawthoung showed a strong upward trend, starting at $84.66 million in 2016-2017 and reaching $360.52 million in 2019-2020. Myeik's trade volume fluctuated, reaching a peak of $259.45 million in 2017-2018. The most dramatic growth occurred at Hteekhee, which saw an enormous surge from $10.58 million in 2016-2017 to $2.61 billion in 2018-2019. This post became a major hub for cross-border trade during this period, likely due to the large-scale export of natural resources or increased industrial trade. Mawtaung's trade volume also grew from $2.24 million in 2016-2017 to $18.84 million in 2019-2020. Meisei had minimal trade, but volumes increased gradually from $0.18 million in 2016-2017 to $ 2.78 million in 2019-2020. Overall, the period from 2016 to 2020 saw strong growth in border trade between Myanmar and Thailand, particularly at Myawaddy and Hteekhee, indicating growing economic ties and the increasing importance of these border posts for bilateral trade.

Table-3 Myanmar-Thailand Bilateral Normal Trade (2011-2020) (US$ in billion)

Year	Export	Import	Volume	Balance
2011-2012	3.65	0.52	4.17	+3.13
2012-2013	3.78	0.50	4.28	+3.28
2013-2014	4.09	0.95	5.04	+3.14
2014-2015	3.85	1.04	4.89	+2.81
2015-2016	2.66	1.11	3.77	+1.55
2016-2017	1.89	1.02	2.91	+ 0.87

Year	Export	Import	Volume	Balance
2017-2018	2.41	1.03	3.44	+1.38
2018-2019	0.27	1.04	1.31	- 0.77
2019-2020	0.27	0.76	1.03	-0.49
Total	22.87	7.97	30.84	14.9

Source: Ministry of Commerce, Myanmar

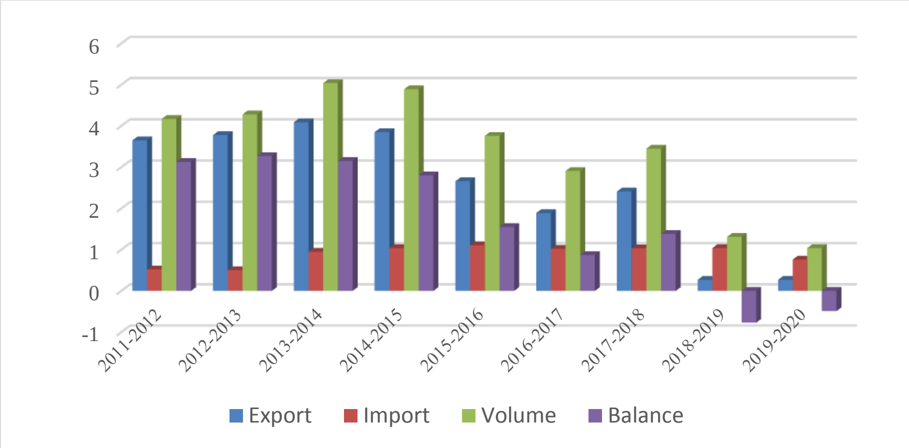


Figure-3 Myanmar-Thailand Bilateral Normal Trade (2011-2020)

Source: Ministry of Commerce, Myanmar

According to Table 3 and Figure 3, the volume of normal trade between Myanmar and Thailand grew steadily starting from 2011 and reached the peak level at US$5.04 billion in 2013-2014. But the volume of trade continuously declined from US$4.89 billion in 2014-2015 to US$1.31 billion in 2018-2019. In terms of trade balance, Myanmar suffered trade deficits in the 2018-2019 financial year. The total volume of Myanmar-Thailand normal trade amounted to US$29.81 billion from 2011 to 2019.

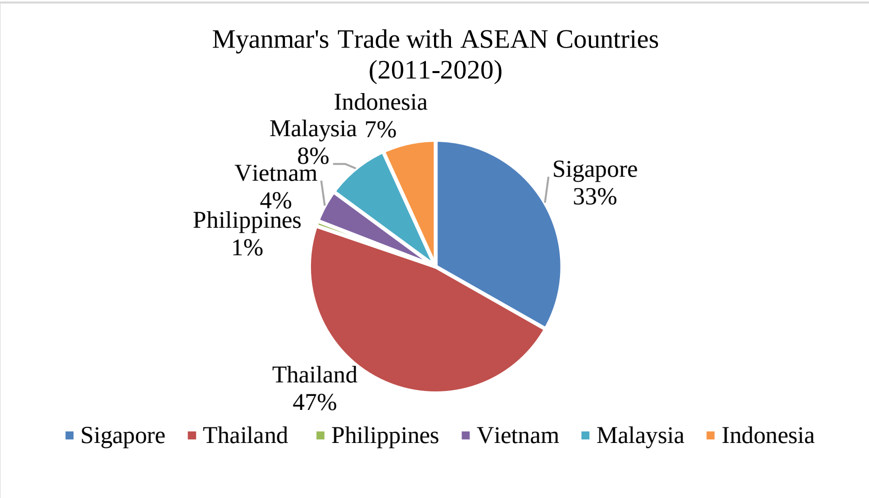


Figure-4 Trade between Myanmar and ASEAN countries (2011-2020)

Source: Ministry of Commerce, Myanmar

Thailand was Myanmar's first most important trading partner among ASEAN member countries, according to Figure 4. Figure 4 shows that among Myanmar's trade with ASEAN member countries, the trade between Myanmar and Thailand reached the highest with 47 percent, followed by the trade between Myanmar and Singapore in second place with 33 percent.

After the acceleration of energy and electric power cooperation sector, Myanmar's export of gas to Thailand had rapidly increased since 2011and the exporting amount reached the highest level in 2014-2015. During the 25 years, the exports of Thailand to Myanmar had increased at an annual rate of 10.2 percent, from US$0.35 billion in 1995 to US$3.83 billion in 2020. On the other hand, the export commodities of Myanmar to Thailand had increased at an annual rate of 10.6 percent, from US$0.21 billion in 1995 to US$2.67 billion in 2020. After launching a new system of border trade comprising normal and border trade, integrated teams were established at their respective border trade posts, and they can provide one-stop services for border trade matters in collaboration with various departments. Furthermore, opening friendship bridges, establishing MoUs on the joint trade commission between both nations, designed to make open discussions, exchange views and opinions, has accelerated the bilateral trade relations.

Conclusion

The government of Myanmar opened the economy to international trade and foreign investment through the people-centred economic policy framework. Myanmar's external trade has been encouraged using pursuing a liberalized trade policy to transform its economy into a market-oriented economic system. Along with policy reform, Myanmar has gained an increase in the volume of external trade. Geographic proximity, domestic politics, and complementary roles between Myanmar and Thailand have played a key role in the relations between the two countries.

Although Myanmar had traded with many countries, more than 80 percent of the country's trade went to its ten main trading partners, such as Thailand, China, India, Japan, Malaysia, Singapore, South Korea, the US, the UK, and Germany. Nevertheless, Thailand was Myanmar's leading export market, and China was Myanmar's key import market. Regularizing border trade between Myanmar and Thailand has contributed to the further development of bilateral trade relations. The volume of bilateral trade between Myanmar and Thailand grew steadily and reached the peak level in the 2014-2015 financial year. In terms of normal trade, Myanmar suffered trade deficits in 2018-2019, and Myanmar encountered trade deficits in terms of border trade from 2013 to 2018 because the private traders desired to import more Thai goods, such as manufactured goods and foodstuffs, rather than export more Myanmar goods. However, the total volume of Myanmar-Thailand normal trade and border trade amounted to US$44.26 billion from 2011 through 2020.

Under the USDP Government, Myawaddy stood out as the most significant trade post, with substantial and steady growth over the years. Tachileik, Kawthoung, and Myeik were moderately active trade posts with some fluctuations in trade volume. HteeKhee and Mawtaung were emerging trade posts with growing trade volumes by 2015-2016. Myawaddy's dominance and the development of smaller posts like Hteekhee reflected the increasing importance of cross-border trade between Myanmar and Thailand from 2011-2015. Under the NLD Government, Myawaddy remained the most important border trade post. Htee Khee experienced a significant trade boom, becoming a major player in the Myanmar-Thailand border trade. Kawthoung and Tachileik saw substantial growth in trade volume. The period from 2016 to 2020 saw strong growth in border trade between Myanmar and Thailand, particularly at Myawaddy and Hteekhee, indicating growing economic ties and the increasing importance of these border posts for bilateral trade.

Furthermore, Myanmar had used energy resources as an instrument in making good relations with its neighbouring country, Thailand. Thailand's rapid richness in economic growth led to the use of more natural gas than it could produce. Therefore, one of the oil and gas and hydropower-rich countries, Myanmar, became an important one for the energy thrust country, Thailand. Thailand, one of the energy-hungry countries, could fill its economic needs in cooperation with Myanmar's oil and gas sector. In 2011, the gas share was 44 percent and the petroleum share was 36 percent; natural gas and petroleum provided 80 percent of Thailand's energy. The surplus position had been large for any single trading partner, like Cambodia, the Lao PDR, and Malaysia. Myanmar was the only exception because of Thailand's imports of natural gas of $3.5 billion, or more than 95 percent of total imports. Without this trade in natural gas, Thailand would have a large surplus with Myanmar.

Myanmar and Thailand had worked together to enhance their economic growth by implementing trade policies and signing Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) to strengthen their relationship. There were many advantages from the Myanmar-Thailand Trade Agreements, such as enhanced trade relations, infrastructure development, border crossing facilitation, business collaboration, energy sector cooperation, employment opportunities, financial integration, agricultural development, and a border trade boost. Since 2011, trade between the two nations has grown significantly, presenting both opportunities and challenges in their trade and investment ties. Both countries encountered issues such as the rule of law, political and economic stability, corruption, and human rights concerns, which influenced the prospects of their trade cooperation. To further improve trade relations, it was crucial to establish stable bilateral agreements, improve transportation infrastructure, and enhance social welfare systems. Trade and investment held promise for Myanmar's economic growth, but significant hurdles remained. Overcoming these required collaborative efforts from both countries, including tackling illegal border trade, human trafficking, and improving regulatory frameworks. A comprehensive approach, involving multiple perspectives and collaboration between relevant government departments or ministries in Myanmar and Thailand, was essential for long-term and sustainable cooperation. This was key to unlocking the full economic potential of their relationship. Trade and investment had promoted market access, infrastructure development, and job creation in Myanmar, while Thai businesses had benefited from investing in Myanmar's emerging sectors such as oil, gas, and hydropower. Moreover, bilateral agreements signify a commitment to deeper cooperation and mutual benefit, fostering economic development, trade diversification, and socio-economic progress for both Myanmar and Thailand. By addressing challenges and leveraging opportunities, trade between the two nations could contribute to economic growth and development for both. To maximize the benefits of trade for long-term prosperity, both nations needed to focus on inclusive economic growth, political stability, and sustainable development.

Acknowledgement

I would like to express the deepest gratitude to Dr. Thida Aung, Professor and Head of the Department of International Relations and Political Science, University of Yangon, for her gracious permission and advice to carry out this research work. I wish to express my deepest gratitude to Dr. Mon Mon James Hla Kyaw, Professor of the Department of International Relations and Political Science, University of Mandalay, for her guidance and support. I also would like to express my special thanks to my professors, Department of International Relations and Political Science, University of Yangon, for their valuable advices, patience, supervision, and kind guidance throughout the research work.

References

Akkanut, Wantanasombut. 2012. “Thailand-Myanmar Border Trade”, papers.ssrn.com. January1, 2012, Vol.1No.1(2012),https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3042186

Chongkittavorn Kavi. 2015. “Southeast Asia’s Game Changer: Thai-Myanmar Relations”, Vol . 10, No.4, Global Asia. A Journal of The East Asia Foundation, December 2015. https://globalasia.org/v10no4/focus/southeast-asias-game-changer-thai-myanmar-relations_kavi-chongkittavorn

“Framework for Economic andSocial Reforms”, January 14,2013.https://themimu.info/sites/themimu .info/files/documents/Ref%20Doc_FrameworkForEconomi AndSocialReform2012-15_Govt_ 2013 % 2 0. pdf

“Fast Track Project on the Capacity Development of Trade Promotion in Myanmar”. 2014.International Cooperation Agency, KRI International Corp., Mitsubishi UFJ Research and Consulting CO., Ltd., March 2014. https://openjicareport.jica.go.jp/pdf/12151080_01.pdf

GMS, “*Myanmar,Thailand Sign MoU to Boost Cross-border Trade*,” December 12, 2019, https://greatermekong.org/myanmar-thailand-sign-mou-boost-cross-border-trade

Krainara, Choen. (2013). “Thailand’s International Trade Policies”, ResearchGate. https://www.researchgate.net /publication/255722109 _Thailand's_International_Trade_Policies

KRI International Corp, “The Project for Capacity Development of Trade Promotion in Myanmar, Phase II, Final Report,” January 2016, Department of Trade Promotion & Consumer Affairs, Ministry of Commerce, Republic of the Union of Myanmar https://openjicareport.jica.go.jp/pdf/12248217.pdf

Lincoln Legal Services (Myanmar) https://www.lincolnmyanmar.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/CBM-guidelines-for-Thai-Myanmar-border-trade.pdf

Lynn, Kyaw Kyaw. (2015). “ An analysis of the relationship between foreign trade and economic growth in Myanmar during 1990-2014?”. International Journal of Business and Administrative Studies, 1(4), 114-131. https://philpapers.org/archive/LYNAAO.pdf

Ministry of Commerce, Myanmar. www.commerce.gov.mm

Myanmar, Thailand Sign MoU to Boost Cross-border Trade”. greatermekong.org. 12 December 2019, https://greatermekong.org/g/myanmar-thailand-sign-mou-boost-cross-border-trade

“Maw Taung Trade Post to be opened on Thai-Myanmar Border”. Myanmar Business Today,21 May 2019. http://www.mmbiztoday.com/articles/maw-taung-trade-post-be-opened-thai-myanmar-border

Mya Than, “Myanmar’s External Trade, ISEAS Current Economic Affairs Series,” 92.

San, Win Mr. 2016.“Analysis of Trade Corporation between Thailand and Myanmar” https://e-research.siam.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/IMBA-2016-IS-Analysis-of Trade-Corporation-between-Thailand-and-Myanmar.pdf

Thai-Myanmar Bilateral Economic Agreements”, thaibizmyanmar. http://www.thaibizmyanmar.com/en/thai-myanmar/agreements.php

The Nation, “*MOU signed to boost Thai-Myanmar border trade*,” October 04, 2019, paras. 2, https://www.nationthailand.com/business/30377044

Winston Set Aung, "*The Role of Informal Cross-border Trade in Myanmar*," ASIA Paper 2009, Sweden, Institute for Security and Development Policy, 2009, 18.

Xinhua, "*Myanmar, Thailand to enhance energy cooperation.*Xinhua, "*Myanmar, Thailand to enhance cooperation in energy, electric power*," ASEAN-China Center, June 16, 2015, http://www.asean-china-center.org/english/2015-06/16/c_134330028.htm

Zin Zin Naing, Daw. 2023. "Trade Policy Reform in Myanmar". https://www.unescap. org/sites/defa/ files/Trade%20policy%20reform-Myanmar Myanmar%20as%20of%2023%20Sept%2014.pdf

THE ROLE OF INDIA AND PAKISTAN IN KASHMIR

Thit Thit Tun[1]

Abstract

Kashmir is important to both India and Pakistan due to its geo-political significance. Kashmir conflict between India and Pakistan has long curbed the relationship and development between the two countries. It is more than six decades old, originating on August 15, 1947, due to the partition of British India into India and Pakistan along religious lines. It has been a protracted conflict in changing global and regional politics. It is valuable for India and Pakistan in terms of national security, geography, and national resources. The purpose of this research is to explore the relations and interactions between Indian and Pakistan regarding the Kashmir region and to analyze the impacts of the Kashmir conflict on India-Pakistan relations. The research questions are how the Kashmir conflict has affected on India and Pakistan relations and Kashmir region, and why conflict resolution between India and Pakistan concerning this conflict has failed. Institutional mistrust, border clashes, the nuclear arms race, continuing insurgency and terrorism have caused the tension between India and Pakistan. It also affects the efforts to improve relations between India and Pakistan. There is hardly any chance for permanent peace in Kashmir because India and Pakistan stand on their national interests and national security in Kashmir Conflict.

Keywords: Kashmir, India, Pakistan, geo-political significance, causes, impact

Introduction

The territory of Kashmir is commonly known as Jammu and Kashmir. Kashmir is an ancient city and Buddhism and Hinduism were major religions in history. Then, Muslim Sultans occupied the region at the beginning of the mid-14th century. Kashmir is bordered by Afghanistan to the northwest, China to the northeast, India to the south and Pakistan to the west. Kashmir covers an area of 222,236 square kilometers. It is a mountainous region and has generally equitable climate and abundant water resources. Indeed, this region is rich in natural beauty and resources. Kashmir is important for India and Pakistan in terms of strategic geography and natural resources.

The Kashmir conflict is still ongoing between India and Pakistan. This conflict was resulted from the failure of the British Government to implement the Government of India Act 1935 that envisaged a federal set-up between the quasi-sovereign Indian States and the British Provinces. Moreover, another reason was the communal split that the Indian nationhood suffered on account of the Two Nation Theory and its politic-geographical expression in the form of British India into India and Pakistan. Muslim majority areas of the British Provinces went to Pakistan and Hindu majority areas went to India. At the time of partition, princely states had the right to choose whether they were to cede to India or Pakistan. The Maharaja of Kashmir signed the Instrument of Accession on October 26, 1947 due to massive infiltration of the tribal Muslims to take control of the State. The Kashmir conflict has been the major tension in Indian-Pakistan relations. It has intensified and led to three major wars between India and Pakistan in 1948, 1965, and 1999. The impacts of these wars and conflicts imposed serious effects on society and people in both countries. Particularly, people in Kashmir have faced direct impacts and instability.

[1] Department of International Relations, Yadanabon University

India and Pakistan view each other as enemies. Owing to the lack of trust, the two countries take various measures to ensure their national interest and security. Various efforts at bilateral and multilateral levels could not resolve the Kashmir conflict. The purpose of this research is to highlight the role of the Kashmir between India and Pakistan and to express the impact of Kashmir conflict on India and Pakistan Relations. To complement this purpose, the research question has come how Kashmir conflict has affected on India and Pakistan Relations. The finding of this research is why conflict resolution between India and Pakistan with regard to Kashmir conflict has failed. Institutional mistrust, border clashes, the nuclear arms race, continuing insurgency and terrorism have provided the tension between India and Pakistan. It also affects the efforts of improving relations between India and Pakistan. There is hardly any chance for permanent peace in Kashmir because India and Pakistan stand on their national interests and national security in Kashmir Conflict.

Literature Review

Choudhry and Akhtar (2010) explain the various aspects of the peace process between India and Pakistan in their article, "Does Terrorism Matter in South Asian Peace Process? : A Perspective of India-Pakistan". They analyze the way in which the Kashmir conflict has become a source of tension between India and Pakistan. Revisiting the past peace processes, they urge the leaders of both countries to embrace much larger and longer strategic perspectives without sticking only to Kashmir as a national policy. In their analysis, Choudhry and Akhtar (2010) discover that the issues of Kashmir and terrorism are the major impediments to peace between the two countries. From a pro-Indian standpoint, Mishra (2007) blames in her article, "The Colonial Origins of Territorial Disputes in South Asia" that Pakistan's double-edged policy of taking peace which is supporting to Jihad in Jammu and Kashmir and caused the failure of peace negotiations. In contrast to their pro-Indian line, Yusuf and Najam (2009) take a more pro-Pakistan stance in their article, "Kashmir: Ripe for Resolution?". They recommend four types of solutions to the conflict: first, an option of direct vote by the people of Jammu and Kashmir; second, independence for part or all of the state; third, autonomy; and fourth, partition.

Unlike the above-mentioned articles, this research highlights the important status of Kashmir, India-Pakistan relations and Kashmir dispute, the Kashmir dispute's impacts on the India-Pakistan relations and the role of India and Pakistan in Kashmir region.

Research Questions

The purpose of this research to explore the relations and interactions between India and Pakistan regarding the Kashmir region and impact of Kashmir conflict on India-Pakistan relations. In doing so, the study tries to answer the following questions:

- How did the Kashmir conflict impact on India-Pakistan relations and the Kashmir region?
- Why did conflict resolution between India and Pakistan concerning the Kashmir conflict fail?

Research Methodology

In this research, the qualitative research method is mainly used and the analytical method is also applied. Literature review on primary sources and secondary sources are done. Moreover, reliable online sources from the official websites are also used. The data analysis in this research is primarily based on the published sources, press conference releases, statements, and reports from different international institutions and organizations. Academic articles, journals, newspapers, and books are utilized as well.

Theoretical Context

Conflict resolution means terminating conflict by methods that are analytical and that get to the roots of problem. Conflict resolution points out that parties involved in conflict must have a mutual understanding about the stakes and importance of settling their differences to ease the process of achieving peace. Conflict resolution framework suggests that groups in conflict must attempt to resolve their problems analytically and systematically with the intervention of third parties in the form of mediators to facilitate the transition to peace. Any attempt to resolve the Kashmir dispute between India and Pakistan needs to consider conflict resolution as one approach among those available. India and Pakistan have made several agreements to resolve the Kashmir dispute. These agreements are Tashkent Declaration, Simla Accord, Lahore Declaration and Composite Dialogue. The United Nations, the United States, Russia and China played as the mediators in the conflict resolution of Kashmir.

The security dilemma is a concept in international relations that refers to the ways in which actions taken by states to increase their own security can inadvertently threaten the security of the other states. The security dilemma arises when states pursue policies that are intended to make them safer, but that are perceived as threatening by other states, leading to a cycle of increasing militarization and tensions. India not only wants to be the leader of South Asian subcontinent, but also wants to become world power. Modi government came into power and proposed the idea of “make 21st century to be the century of India”. Driven by the “Great Power Dream”, India’s military strength has made great progress. The Modi government attached great importance to the construction of India’s military strength and continuously increased military spending. India has always pursued its dominance in South Asia, which has caused Pakistan to continuously strengthen its military equipments to achieve self-protection. The arms race between India and Pakistan has caused the security dilemma.

I. The Significance of Kashmir between India and Pakistan

Kashmir is valuable for both countries in terms of resources, geopolitics and national security. Indus River flows through Kashmir and is crucial for agriculture in Pakistan. Similarly, it is important to India for irrigation. Whoever controls Kashmir, then can effectively cut off the water supply to the other. Thus, the control of the waterways through dams and channels has been an important issue for quite a long time.

Additionally, the glaciers provide the large amount of freshwater to the region. The Kashmiri Rivers and water bodies also have the functionality to generate hydroelectricity at great magnitudes. The Kashmir mainly depends on hydroelectricity for its power demands. At this time, Kashmir only produces around 3000 megawatts of electricity. The region has the potential to produce up to 16000 megawatts of power. It is a home to plethora of resources such as uranium, gold, oil, and natural gas. So, the Indian and Pakistani governments strived their best to possess the Kashmir territory for water and energy resources.

For geopolitical position, Kashmir is vital for India and Pakistan. It is known as a bridge between South Asia and Central Asia. It is also the heartland of South Asia. Its geopolitical position is essential for strategic and military power of both countries. India and Pakistan are the military power of South Asia and they have the nuclear weapons since 1988. Kashmir plays as an important role for Pakistan. It has been a key to the Belt and Road Initiative and for the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). The CPEC is a large-scale bilateral project involving the development of infrastructure in Pakistan, the establishment of transportation networks between China and Pakistan and the creation of energy projects. Many of these projects are carried out through the Kashmir region. Therefore, Pakistan intends to connect both Central Asia and China through Kashmir.

For India, Kashmir is the only direct route to Central Asia, in the North, China on the East and Afghanistan on the West. It is also a transit to Europe. Without Kashmir, India would not be able to directly communicate with Central Asia and European Countries. India could not be able to dominate a pivotal position on the Central Asia. The caravan trade route passes through Kashmir from Central Asia to India. Kashmir is also extremely vital to India's national security. Kashmiri Northern provinces give direct gateway to the North West province of Pakistan and Northern Punjab. The state of Kashmir is a valuable door for India with other regional powers. Therefore, it is truly economic and strategic importance for India. There are many geopolitical significant areas in Kashmir. One of these areas is the Siachen Glacier at the Karakoram Range.

The Siachen Glacier is the only barrier between China and Pakistan. If China and Pakistan were permitted to deploy their militaries at Siachen, India's national security would be greatly undermined. China and Pakistan could combine forces and threaten India without Kashmir. Thus, India spends many funds to forces deployed in Siachen. Strategic importance of Kashmir remains paramount for India's defense, and security.

II. The Causes of the Kashmir Conflict between India and Pakistan

In August 1947, India and Pakistan were on the cusp of independence from British rule. The British, led by the then Governor General Louis Mountbatten, divided British India into the independent states of India and Pakistan. British India contained multiple princely states (states allegiant to the British but headed by an independent local monarch) along with states directly headed by the British. During the partition, the British granted the monarchs of the princely states the right to choose whether to cede to India or Pakistan. In general, the Muslim majority states went to Pakistan while the Hindu majority states went to India, although India is a secular nation. Pakistani Prime minister Muhammed Ali Jinnah had stated that Hindus and Muslims could not live in one nation. General Mountbatten recommended that Kashmir should accede to India, given the fact that India is a secular state. Hari Singh, the local monarch, decided that Muslims would oppose acceding to India while the Hindus and Sikhs would oppose acceding to Pakistan. Therefore, the Kashmir crisis erupted on October 1947.

It was also the product of ambivalence of Poonch masses since the taxes imposed by Maharaja forced the people to revolt against the ruler. These taxes were not imposed on Hindus and Sikhs. There was taxation on the widow, cow, buffalo and sheep. These taxes were levied only on Muslims in the Poonch region. Since the ruler imposed heavy taxes, local revolt begun in Poonch later led to the entire state with chaos, carnage and massacre. Two million people were killed on this issue. At that time, Maharaja's forces failed to combat and he has no choice except the Indian help. So, he requested an emergency military assistance to India. Since without signing the 'Instrument of Accession' Mountbatten refused to send military assistances, Maharaja signed the "Instrument of Accession' on October 26, 1947. In 27 October, 1947 Indian forces launched in Kashmir to overthrow the radars. On the other hand, General Gracy ordered Pakistani forces to launch full scale war in 1947. Therefore, the Kashmir crisis erupted on October 1947.

India and Pakistan fought three major wars with regard to the Kashmir region. The first Kashmir war erupted between India and Pakistan in 1947 due to the Kashmir's Ruler, Maharaja Singh imposed taxes on the Muslim people in Poonch region that led to the Poonch masses. The result of the first Kashmir war is the Line of Divide (LoD) or Ceasefire Line (CFL) which was made under the resolution of the United Nations. According to the Ceasefire Line, India obtained the 65% of the Kashmir region and Pakistan obtained the 35% of the Kashmir region.

In 1965, the second Kashmir war erupted between India and Pakistan. The major cause of the second Kashmir war is that India vowed to liberate the Pakistan-occupied part and Pakistan complained to the United Nations' Security Council. India defeated in the 1965 war between India and China and China occupied the nearly 20% of the Kashmir region. This area is known as the Aksai Chin. Therefore, the Ceasefire Line (CFL) turns to the Line of Control (LoC) in 1971. According to the Line of Control, India occupied 60% of Kashmir (Indian administered Kashmir), Pakistan occupied 30% of Kashmir (Pakistan administered Kashmir) and China occupied 10% of Kashmir. Indian administered Kashmir is more developed than Pakistan administered Kashmir because Indian administered Kashmir is oriented towards development and Pakistan administered Kashmir focused on terrorism.

The third Kashmir war which is known as the Kargil war began on May 26, 1999 due to the infiltration of Pakistani Soldiers and Kashmiri militants into the positions on the Indian side of the Line of Control (LoC). The Kargil war ended with Pakistan failing to secure their objective and under the pressure of US and G-8 countries. These wars have strained the relations between India and Pakistan. Another dispute that has strained India- Pakistan relations is Siachen Glacier dispute because Siachen Glacier is the strategic location for India and Pakistan. Indus River dispute is one of the disputes that strained the relations between India and Pakistan. However, Indus River dispute was solved under the Indus Water Treaty and India controlled the eastern tributaries of Indus River, Beas, Ravi, Sutlej and Pakistan controlled the western tributaries of Indus River, Chenab and Jhelum. The Indus Water treaty is the example of the success of the mediation in India - Pakistan relations.

Muslim insurgency and cross-border terrorism are one of the issues that caused the hostile relations between India and Pakistan because Pakistan supported the terrorism. To reduce the tensions between India and Pakistan, peacemaking efforts have been carried out to solve the Kashmir dispute. These peacemaking efforts are the Tashkent Declaration, Simla Agreement, Arga Summit, Lahore Declaration and Composite Dialogue. The peacemaking efforts were unsuccessful due to the several reasons. The main reason is that India was unaccepted Kashmiri representatives and plebiscite because the majority of Kashmiri people are Muslims and Muslims went to Pakistan. The relations between India and Pakistan continued to strain because Pakistan continued to support the terrorist groups and militants and terrorist attacks and violence are ongoing between India and Pakistan.

III. Impacts on India-Pakistan Relations and Kashmir Region

The Kashmir dispute was affected on the India-Pakistan relations. In the political relations between India and Pakistan, violent partition and the numerous territorial claims have increased between India and Pakistan instead of the improving the relations. In 1947, India and Pakistan started the political relations after the partition of India. Generally, India and Pakistan should have been friends as both got independence from British Empire at the same time. But this did not happen. There were many important issues which were unresolved like problems caused by partition, taking care of minorities, Indus Water dispute, boundary disputes and the Kashmir dispute. The most important and disputed issue is Kashmir which is still a cause of hatred and detestation between India and Pakistan.

The political relationship was rocked by the several tense events like the Pulwama terror attack, Balakot airstrike, scrapping of Kashmir’s special status. The strained ties between India and Pakistan further worsened following the abrogation of article 370 in August, and revoked the special status of Jammu and Kashmir. The move angered Pakistan which downgraded diplomatic ties with India and expelled the Indian High Commissioner. Pakistan also snapped all air and land links with India and suspended trade and railways ties. In the hostile climate, the Indian government continues to demand that Pakistan stops cross-border terrorism by convicting the culprits. Due to the Pakistani-sponsored terrorism, India was facing the problem of home-grown terrorism. Although India called for Pakistan to stop cross-border terrorism, Pakistan has heavily invested in the Jihadist infrastructure to confront India in Kashmir dispute. Thus, the political relations between India and Pakistan continued to deteriorate.

In the economic relations between India and Pakistan, the leaders of both countries promised to improve the economic ties between them. However, the competitive rather than complementary nature of their economies, highly protectionist trade policies, existing tariff and quota systems, other non-tariff barriers such as border controls, transport and visa problems and other security measures and many misgivings due to the past history of confiscating enemy property in the event of war, have largely contributed to the weak economic relations between India and Pakistan.

Moreover, competition in non-traditional areas such as water sharing and access to Central Asia, mounting insurgency, the surging arms race, India’s adoption of hedging strategy, continuing bitter acrimony, hardened public perception after the Mumbai attack on the either side of the border, previous deceptions, deep-seated mistrust, concern about the relative gains and security – all have prevented both countries from undertaking joint gas pipeline projects which could have positive spill-over effects on the peace process and bilateral relations. Continuing border clashes, insurgency, the arms race and terrorism have heightened the tension on the relations between India and Pakistan, despite resuming the talk of dialogue. It also affects the efforts of improving economic and trade relations between India and Pakistan. The relations between India and Pakistan marched from conflict to peace and peace to conflict and have been far away from friendship and cooperation.

The strength change and power struggle between India and Pakistan after the partition of India defined the security dilemma between India and Pakistan. Kashmir conflict is continuously security dilemma for India and Pakistan due to its strategic importance. India and Pakistan viewed that the geographical location of Kashmir is important for the security of both countries. The causes of the security dilemma between India and Pakistan are the territorial disputes, water dispute and cross-border terrorism. The supporting terrorist activities and killing the civilians in Kashmir are the major causes of the security dilemma between India and Pakistan.

The hostile relationship between India and Pakistan significantly impacts on Kashmir, exacerbating the existing territorial dispute and leading to increased conflict and instability in the Kashmir region. The hostile relationship fuels the ongoing tensions along the Line of Control (LoC), the de facto border between the two countries, resulting in frequent ceasefire violations and cross-border firing. The dispute creates a climate of political instability, hindering development and economic progress in the region. The hostile relations between India and Pakistan acts as a major obstacle to resolving the Kashmir dispute and creates a cycle of conflict, instability and human right violations in the Kashmir region.

Both India and Pakistan face significant common challenges, from poverty to environmental issues such as global warming and water scarcity. Despite they shared challenges; historical mistrust and intense political narratives would deter both countries from entering into constructive dialogue to resume trade and diplomatic ties. Due to the existing animosity between India and Pakistan, mutual relations are still far away. Instead, the tense confrontation between India and Pakistan is likely to continue to affect peace and stability in South Asia.

Research Findings and Discussions

India and Pakistan have religious, economic and strategic interests in Kashmir. For India, Kashmir is important for religion (it has holy Hindu temples and caves), economy (rivers flow to India from Kashmir) and ethnicity (Hindus of Jammu and Buddhists of Ladakh want to be part of India). Moreover, it is of paramount importance to the security of India. Giving direct gateways to the North-Western Province of Pakistan and Northern Punjab and providing the only window to the Central Asian Republics in the North, China on the East and to Afghanistan on the West, it has become a 'strategic bowl' for India. Therefore, India views Kashmir as an indispensable geographical, political and economic entity for its security concerns.

Similarly, Pakistan also considers Kashmir as the strategic importance for its national security owing to its geopolitical linkage. It views Kashmir as a 'cap on the head of Pakistan'.

Most importantly, it considers Kashmir as an economic life-line since the headwaters of Pakistan's major river and canal systems lie in Kashmir. In the other words, its agricultural economy is dependent on the rivers flowing out of Kashmir. Besides, Pakistan is also interested in the timber, mineral deposits, and hydroelectric potential of Kashmir. As a result, Pakistani elites have hardly reconciled themselves with the loss of Kashmir. Similarly, Indian ruling elites have equally opposed the session of Kashmir from the India. This has soured India-Pakistan bilateral relations and transformed Kashmir, an earthly paradise, into the most militarized region.

The Kashmir dispute has affected on the India-Pakistan relations. In the political relations between India and Pakistan, violent partition and the numerous territorial claims have increased between India and Pakistan instead of the improving the relations. In the economic relations between India and Pakistan, the leaders of both countries promised to improve the economic ties between them. However, the competitive rather than complementary nature of their economies, highly protectionist trade policies, existing tariff and quota systems, other non-tariff barriers such as border controls, transport and visa problems and other security measures and many misgivings due to the past history of confiscating enemy property in the event of war, have largely contributed to the weak economic relations between India and Pakistan.

Relations between India and Pakistan have been complex and largely hostile due to a number of historical and political events. Despite the historical unity, cultural uniformity, geographical proximity and economic interdependence, India and Pakistan have bitter relations. Relations between India and Pakistan have been defined by the violent partition of British India in 1947, the Kashmir dispute and the numerous military conflicts between the two countries. Consequently, their relationship has been plagued by hostility and suspicion. Soon after their independence, India and Pakistan established the diplomatic relations but the violent partition and the numerous territorial claims overshadowed their relationship. Although India and Pakistan have been developed mutually beneficial economic relations, the hostile political relations between them have affected on the economic relations.

For example, in 1999, the economic relations dropped due to the Kargil war and in 2019, trade between India and Pakistan suspended due to the India revoked the special status of Jammu and Kashmir. Although India and Pakistan intended to try to improve the political relations from the good economic relations, it was not successful. Their relations marched from conflict to peace and peace to conflict but have been far away from friendship and cooperation. Thus, security dilemma entered between India and Pakistan and arm races, domestic power struggles, cross border terrorism and external intervention have made difficult to solve the security dilemma between Indian and Pakistan.

Kashmir, as the core of the conflict and problem between India and Pakistan, has long curbed the relationship and development between the two countries. And security dilemma theory can provide a special perspective for analyzing the Kashmir dispute. Kashmir has been a major bone of contention between India and Pakistan that not only inflicted the three wars between the two countries but the dispute is essential in the relations between the two countries. India and Pakistan being the nuclear powers spend massive share of their annual budgets in nuclear arm race to ensure their nuclear supremacy on each other. Thus, the Kashmir dispute not only dents the nuclear ties between the two countries but services as a constant threat to the security of the entire South Asian region.

India and Pakistan are cognizant of the geographical location of Kashmir for the security of both countries. Indian Prime Minister Nehru stated that common boundary between India and Kashmir ensures the security of India as it will help to protect India from security threats by Afghanistan, Russia, and China. Similarly, Prime Minister Liaqat Ali Khan considered the importance of geographical location of Kashmir for the security of Pakistan. Prime Minister Ali Khan of Pakistan said that Indian control over the territory of Kashmir is a serious threat to Pakistan's security because without Kashmir, Pakistan cannot defend itself the potential unscrupulous governance in India. Geographical position of Kashmir is not only a security dilemma for India and Pakistan but also important for China and Central Asian Countries.

Occupation of the entire Kashmir by India would disengage Pakistan from China while its entire occupation by Pakistan would disconnect India from Central Asian countries. The Kashmir conflict is continuously a security dilemma for India and Pakistan due to its strategic importance. In addition, three stakeholders including India, Pakistan and Kashmir are involved in the dispute with their respective stances over the issue of Kashmir. India did not agree to give the right of self-determination to the Kashmiris considering that the majority of Kashmiri people are Muslim and they would support Pakistan. On the other hand, Pakistan supports their right of self-determination while completely rejecting the Indian slogan that Kashmir is integral part of India. Therefore, the Kashmir plays an important role for the interests of India and Pakistan. There are some reasons why Kashmir is vital for both countries.

Conclusion

Despite the establishment of diplomatic relations after their independence, the immediate violent partition, wars, terrorist attacks and numerous territorial disputes overshadowed the relationship between India and Pakistan. The Kashmir plays an important role for India and Pakistan relations. The primary reason for the conflicts between India and Pakistan is due to the geo-political significance of Kashmir. The Kashmir dispute has intensified to the extent as to have caused three major wars between India and Pakistan in 1948, 1965 and 1999 on Kashmir. The 1948 war between India and Pakistan is known as the first Kashmir war. As the result of this, the Cease-Fire Line was formed under Karachi Agreement signed on July 1949 between India and Pakistan. According to the Cease-Fire Line, India obtained 65 percent of Kashmir (the Vale of Kashmir, Jammu and Ladakh) and Pakistan obtained 35 percent of Kashmir (Northern Territories consisting of Gilgit Baltistan). But the situation of Kashmir between India and Pakistan continued to deteriorate due to the Muslims insurgency and cross-border terrorism.

Muslim insurgency and cross-border terrorism are one the issues that caused the hostile relations between India and Pakistan because Pakistan supported the terrorism. To reduce the tensions between India and Pakistan, peacemaking efforts have been carried out to solve the Kashmir dispute. These peacemaking efforts are the Tashkent Declaration, Simla Agreement, Arga Summit, Lahore Declaration and Composite Dialogue. The peacemaking efforts were unsuccessful due to the several reasons. The main reason is that India was unaccepted Kashmiri representatives and plebiscite because the majority of Kashmiri people are Muslims and Muslims went to Pakistan. The relations between India and Pakistan continued to strain because Pakistan continued to support the terrorist groups and militants and terrorist attacks and violence are ongoing between India and Pakistan.

The strength change and power struggle between India and Pakistan after the partition of India defined the security dilemma between India and Pakistan. Kashmir dispute is continuously security dilemma for India and Pakistan due to its strategic importance. India and Pakistan viewed that the geographical location of Kashmir is important for the security of both countries. The causes of the security dilemma between India and Pakistan are the territorial disputes, water dispute and cross-border terrorism. The supporting terrorist activities and killing the civilians in Kashmir are the major causes of the security dilemma between India and Pakistan.

The lack of trust between India and Pakistan and misunderstanding was exacerbated by multiple military clashes and wars have allowed the security dilemma to take shape between them. Engaging in an arms race with more powerful neighbor, Pakistan faces the problem of the self-destruction of its economy, driving its people into poverty. The main reasons of the security dilemma between India and Pakistan difficult to get rid of are the arms race between India and Pakistan, domestic power struggles, cross-border terrorism, and the intervention of external power. Thus, the relations between India and Pakistan continued to strain. There is hardly any chance for permanent peace in Kashmir because India and Pakistan stand on their national interests in the Kashmir region and Kashmir is important to their security and economy.

Acknowledgement

The researcher would like to express her special thanks of gratitude to Dr. Tint Moe Thu Zar, Rector of Yadanabon University and Pro Rectors of Yadanabon University, for giving a chance to write this research paper. In addition, I would like to express deep gratitude to Dr. Moe Yin Yin (Professor / Head, Department of International Relations, Yadanabon University), Dr. Ngae Ngae, (Professor, Department of International Relations, Yadanabon University), Dr. Tin Myo Thwe (Professor, Department of International Relations, Yadanabon University) and Dr. Tin Tin Mar (Professor, Department of International Relations, Yangon University of Foreign Languages) for their encouragement and valuable advices. I would like to extend sincere appreciation to Dr. Khin Ma Ma Myo (Professor, Department of International Relations, Monywa University) and Dr. Aye Aye Myat (Associate Professor, Department of International Relations, Yadanabon University) for their kindness, supports and moral encouragement. I also expresses sincere thanks to all those involved in conducting this research.

References

A G Noorani. "*Partition of Kashmir*". Journal of Economic and Political Weekly. Vol.31. No.5. February 3. 1996. 271-273.

A.Z Hilali. *Confidence and Security Building Measures for India and Pakistan*. Sage Publications. April-June 2005. 191-222. PDF e-book.

Abbas Ali Bashir. "*Looking Back at the 1999 India-Pakistan Lahore Declaration*". The Diplomat. May 21. 2022. Accessed April 5 2023. https://thediplomat.com/2022/05/ looking-back-at-the-1999-india-pakistan-lahore-declaration/

Abdul Basit Mohammad. "*The Azad Jammu and Kashmir Interim Constitution Act,1974 with Commentary*". Lahore. Rawalpindi. Federal Law House. 2015. 403.

Abhinav Pandya. "*Kashmir Militancy After 370: An Assessment of Pakistan's Proxy War*". CLAWS Journa.Vol.14. No.1. Summer 2021 Accessed January 14. 2023. https:// www.neliti.com/publications/369741/kashmir-militancy-after-370-an-assessment-of-pakistans-proxy-war.

Alison Doyle. “What are the Conflict Resolution Skills”. The Balance Academy. October 14, 2022.Accessed April 8. 2023. https://www.thebalanceacademy.com/conflict-resolution-skills-2063739.

Amit Srivastava. “*Aspects of the Kashmir Dispute*”, Kapur Surya Foundation. 2010. vol.14. No. 4. 72-91. Accessed April 1. 2023. https:// www.jstor.org/stable/48504858.

Andrew North. “*Siachen Dispute; India and Pakistan’s glacial fight*”. BBC.NEWS. April 12. 2014. Accessed April 2. 2023. https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-india-26967340

Apra Vaidya. The 26/11 Mumbai Terror Attack. Kapur Surya Foundation. October-December. 2017.98-109. PDF e-book.

Asad Ullah Khan. “*Indian Occupied Kashmir on International Radar*”. Modern Diplomacy. December 28, 2022. Accessed January 11. 2023. https://moderndiplomacy.eu/2022/ 12/28/ indian-occupied-kashmir-on-international-rader.

Ashraf Fahmida. Models of Conflict Resolution and Kashmir Issue: Pakistan’s Options. Pakistan Institute of International Affairs. April 2003. 119-133. PDF e-book.

Avtar Singh Bhassin. *India-Pakistan Relations 1947-2007*. Geetika. New Delhi. India. 2012. vol.1. CLXXIX.

Bahadur Kalim. “*Agra Summit and India –Pakistan Relations*”. Sage Publications, Ltd, 20001. vol.57. No.2. 29-38. Accessed April 6.2023. https://www.jstor.org/stable/ 45073258.

Balagopal K. “*Kashmir: Self-Determination, Communalism and Democratic rights*”. Economic and Political Weekly. 1996. vol.3. No.44. 2916-2921. Accessed April 6, 2023. https://www.jstor.org/stable/440738.

Bhatnagar Stuti. “*Mediation a long shot in Kashmir conflict*”. The Interpreter. India. January 29, 2019. Accessed May 17. 2023. https://www.lowyinstitute.org/the-interpreter/ mediation- long-shot-kashmir-conflict.

Bose Sumantra. “*Kashmir: Sources of Conflict, Dimensions of Peace*”. Economic and Political Weekly. March 27-April 2,1999. 762-768. Accessed April 2. 2023. http:// www. Jstor.org/stable/2207796.

Brahma Chellaney. *The China-India-Pakistan Triangle: Scenarios for the 21st Century*. University of Georgetown Press. September 17. 2010. p 17.

Brian Farrell. *The Role of International Law in Kashmir Conflict*. Penn State International Law Review. January 1. 2003. Vol.21. No.2. 295-296. PDF e-book.

Buldul Ahmed. “*India and Pakistan fought 3wars over Kashmir- here’s why international law falls short to solve this territorial dispute*”. Bangladesh University. August 24, 2021. https;// the conversation .com/amp/india-and-pakistan-fought-3-wars-over-kashmir.

Chloe Chaplain. “*Indian Partition: A Brief History of India and Pakistan on the 70th Anniversary of Independence*”. Evening Standard. August 15. 2017. Accessed June 3, 2023. https://www.standard.com/news/world/indian-partition-a-brief-history-of-india-and-pakistan-on-the-70th-anniversary-of-independence-a3612126.html.

Chopra Surendra Chopra. *Prospects of Indo-Pakistan Trade*. Indian Political Science Association.1977. 476- 493. PDF e-book.

Cyrus Samii. *Kashmir: From Persistence to Progress*. New York. International Peace Academy. August 2005. 24. PDF e-book.

“*Dixon Plan of 1950*”. IAS Gatewayy. August 2019. Accessed January 4. 2023. https:// iasgatewayy.com/Dixon-plan-of-1950.

Dash Kishore C. *India-Pakistan Trade: Opportunities and Constraints*. The Jonhs Hopkims University Press. 2013. 169-180. PDF e-book.

Ejaz Hussain. “*India-Pakistan Relations: Challenges and Opportunities*”. Journal of Asian Security and International Affairs. March 26. 2019. Accessed June 27. 2023. https://doi.org/10.1177/234779708823964.

Embassy of the People’s Republic of China in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. “*China and Pakistan Relations: China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC)*”. No.1. Zhou-Enlai Avenue, Diplomatic Enclave (Extension). Islamabad. Pakistan. Embassy of the People’s Republic of China in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.2022.

Fahmida Ashraf. “*The Kashmir Dispute: An Evaluation*”. Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad. 1990. vol. 13. No. 4. 61-77. Accessed April 2. 2023. https://www.jstor.org/ stable/45182032.

Faisal Iman. “*The Resolution of Kashmir Conflict*”. The Modern Diplomacy. January 21. 20223. Accessed May 17. 2023. htps://moderndiplomacy.eu/2023/01/21/the-resolution-of-kashmir-conflict.

Farzana Shakoor. *Recasting Pakistan-India Relations in the Post-Cold War Era*. Pakistan Institute of International Affairs. October 1997, 75-92, PDF e-book.

Farzana Shakoor. *The Kargil Crisis: An Analysis*. Pakistan Institute of International Affairs. July 1999. 49-65. PDF e-book.

Fatima Raza. *Prospects for Pakistan-India-Iran Trilateral Cooperation: Opportunities and Challenges*. Strategic Studies. 2019. 37-52. PDF e-book.

Gautam Navlakha. "*Kargil: Cost and Consequences*". Economic and Political Weekly. July 3-9. 1999. vol.34. No.27. 1747-1749. Accessed April 5. 2023. https://www.jstor. org/stable/4408147.

Gobinda Chandra Sethi. *Political Discourage of India and Pakistan with Reference to Kashmir Issue*. Indian Political Science Association. October- December 2015. 1010-1014. PDF e-book.

Gokhale A. Nitin. *Beyond NJ9842: The Siachen Saga*. India. Bloomsbury Publishing India Private Limited. April 10. 2014. 300.

Hajni Mehraj. "*The Kashmir Conflict: A Kashmiri Perspective*." Research Gate. January 1,2008. Accessed January 1,2023. http:// www. Researchgate.net/publication/ 43645724-The-Kashmir-Conflict-A-Kashmiri-Perspective

Hemant Singh. "*Pakistan Occupied Kashmir vs Indian Kashmir: Comparative Study*". Jagran Josh, June 3, 2020, Accessed January 14, 2023, https://www.jagranjosh.com/general-knowledge/which-is-in-better-position-indian-kashmir-or-pakistan-occupied-kashmir-149756642-1.

Husain Haqqani. "*Pakistan's Endgame in Kashmir*". Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Vol.2. No.3. July 2003. Accessed January 7. 2023. https:// carnegieendowment.org/2003/07/01/pakistan-endgame-in-kashmir-pub-1427.

Indurthy Rathnam and Muhammad Haque. *The Kashmir Conflict: Why it Defies Solution*. Paragon house. March 2010. 9-44. PDF e-book.

K Warikoo. *Central Asia and Kashmir: A study in the Context of Anglo-Russian Rivalry*. New Delhi.1989. p.56.

K. N Bakshi. "*Simla Agreement (1972): From Military Victory to A Diplomatic Defeat?*". Indian Foreign Affairs Journal. July-September. 2007. vol.2. No.3. 105-119. Accessed April 2. 2023. https://www.jstor.org/stable/45340665.

K.L Chawla. *India-Pakistan Trade Relations: Viable Options despite Hurdles*. Sage Publication. Ltd. April-June 2001. 139-156. PDF e-book.

Khurshid Khan and Pervaiz Iqbal Cheema. "*Policy Modi's Kashmir*: *The Probable Consequence for the Security of South Asia*". Islamabad, Institute of Strategic Studies. 2017.21.

Lessa Ko. "*In India –Pakistan Standoff, Siachen Glacier Is no Passive Bystander*". News from the Columbia Climate School. March 5. 2021. Accessed April 2. 2023. https://news.climate.columbia.edu/ 2021/03/05/siachen-conflict-warfare.

LLyas M Khan. "*Operation Gibraltar: The Pakistani Troops who infiltrated Kashmir to start a rebellion*". BBC News. September 5. 2015. Accessed April 2. 2023. https:// www.bbc.com/news/word-asia-34136689.amp.

Lorne J Kavic J. *India's Quest for Security: Defence Policies*. University of California Press. 1947-1965. p32.

M Ilyas Khan. "*Kashmir Crisis 2019: between a rock and a hard place*". BBC News. Islamabad. December 24, 2019.

M.K Dhar. *Political Instability in Early Medievel Kashmir*. Indian History Congress. 1986.113-121. PDF e-book.

M.V Naidu. *The Kashmir Dispute and India-Pakistan Relations: The Untold Story of Cold War Diplomacy*. Canadian Mennonite University. May 2000.vol.32.No.2.1-30.PDF e-book.

Mahmood Tehmina. *Peaceful Resolution of Kashmir Dispute: India's Avoidance*. Pakistan Institute of International Affairs. October 2001. 7-24. PDF e-book.

Michael Hirsh and Ahmad Hassan Awan. *India and Pakistan: Outlining a Path towards Peace*. Policy Perspectives. 2018. vol .15. No.1. 21-42. PDF e-book.

Michael Kugelman. *Pakistan in 2016*. Asian Survey. University of California Press. 2017. 33-42. PDF e-book.

Mir Sherbaz Khetran. "*Gwadar and Chabahar*". Strategic Studies. 2018. 43-55. Accessed June 20. 2023. https://www.jstor.org/stable/48539136.

Mohammad Arif. *The Kashmir Dispute and Pakistan-India Relations: 1972-1992*. Pakistan Institute of International Affairs. January 1994. vol. 47. No.1. 35-45.PDF e-book.

Moonis Ahmar. *Security Perceptions in the Indo-Pakistan Relationship*. Pakistan Institute of International Affairs. 1984. 100-119. PDF e-book.

Muhammad Sajjad Malik. *Pakistan-India Relations: An Analytical Perspective of Peace Efforts*. Strategic Studies. Spring 2019. 59-76. PDF e-book.

Muhammad Tasleem Ashraf. "*Impact of Security Issues on Pakistan-India Relations: Remedies and Political Advantages*". Lahore University Press. March 2021. Accessed June 20. 2023. https://www.researchergate.net/publication/35004548.

Nabiha Gul. *Post-9/11 Pakistan-India Relations*. Pakistan Institute of International Affairs. July 2004. 67-77. PDF e-book.

Nisha Taneja and Shravani Prakash. Etc. *Issues in India-Pakistan Trade Negotiations*. Economic and Political Weekly. July 23-29. 2011. 24-28. PDF e-book.

Noorani A.G. *Chapter 3 Jammu & Kashmir's Constituent Assembly: 1952-2*. Oxford University. July. 2011. 88-112. PDF e-book.

"*The Partition of India; the Unruly End of Empire*". ECONOMIST. July 19. 2007. Accessed June 3. 2023. https://www.economist.com/node/9507188.

P. L Bhola. "*Indo-Pakistan Control March over Siachen Glacier*". Indian Journal of Asian Affairs. 1988. Vol.1. No.1. 28-48. Accessed April 2. 2023. https:// www. Jstor.org/ stable/41950323.

Pankaj Dodh. "*India-Pakistan Relations*". Kapur Surya Foundation. October-December 2017.110-125. Accessed June 18. 2023. https://www.jstor.org/stable/48531309.

Pattanaik S Smruti. "*Pakistan's Kashmir Policy: Objectives and Approaches*". Strategic Analysis: A Monthly Journal of the IDSA. Vol. XXVI. No.2. (April-June 2002). Accessed January 17,2023. https://ciaotest.cc.columbia.edu/ olj/sa/sa_apr02pas 01. html.

Paul Staniland. *Azad and Jihad: Trajectories of Insurgency in Kashmir*. Cornell University. 2014. Accessed January 15, 2023. 35. PDF e-book.

Pramit Pal Chaudhurt. "*Modi Changes India's Kashmir Policy*". Geopolitical Intelligence Services(GIS). August 22, 2019, accessed January 5. 2023. https://www. gisreportsonline. com/r/indias-policy-kashmir.

Pratap Bhanu Mehta. "*India-Pakistan: The Enduring Stalemate*". Economic and Political Weekly. May 24-30, 2003. 2014-2017. Accessed June 20. 2023. https://www.jstor.org/ stable/4413589.

Rajat Ganguly. "*India, Pakistan and the Kashmir Dispute*". Centre for Strategic Studies New Zealand. Asian Studies Institute.1998. Vol.1, 22.

Rashied Ahmad Khan. "*Pakistan, India and Regional Cooperation in South Asia*". Pakistan Horizon. 1984. 37-48. Accessed June20. 2023. https://www.jstor/stable/42393699.

Rauf Sana and Muhammad Hassan Asif. "*Modi and Imran Regime: Foreign Policy on Kashmir Dispute*". Human Nature Journal of Social Science. Vol.1. No.1 (March-2021). Pp.60-69.

Ravi Bagheland Marcus Nusser. "*Securing the heights: The vertical dimension of the Siaachen conflict between India and Pakistan in the Eastern Karakoram*". September 2015. vol.48. 24-36. Accessed April 2. 2023. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.polgeo.2015.05.001.

Raviprasad Narayanan. *The India-Pakistan Dyad: Challenge to the Rest or to Themselves*. The Johns Hopkins University Press. 2010. vol. 34. No. 4. PDF e-book.

Rizwana Abbassi. *India and Pakistan: Distinct Strategic Direction and Fragility of Peace*. Pakistan Institute of International Affairs. 2015. 105-130. PDF e-book.

Robert C Mayfiel. *A Geographical Study of the Kashmir Issue*. Taylor & Francis. Ltd. United Kingdom. April 1955. 181-196 PDF e-book.

Roshni Chakraborty and Sadia Nasir. *Indus Basin Treaty: Its Relevance to Indo-Pak Relations*. Pakistan Institute of International Affairs. October 2002. 53-62. PDF e-book.

"*Simla Agreement: History and Significance of a set of high ideals*". CNBC TV18. July 2. 2022. Accessed April 2. 2023. https://www.cnbctv18.com/world/14007112.htm/amp.

J. Myanmar Acad. Arts Sci. 2026 **Vol. XXIII. No.5**

MYANMAR-INDIA POLITICAL RELATIONS (2011-2020)

Aye Wut Yi Ye Lin[1]

Abstract

Myanmar and India share a long land border of 1643 km and a maritime boundary in the Bay of Bengal. In 1951, Myanmar and India signed a Treaty of Friendship which laid the foundation for their subsequent bilateral relations. During the leadership of Prime Minister U Nu and Indian Prime Minister Nehru, Myanmar-India relations were close and cordial. However, the relationship between Myanmar and India has fluctuated, with periods of strong cooperation and times of strain before 2011. During the period of 2011-2020, Myanmar and India generally enjoyed cordial relationships, driven by shared strategic, economic, and security interests. The objective of this paper is to analyze the political relations between Myanmar and India during the period (2011-2020). It is conducted through a qualitative method by using the secondary sources. This paper seeks to examine the factors that have shaped the dynamics of Myanmar-India political relations 2011 to 2020. It analyzes how these factors have influenced bilateral relations and explores the reasons behind both countries' efforts to improve their partnership. It concludes that both the Myanmar and Indian governments had tried to continue to develop and improve the sustainable relationship between the two countries for their interests.

Keywords: Myanmar, India, Prime Minister, diplomatic, relationship.

Introduction

Myanmar and India share a long land border of 1643 km and a maritime boundary in the Bay of Bengal. The geographical proximity has helped develop and sustain cordial relations between the two countries. After independence, Myanmar and India established diplomatic relations and maintained close ties. In the early years after independence, U Nu and Jawaharlal Nehru emphasised the importance of economic and political cooperation. They shared similar ideals of non-alignment during the Cold War and worked together on various regional and global issues. Trade and cultural exchanges were promoted, and both countries sought to build a mutually beneficial partnership.

Myanmar and India signed a Treaty of Friendship in 1951 that declared "everlasting peace and unalterable friendship" between them. The treaty focused on fostering close political, economic, and cultural cooperation between the two nations. Myanmar and India had generally cordial and closer relations prior to the 1960s, with both nations sharing strong historical, cultural, and economic ties. The relations between the two countries, however, became strained in 1962. India strongly opposed the imposition of the military dictatorship in Myanmar by General U Ne Win and supported the pro-democracy forces.

The visit of Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi in 1987 laid the foundations for a stronger relationship between Myanmar and India. However, some tensions remained in the relations between Myanmar and India after Myanmar's military government, the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC), came to power in 1988. After 1993, however, India's policy toward Myanmar was reviewed and India adopted a more pragmatic and less moralistic

[1] Department of International Relations and Political Science, University of Yangon

stance. This pragmatic shift allowed India to maintain a delicate balance between supporting democratic principles and securing its strategic interests. This purposeful shift from an idealistic foreign policy to one that was firmly anchored in realpolitik has been the driving force behind the improvement of relations between the two countries. Since that time, Myanmar-India relations had been growing politically, economically and militarily.

Foreign Policies of Myanmar and India (2011-2020)

The fundamental principles of Myanmar foreign policy, stipulated in article 41 of *the 2008 Constitution*, are that the Union practices independent, active, and non-aligned foreign policy aimed at world peace and friendly relations with nations and upholds the principles of peaceful coexistence among nations. The Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP) government practiced an "independent, active and non-aligned foreign policy," while also advancing efforts towards establishing a genuine, disciplined, multi-party democratic system in line with the mandates of *the 2008 Constitution,* which involved instituting various reforms in domestic governance and reintegrating into the international community. As it sets a foreign policy objective of reintegrating Myanmar into the international community, the USDP government pursued a foreign policy strategy based on multilateralism, with a particular focus on regional institutions and cooperative security, and realignment of Myanmar's foreign relations in the context of strategic competitions among major powers active in the region.

The National League for Democracy (NLD) government continued to adhere to the "independent, active, and non-aligned foreign policy," the policy implemented through multiple tracks in diplomacy with a possibility of stronger focus on people-to-people contacts and multilateralism. The NLD's foreign policy, in terms of objectives and principles, was not new but it was different, as adjustments were made in the realm of diplomacy. The NLD government's foreign policy objectives were shaped by the legacy of Myanmar's military rule, during which the country was largely isolated from the international community and heavily reliant on China. Upon assuming power, the NLD sought to diversify Myanmar's foreign relations to reduce this dependency and enhance its global engagement.

The government aimed to secure economic development, attract foreign investment, and gain international legitimacy for its democratic transition. There was no significant change in the foreign policy objectives and principles and the adjustments were mostly in the realm of diplomacy. It was "activism" and "people-centred approach" in diplomatic relations with other nations. The NLD government's foreign policy strategies were guided by principles of sovereignty, non-alignment, and strategic engagement with global and regional powers, including China, the United States, ASEAN, and notably, India.

India's foreign policy is a blend of idealistic principles and pragmatic considerations. While its leaders frequently emphasise moral and ideological values, realpolitik plays a significant role in shaping policy. Since 1992, fundamental changes have been undergone by India's foreign policy with Myanmar since the initiation of the "Look East" policy, which has also significantly improved India-Myanmar relations. The "Look East" Policy was officially launched in 1992 and was enforced by Indian Prime Minister Narasimha Rao (1991-1996). India deploys the "Look East" Policy to develop economy and trade relations with East Asian countries and maintain a high and stable rate of Indian economic growth. Myanmar, being India's immediate neighbor and a gateway to ASEAN, played a key role in the implementation of the "Look East" policy of India.

India's foreign policy toward Myanmar under the administrations of Prime Ministers Manmohan Singh and Narendra Modi had focused on maintaining stable political, economic, and security relations, with an emphasis on connectivity, counterinsurgency cooperation, and balancing China's influence in the region. Despite changes in leadership, the overall trajectory remained consistent, with some notable shifts in emphasis between the two periods. India viewed Myanmar as a critical partner, which aimed at enhancing economic and trade links with Southeast Asia. Under Singh, several connectivity projects were initiated to link India's northeastern states with Myanmar and the ASEAN region. Notable projects include the Kaladan Multimodal Transit Transport Project, which aimed to connect the northeastern states of India with the Rakhine and Chin states of Myanmar through an integrated transport corridor of sea, river, and road routes.

The India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway, which was initiated during Singh's tenure, was another key project aimed at boosting connectivity with Southeast Asia as part of the "Look East" policy. In the realm of security, India collaborated with Myanmar on defense issues, focusing on cross-border insurgency, maritime security, and counter-terrorism efforts, particularly along the shared border. Energy cooperation was another significant aspect, with Indian companies like ONGC Videsh investing in Myanmar's rich natural gas resources, alongside efforts to explore renewable energy projects. Additionally, cultural ties were strengthened through educational exchanges, tourism, and the promotion of shared Buddhist heritage, which fostered closer people-to-people connections between India and Myanmar. Through these various forms of cooperation, India aimed to establish itself as a regional power while deepening its relationship with Southeast Asian nations under the Look East Policy.

Modi's administration rebranded the "Look East" policy as the "Act East" policy, signaling a more assertive approach in engaging with Southeast Asia, including Myanmar. As a vital link due to its geographical proximity and cultural ties, Myanmar plays a crucial role in this policy. The "Act East" policy emphasises boosting bilateral trade, with India exporting pharmaceuticals, machinery, and textiles, and importing agricultural products and raw materials from Myanmar. Connectivity and infrastructure projects initiated during Singh's time, such as the Kaladan Multimodal Project and the Trilateral Highway, were continued and prioritised under Modi.

India's foreign policy toward Myanmar was also driven by its desire to counterbalance China's growing influence. China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) had made significant inroads in Myanmar, including investments in deep-sea ports, pipelines, and other infrastructure. India sought to counter this influence by offering its own development assistance and infrastructure projects. Security cooperation is another key component, addressing counter-terrorism and insurgent groups along the India-Myanmar border, with initiatives to enhance naval cooperation in the Bay of Bengal for securing maritime trade routes. High-level diplomatic visits further strengthen the partnership, focusing on cooperation in trade, security, and cultural exchange. Myanmar plays a crucial role in India's Act East Policy, serving as a bridge to Southeast Asia.

However, the relationship is influenced by evolving political dynamics, security challenges, and regional geopolitical considerations.

Diplomatic Visits between Myanmar and India (2011-2020)

In the field of diplomacy, since 1992, the relationship between two countries have gradually improved and developed through regular exchanges and contacts in high-level relations, through which many important documents have been signed. It can be said that India’s practical diplomacy with Myanmar since 1992 is a “parallel two-way policy” combining “India’s political and spiritual support for democratic forces” with “a commitment to the Myanmar military government to improve and enhance relations between the two governments”, thereby helping India strengthen relations with Myanmar, a neighboring country with an important strategic position from the field of politics to bilateral economic and trade cooperation and security and defense. In January 2002, an agreement was signed between Myanmar and India to reopen the Consulate General in each country. Subsequently, the Consulate General of Myanmar was reopened in Kolkata, India and the Indian Consulate General in Mandalay, Myanmar. This action has contributed to the restoration of formal diplomatic relations, enabling frequent negotiations between Myanmar and India.

High-level visits have been a regular feature of Myanmar-India relations for several years. In October 12-15, 2011, President U Thein Sein visited India to promote bilateral cooperation of the two countries. Delegation-level talks were held by President U Thein Sein with Indian President Pratibha Devisingh Patil and Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh during the visit. During the visit, two documents were signed. In 2012, Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh paid a historical visit to Myanmar on 27 to 29 May. The Prime Minister and President U Thein Sein held a restricted meeting, followed by delegation level talks on bilateral, regional and international issues of mutual interest. During the visit of the Prime Minister, several new initiatives were announced and twelve MoUs and agreements were signed.

President U Thein Sein attended the India-ASEAN Commemorative Summit in December 20-21, 2012 in New Delhi and also visited Mumbai and Ratnagiri. A two-day official visit to Nay Pyi Taw from 3-4 March 2014 was also undertaken by the Prime Minister Manmohan Singh to participate in the 3rd BIMSTEC Summit. In March 3, 2014, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh met with President U Thein Sein at the Credentials Hall of the Presidential Palace in Nay Pyi Taw. They discussed matters related to further providing technical assistance for development of information technology, education, agriculture and industrial sectors, cooperation in energy sector and banking industry, defense security cooperation and development of SMEs and agricultural sector. Prime Minister Narendra Modi attended the 12th ASEAN-India Summit and 9th East Asia Summit from November 11-13, 2014, in Nay Pyi Taw. Prime Minister Modi met with Foreign Minister U Wunna Maung Lwin on 15 July 2015 in New Delhi, India. Emphasizing the strategic significance of Myanmar to India, Prime Minister Modi expressed India’s utmost priority in its relations with Myanmar and its commitment to being a steadfast partner in Myanmar’s development.

Myanmar President U Htin Kyaw paid a State Visit to India from August 27 to 30, 2016. During the visit, President U Htin Kyaw held wide-ranging discussions with Rashtrapatiji and Prime Minister Narendra Modi and four documents were signed. This is the first top-level engagement between India and Myanmar since the NLD government took office in Myanmar. State Counsellor, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi undertook a State Visit to India in October 17- 19, 2016 after participating in the BRICS-BIMSTEC Outreach Summit in October 16, 2016 in Goa, India. During her three days visit to India, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi met with Indian President Pranab Mrkherjee, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and External Affairs Minister. This was the first official visit of the State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi to India since the NLD government assumed office in Myanmar. During the visit, three MoUs were signed. India assured support for the creation of livelihoods, up-gradation of skills, reconstruction of roads, power, education facilities and health infrastructure for Myanmar people.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi also paid a State Visit to Myanmar in September 5-7, 2017. In September 6, 2017, the Indian delegation led by Prime Minister Modi held bilateral talks with the Myanmar delegation led by State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. The State Counsellor and the Indian Prime Minister witnessed the signing and exchange of various documents between Myanmar and India in the areas of health, culture, capacity building, maritime security and collaboration between key institutions and held a Joint Press Conference. They reviewed ongoing official exchanges, economic, trade and cultural ties, as well as people-to-people exchanges that reflect the harmony between Myanmar's independent, active and non-aligned foreign policy and India's pragmatic "Act East" and "Neighbourhood First" policies.

President of India, Shri Ram Nath Kovind and First Lady Smt. Savita Kovind paid a State Visit to Myanmar in December 10 to 14, 2018. During his visit, he met with President U Win Myint and State Counsellor, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and two MoUs were signed. The visit further strengthened bilateral ties between India and Myanmar, particularly in the areas of science, technology, and judicial cooperation, reflecting the growing partnership between the two nations. State Counsellor, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi visited India during the 25th India-ASEAN Commemorative Summit in January 2018. She met with Prime Minister Modi on the sidelines. An invitation for President of Myanmar, U Win Myint to visit India in 2019 was extended by President of India, Shri Ram Nath Kovind during his State Visit, and the former has accepted it. President U Win Myint attended Indian PM Modi's oath-talking ceremony for the second term in May 30, 2019. President U Win Myint and First Lady Daw Cho Cho paid a State Visit to India in February 27-29, 2020. During the visit, he also held talk with Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and witnessed signing the ten MoUs and Agreements. These high-level visits reinforced the diplomatic ties between Myanmar and India.

With respect to Military Personnels Visits between Myanmar and India, in January 2012, Chief of Army Staff of India General V.K. Singh visited Myanmar and from November to December 2012, the Chairman of the Military Staff Committee and Air Force Commander Norman Anil Kumar Browne visited Myanmar respectively. In January 21-22, 2013, the defence Minister Shri Antony paid an official visit to Myanmar and met with President U Thein Sein. During the visit, they exchanged views on mutual friendship, multifaceted cooperation, inter-governmental and people-to-people cooperation, wider bilateral cooperation, joint efforts for border security, betterment of India-Myanmar road networks bridging South Asia and Southeast Asia.

In October 2013, General Bikram Singh visited Myanmar, where discussions were held on Myanmar's military modernization, the safety of the India-Myanmar border regions, and the provision of scholarships for Myanmar officers and soldiers to facilitate human resource development. In response, Myanmar Vice Senior General Soe Win visited India in December 11-16, 2013, where matters about security and the strengthening of bilateral military relations between the two countries were discussed, along with other issues, with Indian Army Commander-in-Chief of the Eastern Military Region, Dalbir Singh.

Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, Commander-in-Chief of Defense Services, visited India in July 2015, where he met with Prime Minister Modi and other high-ranking defense officials. During the meeting, Senior General Min Aung Hlaing underlined India's role as a "reliable development partner" and pledged to deepen defense and security engagement with India, particularly in the maritime security domain. National Security Adviser Mr. Ajit Doval visited Myanmar as Special Envoy of the Indian Prime Minister in June 16, 2016 and met with President U Htin Kyaw and Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, Commander-in-Chief of Myanmar Defense Services, met with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi in New Delhi, India in July 29, 2019. At the meeting, they discussed further promotion of assistance for uplift of capability of the Myanmar Tatmadaw, situation for cooperation between the two countries, and issues on peace and stability of Rakhine State. Military visits between Myanmar and India during the period 2011-2020 were crucial in enhancing bilateral security cooperation between the two countries.

With regards to Parliamentary Delegation visits between Myanmar and India, a high-level parliamentary delegation to India from December 11-17, 2011, was led by Pyithu Hluttaw (Lower House) Speaker Thura U Shwe Mann. The objective of the visit was to have India's experience in parliamentary practices and procedures shared with the visiting Myanmar delegation. Myanmar Foreign Minister U Wunna Maung Lwin paid an official visit to India in January 22 to 26, 2012. During the visit, meetings were held with the Indian Prime Minister, and bilateral discussions were conducted with External Affairs Minister (EAM). Additionally, a lecture on the topic "Myanmar: A Country in Transition to Democracy" was delivered by Foreign Minister U Wunna Maung Lwin at the Indian Council for World Affairs. He also visited India in 6 March 2014 to attend Delhi Dialogue VI.

Speaker of Amyotha Hluttaw His Excellency U Khin Aung Myint also visited India in 2-6 December 2013. Meira Kumar and India Parliament delegation paid an official visit to Myanmar from 12 to 15 February 2013. Throughout the visit, they engaged in meetings with both the Speakers of the Myanmar Parliament and conducted a detailed discussion with Speaker of Pyithu Hluttaw Thura U Shwe Mann. An India-Myanmar Business Conclave was hosted by India at Yangon in May 18-20, 2016 as part of its "Act East" policy. The event saw participation from a 25-member Indian business delegation, led by Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman, Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Commerce and Industry. This was the first visit by an Indian Minister since the NLD government assumed office in Myanmar. Minister of State for External Affairs Shri V.K. Singh met the State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi on the sidelines of 14th India-ASEAN Foreign Ministers Meeting in July 26, 2016 in Vientiane, Laos.

India External Affairs Minister (EAM) Ms. Sushama Swaraj visited Nay Pyi Taw in August 22, 2016 and had warm interactions with President U Htin Kyaw and State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. During the meeting, they discussed matters related to cooperation in education, health and energy sectors and trade between the two countries. In addition, Prime Minister Narendra Modi met the State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi on the sidelines of the 14th India-ASEAN Summit and 11th East Asia Summit in September 8, 2016 in Vientiane, Laos. These reflected the cordial relations between the two countries. The External Affairs Minister of India, Smt. Sushma Swaraj, visited Myanmar in May 10-11, 2018. During the visit, she called on U Win Myint, President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and met Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, State Counsellor and Minister for Foreign Affairs. During the bilateral meetings, boundary and border related issues, peace and security matters, developments in the Rakhine State, including return of displaced persons, India's development assistance to Myanmar, ongoing projects, and other issues of mutual interest were discussed. During the visit, the Minister also met the Commander in Chief of the Myanmar Defence Services, Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and seven Agreements/MoUs were signed during the visit. The visit reaffirmed India's commitment to heightened partnership with Myanmar.

Foreign Secretary, Shri Vijay Gokhale visited Nay Pyi Taw in October 22, 2018 and met with State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. During the meeting, they discussed the promotion of bilateral relations, cooperation in regional and international arenas and development cooperation in all regions of Myanmar including Rakhine State. H.E. Mr. Vijay Gokhale also met with Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and other senior military officials of Myanmar. They discussed focusing on the progress of cooperation in peace, stability and development of border region of two countries between the two armed forces, Indian ocean and regional security measures, exchange of information about prevention of danger of storms and natural disasters, bilateral cooperation in training affairs. In implementation of India's "Act East" Policy, India and Myanmar signed an important MoU in October 22, 2018 for the appointment of a private port operator for the operation and maintenance of Sittwe Port, Paletwa Inland Water Terminal and associated facilities included in the Kaladan Multi Model Transit Transport Project. The MoU was signed on behalf of the Government of India by H.E Vijay Gokhale, Foreign Secretary and by H.E U Win Khant, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Transport and Communications on behalf of the Government of Myanmar.

The NLD government continued to collaborate with India on key infrastructure projects, particularly the Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project and the India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway. These projects were critical for regional connectivity and trade, reflecting Myanmar's importance in India's "Act East" policy. Under the NLD government, Myanmar-India relations remained positive, with continued engagement in areas such as security, infrastructure development, and regional cooperation. However, the Bengali crisis presented a diplomatic challenge that India managed cautiously, seeking to maintain its strategic partnership with Myanmar while addressing the humanitarian dimension.

MoUs and Agreements Signed between Myanmar and India (2011-2020)

The USDP government pursued active diplomacy with India to bilateral ties. During the period of the USDP government, there were numerous interactions between the top leaders of Myanmar and India. Specifically, between 2011 and 2015, there were sixteen visits exchanged between the two countries. Myanmar officials visited India seven times, while Indian officials visited Myanmar nine times. On the Myanmar side, President U Thein Sein visited India twice, during which documents related to health care, science and technology were signed. On the Indian side, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh visited Myanmar twice, during which key agreements were signed on a broad range of sectors, including finance, aviation, agriculture, education, cultural exchange and border area development.

There were Fourteen MoUs and Agreements between Myanmar and India during U Thein Sein administration (See Table (1)).

Table-1 List of MoUs/Agreements signed under the USDP Government (2011-2015)

No.	MoU Name	Year
(1)	Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the Upgradation of the Yangon Children's Hospital and Sittwe General Hospital	October 2011
(2)	Programme of Cooperation in Science & Technology for the period of 2012-2015	October 2011
(3)	MoU regarding US$500 million Line of Credit	May 2012
(4)	Air Services Agreement between India and Myanmar	May 2012
(5)	MoU on the India-Myanmar Border Area Development	May 2012
(6)	MoU on Establishment of Joint Trade and Investment Forum	May 2012
(7)	MoU on the Establishment of the Advance Centre for Agriculture Research and Education (ACARE)	May 2012
(8)	MoU on Establishment of Rice Bio Park at the Department of Agricultural Research in Nay Pyi Taw	May 2012
(9)	MoU towards setting up of Myanmar Institute of Information Technology	May 2012
(10)	MoU on Cooperation between Dagon University and Calcutta University	May 2012
(11)	MoU on Cooperation between Myanmar Institute of Strategic and International Studies and Indian Council of World Affairs	May 2012
(12)	Agreement on Cooperation between Myanmar Institute of Strategic and International Studies and Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses-IDSA in New Delhi	May 2012
(13)	Agreement on Myanmar-India Cultural Exchange Programme (2012-2015)	May 2012
(14)	MoU on establishing of Border Haats across the border between Myanmar and India	May 2012

Sources:(a) Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, October, 2011, https://embassyofindiayangon.gov.in

(b) Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, May, 2012, https://www.mea.gov.in

Two documents were signed during President U Thein Sein's visit to India on 12-15 October, 2011. Due to MoU for the Upgradation of the Yangon Children's Hospital and Sittwe General Hospital, the sixty-seven medical equipments including CT Scan machine, multiple parameter monitor (neonatal), Oxygen Concentrator with air compressor and piping with vacuum outlets, ENT equipments, Orthopaedic equipments, etc., were supplied to Yangon Children Hospital and Sittwe General Hospital in April 2019.

During the USDP government, Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh visited to Myanmar, twelve MoUs and agreements were signed in May 27 to 29, 2012. Due to MoU on the India-Myanmar Border Area Development, India granted $5 million every year for the basic infrastructure and livelihood development of Myanmar's Chin State and Naga Self-Administered Zone, 43 schools, 18 health centres and 51 bridges and roads have been constructed in the above areas for the border area development between the two countries. According to MoU on Establishment of Rice Bio Park at the Department of Agricultural Research in Nay Pyi Taw, ACARE was handed over to Government of Myanmar on 25 March 2022. The Rice Bio-Park was handed over to Myanmar during the State visit of Hon'ble President of India in December 2018. Due to MoU towards setting up of Myanmar Institute of Information Technology, Myanmar Institute of Information Technology was set up as a National Centre of Excellence in 2015. Due to MoU on establishing of Border Haats across the border between Myanmar and India, the first haat between India and Myanmar was set up at Pangsu Pass, adjacent to Sagaing Region (Myanmar) and Arunachal Pradesh (India).

Political relations were underpinned by economic and infrastructural agreements, with India emphasizing its "Look East" policy. Initiatives like the India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway and the Kaladan Multimodal Transit Transport Project were discussed to boost connectivity between India's northeastern region and Myanmar, which would enhance regional trade and political stability. Both countries emphasised collaboration on border security to combat insurgent groups operating in the region. India supported Myanmar's efforts to maintain stability, particularly in the northeastern states, which share a long border with Myanmar. Cross-border cooperation in dealing with Ethnic Armed Organization (EAOs) and ensuring security along the Myanmar-India border became a critical area of focus. India's support for Myanmar's political and economic reforms during this period was crucial. India welcomed Myanmar's democratic transition and saw it as an opportunity to build stronger bilateral ties. The USDP era was crucial for normalising and re-establishing political ties after Myanmar's long isolation. The initial political engagement during this period set the stage for deeper relations between the two countries.

After the USDP government, the NLD government took the foundation laid by the USDP government and built on it, expanding and institutionalizing political relations. The relations between Myanmar and India continued to improve under the NLD government, with an emphasis on deepening strategic partnerships. Under the NLD government, there are fourteen times of state visits between Myanmar-India relations. During the fourteen visits, Security and Defense consultations were held three times; five times for MoU signing; three times for economic matter, two times for policy discussions. During the NLD government, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, U Htin Kyaw, U Win Myint, and Defence Minister Senior General U Min Aung Hlaing had visited India respectively. There were thirty-seven MoUs and Agreements between Myanmar and India during the NLD Government. Among them, seventeen MoUs and Agreements were signed during high-level visits of Myanmar (See Table (2)).

Table-2 List of MoUs/ Agreements during high-level visits of Myanmar under the NLD Government (2016-2020)

No.	Name	Year
(1)	MoU on Cooperation in the construction of 69 Bridges including Approach Roads in the Tamu-Kyigone-Kalewa Road Section of the Trilateral Highway in Myanmar	August 2016
(2)	MoU on Cooperation in the construction / upgradation of the Kalewa-Yagyi Road Section	August 2016
(3)	MoU on Cooperation in the Field of Renewable Energy	August 2016
(4)	MoU on Cooperation in the field of Traditional Systems of Medicine	August 2016
(5)	MoU between Financial Regulatory Department of Myanmar and Insurance Institute of India for designing an academic and professional building programme for insurance industry of Myanmar	October 2016
(6)	MoU on Cooperation in the field of Power Sector	October 2016
(7)	MoU on Banking Supervision between RBI and Central Bank of Myanmar	October 2016
(8)	MoU for Cooperation on Combating Timber Trafficking, and Conservation of Tigers and other Wildlife	February 2020
(9)	Agreement between the Government of Myanmar and the Government of India regarding Indian Grant Assistance for Implementation of Quick Impact Projects (QIPs)	February 2020
(10)	Project Agreement between the Rakhine State Government and the Embassy of India for construction of incinerator in Mrauk Oo Township hospital, construction of seed storage houses and water supply systems in Gwa Township under the Rakhine State Development Programme	February 2020
(11)	Project Agreement between the Rakhine State Government and the Embassy of India, Yangon for distribution of electricity by solar power in five townships of Rakhine State under Rakhine State Development Programme	February 2020
(12)	Project Agreement between Rakhine State Government and Embassy of India, Yangon for construction of Kyawlyaung-Ohlyphyu road, construction of Kyaung Taung-Kyau Paung road in Bhuthidaung Township under Rakhine State Development Programme	February 2020
(13)	Project Agreement between Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement and Embassy of India, Yangon for construction of pre-schools under Rakhine State Development Programme	February 2020

No.	Name	Year
(14)	MoU between the Department of Medical Research of Myanmar and the Indian Council of Medical Research in the field of Health Research	February 2020
(15)	MoU on Cooperation in the field of Communication	February 2020
(16)	MoU in the field of Petroleum Products	February 2020
(17)	MoU between the Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and the Government of the Republic of India on Cooperation for Prevention of Trafficking in Persons, Rescues, Recovery, Repatriation and Reintegration of Victims of Trafficking.	February 2020

Source: Ministry of Information, Nay Pyi Taw, November, 2020, https://myanmar.gov.mm

During his first visit to India, President U Htin Kyaw met with Prime Minister Shri Narendra and conducted wide ringing discussions and signed four MoUs related to Cooperation in Traditional Medicine, Renewable Energy, Construction of sixty-nine bridges (Tamu-Kyigone-Kalewa), Cooperation in the Construction of Kelawa -Yagyi road, Trilateral Highway. Due to the MoU on Cooperation in the construction, sixty-nine bridges of World War II vintage were to be replaced with new Reinforced Cement Concrete (RCC) bridges and National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) had been identified as the implementing agency for the project. During Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's visit to India, she met with Rashtrapatiji, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, External Affairs Minister and signed three MoUs on Power, Insurance and Banking supervision. President U Win Myint and First Lady Daw Cho Cho paid a State Visit to India in February 27-29, 2020. A total of ten MoUs/ Agreements were signed during his visit.

In addition, there were also India high-level visits to Myanmar during the NLD government. A total of twenty MoUs and Agreements were signed between Myanmar and India (See Table (3)).

Table-3 List of MoUs/ Agreements during high-level visits of India under the NLD Government (2016-2020)

No.	Name	Year
(1)	MoU on Maritime Security Cooperation between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar	September 2017
(2)	Cultural Exchange Programme between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar for the year 2017-2020	September 2017
(3)	MoU between the Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and the Government of the Republic of India on Enhancing the Cooperation of the Upgradation of the Women's Police Training Centre at Yamethin, Myanmar	September 2017
(4)	MoU for Sharing White Shipping Information between the Indian Navy and Myanmar Navy	September 2017

No.	Name	Year
(5)	Technical Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar for providing Coastal Surveillance System	September 2017
(6)	MoU between the Central Drugs Standard Control Organization (CDSCO), Ministry of Health and Family Welfare of the Republic of India and Food and Drugs (FDA), Ministry of Health and Sports of Myanmar on Cooperation in Medical Products Regulation	September 2017
(7)	MoU between the Ministry of Health and Family welfare of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Health and Sports of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar on cooperation in the field of Health and medicine	September 2017
(8)	Exchange of Letter for Extension of MoU on the establishment of MIIT	September 2017
(9)	Exchange of Letter for Extension of MoU on the establishment of India-Myanmar Center for Enhancement of IT-Skill	September 2017
(10)	MoU in the field of elections between the Election Commission of India and the Union Election Commission of Myanmar	September 2017
(11)	MoU on Cooperation between Myanmar Press Council and the Press Council of India.	September 2017
(12)	Agreement on Land Border Crossing	May 2018
(13)	MoU on Restoration and Preservation of Earthquake Damaged Pagodas in Bagan	May 2018
(14)	MoU on assistance to the Joint Ceasefire Monitoring Committee	May 2018
(15)	MoU on Training of Myanmar Foreign Service Officers	May 2018
(16)	MoU on Setting up Industrial Training Centre (ITC) at Monywa	May 2018
(17)	MoU on ITC at Thaton	May 2018
(18)	Exchange of Letters on extending a maintenance contract for ITC Myingyan.	May 2018
(19)	a programme on cooperation in science and technology between the Indian government and Myanmar government from 2018 to 2021	December 2018
(20)	MoU between the Office of the Union Chief Justice of Myanmar and the National Judicial Academy of India for conducting training for Myanmar judges and judiciary officers.	December 2018

Sources: (a)Embassy of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, India. September, 2017, https://www.myanmedelhi.com

(b)Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, New Delhi, May, 2018, https://mea.gov.in

During the NLD government period, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Myanmar twice and signed eleven MoUs and discussed India's parliamentary practices and procedures. The External Affairs Minister of India, Smt. Sushma Swaraj, visited Myanmar in May 10-11, 2018. During his visit, seven MoUs/Agreements were signed between Myanmar and India. The Land Border Crossing agreement had been brought into effect with the simultaneous opening of international entry-exit checkpoints at the Tamu-Moreh and the Rihkhawdar-Zowkhawtar border between Myanmar and India. Due to the MoU on ITC at Thaton, ITC, it was officially inaugurated on 10 January 2024. President of India, Shri Ram Nath Kovind, and First Lady Smt. Savita Kovind paid a State Visit to Myanmar from December 10 to 14, 2018. During his visit, two MoUs were signed between Myanmar and India. Singing many MoUs highlighted the commitment to strengthen bilateral relations between Myanmar and India.

Conclusion

The political relations between Myanmar and India from 2011 to 2020 reflected a complex yet steadily evolving partnership, shaped by both regional strategic imperatives and domestic political developments in each country. Throughout this period, the bilateral relationship remained robust, with both governments prioritizing cooperation in areas of security, economic development, infrastructure, and regional connectivity.

Under the USDP government (2011-2015), led by President U Thein Sein, Myanmar initiated significant political and economic reforms, which provided an opportunity for India to deepen its engagement. India's support for Myanmar's democratization, combined with its strategic interest in strengthening ties as part of its "Look East" (later "Act East") policy, resulted in increased collaboration, particularly in infrastructure projects like the Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project and the India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway. Many MoUs and Agreements were signed during this period to enhance cooperation in various sectors such as infrastructure, connectivity, energy, and security. The period thus represented a constructive and forward-looking phase in Myanmar-India political relations, with both countries recognising mutual interests in stability and development between the two countries.

The NLD government (2016-2020), led by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, continued this trajectory of strong bilateral relations. Both countries continued to prioritise security cooperation, economic development, and regional connectivity. India remained committed to supporting Myanmar's development, while Myanmar recognised the importance of India as a key partner in countering regional challenges, including China's growing influence. High-level diplomatic exchanges and signing many MoUs and Agreements reflected not only mutual interests but also a shared vision for regional peace, connectivity, and development between the two countries. Overall, this period was characterised by a steady and mutually beneficial political relations with India, underpinned by shared strategic concerns and the NLD's balanced foreign policy that sought constructive ties with all major regional powers including India.

Despite the overall strength of bilateral ties, particular challenges remained. Cross-border insurgency, infrastructural delays, and internal ethnic conflicts within Myanmar occasionally strained relations. However, both governments managed to navigate these challenges without compromising the strategic nature of their partnership. The political relations between Myanmar and India during the 2011-2020 period were characterized by a strong foundation of mutual interest, regional security, and economic collaboration. Both countries demonstrated resilience in managing domestic and external pressures, ensuring that their partnership continued to evolve. Moving forward, the relationship holds significant potential, particularly in areas of connectivity, trade, and security cooperation. As both countries seek to navigate a rapidly changing regional environment, their diplomatic ties will remain a cornerstone of stability and growth in South and Southeast Asia.

Acknowledgement

I would like to express my gratitude and sincere thanks to Dr. Thida Aung, Professor and Head of Department of International Relations, and Political Science, University of Yangon, for her insightful guidance and encouragement to carry out this research work. I also wish to express my profound gratitude to Dr. Myint Myint Htay, Professor of the Department of International Relations, and Political Science, University of Mandalay, for her invaluable guidance and encouragement throughout the preparation of this research work, as well as for providing essential information needed for this study.

References

Bhatia, Rajiv (2016). *India-Myanmar Relations-Changing Contours*, New Delhi, Routledge Taylor & Francis Group.

Ayob, Azman. (2016). India-Myanmar relations: From Idealpolitik to Realpolitik.*Malaysian Journal of International Relations*, December 2016, 4(1). http://dx.doi.org/10.22452/mjir.vol4no1.4

Aung Myoe, Maung. (2016). Myanmar's Foreign Policy under USDP Government: Continuities and Changes. *Journal of Current Southeast Asian Affairs*. GIGA German Institute of Global and Area Studies, Institute of Asian Studies and Hamburg University Press.https://journals.sagepub.com/ doi/pdf/10. 1177/1868103 41603500105

Aung Myoe, Maung. (2017). The NLD and Myanmar's Foreign Policy: Not New, but Different. *Journal of Current Southeast Asian Affairs*, Sage Journals, 36(1), April 1, 2017. https://doi.org/10.1177/ 186810341703600104

Aye, Tin Tin. (2019). Security and Military Cooperation between Myanmar and India after 2010. *University of Yangon Research Journal*, University of Yangon, Yangon, Myanmar. Vol.9, No.1.

Binh, Nguyen Tuan. (2018). Political and Diplomatic relations between India and Myanmar (1992-2014): A view from the impacts of Look East Policy. *Hue University Journal of Social Science and Humanities,* University of Education, Hue University, Hue City. July 2018, Vietnam Vol. 127, No. 6B. file:///C:/Users/Admin/Downloads/The_Political_and_Diplomatic_Relations_B.pdf

Embassy of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, India. September, 2017. https://www.myanmedelhi.com

Embassy of India, Yangon, Myanmar. May 30, 2019. https://embassyofindiayangon.gov.in/albumimage/MTM2

Embassy of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, New Delhi, India. March 1, 2020. https://www .myanmedelhi.com/press-release-on-the-state-visit-of-u-win-myint-president-of-the-republic-of-the-union-of-myanmar-to-the-republic-of-india

Foreign Policy of Dr. Manmohan Singh and Manmohan Doctrine. *Gktoday. GK, Current Affairs & General Studies.* October 16, 2016.https://www.gktoday.in/foreign-policy-of-dr-manmohan-singh-and-manmohan-doctrine /

Gottschlich, Pierre. (2015). New Developments in India–Myanmar Bilateral Relations? *Journal of Current Southeast Asian Affairs*, *34*(2), August 1, 2015. https://doi.org/10.1177/186810341503400206

India-Myanmar Relations. Ministry of External Affairs, July 2012. https://www. mea.gov.in/ Portal/Foreign Relation/ myanmar-july-2012.pdf

India-Myanmar Relations. Ministry of External Affairs, Government of Myanmar. May 2014. https://www.mea.gov.in/Portal/ForeignRelation/Myanmar_May-2014.pdf

India-Myanmar Relations. Consulate General of India. Mandalay, Myanmar. September 2017. https://www.cgimandalay.gov.in/page/india-myanmar-relations/

Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, October, 2011. https://embassyofindiayangon.gov.in

Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, May, 2012. https://www.mea.gov.in

Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, Nay Pyi Taw, September 6, 2017.https://www.mea.gov.in/bilateral-documents.htm?dtl/

Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, New Delhi, May, 2018. https://mea.gov.in

Ministry of Information, Nay Pyi Taw, November, 2020. https://myanmar.gov.mm

Sein, Chaw Chaw. (2016). Myanmar Foreign Policy under New Government: Changes & Prospects. ResearchGate. August 1, 2016. https://www.researchgate .net/publication/30573469 1_Myanmar_Foreign_Policy _under_ New _ Government _Changes_and_Prospects

Shang, Po P, (2021), "Myanmar's Foreign Policy: Shifting Legitimacy, Shifting Strategic Culture." *Journal of Current Southeast Asian Affairs*, Sage Journals. October 22, 2021. https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/18681034211044481?icid=int.sj-full-text.similar-articles

The New Light of Myanmar, Vol. XXI, no.245. December 17, 2013.

The New Light of Myanmar, Vol. XXI, no.332. March 4, 2014.

The Global New Light of Myanmar, Vol. V, No. 240. December 12, 2018.

The Global New Light of Myanmar, Vol. VI, No. 317. February 28, 2020.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INTERDEPENDENCE AND PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE IN A SOCIETAL CONTEXT*

Thant Sin[1], Win Win Yi[2], Khin Thiri Thet Naing[3]

Abstract

In the face of increasing environmental crises and social discord, the principle of *Mettā*, or loving-kindness, emerges as a transformative approach to fostering ecological balance and global peace. This paper investigates the profound interconnections between *Mettā* and sustainable environmental practices, demonstrating that cultivating loving-kindness extends compassion not only to fellow humans but to all sentient beings and the natural world. The first section explores the concept of interdependence, emphasizing how *Mettā* nurtures awareness of the intricate relationships among individuals, communities, and ecosystems, inspiring ethical actions towards the environment. The second section highlights *Mettā's* pivotal role in conflict resolution, particularly in addressing disputes over natural resources, and underscores the importance of compassionate dialogue in achieving mutual understanding and cooperation. Furthermore, the paper examines how *Mettā* can galvanize global solidarity, encouraging collective action for sustainability and environmental justice. By integrating loving-kindness into personal lifestyles and environmental policies, this study advocates for a sustainable future that honors the intrinsic value of all life, paving the way for harmonious coexistence between humanity and the natural world. Ultimately, the paper argues that *Mettā* serves as a foundational principle for cultivating ecological balance and global peace, offering a pathway to a more compassionate and sustainable society. The research employs descriptive, evaluative, and comparative methods to critically examine the sutta's teachings and assess their applicability in contemporary settings.

Keywords: *Mettā,* ecological balance, global peace

Introduction

In an increasingly interconnected world, the concepts of interdependence and peaceful coexistence have emerged as vital frameworks for understanding and addressing societal challenges. Interdependence, defined as the mutual reliance between individuals, communities, and nations, underscores the intricate web of relationships that binds us together. This principle is particularly relevant in the context of globalization, where actions in one part of the world can have far-reaching consequences for distant communities and ecosystems.

Peaceful coexistence, on the other hand, represents the ideal of living harmoniously despite differences in beliefs, values, and backgrounds. It emphasizes the importance of dialogue, empathy, and cooperation in fostering relationships that are not only tolerant but also supportive and nurturing. As societies face issues such as social injustice, environmental degradation, and political conflict, the need for a deeper understanding of how interdependence can cultivate peaceful coexistence becomes paramount.

This paper explores the intricate relationship between interdependence and peaceful coexistence in a societal context, drawing upon various philosophical and ethical perspectives,

---

*First Prize(2024)

[1] Department of Oriental Studies, University of Yangon
[2] Department of Oriental Studies, University of Yangon
[3] Department of Oriental Studies, Dagon University

including Buddhist teachings. By examining how interdependence fosters awareness of our shared humanity and the collective responsibility we have toward one another and the environment, we can identify pathways to create a more just and harmonious world.

In the following sections, we will delve into the implications of interdependence for social dynamics, the role of compassion and empathy in promoting peaceful coexistence, and practical examples that illustrate the transformative power of these principles. Ultimately, we aim to highlight the necessity of embracing interdependence as a foundation for nurturing relationships that contribute to a more peaceful and sustainable society.

1.Introduction to *Mettā* and Ecological Balance

Mettā, often translated as loving-kindness, is a fundamental principle in Buddhist philosophy that emphasizes compassion and goodwill toward all sentient beings. Rooted in the teachings of the Buddha, *Mettā* encourages practitioners to extend their compassion beyond individual relationships to encompass all forms of life.

The *Karaṇīya Metta Sutta*[1] articulates this ideal by urging individuals to cultivate a boundless love that embraces all beings, highlighting that true happiness arises from the practice of *Mettā*, which in turn fosters an environment of peace and tranquility. This sutta is foundational for understanding Mettā as a boundless compassion that should extend to all beings, supporting peaceful coexistence and universal goodwill:

> **"Just as a mother would protect her only child at the risk of her own life, even so, one should cultivate a boundless heart towards all beings."**

This sutta emphasizes that genuine happiness and peace arise from Mettā, laying a foundation for harmony that can extend to ecological and environmental stewardship.

The Dhammapada also captures the power of Mettā as a force that dissolves hatred, supporting peaceful coexistence and ethical behavior:

> **"Hatred is never appeased by hatred in this world; it is appeased by non-hatred. This is the eternal law."[2]**

This verse highlights the potential of Mettā to resolve conflicts and foster harmony, which is crucial for overcoming social and ecological crises.

The *Nidāna Saṃyutta* in the *Saṃyutta Nikāya* addresses interdependence and conditionality (*paṭicca-samuppāda*), illustrating how each action affects others, reflecting the interconnectedness essential to ecological awareness.[3]

The text explains that understanding this interconnectedness inspires ethical responsibility and a commitment to mindful and sustainable actions that consider their impact on the environment.

In the Visuddhimagga[4],This meditation manual by Buddhaghosa discusses how cultivating Mettā transforms one's thoughts, actions, and behavior toward others and nature:

---

[1] Sn 300 -302, Sn-a I 188
[2] Dhp 14, Dhp-a I 33-34
[3] SN I 243, SN-a I 1-10
[4] Vism-a I 287-306

"He develops a mind of loving-kindness toward all beings, abandoning aversion and ill will."

Practicing Mettā inspires profound behavioral change and a sense of ethical responsibility toward all beings, fostering a mindset that values ecological balance and environmental protection.

The *Mahāparinibbāna Sutta*[1] presents the Buddha's final teachings, underscoring the importance of compassion, mindfulness, and ethics in all aspects of life. It underscores the need to live in harmony with others and the environment. The Buddha advises cultivating a mind of goodwill that promotes a sustainable relationship with both people and nature, forming the basis for ecological balance and peace.

Each of these texts provides a basis for understanding how Mettā and the principle of interdependence can foster responsible environmental and social practices, encouraging a harmonious coexistence with all forms of life.

2. Interdependence and Ethical Responsibility

Explanation of Interdependence in Buddhist Philosophy

Interdependence is a core concept in Buddhist philosophy, articulated through the doctrine of ***Paṭiccasamuppāda*** (Dependent Origination). This teaching elucidates how all phenomena arise in dependence upon multiple conditions and causes, emphasizing the intricate web of relationships that binds all living beings and the environment. According to the ***Saṃyutta Nikāya***, the Buddha explained that nothing exists in isolation; instead, every action, thought, and intention impacts the broader ecosystem of existence. This interconnectedness not only highlights the importance of ethical behavior but also illustrates how individual actions can lead to collective consequences.

Buddhism posits that ignorance of this interdependence fosters suffering (*dukkha*) and ethical violations, while awareness cultivates compassion and responsible action. This understanding forms the foundation for ethical responsibility in Buddhist practice, compelling individuals to act with consideration for all beings and the natural world.

The Role of Mettā in Fostering Awareness of Interconnectedness

Mettā, or loving-kindness, plays a vital role in enhancing awareness of interconnectedness. The *Karaṇīya Metta Sutta*[2] encourages practitioners to cultivate an expansive love that transcends personal relationships, promoting a sense of unity with all sentient beings. By practicing *Mettā*, individuals begin to recognize the shared nature of existence and the impact their actions have on others, thereby nurturing a compassionate perspective toward the world.

The *Dhammapada* reinforces this concept, stating that "Hatred does not cease by hatred, but only by love; this is the eternal rule"[3]. By fostering *Mettā*, individuals not only create peace within themselves but also contribute to a more harmonious relationship with the environment. This cultivation of loving-kindness transforms how people view their ethical responsibilities, inspiring them to act with integrity and care for the natural world.

---

[1] DN II 67-69, DN-a II 120-127
[2] Sn 300 -302, Sn-a I 184-185
[3] Dhp 14, Dhp-a I 33-34

Case Studies Illustrating How *Mettā* Inspires Ethical Actions Toward the Environment

Community Forest Conservation Initiatives:

In various Buddhist communities, forest conservation projects have been initiated that are grounded in the principles of *Mettā*. For example, a community in Thailand, inspired by Buddhist teachings, implemented a conservation program aimed at protecting local forests. Participants emphasized the interconnectedness of all life and the importance of preserving the natural environment for future generations. The ethical responsibility to care for the earth was framed as an extension of their *Mettā* practice, leading to collective actions that resulted in increased biodiversity and sustainable resource management.

Karaṇīya Metta Sutta[1] promotes an all-encompassing love that values the protection of life, which can extend to environmental conservation:

"May all beings be happy and safe; may all beings have happy minds."

This compassion-inspired view aligns with treating nature as a part of the interconnected web of life, emphasizing that ethical responsibility extends to all living things.

Eco-Buddhism and Sustainable Living:

Movements like Eco-Buddhism advocate for sustainable living practices rooted in the teachings of *Mettā* and interdependence. In these communities, practitioners engage in ethical consumption, waste reduction, and the promotion of renewable energy sources. By recognizing the impact of their lifestyle choices on the environment, individuals embody the principles of *Mettā*, fostering a compassionate relationship with nature. This holistic approach encourages ethical responsibility not only toward fellow humans but also towards the planet.

Dhammapada[2] encourages mindful living that avoids causing harm:

"Just as a cowherd with a stick drives the cattle to pasture, so do old age and death drive the life of beings."

Recognizing this impermanence can foster sustainable living practices that honor life's delicate balance.

Conflict Resolution in Resource Management:

In regions where natural resources are a source of conflict, *Mettā*-inspired dialogue has been employed to promote cooperation among different stakeholder groups. For instance, in some areas of Nepal, Buddhist leaders have facilitated discussions around water resource management, encouraging a *Mettā*-based approach to conflict resolution. By fostering compassionate dialogue and mutual understanding, stakeholders have been able to reach agreements that prioritize both human needs and environmental sustainability, showcasing how *Mettā* can inspire ethical actions that benefit the greater good.

Mahāparinibbāna Sutta[3] emphasizes the importance of harmony and ethical behavior for communal welfare:

"So one should speak that which leads to the welfare and happiness of oneself and others."

---

[1] Sn 301, Sn-a I 185
[2] Dhp 33, Dhp-a II 38
[3] DN II 67-69

Here, promoting compassionate and ethical dialogue inspired by Mettā aligns with resolving conflicts for the shared benefit of both people and the environment.

3. *Mettā* and Conflict Resolution

Frequency and Impact of Conflicts Arising from Environmental Resource Disputes

Conflicts over environmental resources have become increasingly common, often leading to social unrest and ecological degradation. In *Pāli* literature, the Dhammapada highlights the destructive nature of conflict, stating, "Hatred does not cease by hatred, but only by love; this is the eternal rule"[1].

This underscores the importance of addressing conflicts not through aggression but through understanding and compassion.

Disputes surrounding essential resources—such as water, land, and forests—often pit communities against one another. For instance, the *Sutta Nipāta* speaks of the adverse effects of conflict, illustrating how aversion and greed can cloud judgment and lead to suffering for all parties involved. The consequences of such conflicts extend beyond individual disputes, often impacting entire ecosystems and social structures.

Mettā as an Approach to Conflict Resolution

Mettā, or loving-kindness, as discussed in the *Karaṇīya Metta Sutta*[2], emphasizes the cultivation of compassion towards all beings. This practice serves as a potent tool for resolving conflicts, encouraging individuals to approach disputes with an open heart and a willingness to understand differing perspectives.

The teachings of the Buddha encourage the cultivation of *Mettā* as a means to dissolve hostility and foster harmony. The *Brahmavihāras*[3], which include *Mettā*, provide a framework for ethical conduct that can be transformative in conflict situations. By promoting *Mettā*, individuals can create a conducive environment for empathetic dialogue, leading to collaborative solutions.

Examples of Successful Initiatives

Community Conflict Resolution in Forest Management:

In the *Jātaka* Tales, many stories exemplify the use of *Mettā* in resolving disputes related to natural resources. One notable tale is that of the *Kukkuravatika Jātaka*[4], where a compassionate dog intervenes to resolve a conflict between a group of animals over access to water. By embodying *Mettā*, the dog facilitates understanding among the parties involved, illustrating how loving-kindness can lead to peaceful resolutions.

The Role of Compassionate Dialogue in Monastic Communities:

In monastic settings, the Buddha's teachings emphasize the importance of *Mettā* in resolving interpersonal conflicts. The *Vinaya Piṭaka* provides guidelines for resolving disputes among monks, advocating for a compassionate approach rooted in *Mettā*. This framework not only

[1] Dhp 14, Dhp-a I 33-34
[2] Sn 300-302, Sn-a I 184-185
[3] It 208, It -a 86
[4] Ja I 6, Ja-a I 192-193

maintains harmony within the monastic community but also serves as a model for broader social interactions.

International Dialogue on Environmental Sustainability:

The principles of *Mettā* can also be observed in modern contexts, such as international negotiations on climate change. The collaborative spirit evident in the Paris Agreement can be seen as an extension of *Mettā*-inspired dialogue, where nations recognize their interconnectedness and collective responsibility to address environmental crises. The teachings found in the *Saṃyutta Nikāya* highlight the importance of understanding and cooperation, aligning with contemporary efforts to foster global solidarity in environmental stewardship.

Mettā serves as a transformative approach to conflict resolution, particularly in the context of environmental resource disputes. By fostering empathetic communication and understanding, *Mettā* can facilitate constructive dialogues among conflicting parties. The examples drawn from *Pāli* literature, alongside modern applications of these teachings, illustrate the profound impact that cultivating loving-kindness can have on resolving conflicts and promoting harmony with the environment.

In the *Sāmaññaphala Sutta*[1], the Buddha articulates the fruits of ethical living, with a particular focus on the cultivation of loving-kindness (*Mettā*). This sutta serves as a vital exploration of the interconnectedness of actions and their ethical implications, revealing how the practice of *Mettā* can inspire responsible conduct toward the environment and all sentient beings.

Key Insights

Fruits of Ethical Living

In the *Sāmaññaphala Sutta*, the Buddha articulates the numerous benefits that arise from ethical conduct, emphasizing how such practices contribute to mental peace, social harmony, and positive relationships. The sutta highlights the following key fruits of ethical living:

Mental Peace: Ethical conduct fosters a tranquil mind, free from the turmoil of guilt and regret that can arise from unwholesome actions. By adhering to moral precepts and cultivating *Mettā*, individuals experience a profound sense of inner peace. This mental clarity allows for greater focus, resilience, and emotional stability, which are essential for personal well-being and effective engagement with the world. The sutta emphasizes that mental tranquility is a direct result of living ethically, enabling individuals to cultivate a balanced and peaceful state of mind.

Social Harmony: The practice of *Mettā* enhances one's capacity for compassion and understanding, thereby strengthening relationships within communities. As individuals embody loving-kindness, they promote a culture of empathy and cooperation, reducing conflict and fostering goodwill among diverse groups. This social harmony is vital for creating environments where people can thrive collectively, supporting initiatives that benefit both society and the environment. The sutta illustrates that when communities practice *Mettā*, they create bonds of trust and collaboration that are essential for addressing communal challenges, including those related to environmental stewardship.

Positive Relationships: Cultivating *Mettā* leads to healthier interactions with others, characterized by respect, kindness, and mutual support. Such relationships, rooted in ethical

[1] DN I 55-69, DN-a I 152-194

conduct, contribute to a sense of belonging and interconnectedness, not only among humans but also in the broader ecological context. By recognizing the intrinsic value of all beings, individuals are more likely to engage in behaviors that promote sustainability and responsible stewardship of the environment. The *Sāmaññaphala Sutta* highlights that as individuals practice *Mettā*, they naturally foster deeper connections and empathy, resulting in enriched community bonds and a collective commitment to the well-being of all life.

Supportive Environment: When individuals cultivate *Mettā*, they contribute to a supportive atmosphere that nurtures both people and nature. This environment encourages collaboration and altruism, paving the way for collective efforts to address pressing ecological challenges. As communities embrace ethical living guided by loving-kindness, they become more resilient and capable of responding to environmental crises in a constructive manner. The sutta emphasizes that such supportive environments, fueled by compassion and understanding, empower individuals to work together towards shared goals, enhancing the community's ability to thrive amidst challenges.

In summary, the *Sāmaññaphala Sutta* elucidates that the fruits of ethical living, particularly through the lens of *Mettā*, extend beyond personal benefits to encompass the well-being of society and the environment. By embracing ethical conduct, individuals not only enhance their own lives but also contribute to a more compassionate, harmonious, and sustainable world.

Interconnectedness

In the *Sāmaññaphala Sutta*, the Buddha emphasizes the fundamental principle of interdependence, illustrating the intricate web of connections that bind individuals to one another and to the environment. This understanding of interconnectedness is crucial for ethical living and responsible stewardship of the earth. Key insights include:

Impact of Actions: The Buddha teaches that every action has repercussions that extend beyond the individual. Actions rooted in greed, hatred, and ignorance can lead to suffering not only for oneself but also for others and the environment. Conversely, actions guided by wisdom and compassion—such as those stemming from the cultivation of *Mettā*—create positive ripple effects, fostering harmony and well-being throughout the interconnected web of life.

"The nature of one's actions is their cause."[1]

This reinforces the idea that actions driven by greed, hatred, and ignorance contribute to suffering, while actions based on compassion yield harmony.

***Mettā* as a Reinforcement of Interdependence:** The cultivation of loving-kindness deepens one's awareness of the interconnected nature of existence. By recognizing that all beings share the desire for happiness and the aversion to suffering, individuals are motivated to act with kindness and compassion. *Mettā* inspires a sense of shared responsibility, encouraging people to consider the effects of their choices on the broader community and the natural world.

Responsibility Toward the Environment: Understanding interconnectedness compels individuals to act sustainably and ethically in their interactions with the environment. The Buddha's teachings advocate for mindful stewardship of natural resources, recognizing that the

[1] DN I 55-59, DN-a I 152-164

health of the environment directly influences the well-being of all living beings. When individuals practice *Mettā*, they are more likely to engage in behaviors that protect ecosystems, conserve resources, and promote ecological balance.

Collective Well-Being: Interconnectedness highlights the importance of collective well-being over individual gain. The Buddha's emphasis on community and relational ethics encourages collaborative efforts to address social and environmental challenges. By nurturing *Mettā*, individuals can work together towards common goals, creating a culture of mutual support that benefits both humanity and the planet.

Real-Life Applications: The teachings on interconnectedness are increasingly relevant in contemporary discussions about environmental sustainability and social justice. Initiatives that embody *Mettā*, such as community-based conservation projects or cooperative movements, exemplify how understanding interdependence can lead to effective and compassionate solutions to ecological problems.

In summary, *the Sāmaññaphala Sutta* articulates the profound implications of interdependence, emphasizing that one’s actions resonate throughout the interconnected web of life. The cultivation of Mettā not only reinforces this understanding but also motivates individuals to act responsibly and sustainably, fostering a harmonious coexistence between humanity and the natural world.

Mettā as Inspiration

Loving-kindness (*Mettā*) emerges as a fundamental guiding principle for ethical behavior in *the Sāmaññaphala Sutta* and Buddhist philosophy at large. By nurturing *Mettā*, individuals are inspired to engage in actions that promote ecological balance and harmony, reflecting a deep awareness of the interconnectedness of all life. Key insights include:

Guiding Principle for Ethical Behavior: *Mettā* encourages individuals to cultivate compassion and kindness in their interactions with others and the environment. This foundational principle promotes a mindset of empathy, fostering a desire to alleviate suffering and enhance the well-being of all sentient beings. As individuals embody *Mettā*, they are more likely to make ethical choices that reflect a commitment to justice, sustainability, and respect for nature.

Stewardship Toward the Environment: The cultivation of *Mettā* leads to a profound sense of stewardship toward the environment. Recognizing the intrinsic value of all life encourages individuals to care for the planet and its ecosystems. This stewardship is not merely about conservation; it encompasses a holistic approach to living that respects the interconnectedness of all beings and promotes the health of the environment.

Promoting Ecological Balance: Actions inspired by *Mettā* are inherently aligned with the principles of ecological balance. When individuals act with loving-kindness, they are motivated to engage in practices that protect natural resources, reduce waste, and promote biodiversity. For example, community initiatives focused on reforestation, sustainable agriculture, and wildlife conservation often stem from a foundation of *Mettā*, showcasing how loving-kindness can translate into tangible environmental benefits.

Recognition of Intrinsic Value: By developing *Mettā*, individuals come to recognize the intrinsic value of all life forms, which encourages a shift in perspective. Rather than viewing the environment merely as a resource to exploit, individuals begin to see it as a vital component of a shared existence. This recognition fosters a sense of responsibility to protect and nurture the environment, aligning personal values with ecological sustainability.

Encouraging Positive Social Change: *Mettā* also serves as a catalyst for broader social change, inspiring collective actions that address environmental issues. When individuals unite under the banner of loving-kindness, they can collaborate on initiatives that promote environmental justice, equitable resource distribution, and sustainable development. The sense of community fostered by *Mettā* can mobilize diverse groups to work toward common goals, amplifying their impact on ecological preservation.

Real-Life Examples: Numerous environmental movements and organizations draw inspiration from the principles of *Mettā*. For instance, the work of various Buddhist eco-activists illustrates how the cultivation of loving-kindness can lead to impactful advocacy for the environment. These initiatives not only raise awareness of ecological issues but also provide practical solutions grounded in compassion and ethical living. The *Sutta Nipāta* provides examples of harmonious living in relation to the environment:

In conclusion, *Mettā* serves as a powerful source of inspiration for ethical behavior, encouraging individuals to engage in actions that promote ecological balance and harmony. By nurturing loving-kindness, individuals develop a profound sense of stewardship toward the environment, recognizing the intrinsic value of all life and fostering a sustainable future for both humanity and the natural world.

4.Global Solidarity through *Mettā*

The principle of *Mettā* (loving-kindness) is a transformative force that can transcend cultural and geographical boundaries, unifying diverse groups in the pursuit of sustainability and environmental justice. Rooted in Buddhist teachings, *Mettā* encourages collective action based on compassion and shared responsibility. This section explores key aspects of global solidarity through *Mettā*, referencing relevant *Pāli* literature.

Uniting Diverse Groups: In the *Metta Sutta*[1] , the Buddha extols the virtues of loving-kindness, emphasizing its capacity to foster unity among all beings. By nurturing *Mettā*, individuals can overcome divisions based on cultural, social, or geographical differences, recognizing the shared desire for well-being. This understanding encourages collaboration on sustainability initiatives that address ecological challenges.

***Mettā*-Driven Initiatives:** Numerous initiatives exemplify how *Mettā* can inspire solidarity in environmental efforts:

Global Climate Movements: Initiatives like Fridays for Future embody the spirit of *Mettā*, bringing together individuals from diverse backgrounds who advocate for urgent climate action. The underlying message of loving-kindness resonates with the Buddha's teachings on compassion for all beings, emphasizing the importance of protecting the planet for future generations.

Conservation Projects: Collaborative conservation efforts often draw upon the principles of *Mettā*, uniting local communities, NGOs, and governmental organizations. The Buddha's

[1] Sn 300-302, Sn-a I 175-192

emphasis on interdependence in the *Sāmaññaphala Sutta*[1] illustrates how collective efforts rooted in loving-kindness can lead to effective stewardship of the environment, recognizing that the health of ecosystems is vital for all beings.

Local Community Programs: Grassroots initiatives, such as community gardens and clean-up drives, often thrive on *Mettā*. These programs cultivate a sense of belonging and shared responsibility, aligning with the Buddha's teachings in the Dhammapada, where compassion and kindness are highlighted as essential qualities for harmonious living.

> "Conquer anger by love, conquer evil by good; conquer the stingy by generosity, and the liar by truth." [2]

This verse emphasizes kindness, compassion, and generosity as qualities that overcome negativity and promote harmonious relationships, resonating with grassroots efforts that build a collective spirit of care.

In the Dhammapada

> "One should speak the truth, not get angry, and give even when asked for little. By these three actions, one can reach the presence of the gods."[3]

The emphasis on truthfulness, patience, and generosity highlights the qualities that cultivate a supportive and compassionate community, essential for sustaining grassroots initiatives.

Shared Responsibility and Compassion: The collective action inspired by *Mettā* fosters a strong sense of shared responsibility. As articulated in the *Brahmavihāra Sutta* loving-kindness expands one's concern from oneself to include all sentient beings. This awareness cultivates a culture of compassion, motivating individuals to support one another in addressing environmental issues.

Promoting Environmental Justice: *Mettā*-driven solidarity plays a crucial role in promoting environmental justice. The Dhammapada teaches that all beings wish to be free from suffering[4]. Recognizing the disproportionate impact of environmental degradation on marginalized communities allows *Mettā* practitioners to advocate for equitable policies and practices. Initiatives that ensure access to clean air, water, and resources emerge from a collective commitment to uphold the dignity and rights of all beings.

Examples of Mettā in Action: Successful case studies illustrate the power of *Mettā* in fostering global solidarity. For instance, organizations like Buddhist Global Relief embody the principles of *Mettā* by addressing issues of hunger, poverty, and environmental degradation. Their projects often draw on Buddhist teachings, emphasizing compassion in action and demonstrating the application of *Mettā* in supporting both people and the planet.

Impact on Policy and Advocacy: The unity cultivated by *Mettā* can influence policy and advocacy efforts. In the *Sutta Nipāta*, the Buddha emphasizes the importance of harmony and collective effort in achieving common goals. When diverse groups unite under the banner of

---

[1] DN II 55-59, DN-a I 152-164
[2] Dhp 46, Dhp-a II 202
[3] Ibid
[4] Dhp 32

loving-kindness, they amplify their voices, enhancing their impact on decision-makers and advocating for climate justice, biodiversity conservation, and sustainable development.[1]

In summary, *Mettā* serves as a powerful catalyst for global solidarity, unifying diverse groups to work together for sustainability and environmental justice. By fostering a sense of shared responsibility rooted in compassion, *Mettā*-driven initiatives can effectively address pressing ecological challenges and promote a more equitable and sustainable future for all.

5.Integrating *Mettā* into Environmental Practices

Integrating *Mettā* (loving-kindness) into environmental practices involves both individual actions and systemic changes in policy-making. This section offers practical suggestions for embodying loving-kindness in everyday life and for promoting it as a guiding principle in environmental legislation and community engagement.

Embodying *Mettā* in Everyday Life:

Mindful Consumption: Individuals can practice *Mettā* by being mindful of their consumption habits. This includes reducing waste, choosing sustainable products, and supporting local businesses. The Dhammapada emphasizes the importance of right action, which can translate into responsible consumer choices that reflect compassion for the planet and its inhabitants.[2]

Conserving Resources: Practicing loving-kindness can inspire individuals to conserve energy and water. Simple actions, such as turning off lights when not in use or fixing leaks, demonstrate a commitment to stewardship of the earth. This aligns with the Buddha's teaching on interdependence found in the *Sāmaññaphala Sutta*[3] , highlighting how individual actions impact the collective well-being of the community and environment.

Advocating for Sustainable Policies: Individuals can embody *Mettā* by engaging in advocacy for policies that promote sustainability and environmental justice. This includes participating in community discussions, writing to representatives, or joining organizations focused on environmental issues. The spirit of *Mettā* encourages individuals to act not only for their benefit but also for the welfare of others and future generations.

Policy-Making and Community Engagement:

Frameworks Promoting *Mettā*: Policymakers can create frameworks that integrate *Mettā* into environmental legislation by considering the impact of laws on both people and the planet. For example, policies promoting renewable energy should also prioritize equitable access for marginalized communities, reflecting the compassionate principles of *Mettā*. The *Brahmavihāra Sutta* emphasizes the importance of extending kindness to all beings, which can guide policymakers in their decision-making processes.

Community-Based Approaches: Engaging communities in the decision-making process fosters a sense of shared responsibility. Initiatives that encourage local participation in environmental planning and conservation efforts can cultivate *Mettā* among community members. The Buddha's teachings on the importance of harmony and collective effort[4] can inspire collaborative approaches to addressing local environmental challenges.

[1] Sn 312
[2] Dhp 13
[3] DN II 55-59
[4] Sn 312

Educational Initiatives:

Instilling Values of *Mettā*: Educational initiatives play a crucial role in instilling values of *Mettā* and stewardship in future generations. Schools can incorporate lessons on environmental ethics grounded in loving-kindness, emphasizing the interconnectedness of all life. Programs that teach children about sustainability, conservation, and the importance of compassion toward the environment can nurture a generation that values *Mettā* in their actions.

Promoting Environmental Literacy: Educational institutions can foster environmental literacy by connecting *Mettā* to environmental science, encouraging students to explore the ethical implications of their actions on the planet. This holistic approach aligns with the Buddha's emphasis on wisdom and understanding, as highlighted in the Dhammapada[1] , encouraging critical thinking about the impact of choices on the environment and society.

***Mettā* in Community Projects:**

Community Gardening and Clean-Up Initiatives: Local projects that embody *Mettā*, such as community gardens and clean-up initiatives, can foster cooperation and a sense of belonging among participants. These activities not only beautify the environment but also cultivate relationships grounded in loving-kindness. Engaging in such projects allows individuals to practice *Mettā* while actively contributing to the ecological balance of their communities.

Support for Indigenous Practices: Recognizing and supporting Indigenous knowledge and practices rooted in *Mettā* can enhance environmental sustainability. Collaborative efforts that respect traditional ecological wisdom align with the teachings of interdependence and compassion found in *Pāli* literature, promoting a holistic approach to environmental stewardship.

In conclusion, integrating *Mettā* into environmental practices requires both individual commitment and systemic change. By embodying loving-kindness in everyday actions, advocating for sustainable policies, and prioritizing education on *Mettā* and stewardship, individuals and communities can contribute to a more compassionate and sustainable future. The teachings of the Buddha serve as a guide for cultivating *Mettā*, emphasizing the importance of responsible action and the interconnectedness of all beings in creating a harmonious coexistence with the natural world.

Discussion

The exploration of interdependence and peaceful coexistence reveals critical insights into the complexities of human relationships in a diverse and interconnected world. The concept of interdependence emphasizes that our actions, whether positive or negative, ripple through the fabric of society, affecting not only our immediate circles but also broader communities and ecosystems. This understanding is especially crucial in addressing contemporary challenges such as social inequality, environmental degradation, and geopolitical conflicts.

Incorporating perspectives from Buddhist philosophy, we see that interdependence is intricately linked with the principle of compassion. By fostering an awareness of our shared existence, individuals are more likely to engage in empathetic actions that promote social harmony and

[1] Dhp 14

environmental sustainability. This compassionate approach not only enhances individual well-being but also strengthens communal ties, paving the way for collaborative efforts in addressing pressing societal issues.

Furthermore, examples from various cultures and communities demonstrate the effectiveness of interdependence in fostering peaceful coexistence. Initiatives that emphasize collective action, such as community dialogues, environmental conservation projects, and intercultural exchanges, illustrate how recognizing our interconnectedness can lead to more inclusive and equitable societies. These initiatives serve as powerful reminders of the potential for positive change when individuals and groups unite around shared goals, transcending differences and fostering mutual respect.

However, the journey toward realizing the full potential of interdependence and peaceful coexistence is fraught with challenges. Social divisions, power imbalances, and historical grievances can hinder progress and perpetuate cycles of conflict. Thus, it is essential to approach these concepts with a commitment to addressing underlying inequalities and injustices. Educational initiatives that cultivate values of empathy, cooperation, and active citizenship can play a pivotal role in reshaping societal attitudes and fostering a culture of peace.

Conclusion

In this paper, we have explored the profound significance of *Mettā* (loving-kindness) as a foundational principle for achieving ecological balance and global peace. Rooted in Buddhist philosophy, *Mettā* extends compassion to all beings and emphasizes our interdependence with the natural world. The cultivation of loving-kindness is not merely an individual endeavor; it is a transformative force that can inspire collective action and foster a harmonious relationship with the environment.

We examined how *Mettā* encourages ethical responsibility, guiding individuals toward mindful consumption, resource conservation, and advocacy for sustainable practices. By embodying loving-kindness in our daily lives, we can create a ripple effect that promotes compassion within our communities and influences broader policy decisions. Additionally, we discussed the role of *Mettā* in conflict resolution, highlighting how empathetic communication and understanding can address disputes arising from environmental resource management.

As we face escalating environmental crises—such as climate change, biodiversity loss, and social injustices—the urgency of adopting *Mettā* becomes increasingly clear. In a world marked by division and discord, the principles of loving-kindness can unite diverse groups across cultural and geographical boundaries, fostering global solidarity in the pursuit of sustainability and environmental justice.

Ultimately, the vision for the future is one where *Mettā* guides humanity's relationship with the earth, cultivating a sense of stewardship that honors the intrinsic value of all life. By committing to compassion and sustainability, we can create a legacy for future generations, ensuring that the natural world thrives alongside human society. As we embrace *Mettā*, we pave the way for a more harmonious coexistence with the environment, nurturing a world where peace, justice, and ecological balance flourish for all beings.

In conclusion, the relationship between interdependence and peaceful coexistence offers a profound framework for understanding and addressing the complexities of human society. By recognizing our shared humanity and the interconnectedness of our actions, we can cultivate a culture of compassion and collaboration that transcends boundaries and promotes social harmony.

The urgency of embracing these principles is heightened by the myriad challenges facing our world today. As we navigate the complexities of globalization, social justice, and environmental sustainability, the call for a collective commitment to interdependence and peaceful coexistence becomes increasingly critical. Through compassion and mutual respect, we can build a future that honors our shared responsibility toward one another and the planet.

Ultimately, fostering interdependence and peaceful coexistence is not merely an ideal but a practical necessity for a sustainable and just society. By nurturing these values in our communities, educational institutions, and policies, we can pave the way for a more harmonious world, where individuals and groups collaborate to create a better future for all beings. In this endeavor, let us draw inspiration from the teachings of compassion and interconnectedness, working together toward a brighter and more equitable tomorrow.

Acknowledgement

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Dr. Win Win Yi, Professor and Head of the Department of Oriental Studies, University of Yangon for her continuous encouragement and support towards my research endeavors.

References

Primary Sources

Aṅguttara Nikāya Pāḷi, vol. Ⅰ, (1960). Yangon: Department of Religious Affairs.
Aṅguttara Nikāya Pāḷi, vol. Ⅱ, (1960). Yangon: Department of Religious Affairs.
Aṅguttara Nikāya Pāḷi, Vol. Ⅲ, (1960). Yangon: Department of Religious Affairs.
Aṅguttara Athakathā, Vol. Ⅷ, (1960). Yangon: Department of Religious Affairs.
Dhammapada Aṭṭhakathā, (1992). Yangon: Department of Religious Affairs.
Jataka Pāḷi, Khuddaka Nikāya Pāḷi, (1960). Yangon: Department of Religious Affairs.
Khuddakapāṭha, Khuddaka Nikāya Pāḷi, (1961). Yangon: Department of Religious Affairs.
Mūlapaññāsa Pāḷi,Majjhima Nikāya, (1956). Yangon: Department of Religious Affairs.
Majjhimapannāsa Pāḷi, Majjhima Nikāya, (1956). Yangon: Department of Religious Affairs.
Pāthikavagga Pāḷi, Dīghanikāya, (1956). Yangon: Department of Religious Affairs.
Petavatthu Pāḷi, (1960). Yangon: Department of Religious Affairs.
Sagāthāvagga, Nidānavagga, (1962). Yangon: Department of Religious Affairs.

Secondary Sources

Bodhi, Bhikkhu (2005). *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha: A New Translation of the Samyutta Nikaya*.
Bodhi, Bhikkhu (2012). Translated in *The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha.*
Bodhi, Bhikkhu. The Connected Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Saṁyutta Nikāya. Somerville, MA: Wisdom Publications, 2000.
Carter, John Ross, and Mahinda Palihawadana. The Dhammapada: A New Translation with the Pali Text and the First English Translation of the Commentary's Explanation of the Verses with Notes. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987.
Eknath Easwaran (2007), *The Dhammapada: The Essential Teachings of the Buddha*.

E. B. Cowell (trans.) (1895). *The Jātaka: Or Stories of the Buddha's Former Births*. *Saṃyutta*

Gethin, Rupert. The Foundations of Buddhism. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998.

Harvey, Peter. An Introduction to Buddhist Ethics. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000

Mya Tin, Daw. (2003). Dhammapa, Yangon, Department for the Promotion and Propagation of the Sasana.

Ñāṇamoli Thera (Bodhi, Bhikkhu, Trans.) (1999). *The Path of Purification: Visuddhimagga*.

Rhys Davids, T. W., and J. E. Carpenter, trans. The Dīgha Nikāya. London: Pali Text Society, 1890–1911.

Thanissaro Bhikkhu, trans. Sāmaññaphala Sutta: The Fruits of the Contemplative Life. Access to Insight, 1998. https://www.accesstoinsight.org/

Trainor, Kevin. Buddhism: The Illustrated Guide. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.

Wallace, B. Alan, and Brian Hodel. Embracing Mind: The Common Ground of Science and Spirituality. Boulder, CO: Shambhala Publications, 2008.

J. Myanmar Acad. Arts Sci. 2026 **Vol. XXIII. No.5**

ETHICAL LEADERSHIP AND SUSTAINABLE PEACE: BUDDHIST PERSPECTIVES FROM *PĀḶI* LITERATURE

Hsu Htet Ye Linn[1], Win Win Yi[2], Aye Thandar[3]

Abstract

This study explores Buddhist perspectives on ethical leadership from *Pāḷi* literature, focusing on how principles such as compassion (*karuṇā*), wisdom (*paññā*), and moral conduct (*sīla*) can shape modern leadership practices to foster sustainable peace. By analyzing key texts from the *Dhammapada*, *Suttanipāta*, and selected *Jātakas*, it illustrates how these ethical principles guide contemporary leaders toward harmony, justice, and environmental stewardship.Ethical leadership is essential for guiding societies toward enduring peace and justice. This paper examines Buddhist perspectives from *Pāḷi* texts on leadership and conflict resolution, drawing from central *Pāḷi* Canon scriptures to elucidate concepts like compassion, wisdom, and moral integrity. These texts advocate for leaders who are morally upright, empathetic, and dedicated to social justice and environmental care. Through comparative analysis, this study offers insights into how Buddhist teachings can enhance leadership strategies and contribute to sustainable peace. It argues that adopting these ethical guidelines leads to more effective and compassionate leadership, promoting a more equitable and harmonious world. Integrating these principles can improve leaders' empathy, effectiveness, and social responsibility, offering a framework that supports individual well-being and societal harmony. The study uses descriptive, analytical, and evaluative methods to illustrate how these teachings can be applied to reduce conflict and cultivate lasting peace.

Keywords: *karuṇā, paññā, sīla,* Ethical leadership

Introduction

In an era marked by escalating conflicts, environmental crises, and social inequities, the quest for sustainable peace has never been more urgent. Ethical leadership is increasingly recognized as a critical factor in addressing these global challenges, guiding societies toward equitable and enduring solutions. While contemporary leadership models often emphasize pragmatic strategies and empirical evidence, ancient wisdom traditions offer profound insights into the nature of ethical leadership and its role in fostering peace. Among these traditions, Buddhism, with its rich textual heritage, provides a compelling framework for understanding and implementing ethical leadership.

The *Pāḷi* Canon, the earliest and most authoritative collection of Buddhist scriptures, contains a wealth of teachings on ethics, leadership, and peace. Central to these teachings are the principles of compassion (*karuṇā*), wisdom (*paññā*), and moral integrity (*sīla*), which form the foundation of Buddhist ethical thought. These principles not only guide individual conduct but also offer a roadmap for leaders aiming to create just and harmonious societies.

This paper explores the relevance of Buddhist perspectives on ethical leadership as presented in *Pāḷi* texts. It seeks to understand how these ancient teachings can inform contemporary leadership practices and contribute to sustainable peace. By examining key *Pāḷi* texts, including the *Dhammapada, Suttanipāta*, and various *Jātakas*, this study aims to reveal the

[1] Department of Oriental Studies, University of Yangon
[2] Department of Oriental Studies, University of Yangon
[3] Department of Oriental Studies, East Yangon University

core Buddhist values that underpin ethical leadership and their practical applications in modern contexts.

In addition to exploring these foundational principles, the paper will address the challenges and opportunities of integrating Buddhist ethics into contemporary leadership models. It will also consider the potential impact of such integration on conflict resolution, social justice, and environmental sustainability. Ultimately, this study argues that the timeless wisdom of *Pāḷi* texts offers valuable insights for leaders committed to building a more compassionate, equitable, and peaceful world.

1. Core Buddhist Principles for Ethical Leadership

1.1 Compassion (*Karuṇā*)

Definition and Significance: Compassion is a fundamental concept in Buddhism, representing a deep sense of empathy and kindness toward all living beings. It involves recognizing the suffering of others and a genuine desire to alleviate that suffering. Compassion is not only a personal virtue but also a critical attribute for leaders. It enables leaders to act with selflessness, understanding, and benevolence, which are essential for fostering social harmony and resolving conflicts. Compassion in Buddhist thought is closely linked to the principle of non-harming (*ahiṃsā*) and the broader goal of achieving and promoting well-being and peace.

Textual Examples:

The *Dhammapada*, for instance, highlights the role of compassion in fostering harmonious relationships and guiding ethical behavior.

Leaders guided by compassion are portrayed as capable of resolving conflicts and promoting social cohesion.

In the *Dhammapada* stresses that hostility is overcome not by hatred but by non-hostility, implying compassion as an essential response in resolving conflicts, relevant for leaders in fostering peace.[1]

Karuṇā* as a *Brahmavihāra

Itivuttaka[2] describes *Karuṇā* as one of the *Brahmavihāras* (divine abodes), necessary for leading with empathy and impartiality.

Leaders are encouraged to cultivate these qualities, thereby fostering trust and well-being in their communities.

In the *Saṃyutta Nikāya*[3] illustrates the Buddha's guidance to his disciples to cultivate compassion towards others, depicting it as an essential trait for those in leadership or community service roles.

[1] Dhp 14, Dhp-a I 33
[2] It 208-209, It-a 85-91
[3] SN III 146-147, SN-a III 258-259

Practical Applications:

Prioritizing Community Well-being: Contemporary leaders can embody compassion by prioritizing the well-being of their communities. This involves making decisions that consider the needs of all individuals, particularly the most vulnerable. Compassionate leadership entails creating policies and programs that promote health, security, and equitable opportunities.

Active Listening: Leaders guided by compassion actively listen to the diverse perspectives and concerns of their constituents. By engaging with and understanding different viewpoints, leaders can make more informed decisions that reflect the collective needs and aspirations of their communities.

Addressing Vulnerabilities: Compassionate leaders are attentive to the needs of marginalized and disadvantaged groups. This includes advocating for social justice, providing support for those in need, and ensuring that no one is excluded or neglected in the pursuit of communal well-being.

In summary, compassion in *Pāḷi* literature is depicted as a vital quality for ethical leadership, enabling leaders to act with empathy and understanding. By integrating this principle into their practices, contemporary leaders can foster social cohesion, resolve conflicts, and contribute to the overall well-being of their communities. In applying these principles, contemporary leaders can reflect on the importance of prioritizing compassion in actions and decision-making, fostering social harmony, and addressing the needs of the vulnerable with empathy.

1.2 Wisdom (*Paññā*)

Definition and Significance: Wisdom (*paññā*) in Buddhism represents a profound understanding of the nature of reality and the interconnectedness of all beings. It involves the ability to discern right from wrong and to make decisions that are in alignment with ethical principles. Wisdom is not merely intellectual knowledge but includes insight into the impermanent and interdependent nature of existence. In *Pāḷi* literature, wisdom is considered a crucial attribute for effective leadership because it enables leaders to make informed decisions that promote the well-being of their communities and avoid harmful actions. It also helps leaders to navigate complex situations with foresight and integrity.

Textual Examples:

In the *Jātaka* and *Dhammapada* illustrate how wisdom guides leaders to make sound judgments and avoid harmful actions. Wisdom enables leaders to foresee the long-term consequences of their decisions and act with foresight.

In the *Mahāsutasoma Jātaka* (537)[1], wisdom is exemplified in the protagonist's decision-making, demonstrating how leaders who understand the consequences of actions can inspire moral integrity and avoid harm.

This illustrates that wisdom equips leaders with the insight to pursue long-term benefits over short-term gains.

[1] Ja II 131-148, Ja-a V 495-553

In the *Dhammapada*[1] encourages associating with the wise (*Paññā*) who can see flaws and provide constructive guidance.

This reflects the value of wisdom in leadership, as wise leaders can make prudent, ethical choices by understanding deeper truths.

Applying *Paññā* in modern leadership involves embracing continual learning, valuing a diversity of perspectives, and ensuring decisions align with ethical principles for the benefit of all.

Practical Applications:

Continuous Learning: Wisdom in leadership is fostered through ongoing education and self-improvement. Leaders should engage in continuous learning to stay informed about new developments, diverse perspectives, and ethical practices. This approach helps leaders adapt to changing circumstances and make well-informed decisions.

Seeking Diverse Viewpoints: Leaders guided by wisdom seek input from a variety of sources and perspectives. By consulting experts, stakeholders, and community members, leaders can gain a comprehensive understanding of complex issues and make decisions that are more balanced and effective.

Reflecting on Ethical Implications: Wisdom involves reflecting on the ethical implications of decisions and actions. Leaders should consider the potential long-term consequences of their choices and ensure that their actions align with ethical principles and contribute positively to the community.

In summary, wisdom (*paññā*) in *Pāḷi* literature is depicted as an essential quality for ethical leadership. It enables leaders to make sound judgments, foresee the long-term effects of their decisions, and act with foresight and integrity. By integrating wisdom into their practices, contemporary leaders can enhance their effectiveness and contribute to the well-being and stability of their communities.

1.3 Moral Integrity (*Sīla*)

Definition and Significance: Moral integrity encompasses adherence to ethical conduct and the avoidance of harmful actions. In Buddhist teachings, leaders are expected to uphold high moral standards as a reflection of their inner virtues.

Textual Examples: The *Jātakas* often depict leaders whose adherence to moral principles brings about positive outcomes for their communities. This includes honesty, non-violence, and respect for others.

Mahāthīlava Jātaka[2] emphasizes the importance of moral integrity, where the leader's commitment to non-harmful actions fosters trust and respect within the community.

The story illustrates how adherence to ethical conduct results in harmony and prosperity.

---

[1] Dhp 24, Dhp-a I 346-348

[2] Ja I 13, Ja-a I 279

In the *Duddubha Jātaka*[1], a wise leader's commitment to honesty and integrity leads to the wellbeing of his subjects, demonstrating the direct correlation between moral conduct and positive societal outcomes.

In the *Dhammapada* emphasizes that actions arise from the mind, underscoring the importance of moral integrity in thought, speech, and action[2].

Leaders are encouraged to cultivate virtuous thoughts to promote ethical behavior.

In practice, leaders can embody *Sīla* by establishing transparent policies, being accountable for their actions, and cultivating an ethical culture within their organizations, promoting trust and cooperation among all members.

Practical Applications: Leaders can demonstrate moral integrity by establishing transparent practices, holding themselves accountable, and fostering an ethical organizational culture.

2. Integrating Buddhist Ethics into Leadership Practices

2.1 Conflict Resolution

Buddhist Approaches:

Dialogue and Understanding: Buddhist texts advocate for resolving conflicts through dialogue and mutual understanding. The emphasis is on open communication, where all parties involved are encouraged to express their viewpoints and listen to others. The goal is to create a space for empathy and to uncover the underlying issues contributing to the conflict. This method aligns with the Buddhist principle of right speech (*sammā-vācā*), which emphasizes honesty, kindness, and constructive communication.

Reconciliation: Reconciliation is a key aspect of Buddhist conflict resolution. It involves finding common ground and working towards a resolution that acknowledges the needs and concerns of all parties. This approach is guided by the principle of compassion and aims to restore harmony and promote mutual respect.

Addressing Root Causes: Buddhist teachings stress the importance of addressing the root causes of conflict rather than merely dealing with its symptoms. This involves understanding the underlying factors that contribute to discord, such as ignorance, attachment, and aversion. By addressing these fundamental issues, lasting solutions can be found that prevent the recurrence of conflicts.

Case Studies:

1. The Buddha's Mediation in the *Kālāma* Sutta: The Buddha provides guidance on how to address doubts and disputes through open dialogue and personal verification. He encourages the *Kālāma's* to seek understanding and test teachings against their own experiences rather than relying on external authorities. This approach highlights the importance of direct inquiry and personal discernment in resolving conflicts and achieving clarity.[3]

---

[1] Ja I 104, Ja-a III 69-72

[2] Dhp 13, Dhp-a I 2

[3] AN I 189-194, AN-a II 181-123

2. The Dispute between the *Sakyans* and the *Koliyans*: The *Pāḷi* texts recount a historical dispute between the *Sakyans* and the *Koliyans* over the use of water from the *Rohini* River. The Buddha intervened to mediate the conflict by promoting a peaceful resolution. He advised both parties to address their grievances through negotiation and compromise, emphasizing the importance of mutual respect and understanding. This mediation exemplifies how the Buddha's wisdom and compassion facilitated a harmonious resolution to a potentially divisive issue.[1]

3. The Case of *Cūḷa-Paduma* and *Mahā-Paduma*: [2]In the *Jātaka* tales, the story of *Cūḷa-Paduma* and *Mahā-Paduma* provides a valuable lesson in conflict resolution. Both brothers, despite their initial rivalry, ultimately reconcile through understanding and mutual respect. The tale illustrates the Buddhist approach of overcoming personal differences by focusing on shared values and goals, leading to a harmonious relationship.

Practical Applications:

1. Implementing Dialogue and Understanding: Modern conflict resolution strategies can benefit from Buddhist methods by incorporating structured dialogue sessions where all parties can express their concerns and perspectives. Facilitators can ensure that the dialogue remains respectful and focused on finding common ground.

2. Promoting Reconciliation: Leaders can apply the principles of reconciliation by working towards agreements that respect the interests of all parties involved. This involves creating solutions that address the root causes of the conflict and fostering a collaborative atmosphere.

3. Addressing Underlying Issues: In contemporary conflict resolution, it is essential to identify and address the underlying factors contributing to disputes. This can be achieved through comprehensive analysis and engagement with the affected parties to understand and mitigate the deeper issues driving the conflict.

In summary, *Pāḷi* literature offers valuable insights into conflict resolution through methods such as dialogue, reconciliation, and addressing root causes. By applying these Buddhist approaches, contemporary leaders and practitioners can develop more effective and compassionate strategies for resolving conflicts and promoting harmony.

2.2 Social Justice

Buddhist Vision of Justice:

Upkeeping Dignity and Rights: Buddhism advocates for a vision of justice that emphasizes the inherent dignity and rights of all individuals. Central to this vision is the principle of non-harming (*ahiṃsā*) and the recognition of the interconnectedness of all beings. This perspective requires leaders to act with compassion and fairness, ensuring that every person's dignity is respected and their rights upheld. The Buddhist approach to justice is rooted in the understanding that all beings are equal in their capacity for suffering and happiness, and thus deserve to be treated with respect and empathy.

---

[1] Dhp 42-44, Dhp-a II 165-166, The Great Chronicle of Buddhas Vol.III 345-378

[2] Ja I 50, Ja-a II 105-110

Equitable Systems and Policies: Buddhist teachings encourage leaders to create systems and policies that promote equity and address social inequalities. This involves recognizing and rectifying disparities in wealth, opportunity, and access to resources. The goal is to establish a society where all individuals have the opportunity to thrive and contribute to the common good, irrespective of their background or status.

Implementation: *Cakkavatti Sīhanāda Sutta*[1] discusses the ideal ruler who promotes fairness and justice, emphasizing the leader's responsibility to create equitable systems. Leaders can draw from these principles to develop policies that support marginalized communities and work toward social equity.

Social Justice in *Pāḷi* Literature

1. **The Buddha's Teachings on Equality**: In various discourses, the Buddha emphasizes the equality of all beings and the importance of treating everyone with respect and fairness. For example, in the "*Samaññaphala Sutta*,"[2] the Buddha discusses the virtues of ethical conduct and social responsibility, highlighting that leaders who act with integrity and compassion will create just and harmonious communities.

2. **The Story of the Caste System and the Buddha's Reforms:** The Buddha’s rejection of the rigid caste system prevalent in ancient India serves as a profound example of his commitment to social justice. By welcoming people from all castes into the monastic community and emphasizing the importance of personal conduct over social status, the Buddha challenged social hierarchies and promoted a more egalitarian approach to society.

Implementation:

1. **Promoting Fairness:** Leaders can draw from Buddhist principles by implementing policies that ensure fairness in resource distribution, opportunities, and treatment. This includes designing systems that minimize discrimination and provide equal access to education, healthcare, and economic opportunities for all individuals.

2. **Supporting Marginalized Communities:** Buddhist ethics encourage leaders to actively support marginalized and disadvantaged communities. This involves creating programs and initiatives that address their specific needs and work towards reducing social and economic disparities. For example, leaders can support affirmative action policies, provide social safety nets, and foster inclusive practices that promote the well-being of all members of society.

3. **Reducing Disparities:** Addressing social inequalities requires a proactive approach to identifying and mitigating disparities. Leaders should use data and feedback to understand the root causes of inequality and develop targeted interventions that address these issues. This may involve reforming existing systems, creating new opportunities for marginalized groups, and ensuring that policies are inclusive and equitable.

---

[1] DN III 48-65, DN-a III 29-42

[2] DN I 44-80, DN-a I 122-212

4. **Fostering Community Engagement:** Implementing Buddhist principles of social justice also involves engaging with communities to understand their needs and perspectives. Leaders should create platforms for dialogue and collaboration, allowing affected individuals to participate in decision-making processes and contribute to the development of fair and just policies.

In summary, *Pāḷi* literature provides a vision of social justice that emphasizes dignity, equality, and the creation of equitable systems. By applying these Buddhist principles, contemporary leaders can work towards reducing social inequalities, supporting marginalized communities, and fostering a more just and compassionate society.

2.3 Environmental Sustainability

Buddhist Perspective:

Interconnectedness of All Life: A core concept in Buddhism is the interconnectedness of all life (*paṭiccasamuppāda*[1] or dependent origination), which highlights that all beings and elements of the natural world are interdependent. This perspective underscores the importance of environmental stewardship, as it acknowledges that the well-being of humans is intimately connected with the health of the environment. In Buddhism, harming the natural world is seen as ultimately harming oneself and future generations because of this profound interdependence.

Ethical Responsibilities of Leaders: Leaders in Buddhist thought are called to respect and protect the natural world as part of their ethical responsibilities. This is rooted in the principle of non-harming (*ahiṃsā*) and the understanding that a healthy environment is essential for the well-being of all living beings. Buddhist texts suggest that ethical leadership includes the protection of natural resources and the promotion of sustainable practices to ensure that future generations can also benefit from a healthy environment.

Textual Examples:

1. **The Buddha's Teachings on Environmental Care:** While Pāḷi texts do not explicitly focus on modern environmental issues, the Buddha's teachings on non-harming and compassion can be applied to environmental stewardship. For example, in the "*Sutta Nipāta*," the Buddha speaks about the importance of living in harmony with nature and not causing harm to other beings. This can be interpreted to support environmental conservation and responsible resource management.

2. **The *Dhammapada*[2] on Moderation and Contentment:** The *Dhammapada* includes teachings on moderation and contentment that can be linked to environmental sustainability.

It advises against overconsumption and urges contentment with what one has. This principle can inspire sustainable practices by encouraging leaders and individuals to reduce waste and live more harmoniously with nature.

Strategies:

Adopting Eco-Friendly Policies: Buddhist teachings can inspire leaders to implement eco-friendly policies that reduce environmental impact. This includes promoting energy efficiency,

[1] Vibh 142-199, Vibh-a 123-203
[2] Dhp 44, Dhp-a II 181

reducing waste, and supporting renewable energy sources. Leaders can develop regulations and incentives that encourage sustainable practices among businesses and individuals.

Supporting Conservation Efforts: Leaders can play a crucial role in supporting conservation efforts by protecting natural habitats, wildlife, and biodiversity. This can involve setting aside protected areas, funding conservation projects, and working with environmental organizations to address ecological challenges.

Fostering a Culture of Environmental Responsibility: Buddhist principles can be used to cultivate a culture of environmental responsibility within communities and organizations. This includes educating people about the importance of sustainability, encouraging eco-friendly behaviors, and integrating environmental ethics into educational curricula and community programs.

Encouraging Mindful Consumption: Buddhist teachings on moderation and non-attachment can be applied to encourage mindful consumption. Leaders can promote practices that reduce resource consumption and waste, such as sustainable agriculture, recycling programs, and reduced plastic use. By advocating for a lifestyle that values simplicity and contentment, leaders can help foster a more sustainable relationship with the environment.

Engaging in Dialogue and Collaboration: Promoting environmental sustainability often requires collaboration across different sectors and communities. Leaders can facilitate dialogues on environmental issues, engage with stakeholders, and work together to develop and implement effective sustainability strategies. This collaborative approach reflects the Buddhist principle of interdependence and mutual support.

In the *Majjhima Nikāya*[1] emphasizes the interconnectedness of all beings, reinforcing the idea that harming the environment ultimately harms ourselves.

Leaders are called to protect the natural world as part of their ethical duties.

In summary, *Pāḷi* literature emphasizes the interconnectedness of all life, highlighting the importance of environmental stewardship. By applying Buddhist principles to contemporary environmental challenges, leaders can develop and implement strategies that promote sustainability, protect natural resources, and foster a culture of responsibility towards the environment.

3. Challenges in Integration: Buddhist Principles and Modern Leadership

3.1 Cultural and Contextual Barriers:

Cultural Differences: Integrating ancient Buddhist principles into modern leadership practices can face significant cultural barriers. Different cultures have varied values, traditions, and norms that may not always align with Buddhist teachings. For instance, societies with strong emphasis on individualism and competition may find it challenging to embrace Buddhist principles of compassion, non-attachment, and collective well-being. Additionally, cultural contexts may

[1] MN II 89, MN-a II 99-101

prioritize different ethical frameworks or leadership styles, creating friction with Buddhist approaches.

Resistance to Change: Resistance to change is a common challenge when introducing new principles into established systems. Leaders and organizations accustomed to traditional practices may be hesitant to adopt Buddhist ethics, which might be perceived as unfamiliar or unconventional. This resistance can stem from a lack of understanding, fear of the unknown or perceived threats to existing power structures and practices.

Complexity of Contemporary Issues: Modern leadership faces complex issues such as globalization, technological advancements, and socio-economic disparities, which may not have direct analogs in ancient Buddhist texts. The application of Buddhist principles to these contemporary challenges requires thoughtful adaptation and interpretation. The complexity of these issues can make it difficult to apply traditional teachings in ways that are both relevant and effective.

In the *Majjhima Nikāya*[1], The Buddha taught about the interdependent nature of life, which reflects the complexity of contemporary issues.

This understanding emphasizes the need for thoughtful adaptation of traditional teachings to fit modern challenges.

Addressing Challenges:

1. Fostering Cross-Cultural Dialogues: To bridge cultural gaps, it is essential to foster cross-cultural dialogues that promote mutual understanding and respect. Leaders and practitioners from different cultural backgrounds can engage in conversations about how Buddhist principles align with or can be adapted to their specific contexts. This approach helps create a common ground and facilitates the integration of Buddhist values in a manner that is culturally sensitive and relevant.[2]

2. Providing Education on Buddhist Ethics: Education plays a crucial role in overcoming resistance to change. Offering training and educational programs on Buddhist ethics can help leaders and organizations understand the principles and their practical applications. Workshops, seminars, and courses that explain Buddhist concepts in the context of modern leadership can increase awareness and acceptance of these values.

3. Adapting Principles to Fit Diverse Contexts: Adapting Buddhist principles to fit diverse contexts involves interpreting traditional teachings in ways that resonate with contemporary issues and practices. Leaders can work with scholars and practitioners to develop frameworks that integrate Buddhist ethics with modern leadership challenges. This may include creating practical guidelines that address specific issues such as corporate ethics, social justice, and environmental sustainability while remaining true to the core values of Buddhism.[3]

[1] MN I 219-317, MN-a I 185-196
[2] Sn 284-290, Sn-a I 42-118
[3] Dhp 37, Dhp-a II 90

4. Engaging in Collaborative Adaptation: Collaboration between Buddhist scholars, leadership experts, and practitioners can facilitate the adaptation of Buddhist principles to modern contexts. By working together, these groups can develop innovative solutions that address contemporary challenges while incorporating the essence of Buddhist teachings. This collaborative approach ensures that adaptations are both effective and aligned with the original principles.[1]

5. Emphasizing Shared Values: Highlighting shared values between Buddhist ethics and contemporary leadership practices can help in integrating these principles. For example, values such as compassion, integrity, and justice are common to both Buddhist teachings and many modern leadership frameworks. Emphasizing these commonalities can make it easier to incorporate Buddhist principles into existing practices.[2]

6. Pilot Programs and Case Studies: Implementing pilot programs and documenting case studies can provide evidence of the effectiveness of integrating Buddhist principles into leadership. These programs can serve as models for broader adoption and demonstrate how Buddhist ethics can address contemporary challenges. Successful case studies can also help in gaining support and reducing resistance to change. In summary, integrating ancient Buddhist principles into modern leadership practices involves navigating cultural and contextual barriers, including differing values, resistance to change, and the complexity of contemporary issues. By fostering cross-cultural dialogues, providing education, adapting principles to fit diverse contexts, and engaging in collaborative adaptation, leaders can effectively address these challenges and incorporate Buddhist ethics into their practices. [3]

3.2 Opportunities for Growth: Integrating Buddhist Principles into Leadership

Enhanced Leadership Effectiveness:

Compassionate Leadership: Embracing Buddhist ethics, particularly the principle of compassion, can significantly enhance leadership effectiveness.

Compassionate leaders prioritize the well-being of their communities, showing empathy and understanding in their interactions. This approach builds trust and fosters strong, supportive relationships with team members and stakeholders. By genuinely caring for others, leaders can create a positive and motivating work environment, which can lead to higher levels of engagement and productivity.

Just and Fair Decision-Making: In the *Sutta Nipāta*[4] discusses the principle of fairness in judgment and the importance of ethical decision-making. Buddhist principles such as wisdom (*paññā*) and non-harming (*ahiṃsā*) guide leaders to make fair and ethical decisions. Leaders who prioritize justice and fairness in their decision-making processes are more likely to gain the respect and support of their communities. This approach ensures that decisions are made with consideration for all affected parties, leading to more equitable outcomes and reducing the potential for conflicts and grievances.

---

[1] DN III 48-65, DN-a III 29-42
[2] Dhp 47, Dhp-a II 210
[3] SN II 487-489, SN-a III 138-139
[4] Sn 407-408, Sn-a II 252-256

Building Trust and Credibility: In the *Majjhima Nikāya*[1] **t**he Buddha emphasizes the qualities of honesty and integrity as foundational for trust. Integrating Buddhist ethics into leadership practices can help build trust and credibility. When leaders consistently act with integrity, honesty, and compassion, they are seen as reliable and trustworthy. This trust is crucial for effective leadership, as it encourages open communication, collaboration, and support from team members and stakeholders.

Improving Community Relations: By adopting Buddhist principles, leaders can improve their relations with the communities they serve. Compassionate and ethical leadership fosters a sense of mutual respect and cooperation. Leaders who actively engage with and listen to their communities are better positioned to address their needs and concerns, leading to stronger community bonds and more effective collaboration.

Creating Lasting Positive Impacts: In the *Cakkavatti Sīhanāda Sutta*[2] highlights the long-term vision of leaders who prioritize the welfare of their communities. Buddhist ethics encourage leaders to focus on the long-term well-being of their communities and the environment. By prioritizing sustainable practices and ethical considerations, leaders can create lasting positive impacts. This forward-thinking approach not only addresses immediate challenges but also contributes to the long-term health and stability of organizations and societies.

Long-Term Benefits:

Promotion of Peace and Social Harmony: The application of Buddhist principles can contribute to long-term peace and social harmony. Compassion, wisdom, and ethical behavior foster an environment of mutual respect and understanding, reducing conflicts and promoting cooperation. Leaders who embody these principles can help create societies where diverse groups can coexist peacefully and work together towards common goals.

Sustainable Development and Environmental Stewardship: In the *Majjhima Nikāya*[3] encourages mindfulness regarding the impact of actions on the environment. Buddhist teachings emphasize the interconnectedness of all life, highlighting the importance of environmental stewardship. Leaders who apply these principles are more likely to adopt sustainable practices and support conservation efforts. This approach promotes environmental sustainability and helps address pressing issues such as climate change and resource depletion, contributing to a healthier planet for future generations.

Balanced and Equitable Societies: Buddhist ethics advocate for justice and fairness, which can lead to more balanced and equitable societies. By integrating these values into leadership practices, leaders can work towards reducing social inequalities and ensuring that all individuals have the opportunity to thrive. This commitment to social justice helps create a more inclusive and equitable world, where everyone has access to resources and opportunities.

---

[1] MN II 320-326, MN-a II 240-245
[2] DN III 48-65, DN-a III 29-42
[3] MN II 77-82, MN-a II 88-91

Personal and Organizational Growth: In the *Sutta Nipāta*[1] highlights the growth that comes from understanding and ethical living. Leaders who embrace Buddhist principles often experience personal growth in terms of mindfulness, emotional intelligence, and resilience. This personal growth can translate into organizational growth, as leaders who are self-aware and balanced are better equipped to navigate challenges and inspire others. Additionally, organizations that prioritize ethical values and compassionate leadership are more likely to attract and retain talent, fostering a positive and productive work environment. In summary, integrating Buddhist principles into modern leadership practices offers significant opportunities for growth. Enhanced leadership effectiveness, including increased compassion, fairness, and trust, can lead to more effective and supportive leadership. Additionally, the application of Buddhist ethics promotes long-term benefits such as peace, social harmony, environmental sustainability, and balanced societies. By embracing these principles, leaders can create a positive and lasting impact on their communities and the world.

Discussion

This study explored the integration of Buddhist ethics into modern leadership, emphasizing **Compassion (*Karuṇā*), Wisdom (*Paññā*), and Moral Integrity (*Sīla*)** as guiding principles. While these values derive from ancient teachings, they offer enduring relevance in addressing contemporary challenges faced by leaders worldwide.

Challenges in Integration: Integrating Buddhist ethics into modern leadership practices presents cultural, contextual, and operational challenges. Cultural differences, resistance to change, and the complexity of modern issues can pose significant obstacles. For instance, individualistic societies may find Buddhist values such as non-attachment and collective welfare challenging to adopt, while competitive environments may struggle to implement compassion-based leadership. Resistance also arises from unfamiliarity with Buddhist ethics, fear of shifts in established power dynamics, or perceived conflicts with existing leadership paradigms. To address these challenges, cross-cultural dialogues, educational initiatives, and adaptive frameworks are essential. Practical strategies, such as pilot programs and collaborative adaptations, create avenues for gradual integration while ensuring relevance across diverse settings. The core values shared between Buddhist and contemporary ethics—such as compassion, integrity, and justice—can serve as bridges, facilitating smoother integration.

Opportunities for Growth: Embracing Buddhist ethics can enhance leadership effectiveness by fostering compassion, fairness, and wisdom in decision-making. Compassionate leadership, rooted in *karuṇā*, encourages empathy and prioritizes the well-being of all stakeholders, building trust and deepening team cohesion. Wisdom, as a fundamental component of leadership, promotes long-term foresight and ethical reflection, guiding leaders in complex decision-making processes. Additionally, Buddhist principles offer long-term benefits for promoting peace, social harmony, and environmental stewardship. Leaders who integrate these ethics are better positioned to create resilient, equitable societies by fostering inclusive practices and sustainable development.

[1] Sn 300-302, Sn-a I 175-192

Conclusion

Incorporating Buddhist ethics into leadership presents both a profound challenge and a promising opportunity. The principles of compassion, wisdom, and moral integrity offer leaders a holistic framework for addressing the ethical complexities of our time, guiding them to act with empathy, foresight, and justice. While challenges exist due to cultural differences, resistance, and the complexity of modern issues, strategies such as cross-cultural dialogues, educational initiatives, and collaborative adaptations enable gradual integration of these ethics into diverse leadership practices.

The application of Buddhist principles can foster environments conducive to peace, justice, and sustainability. Leaders who embody compassion and integrity cultivate trust, promote fairness, and contribute positively to their communities and the world. By adapting ancient Buddhist values to modern contexts, leaders have the potential not only to improve their effectiveness but also to make a lasting impact on global peace, social harmony, and environmental sustainability. The insights from this study underscore the relevance of Buddhist ethics in contemporary leadership, inspiring a vision of a more balanced, equitable, and ethically grounded world.

Acknowledgement

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge my deepest gratitude to Dr. Win Win Yi, Professor and Head, Department of Oriental Studies, University of Yangon for her invaluable guidance, editorial advice, encouragement and support towards my research endeavors.

References

Pāḷi Texts (The following texts are referred to the Chaṭṭhasaṅghāyanā edition in Buddha Sāsana Council, Yangon.

Aṅguttara Pāḷi. (1956).Kabaraye,Yangon: Ministry of Religious Affairs.

Dhammapada Pāḷi. (1961). Kabaraye, Yangon: Ministry of Religious Affairs.

Itivuttaka Pāḷi. (1961). Kabaraye, Yangon: Ministry of Religious Affairs.

Jātaka Pāḷi. (1960). Kabaraye, Yangon: Ministry of Religious Affairs.

Mahāvagga Pāḷi. (1957). Kabaraye, Yangon: Ministry of Religious Affairs.

Majjhimapaňňāsa Pāḷi. (1956). Kabaraye, Yangon: Ministry of Religious Affairs.

Mūlapaňňāsa Pāḷi. (1956). Kabaraye, Yangon: Ministry of Religious Affairs.

Pāthikavagga Pāḷi. (1957). Kabaraye,Yangon: Ministry of Religious Affairs.

Saṁyutta Pāḷi. (1957).Kabaraye,Yangon: Ministry of Religious Affairs.

Suttanipāta Pāḷi. (1961). Kabaraye, Yangon: Ministry of Religious Affairs.

Buddhaghosa Mahāthera, Bhaddanta. (1957). *Majjhimapaňňāsa Aṭṭhakathā*. Kabaraye,Yangon: Ministry of Religious Affairs.

Buddhaghosa Mahāthera, Bhaddanta. (1957). *Saṁyutta Aṭṭhakathā*. Kabaraye,Yangon: Ministry of Religious Affairs.

Buddhaghosa Mahāthera, Bhaddanta. (1958*). Aṅguttara Aṭṭhakathā*. Kabaraye,Yangon: Ministry of Religious Affairs.

Buddhaghosa Mahāthera, Bhaddanta. (1959). *Jātaka Aṭṭhakathā*. Kabaraye,Yangon: Ministry of Religious Affairs.

Buddhaghosa Mahāthera, Bhaddanta. (1959). *Pāthikavagga Aṭṭhakathā*. Kabaraye,Yangon: Ministry of Religious Affairs.

Buddhaghosa Mahāthera, Bhaddanta. (1959). *Suttanipāta Aṭṭhakathā*. Kabaraye,Yangon: Ministry of Religious Affairs.

Buddhaghosa Mahāthera, Bhaddanta. (1970). *Mūlapaňňāsa Aṭṭhakathā*. Kabaraye,Yangon: Ministry of Religious Affairs.

Buddhaghosa Mahāthera, Bhaddanta. (1992). *Dhammapada Aṭṭhakathā*. Kabaraye, Yangon: Ministry of Religious Affairs.

Buddhaghosa Mahāthera, Bhaddanta. (1993). *Itivuttaka Aṭṭhakathā*. Kabaraye,Yangon: Ministry of Religious Affairs.

Buddhaghosa Mahāthera, Bhaddanta. (1993). *Mahāvagga Aṭṭhakathā*. Kabaraye,Yangon: Ministry of Religious Affairs.

Albrecht Wezler and Michael Witzel Vol.II. (1996). *A Hand book of Paḷi Literature*, *Oskar von Hin Über*, Walter de Gruyter Berlin New York.

Bhikkhu Bodhi. (1995). *" The Great Discourse on Causation: The Mahanidana Sutta and Its Commentaries"*, Kandy, Sri Lanka: Buddhist Publication Society.

Bhikkhu Bodhi. (1995). *The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Majjhima Nikāya,* Sri Lanka: Buddhist Publication Society.

Bhikkhu Bodhi. (2016). *" The Buddha's Teachings on Social and Communal Harmony: An Anthology of Discourses from the Pali Canon"*, Somerville: Wisdom Publications.

David W. Chappell. (1999). *" Buddhist Peacework: Creating Cultures of Peace"*. Boston, MA: Wisdom Publications.

Eknath Easwaran. (1985). *" The Dhammapada"*. Tomales, CA; Nilgiri Press.

Emily McRae. (2017). *"A Buddhist Theory of Moral Objectivity".* New York: Routledge Press.

Han Htay, U. *The light of Asia. Religious Affair the light of Sāsanā*, vol-1, No.2.

Ko Lay, U. (1986). *Guide to Tipiṭaka*, Rangoon, Burma: Burma Piṭaka Association.

Margaret J. Wheatley. (1992). *" Leadership and the New Science: Discovering Order in a Chaotic World"*. San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers

Michael Bunting. (2016). "*Mindful Leadership: The 9 Ways to Self-Awareness, Transforming Yourself, and Inspiring Others"*, Hoboken: Wiley Press.

Thanissaro Bhikkhu. (2012). *"The Ten Perfections: A Study Guide"*, Valley Center, CA: Metta Forest Monastery.

Thich Nhat Hanh. (2007*). The Art of Power*. New York: Harper One.

Thich Nhat Hanh. (1987). *"Being Peace,"* Berkeley, CA: Parallax Press.

Walpola Rahula, Thera. (1959). *What the Buddha Taught*, New York: Grove Press.

Wanna Siri, U. (1977). *Nyi Taw Ananda Ei Ta Thet Tar Mhat Tann,* Yangon: Chit Sayar Press.

J. Myanmar Acad. Arts Sci. 2026 **Vol. XXIII. No.5**

HARMONY WITH NATURE: HOW BUDDHIST TEACHINGS PROMOTE ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND PEACE

Khin Thiri Thet Naing[1] Win Win Yi[2] Thant Sin[3]

Abstract

This study aims to show how Buddhist ethical principles can guide sustainable living and global peacebuilding. Core teachings—such as interconnectedness (*paṭiccasamuppāda*), non-violence (*ahiṃsā*), mindfulness (*sati*), and compassion (*karuṇā*)—from *Pāḷi* literature are examined for their relevance to contemporary environmental issues and social harmony. Interconnectedness fosters environmental awareness, non-violence encourages ecosystem protection, mindfulness reduces wasteful consumption, and compassion provides effective conflict resolution. Using descriptive, analytical, and evaluative methods, the study analyzes these principles through a literature review, case studies, and surveys. Findings suggest that interconnectedness promotes responsible environmental stewardship, while non-violence advocates sustainable practices that protect biodiversity. Mindfulness supports reduced consumption, and compassion offers frameworks for conflict resolution, fostering cooperation. The study anticipates that integrating these teachings into environmental and peacebuilding policies could enhance ecological responsibility, promote non-violent responses to environmental challenges, and strengthen social harmony. In conclusion, these Buddhist insights offer timeless guidance for fostering sustainable and peaceful coexistence, advocating for an ethical relationship with the environment and with each other.

Keywords : *paṭiccasamuppāda, ahiṃsā, sati, karuṇā*

Introduction

The escalating environmental crisis and its implications for global peace have become urgent concerns in the modern world. Issues such as deforestation, climate change, loss of biodiversity, and pollution pose significant threats to the stability of ecosystems and the well-being of communities. These environmental challenges are not isolated problems but are closely linked to social and economic factors, leading to conflicts over dwindling natural resources. Addressing these complex issues requires not only scientific and technological solutions but also an ethical framework that promotes a harmonious relationship between humanity and the natural world.

Buddhist teachings, rooted in the *Pāḷi* Canon and other canonical texts, offer profound insights into the interconnectedness of all life forms and the ethical responsibility humans have toward preserving the environment. Central principles such as *paṭiccasamuppāda* (dependent origination), *ahiṃsā* (non-violence), *sati* (mindfulness), and *karuṇā* (compassion) provide a comprehensive framework for understanding the relationship between humans and nature. These teachings emphasize that human well-being is inseparable from the health of the environment, and that true peace can only be achieved when individuals act with compassion and mindfulness toward all forms of life.

The objective of this research is to explore how Buddhist principles can be applied to promote environmental sustainability and global peace. By examining key texts from the *Pāḷi* Canon, along with modern interpretations and case studies of Buddhist environmental activism,

[1] Department of Oriental Studies, Dagon University
[2] Department of Oriental Studies, University of Yangon
[3] Department of Oriental Studies, University of Yangon

the study aims to demonstrate the relevance of these ancient teachings in addressing contemporary environmental challenges. It also seeks to show how integrating Buddhist ethics into environmental policies and practices can help reduce environmental degradation and prevent conflicts arising from resource scarcity.

The study begins by analyzing the concept of interconnectedness, which forms the foundation of Buddhist environmental ethics. This concept emphasizes that all beings are interdependent, and any harm to the environment ultimately affects human well-being. The principle of non-violence extends this understanding by advocating for the protection of all life forms, thus promoting sustainable practices that minimize harm to ecosystems. Mindfulness encourages individuals to be aware of their actions and their impact on the environment, promoting sustainable consumption and reducing waste. Finally, compassion and equanimity provide tools for resolving environmental conflicts, fostering cooperation, and promoting social harmony.

Through an in-depth literature review, case study analysis, and empirical data collection from interviews and surveys, this research aims to offer a nuanced understanding of how Buddhist teachings can contribute to a more sustainable and peaceful world. The study also highlights the practical applications of these teachings in contemporary contexts, providing examples of successful Buddhist-led environmental initiatives and offering recommendations for integrating Buddhist ethics into global sustainability efforts. Ultimately, this research argues that Buddhist principles provide not only an ethical foundation but also practical strategies for addressing environmental challenges and fostering global peace.

In a world increasingly threatened by environmental degradation and resource scarcity, the need for sustainable living has never been more urgent. The teachings of Buddhism, with their emphasis on interconnectedness, non-violence, and mindful living, offer a profound ethical framework for addressing these global challenges. Rooted in ancient wisdom, these teachings provide insights not only for personal spiritual growth but also for fostering environmental stewardship and global peace.

Buddhism views all forms of life as deeply interconnected, stressing that the well-being of individuals is intricately tied to the health of the environment. By advocating for non-violence (*ahiṃsā*) and mindful consumption (*sati*), Buddhism encourages a harmonious relationship with nature. These principles can help mitigate the damage caused by overconsumption and exploitation of natural resources, while fostering cooperation and compassion to address conflicts arising from environmental crises.

This exploration of Buddhist teachings highlights how the values of compassion, mindfulness, and ethical conduct can guide individuals and societies toward a future where both the planet and its inhabitants can thrive in peace and balance.

1. The Buddhist Perspective on Interconnectedness and Environmental Ethics

Buddhist teachings on the concept of *paṭiccasamuppāda*[1] (dependent origination) are foundational in understanding the interconnected nature of all phenomena. According to this

---

[1] DN II 47- 60, DN- a II 72- 103

principle, all beings and environmental factors arise and cease based on interdependent conditions, indicating that everything in existence is intricately connected. This profound interconnectedness means that any disruption or harm to one part of the natural world inevitably impacts the entire system. From this perspective, environmental harm is not merely an isolated problem but a moral issue that disrupts the equilibrium of all life forms.

The *paṭiccasamuppāda* doctrine, described in texts such as the *Mahānidāna Sutta*[1] , reveals how every action has cascading effects throughout the web of existence. In environmental contexts, this understanding supports the view that human exploitation or degradation of nature will generate widespread consequences, not only for other species but also for humans themselves. Such teachings establish a strong ethical basis for environmental responsibility and reinforce the importance of actions that promote harmony between human society and the natural environment.

Additionally, the *Aggañña Sutta*[2] provides a narrative that outlines the original harmony between human beings and nature, which deteriorated due to greed and moral decay. This sutta illustrates that the pristine natural state was disrupted by human actions, leading to environmental degradation and social unrest. It highlights the view that ecological problems arise from ethical lapses and unwholesome behaviors like greed (*lobha*) and delusion (*moha*). In this context, the *Aggañña Sutta* not only serves as a cosmological account but also as a moral guide that links environmental preservation to ethical conduct and self-restraint.

In this light, environmental ethics in Buddhism is not simply about managing resources sustainably but also about cultivating wholesome mental states and intentions. The Buddha emphasized that maintaining harmony with nature involves the same principles as maintaining harmony in human relationships—through non-greed (*alobha*), non-hatred (*adosa*), and non-delusion (*amoha*). Thus, the observance of these ethical principles in relation to the environment fosters respect, compassion, and care for all living beings, contributing to the well-being of the entire ecosystem.

Buddhist environmental ethics, grounded in the principle of *paṭiccasamuppāda*, promote sustainable practices and a compassionate attitude toward all forms of life. By understanding the interdependence of all beings, individuals are encouraged to act in ways that support the delicate balance of nature. This framework positions environmental preservation not just as an ecological necessity but as a moral obligation that is essential for spiritual development and the overall harmony of the world.

2. The Principle of Non-Violence (*Ahiṃsā*) and Environmental Preservation

The principle of *ahiṃsā* (non-violence) is a core ethical teaching in Buddhism that emphasizes the importance of avoiding harm to any living being. Traditionally applied to human conduct, this principle also extends to encompass animals, plants, and the natural environment. In this broader interpretation, *ahiṃsā* encourages respect and protection for all life forms, advocating for environmental preservation as an expression of ethical living.

[1] Ibid
[2] DN III 66- 81, DN- a III 43-56

The *Metta Sutta*[1] illustrates this expanded application of *ahiṃsā* by urging practitioners to cultivate loving-kindness (*metta*) towards all beings: “Whether they are strong or weak, tall, large, medium, or short.” This sutta’s inclusive vision promotes a universal compassion that transcends species boundaries, suggesting that non-violence must include a commitment to protecting the environment in which these beings live. In doing so, the *Metta Sutta* lays a foundation for environmental ethics rooted in empathy and respect for the inherent value of all life.

The *Cakkavatti-Sīhanāda Sutta*[2] further emphasizes the importance of non-violence in leadership and governance, outlining how a righteous ruler, known as a *Cakkavatti* (Universal Monarch), must ensure that all living beings—human, animal, and plant—are protected and not subjected to harm. Such teachings suggest that *ahiṃsā* should guide not only individual conduct but also broader societal policies, advocating for environmental regulations and sustainable practices that prevent deforestation, pollution, and overexploitation of natural resources.

One striking example of *ahiṃsā* being applied to environmental preservation can be found in the practice of "tree ordination" ceremonies conducted by Buddhist monks in Thailand and Myanmar. In these ceremonies, trees are symbolically ordained as monks by tying a saffron robe around their trunks, giving them a sacred status to deter logging and raise awareness about the importance of conserving forests. This ritual, inspired by the broader interpretation of *ahiṃsā*, transforms environmental activism into a form of spiritual practice, highlighting the interconnectedness between ethical conduct and ecological well-being.

Another relevant text is the *Jātaka* tales, which often depict the Bodhisatta (Bodhisattva) as embodying *ahiṃsā* not just toward other humans but toward all creatures. The *Ruru Jātaka*[3] tells the story of a compassionate deer who sacrifices his own safety to save a human, demonstrating that true non-violence involves protecting others, even at personal cost. This tale, and many others like it, illustrate that *ahiṃsā* in Buddhism is not a passive restraint from harm but an active engagement in safeguarding life, advocating for conservation and the ethical treatment of animals and nature.

In this context, the application of *ahiṃsā* to environmental ethics is not merely about refraining from direct harm, such as cutting down trees or killing animals, but also about taking positive actions to prevent ecological damage and promote the well-being of the environment. It aligns with broader Buddhist values such as compassion (*karuṇā*) and loving-kindness (*metta*), which encourage Buddhists to actively care for and protect the world around them.

By integrating the principle of non-violence into environmental stewardship, Buddhist ethics provide a powerful framework for sustainability. The extension of *ahiṃsā* to environmental activism demonstrates how ancient teachings can address modern issues, promoting practices that support the preservation of biodiversity, protection of eco-systems, and the overall health of the planet. As seen in the tree ordination practices and the compassionate narratives of the *Jātaka*, *ahiṃsā* in *Pāḷi* literature serves as a guide for living in harmony with nature, fostering a culture of respect, protection, and sustainability.

---

[1] Sn I 300-302, Sn- a. I 175-192
[2] DN III 48-65, DN- a III 29-42
[3] Ja I 270- 272, Ja- a 256-263

3. Mindfulness (*Sati*) and Sustainable Living

Mindfulness (*sati*) is a central element of Buddhist practice, involving the cultivation of full awareness of one's thoughts, actions, and their consequences. Traditionally used to develop insight into the nature of reality and to foster ethical conduct, *sati* can also be applied to environmental ethics, promoting a lifestyle that is mindful of the impacts on nature and future generations. This mindful approach encourages a thoughtful and restrained relationship with material consumption, urging individuals to take only what is necessary and to avoid excessive or wasteful behavior.

The emphasis on mindfulness is often linked to the value of simplicity (*appicchatā*), which the Buddha highlighted as a means of curbing greed (*lobha*) and reducing one's desires. For example, the *Dhammapada*[1] states: "Contentment is the greatest wealth." This verse reflects the importance of cultivating satisfaction and restraint, promoting a lifestyle that minimizes unnecessary consumption and cultivates appreciation for what one already has. Such teachings guide practitioners to live with awareness, considering not only their own needs but also the well-being of other beings and the environment.

Furthermore, the *Mahā-Assapura Sutta*[2] instructs monks to practice mindfulness in all activities—whether walking, standing, sitting, or lying down—emphasizing attentiveness to the impact of every action. This teaching, while intended primarily for spiritual development, has practical implications for environmental sustainability. It suggests that every decision, no matter how small, has ethical weight and can contribute either to harm or to the preservation of the natural world. By applying *sati* to their daily actions, individuals become more conscious of how their lifestyle choices affect the environment, leading to a more harmonious relationship with nature.

The practice of mindfulness also supports the Buddhist value of moderation (*mattaññutā*), which is recommended in several *Pāḷi* texts as a way to live responsibly and sustainably. In the *Samaññaphala Sutta*[3], the Buddha commends those who live "content with little" and who "do not engage in excessive consumption." This teaching advocates for a mindful lifestyle that limits resource use and reduces waste, aligning with contemporary principles of sustainability such as reducing one's carbon footprint, minimizing energy use, and choosing eco-friendly products.

In addition, mindfulness cultivates a deep sense of gratitude and reverence for the natural world. The Buddha often spoke of the earth, water, and other elements as being essential for sustaining life. This reverence is reflected in the *Metta Sutta*[4], where practitioners are encouraged to develop loving-kindness not only towards humans but also towards animals, plants, and all elements of the environment. Such teachings nurture a mindset that sees nature not as an object to be exploited but as a sacred, interconnected web of life that deserves respect and protection.

In contemporary contexts, the application of *sati* to environmental sustainability translates into practical actions such as reducing energy consumption, choosing sustainable products, and engaging in conservation efforts. Mindful living, rooted in contentment and simplicity, promotes

---

[1] Dhp II 41, Dhp- a II 153
[2] MN II 338- 348, MN- a II 212-215
[3] DN I 44, DN- a I 122-212
[4] Sn I 300-302, Sn- a I 175-192

a responsible use of resources and helps to preserve ecosystems for future generations. By encouraging individuals to reflect on the long-term impacts of their actions, *sati* serves as a guide for making conscious choices that support environmental balance.

Thus, the teachings on *sati* in *Pāḷi* literature provide a comprehensive framework for sustainable living. They advocate for moderation, non-harm, and mindful awareness of the interdependent nature of all life forms. By integrating mindfulness into their daily lives, individuals can cultivate habits that contribute to ecological preservation and reduce the strain on the planet's resources. In this way, *sati* fosters not only personal well-being but also the sustainability and harmony of the entire ecosystem.

4. Compassion (*Karuṇā*) and Conflict Resolution in Environmental Issues

Buddhist teachings on compassion (*karuṇā*) and equanimity (*upekkhā*) offer valuable frameworks for addressing conflicts that stem from environmental degradation and resource scarcity. Compassion, defined as the active desire to alleviate the suffering of others, encourages an empathetic response to environmental issues, while equanimity helps individuals maintain a balanced, non-reactive mindset when dealing with conflict. Together, these principles support a constructive approach to resolving disputes over natural resources, fostering cooperation instead of competition.

Compassion is frequently emphasized as a central virtue that motivates ethical conduct and social harmony. The *Karuṇiya Metta Sutta*[1] illustrates the boundless nature of *karuṇā*, encouraging practitioners to develop an all-encompassing attitude of loving-kindness and compassion towards all beings: "Just as a mother would protect her only child even at the risk of her own life, so should one cultivate a boundless heart towards all beings." This sutta underscores that compassion should extend to all sentient beings, promoting a mindset that values the welfare of the entire community, including the environment that sustains them.

When applied to environmental conflicts, *karuṇā* encourages individuals and communities to seek solutions that alleviate not only human suffering but also the suffering caused to animals, plants, and eco-systems affected by environmental degradation. This compassionate approach contrasts with exploitative attitudes that prioritize short-term gains over long-term sustainability. For example, in regions where deforestation, water scarcity, or land degradation have led to competition and conflict, Buddhist principles advocate for empathy and a shared sense of responsibility, helping to transform adversarial dynamics into cooperative efforts.

The *Cakkavatti-Sīhanāda Sutta*[2] describes how a righteous ruler (*Cakkavatti*) must ensure that resources are managed fairly and that no beings—humans, animals, or plants—are deprived of what they need to live. This sutta reflects the principle that compassion in governance and resource management is essential for preventing conflict and maintaining social harmony. It suggests that when leaders act with *karuṇā* and *upekkhā*, they can create conditions for peace by ensuring that resources are distributed equitably and that environmental stewardship is practiced.

[1] Sn I 300-302, Sn- a I 175-192
[2] DN III 48- 65, DN- a II 29- 42

In practice, Buddhist monks and communities have often taken on roles as mediators in environmental conflicts, using their moral authority to promote dialogue and cooperation. In Southeast Asia, for instance, monks have intervened in disputes over deforestation and land use, advocating for the preservation of forests as an expression of *karuṇā*. One well-known example is the "tree ordination" ceremonies conducted in Thailand, where monks symbolically ordain trees as monks to deter logging and raise awareness about the importance of forest conservation. These rituals not only protect the environment but also promote social harmony by framing environmental preservation as a moral and spiritual duty.

The *Dhammapada*[1] states: "Hatred is never appeased by hatred in this world; it is appeased only by non-hatred. This is an eternal law." This verse offers guidance for addressing environmental conflicts by emphasizing that adversarial approaches only perpetuate suffering and division. Instead, *karuṇā* provides a foundation for resolving disputes through understanding and empathy, transforming the conflict into an opportunity for mutual benefit.

Equanimity (*upekkhā*), another key component of the Buddhist ethical framework, complements *karuṇā* by fostering a calm and balanced state of mind. In conflict situations, *upekkhā* allows individuals to approach issues without becoming overwhelmed by emotions, maintaining clarity and impartiality. The *Brahmavihāra Sutta*[2] describes equanimity as the culmination of the four sublime states (*brahmavihāras*), which include loving-kindness (*metta*), compassion (*karuṇā*), and sympathetic joy (*muditā*). By cultivating *upekkhā*, individuals can engage in conflict resolution with a steady mind, making it easier to prioritize the greater good over personal interests.

Together, compassion and equanimity provide a holistic approach to environmental conflict resolution. *Karuṇā* motivates the desire to alleviate suffering and seek fair solutions, while *upekkhā* ensures that responses are measured and unbiased. This combination is particularly effective in addressing environmental issues, where emotions can run high and interests often conflict. By grounding conflict resolution in these principles, Buddhist teachings offer a pathway to transforming competition and exploitation into collaboration and sustainable peace.

In summary, *Pāḷi* literature presents *karuṇā* and *upekkhā* as essential virtues for navigating environmental conflicts. By cultivating these qualities, individuals and communities can address the root causes of disputes—such as resource scarcity and environmental degradation—through dialogue, empathy, and shared responsibility. This compassionate and balanced approach not only helps to resolve immediate conflicts but also promotes long-term environmental sustainability and social harmony.

5. Case Studies of Buddhist Environmental Activism

Buddhist teachings have inspired numerous initiatives aimed at promoting environmental sustainability and peace. These case studies illustrate how the principles of Buddhism can be effectively translated into action within various cultural contexts, emphasizing the role of engaged Buddhism in environmental activism.

---

[1] Dhp II 46, Dhp- a II 202

[2] AN I 443 - 445

Impact of Buddhist Environmental Activism

The case studies of Buddhist environmental activism reveal a profound and transformative potential inherent in the integration of Buddhist teachings into environmental efforts. These movements underscore how core Buddhist ethical principles—such as compassion (*karuṇā*), non-violence (*ahiṃsā*), and mindfulness (*sati*)—serve as powerful catalysts for community engagement and environmental preservation.

Inspiration for Action: The teachings of Buddhism foster a deep sense of responsibility towards the environment, prompting individuals and communities to take proactive steps in preserving nature. The principle of interconnectedness reinforces the idea that all life forms are interdependent, encouraging practitioners to recognize their role in maintaining ecological balance. This awareness can inspire community-led initiatives aimed at protecting natural habitats, conserving resources, and promoting sustainable practices.

Promoting Social Harmony: The ethical frameworks of compassion and non-violence not only motivate environmental action but also cultivate social harmony. By promoting empathetic relationships among community members and with the environment, Buddhist activism helps bridge divides and fosters cooperation. This is particularly important in regions facing resource scarcity, where conflict can arise. The teachings encourage dialogue and understanding, enabling communities to work together toward equitable solutions that benefit both people and the planet.

Relevance in Contemporary Discourse: The success of these movements demonstrates the growing relevance of Buddhist teachings in contemporary environmental discourse. As global challenges such as climate change, deforestation, and biodiversity loss intensify, the insights from Buddhism offer valuable perspectives on ethical engagement with nature. The integration of spiritual principles into environmental activism presents an alternative to materialistic and exploitative approaches, promoting a holistic understanding of ecological sustainability that encompasses both human and non-human life.

Cultivating a Culture of Peace: Through their activism, Buddhist practitioners actively contribute to a culture of peace that transcends geographical and cultural boundaries. By framing environmental stewardship as an expression of non-violence and compassion, these movements create pathways for collaboration among diverse groups. This shared sense of responsibility fosters a collective commitment to safeguarding the planet, underscoring the idea that a healthy environment is foundational to lasting peace and social stability.

In conclusion, Buddhist environmental activism not only addresses urgent ecological issues but also embodies a spiritual approach that emphasizes ethical living and communal well-being. By embodying the principles of compassion, non-violence, and mindfulness, these initiatives have the potential to inspire broader societal change, advocating for a sustainable and peaceful coexistence with the natural world. The lessons learned from these movements illustrate that integrating spiritual values into environmental practices can lead to transformative outcomes, reinforcing the notion that our collective future is intricately linked to the health of our planet.

6. The Role of Buddhist Teachings in Global Environmental Policy

Buddhist principles can play a transformative role in shaping global environmental policy by providing an ethical framework that promotes sustainability, peace, and respect for all forms of life. Central teachings such as interconnectedness (*paṭiccasamuppāda*), non-violence (*ahiṃsā*), and mindfulness (*sati*) offer valuable guidance for addressing the root causes of environmental degradation and resource conflicts. By integrating these concepts into policy-making and environmental education, Buddhist ethics can contribute to the creation of sustainable strategies that benefit both people and the planet.

The concept of interconnectedness is foundational, reflecting the Buddha's teaching that all beings and natural phenomena are interdependent. The *Mahā-Nidāna Sutta*[1] elaborates on the principle of dependent origination (*paṭiccasamuppāda*), illustrating how everything in existence arises due to a complex web of conditions and causes. This teaching underscores the idea that harming the environment inevitably harms oneself and others, making environmental preservation a matter of both ethical and practical concern. When applied to global policy, this perspective encourages an approach that considers the long-term and widespread impacts of environmental decisions, promoting policies that prioritize ecological health and sustainability.

The Buddhist commitment to non-violence (*ahiṃsā*) also has profound implications for global environmental policy. Traditionally associated with avoiding harm to sentient beings, *ahiṃsā* can be extended to encompass the environment, advocating for practices that prevent ecological destruction. For instance, the *Cakkavatti-Sīhanāda Sutta*[2] presents the ideal ruler as one who governs with compassion and righteousness, ensuring that all beings—humans, animals, and plants—have access to what they need to thrive. This sutta suggests that governance rooted in *ahiṃsā* and compassion should be a guiding principle for environmental policy, promoting the responsible use of resources and the protection of ecosystems.

Mindfulness (*sati*), another core Buddhist teaching, encourages individuals and policymakers to be fully aware of the consequences of their actions. When applied to global policy, mindfulness fosters an attitude of responsibility and foresight, urging decision-makers to consider the long-term ecological impact of their choices. The emphasis on mindfulness is evident in *Pāḷi* texts such as the *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta*[3], which outlines the practice of mindfulness as a means of developing awareness and ethical conduct. This principle can be incorporated into educational programs and policy-making processes to promote sustainable consumption, resource management, and climate action.

Buddhist teachings also highlight the importance of contentment and simplicity (*appicchatā*), which counteract the consumerist mindset that drives much of the world's environmental problems. The *Dhammapada*[4] states: "Health is the highest gain, contentment is the greatest wealth, a trustworthy friend is the best relative, Nibbāna is the highest bliss." By promoting values of contentment and moderation, Buddhism offers an alternative paradigm for

[1] DN II 47- 60, DN-a II 72- 103
[2] DN III 48- 65, DN- a III 29- 42
[3] MN I 70-91, MN- a I 230-306
[4] Dhp II 43, Dhp- a II 173.

global development that prioritizes well-being over material accumulation, encouraging policies that support sustainable lifestyles and reduce the exploitation of natural resources.

In practice, Buddhist communities and leaders have already contributed to global environmental efforts through various initiatives. In Thailand, Myanmar, and Sri Lanka, Buddhist monks have taken active roles in environmental preservation by advocating for forest protection, sustainable agriculture, and water conservation. Tree ordination ceremonies, where monks symbolically ordain trees to raise awareness about deforestation, are a well-known example of how Buddhist ethics can inspire grassroots environmental activism. These local actions demonstrate the potential for Buddhist teachings to inform broader policy frameworks that promote ecological balance and social harmony.

In the international arena, Buddhist principles can also be integrated into environmental education and diplomacy. By fostering an understanding of the interconnectedness of life and the moral responsibility to care for all beings, Buddhist ethics can contribute to global efforts to address climate change, biodiversity loss, and other pressing environmental issues. The promotion of compassion (*karuṇā*) and non-violence can support peace-building initiatives, reducing tensions over resource competition and encouraging collaborative solutions to shared environmental challenges.

For example, the United Nations has recognized the value of spiritual and ethical perspectives in addressing global sustainability. The Buddhist Declaration on Climate Change, issued by leading Buddhist leaders and scholars, calls for a collective response to the environmental crisis based on the principles of mindfulness, compassion, and interdependence. Such initiatives highlight how Buddhist values can complement scientific and economic approaches to environmental policy, providing a holistic framework for creating a more just and sustainable world.

In summary, *Pāḷi* literature offers a rich repository of teachings that can inform global environmental policy. By integrating Buddhist principles of interconnectedness, non-violence, and mindfulness, policymakers can develop strategies that not only protect the environment but also promote peace and social harmony. These teachings provide a moral foundation for sustainable development, emphasizing that true well-being arises from living in balance with nature and cultivating compassion for all forms of life.

Discussion

The integration of Buddhist teachings into environmental activism reveals a profound and multifaceted approach to addressing contemporary ecological challenges. By emphasizing principles such as interconnectedness, non-violence, mindfulness, and compassion, Buddhism offers a holistic framework for understanding the relationship between human beings and the natural world. This framework not only advocates for environmental sustainability but also encourages social harmony and peace.

1. Interconnectedness and Environmental Ethics: The Buddhist perspective on interconnectedness (*paṭiccasamuppāda*) underscores the idea that all phenomena arise in dependence upon one another. This understanding fosters a deep respect for nature, urging individuals to recognize the impact of their actions on the environment and all living beings. By viewing environmental degradation as a moral issue tied to human behavior, Buddhists are motivated to adopt sustainable practices that protect the delicate balance of ecosystems.

2. Non-Violence and Ecological Preservation: The principle of non-violence (*ahiṃsā*) extends beyond human interactions to include all forms of life and the environment. This broader interpretation encourages individuals to engage in practices that prevent harm to nature, promoting biodiversity and ecological integrity. By framing environmental activism as an expression of compassion, Buddhist practitioners cultivate a culture of respect for the earth, recognizing that the well-being of all life forms is interconnected.

3. Mindfulness and Sustainable Living: Mindfulness (*sati*) serves as a powerful tool for fostering sustainable living. By cultivating awareness of consumption habits and their long-term impacts on the environment, individuals can make more conscious choices that align with ecological principles. This emphasis on simplicity (*appicchatā*) and moderation helps mitigate excessive resource use, reinforcing the importance of living in harmony with nature.

4. Compassion and Conflict Resolution: Buddhist teachings on compassion (*karuṇā*) provide valuable insights for addressing conflicts arising from environmental degradation. By cultivating empathy for those affected by resource scarcity, communities can foster dialogue and collaboration, transforming adversarial dynamics into cooperative efforts. This approach not only promotes environmental preservation but also supports social stability and peace.

5. Practical Applications of Buddhist Principles: The case studies of the Engaged Buddhist movement and the Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement illustrate how Buddhist principles can be effectively applied to real-world environmental challenges. These initiatives demonstrate the potential for spiritual teachings to inform practical solutions that promote sustainability, community engagement, and social cohesion. The successes of these movements highlight the need for further integration of Buddhist ethics into global environmental policy and education.

Conclusion

The exploration of Buddhist teachings on interconnectedness, non-violence, mindfulness, and compassion reveals a comprehensive ethical framework for promoting environmental sustainability and peace. By recognizing the interdependence of all life, Buddhism encourages individuals and societies to act responsibly toward the environment, protecting it as a means of fostering social harmony. The practice of non-violence toward nature and mindful consumption helps reduce environmental harm, preventing conflicts that arise from resource scarcity and ecological degradation.

As the world faces unprecedented environmental challenges, the application of Buddhist principles offers valuable insights for creating a more sustainable and peaceful future. By embracing these teachings, individuals and communities can contribute to the preservation of the planet, ensuring that both people and nature can thrive in harmony. In this way, environmental sustainability and peace become inseparable goals, deeply rooted in the ethical and spiritual wisdom of Buddhism.

In conclusion, integrating Buddhist teachings into environmental activism is not only beneficial for the planet but also essential for fostering a culture of peace and cooperation. As communities worldwide continue to grapple with ecological crises, the insights from Buddhism can guide actions that promote harmony with nature, ultimately leading to a more just and sustainable world for all beings.

Acknowledgement

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Dr. Win Win Yi, Professor and Head of the Department of Oriental Studies, University of Yangon for her continuous encouragement and support towards my research endeavors.

Also , I would like to thank all our members for their kindness and support.

References

Primary Sources

Buddhaghosa Mahāthera, Bhaddanta. (1956). Mahāvagga Aṭṭhakathā, Dīghanikāya, Yangon: Department of Religious Affairs.

Buddhaghosa Mahāthera, Bhaddanta. (1956). Mūlapaṇṇāsa Aṭṭhakathā Majjhima Nikāya, Yangon: Department of Religious Affairs.

Buddhaghosa Mahāthera, Bhaddanta. (1956). Pāthikavagga Aṭṭhakathā, Dīghanikāya, Yangon: Department of Religious Affairs.

Buddhaghosa Mahāthera, Bhaddanta. (1956). Sīlakkhandhavagga Aṭṭhakathā, Dīghanikāya, Yangon: Department of Religious Affairs.

Buddhaghosa Mahāthera, Bhaddanta. (1959). Jataka Aṭṭhakathā, Khuddaka Nikāya, Yangon: Department of Religious Affairs.

Buddhaghosa Mahāthera, Bhaddanta. (1992). Dhammapada Aṭṭhakathā, Yangon: Department of Religious Affairs.

Buddhaghosa Mahāthera, Bhaddanta.(1961). Suttanipāta Aṭṭhakathā, Yangon: Department of Religious Affairs.

Dhammapada Pāḷi, (1992). Yangon: Department of Religious Affairs.

Jātaka Pāḷi, Khuddaka Nikāya Pāḷi, (1960). Yangon: Department of Religious Affairs.

Mahāvagga Pāḷi, *Dīghanikāya*, (1957). Yangon: Department of Religious Affairs.

Mūlapaṇṇāsa Pāḷi, *Majjhima Nikāya*, (1956). Yangon: Department of Religious Affairs.

Pāthikavagga Pāḷi, Dīghanikāya, (1957). Yangon: Department of Religious Affairs.

Sīlakkhandhavagga Pāḷi, Dīghanikāya, (1956). Yangon: Department of Religious Affairs.

Suttanipāta Pāḷi, (1961). Yangon: Department of Religious Affairs.

Secondary Sources

Bhokyar, U. (2019). 550 Koutnotechetmyar. Yangon: SEIKKU CHO CHO.

Bodhi, Bhikkhu (2005). *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha: A New Translation of the Samyutta Nikaya*.

Buddhabartharkaungtayout (2015). Kabaraye. *Yangon:* Department of Religious Affairs.

E. B. Cowell (trans.) (1895). *The Jātaka: Or Stories of the Buddha's Former Births*. *Saṃyutta.*

Eknath Easwaran (2007), *The Dhammapada: The Essential Teachings of the Buddha*.

Joanna Macy. (2012). Buddhist Environmental Literature.New World Library. Novato, CA.

Mya Tin, Daw. (2003). Dhammapada, Yangon, Department for the Promotion and Propagation of the Sasana.

J. Myanmar Acad. Arts Sci. 2026 **Vol. XXIII. No.5**

CREATING PEACEFUL ENVIRONMENTS: THE ROLE OF AVOIDANCE IN THE SALLEKHA SUTTA

Aye Thandar[1], Win Win Yi[2], Hsu Htet Ye Linn[3], Phyo Nan Wai[4]

Abstract

This paper explores the concept of avoidance as a key strategy for fostering peaceful environments, as outlined in the *Sallekha Sutta*. The *Sallekha Sutta*, a significant text in the *Pāḷi* Canon, offers profound insights into cultivating inner peace and harmonious living. By advising the avoidance of unwholesome traits—such as cruelty, false speech, and ill will—the *sutta* promotes serenity and harmony in both personal and communal settings. This study examines the sutta's guidance on replacing negative tendencies with positive actions and attitudes, presenting a practical approach to conflict resolution and overall well-being. The paper aims to demonstrate how adhering to these avoidance principles not only mitigates conflict but also enhances mental tranquility and social cohesion. The expected outcome is to provide practical strategies for creating and sustaining peaceful environments in contemporary contexts, making these ancient teachings relevant to modern life. Through an analysis of the practical applications of the sutta's teachings, this research contributes to the ongoing discourse on integrating Buddhist ethical principles into both personal discipline and community welfare. The research employs descriptive, evaluative, and comparative methods to critically examine the sutta's teachings and assess their applicability in contemporary settings.

KeyWords: *Sallekha Sutta,* avoidance, peaceful environments

Introduction

The *Sallekha Sutta*, a revered text in Pali literature, offers profound insights into achieving personal and communal peace through the practice of avoidance. This ancient discourse, attributed to the Buddha, emphasizes a strategic approach to cultivating peace by steering clear of harmful behaviors and fostering positive mental states. The sutta underscores the importance of directing one's mind away from actions and attitudes that lead to discord, and instead, inclining towards practices that promote harmony and well-being.

In today's fast-paced and often turbulent world, the teachings of the *Sallekha Sutta* provide a timeless framework for enhancing peace and resolving conflicts. By focusing on avoidance as a method for personal transformation and communal harmony, the sutta offers practical guidance on how individuals and organizations can create more supportive and peaceful environments.

This exploration of the *Sallekha Sutta* aims to illuminate how its principles can be applied to various aspects of life. From individual behaviors and communication practices to broader communal and organizational settings, the teachings offer actionable strategies for fostering an environment of compassion, respect, and mutual support. By integrating these ancient insights into contemporary contexts, we can harness the power of avoidance to cultivate lasting peace and enhance overall well-being.

[1] Department of Oriental Studies, University of Yangon
[2] Department of Oriental Studies, University of Yangon
[3] Department of Oriental Studies, University of Yangon
[4] Department of Oriental Studies, Yangon University of Distance Education

1. Theoretical Framework: The *Sallekha Sutta's* Approach to Avoidance

Avoidance of Cruelty and Harm:

Sallekha Sutta[1]: This discourse itself is the primary source for the concept of *sallekha* or "effacement," emphasizing the practice of avoiding unwholesome behaviors, specifically cruelty and harm.

First Precept in the *Pañca Sīla*: The principle of refraining from killing any living being (*Pāṇātipāta veramaṇī sikkhāpadaṃ*) is extensively detailed in the *Dhammapada*[2] and in *Sutta Nipāta*[3], which underscore the importance of *ahiṃsā* (non-harming) as a foundation for compassion.

***Karuṇā* and *Mettā* Cultivation:** Compassion (*karuṇā*) and loving-kindness (*mettā*) are foundational qualities, recommended for fostering non-cruelty and loving attitudes toward all beings. In the *Karaṇīya Mettā Sutta*[4], the Buddha encourages the cultivation of *mettā* toward all beings without distinction, directly countering intentions of harm.[5]

Avoidance of False and Harmful Speech: (Need)

Right Speech in the Noble Eightfold Path (*Sammā-Vācā*): Right speech, as defined in the *Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta*[6] and elaborated in the *Sāmaññaphala Sutta*[7], emphasizes refraining from lying, slander, and gossip, as well as avoiding harsh words.

Abstention from False Speech and Its Impact: The fourth precept, abstaining from false speech (*Musāvādā veramaṇī sikkhāpadaṃ*), and teachings on truthful communication are highlighted in the *Dhammapada*[8], which emphasize that truthfulness builds trust and stability[9].

Speech with Ethical Tone: In the *Abhaya Rājakumāra Sutta*[1], the Buddha speaks about the importance of speaking only what is beneficial, truthful, and pleasing, directly supporting the notion of refraining from divisive or harsh language.

---

[1] M 55-56
M-a 197-198
[2] Dhp 32-33,46, Dhp-a II 31-32,226
Sn 300-301; Sn-a 175-192; Sn 338; Sn-a II 106
Khp 11, Khp-a 208
[3] Sn 300-301, Sn-a 175-192, Sn 338, Sn-a II 106
[4] Sn 300-301, Sn-a 175-192
[5] DN 146-157, DN-a 124-141
Sn 300-301, Sn-a 175-192
MN 55-56, MN-a 197-198
Khp 11, Khp-a 208
Sn 300-301 , Sn-a 175-192
Vism-a I 287-306
Dhp 46, Dhp-a II 202
MN 181, MN-a 8
[6] DN II 232, DN-a II 367-369
[7] DN I 60
[8] Dhp 46, Dhp-a II 202
[9] MN 55-56, MN -a 197-198
Dhp 46, Dhp-a II 202
MN 354-360, MN-a 227-234

Refraining from Malicious, Harsh, and Gossipy Speech[2]: The sutta extends the concept of ethical speech beyond mere truthfulness to include the tone and intention behind one's words. Practitioners are encouraged to avoid speech that is:

Malicious Speech: Speech that aims to cause division or harm between individuals.

Harsh Speech: Hurtful or aggressive language that incites conflict and animosity.

Gossip Speech: Idle talk that serves no beneficial purpose but instead spreads negativity and distorts facts.

Role in Social Harmony: By abstaining from these forms of unwholesome speech, individuals promote understanding, kindness, and respect in their interactions. This aligns with the larger goal of *sallekha*, which is to remove unwholesome tendencies from the mind and to contribute to a more peaceful and supportive environment.[3]

Theoretical Insights on Avoidance in the *Sallekha Sutta*:

Internal Transformation through Avoidance: The *Sallekha Sutta* itself details how avoiding unwholesome behaviors purifies the mind, linking to the *Citta-visuddhi* (purification of mind) stage outlined in the *Visuddhimagga* by Buddhaghosa.

Community Well-Being and Harmony: The *Siṅgālovāda Sutta*[4] illustrates how ethical conduct among individuals promotes harmonious relationships and social trust. It highlights the practical benefits of avoiding divisive speech, aggression, and harmful intentions in building communal peace.

Alignment with the Noble Eightfold Path: Avoidance, as outlined in the *Sallekha Sutta*, aligns with several elements of the Eightfold Path, including right speech, right action, and right intention, which contribute to the cessation of suffering. This alignment is supported in the *Magga-Vibhaṅga Sutta*[5], which discusses the interconnectedness of right intentions and actions in leading to Nibbāna.

2. Application of Avoidance in Personal Life

In Pāli literature, particularly through the lens of the *Sallekha Sutta*, the application of avoidance as a practice of compassion and non-violence holds great significance for personal development and the creation of harmonious relationships. This practical implementation involves consciously abstaining from unwholesome behaviors while actively cultivating positive mental states that foster peace and harmony. Below is an analysis of how these principles can be applied in personal life.

---

[1] MN II 54-58, MN-a II 76-80

[2] MN I55-56, MN -a I 197-198
MN II 375-376, MN-a II 262-263
Dhp 33, Dhp-a 37

[3] Khp 11, Khp-a 208
DN II 68, DN-a II 67-68)

[4] DN I 60, DN-a I 106

[5] SN III 7-9

2.1. Cultivating Compassion and Non-Violence (Ahiṃsā)

The practice of avoiding cruelty and violence, as recommended by the *Sallekha Sutta*, is central to cultivating compassion (*karuṇā*) and non-violence (*ahiṃsā*) in everyday life.

Engaging in Kindness:

Regular Acts of Kindness: Small, consistent acts of kindness—such as offering assistance, expressing gratitude, and showing support to those in need—are simple yet powerful ways to integrate non-violence and compassion into daily life. These practices strengthen interpersonal bonds and reduce the likelihood of conflict.[1]

Empathy and Understanding: Empathy involves putting oneself in another's shoes, understanding their experiences, and responding with kindness. Active listening and compassion can transform relationships, allowing conflicts to be resolved more peacefully. By embracing empathy, individuals contribute to a more supportive and caring community.

Mindful Awareness:

Awareness of Actions: Being mindful of how your actions impact others is a key practice in the avoidance of cruelty. Regular self-reflection allows individuals to assess whether their words and deeds align with principles of non-violence. This mindfulness reduces the likelihood of harm, whether physical, verbal, or emotional.

Acting with intention means considering the consequences of your actions before proceeding. For example, asking yourself whether your actions will foster kindness or cause harm can lead to more thoughtful and compassionate behavior, contributing to a peaceful environment.

2.2. Building Compassionate Relationships

The avoidance of harmful behaviors extends to creating and nurturing compassionate relationships through forgiveness, inclusivity, and non-violent communication.

Cultivating Forgiveness:

Forgiveness Toward Self and Others: The act of forgiving others, and yourself, is essential for emotional healing and resolving conflict. Holding onto anger or grudges only perpetuates suffering, while forgiveness clears the way for reconciliation and inner peace. Forgiveness aligns with the principle of avoiding ill-will (*byāpāda*), a key unwholesome mental state mentioned in the *Sallekha Sutta*.[2]

Promoting Inclusivity:

Embrace Diversity: Inclusivity involves welcoming and celebrating diversity in all forms—whether in friendships, families, or communities. This practice helps reduce discrimination, fosters mutual respect, and builds stronger social connections. In this way, individuals can contribute to a more harmonious society by encouraging open-mindedness and mutual understanding.

---

[1] A I 383-384 A I a II 316

[2] DN 146-157, DN a 124-141

2.3. Addressing Conflict Constructively

In line with the teachings of the *Sallekha Sutta*, non-violent communication and conflict resolution are vital for managing interpersonal disagreements without resorting to hostility.

Non-Violent Communication:

Expressing Feelings Without Blame: When addressing conflicts, use communication techniques that avoid blame or judgment. Instead, focus on expressing your needs and emotions respectfully, seeking solutions that respect all parties involved. This practice fosters understanding and cooperation, aligning with the principle of right speech (*sammā-vācā*).

Conflict Resolution Skills:

Active Listening and Empathy: These skills are essential in resolving disagreements constructively. By truly listening and seeking to understand the other person's perspective, conflicts can be addressed more harmoniously. Finding common ground and aiming for peaceful resolutions avoids the escalation of conflict into aggression.[1]

2.4. Personal Reflection and Growth

The application of avoidance in personal life also involves continuous self-examination and learning, ensuring that one is always progressing in the cultivation of compassion and non-violence.

Self-Examination:

Tracking Personal Growth: Regular self-reflection allows individuals to assess their progress in cultivating compassion and non-violence. Keeping a journal can help track emotional responses and identify areas for improvement, enabling mindful adjustments in behavior and thought.[2]

"Attānañce piyaṁ jaññā, rakkheyya naṁ surakkhitaṁ"[3] – "If one loves oneself, one should carefully protect oneself.". This highlights the importance of self-awareness and safeguarding one's mental purity.

Continuous Learning: The Buddha advocated lifelong learning and improvement as essential aspects of the path:

"Bahussutaṁ vāsapi cetasi"[4] – "One who has heard much [learned] and practices well, develops wisdom.". This emphasizes the importance of seeking knowledge to deepen one's understanding of Dhamma and refine personal qualities, such as compassion and non-violence.

---

[1] MN 55-56, MN-a 197-198
MN II 54-58, MN-a II 76-80
Dhp 46, Dhp.a.II 206, Dhp 46,Dhp-a II 202

[2] MN I 167-171, MN-a I 391-398
Dhp 25, Dhp-a I 371
SN II 410-412, SN-a III 117

[3] Dhp 37, Dhp-a II 87-88

[4] AN II 63 -66, AN-a III 28-29

Transforming Communication (Right Speech)

Truthfulness (Sacca): In the *Sallekha Sutta*, the Buddha explicitly mentions the commitment to avoid deceit. Right Speech is one of the eightfold path factors and is essential for ethical communication:

"I undertake the training rule to refrain from false speech." (Eightfold Path, Sīla section). Truthful speech fosters trust and is essential for harmonious relationships.

Beneficial Communication: The Buddha encouraged speaking only that which is beneficial and meaningful:

"Speak what is useful, speak what is good."[1] . Here, the focus is on constructive speech that aids others and supports well-being.

Kindness: Speaking kindly fosters a compassionate environment and reduces conflict:

"With a heart of loving-kindness, one brings peace."[2] . This principle supports gentle, non-harsh communication, which builds supportive relationships.

Avoiding Gossip (Sampappalāpa): The Buddha advised avoiding idle talk and "He does not delight in idle chatter." Gossip often leads to misunderstandings and conflicts, so avoiding it is critical for personal and communal peace.

These teachings illustrate the transformative power of mindfulness and ethical speech in creating supportive, peaceful relationships and a fulfilling life. By following the principles outlined in the Sallekha Sutta, individuals can actively cultivate an environment of harmony in all interactions.

Cultivating Respectful Dialogue

Active Listening and Empathetic Responses: In the context of right speech, the Buddha encouraged careful attention and empathy in communication. The following reference emphasizes listening and responding with mindfulness:

"One should not speak if it does not benefit others, nor engage in speech that brings no benefit to oneself or others."[3] . This teaches active listening and thoughtful responses, supporting mutual understanding.

Clear and Concise Expression (Right Speech): Clear, honest, and beneficial speech fosters positive interactions and prevents misunderstanding:

"One should speak thoughtfully, in accordance with truth and beneficially, speaking at the right time."[4]

Fostering a Positive Communication Culture: In the *Cūḷagosiṅga Sutta*, respectful and harmonious dialogue is exemplified among three monks who actively support one another's practice, fostering a supportive environment:

[1] Sn 340-341, Sn-a 110-121
[2] Sn 300-301, Sn-a 175-192
[3] AN III 472-478
[4] Dhp 46, Dhp-a II 202

"They lived in unity, supporting each other like milk and water mixed together."[1] Their interactions illustrate the Buddha's teachings on creating supportive, respectful communities.

Managing Mental States:

Developing Compassion: Compassion is a central practice for transforming negative mental states:

"May all beings be happy, free from enmity, free from affliction, and may they take care of themselves joyfully."[2] . Practicing loving-kindness (mettā) helps reduce anger and resentment and builds a compassionate mindset.

Fostering Patience (Khanti): Patience is seen as one of the highest virtues in Buddhism, helping to overcome reactive emotions:

"Khantī paramaṁ tapo titikkhā" [3]– "Patience is the highest form of self-discipline." Practicing patience supports a calm and understanding response to challenging situations, reducing frustration and fostering peaceful interactions.

Embracing Forgiveness: Forgiveness helps release resentment and supports emotional healing:

"The one who has developed patience, is peaceful and free from mental defilements, is truly praised." [4]By fostering forgiveness, one lets go of past grievances, reducing negative emotions and enhancing personal peace.

Mindfulness Practices for Managing Mental States

Engaging in Meditation: Mindfulness (Sati) and meditation are tools for recognizing and managing unwholesome mental states. *"Appamādo amatapadaṁ"*[5] Mindfulness is the path to the deathless. Meditation helps individuals develop awareness and control over their thoughts and emotions.

Self-Monitoring: Self-awareness through regular mental state checks is integral to maintaining wholesome states:

"A wise one, mindful, should exert effort." Mindfulness allows individuals to observe negative mental patterns and make adjustments to prevent escalation.

Practising Acceptance: Acceptance helps in observing thoughts without judgment:

"Mindful, comprehending, the meditator reaches the unconditioned." By accepting mental states as they are, one approaches them with equanimity, reducing stress and promoting inner peace.

Integrating these teachings into daily life allows individuals to embody the *Sallekha Sutta*'s guidance, promoting peaceful interactions and fostering personal well-being. The mindfulness, patience, and compassion recommended by the Buddha in Pāli literature lay a foundation for positive communication and mental tranquility, contributing to harmonious living and growth

---

[1] MN I 266-272, MN-a 138-147
[2] Sn 10-11, Sn-a 300-302
[3] Dhp 41, Dhp-a II 153
[4] It 208-209, It-a 85-91
[5] Dhp 16, Dhp-a 145

3. Application of Avoidance in Communal Settings

a. Promoting Harmony in Communities

Applying the principles of avoidance from the *Sallekha Sutta* to communal settings can significantly enhance harmony and collective well-being. Here's how these principles can be put into practice:

Encouraging Constructive Behavior:

Fostering a Culture of Compassion: Encourage community members to practice compassion and non-violence in their interactions. This can be achieved through community events focused on kindness and empathy, as well as through educational programs that highlight the importance of treating others with respect and understanding.[1] "Overcome anger by non-anger; overcome evil by good."[2]

Promoting Honest Communication: Create platforms for open and honest communication where community members can express themselves constructively. This could involve regular community meetings, feedback sessions, or mediation workshops that address and resolve conflicts transparently.

Modeling Positive Behavior: Leaders and influential members of the community should model the behaviors they wish to see in others. Demonstrating non-cruelty, avoiding false speech, and managing mental states with mindfulness can set a positive example and inspire others to follow suit. *Sallekha Sutta*[3] promotes avoiding cruelty and false speech as a basis for moral conduct.

Encouraging Mutual Respect: Implement community norms and guidelines that emphasize respect and understanding among members. This includes promoting non-gossip, avoiding harsh words, and addressing disagreements with a focus on resolution rather than escalation. In the *Dhammapada*[4] emphasizes non-retaliation and responding with kindness as ways to maintain harmony: "Hatred is not overcome by hatred; hatred is overcome by love."

Building Supportive Networks:

Creating Safe Spaces: Establish safe spaces within the community where individuals can seek support and guidance for managing negative behaviors or mental states. This might include support groups, counseling services, or peer mentoring programs. The Buddha often emphasized the need for wise association (*kalyāṇa-mittatā*), such as in *Mahāgopālaka Sutta*[5], for personal and communal well-being.

Facilitating Community Engagement: Encourage active participation in communal activities that promote positive behaviors and reinforce shared values. Community service projects,

---

[1] Sn 300-301,Sn.a.I .175-192
[2] Dhp 46, Dhp-a II 202
[3] MN I 48-56,MN-a I 185
[4] Dhp 22-24 ,Dhp a. I 288-302
[5] MN I 281, MN-a II 159.

collaborative events, and educational workshops can build a sense of belonging and collective responsibility. In The *Sigālovāda Sutta* also encourages community members to support one another, reflecting shared responsibility and respect.

Recognizing Positive Contributions: Acknowledge and celebrate individuals and groups who contribute positively to the community. Recognition programs or community awards can motivate others to engage in constructive behavior and avoid negative actions. The *Cūḷagosiṅga Sutta*[1] discusses the benefits of harmony and supportive behavior among community members.

Developing Conflict Resolution Mechanisms: Implement effective conflict resolution mechanisms that focus on understanding and addressing the root causes of disputes. Training in negotiation and mediation skills can help community members resolve conflicts amicably and maintain harmony. The *Kakacūpama Sutta*[2] teaches patience and the importance of resolving conflicts through calm, non-reactive methods.

Encouraging Personal Growth: Support initiatives that promote personal development and self-improvement among community members. Workshops on mindfulness, emotional intelligence, and effective communication can help individuals enhance their own well-being and contribute positively to the community. *Sallekha Sutta* encourages personal moral development as the foundation for harmonious relationships within the community.

Promoting Inclusivity: Ensure that all community members feel included and valued. Inclusive practices that respect diverse perspectives and backgrounds contribute to a harmonious environment where individuals are less likely to engage in negative behaviors. In the *Mahāmaṅgala Sutta*[3] identifies compassion, patience, and respect for others as the highest blessings, enhancing communal harmony.

Providing Resources and Support: Offer resources and support systems that help individuals avoid negative behaviours and adopt positive practices. This could include access to educational materials, workshops on non-violence and ethical conduct, and support for personal and communal growth initiatives. The *Saṅgīti Sutta*[4] advises providing teachings and support to promote ethical conduct within communities.

By implementing these strategies, communities can leverage principles of avoidance outlined in the Sallekha Sutta to foster an environment of harmony and collective well-being. Encouraging constructive behavior and building supportive networks will lead to a more cohesive and peaceful community.

[1] MN I 266, MN-a II 138
[2] MN I 173, MN-a II 1-2
[3] Sn 318-319, Sn-a II 8-35
[4] DN III 178, DN-a 157-159

3. Application of Avoidance in Communal Settings

b. Institutional and Organizational Practices

Organizations and institutions play a crucial role in applying the principles of avoidance from the Sallekha Sutta to create positive and harmonious environments. Here's how they can integrate these principles into their practices:

Implementing Ethical Policies:

Developing Comprehensive Codes of Conduct: Create and enforce codes of conduct that explicitly discourage cruelty, dishonesty, and harmful behaviors. These codes should outline expected behaviors, provide guidelines for ethical decision-making, and establish consequences for violations. "I undertake the training precept to refrain from..." – This principle, found in the Five Precepts (Pañca-sīla), underscores ethical commitments and behavioral guidelines central to organizational codes of conduct.[1]

Promoting Non-Discrimination and Inclusivity: Ensure that policies are in place to prevent discrimination and promote inclusivity. Establish practices that support diversity, equity, and respect for all individuals, regardless of their background. *"Sabbe sattā averā hontu"* – "May all beings be free from enmity" – Encouraging inclusivity and non-discrimination aligns with the ideal of universal goodwill found in *Karaṇīya-mettā Sutta*[2].

Encouraging Transparency and Accountability: Implement policies that promote transparency and accountability in organizational practices. Regular audits, open communication channels, and clear reporting mechanisms help in maintaining ethical standards and addressing issues promptly. *"Attanā ca yathābhūtaṁ pajānāti"* – "One sees things as they are" – This principle of clear perception and self-awareness in the *Satavahanas Sutta*[3] can guide transparency and accountability within an organization.

Fostering a Respectful Work Environment: Create a respectful work environment by prohibiting harmful behaviours such as harassment, bullying, and unethical conduct. Provide clear procedures for reporting and addressing grievances and ensure that all employees understand their rights and responsibilities. "Having laid aside the rod towards all beings, whether trembling or firm" [4]– In the *Metta Sutta*, this line encourages a non-violent and respectful approach to all beings, which can translate into creating a harassment-free workplace.

Providing Training and Resources:

Training in Effective Communication: Offer workshops and training sessions focused on improving communication skills. Emphasize the importance of truthful, respectful, and

[1] AN 539-540, AN-a II 389
[2] Sn 300-302, Khp a.197-214
[3] MN 70, MN a I 230-251
[4] Dhp 71, Dhp-a II 415

constructive communication in preventing misunderstandings and conflicts. "One should speak the truth and not lie" – The Dhammapada emphasizes truthful and kind speech as part of right conduct[1].

Conflict Resolution Training: Provide training in conflict resolution techniques to help individuals and teams manage and resolve disputes effectively. Equip employees with skills to address conflicts calmly and constructively, in line with the principles of the *Sallekha Sutta*. "It is not possible, monks, that a monk would oppose another monk" – This passage from the *Mahāgosiṅga Sutta*[2] stresses the need for harmonious relations and peaceful conflict resolution.

Emotional Intelligence Development: Incorporate emotional intelligence training to help individuals understand and manage their own emotions and recognize the emotions of others. This training can enhance interpersonal relationships and contribute to a more supportive and harmonious environment. *"Cittena niyati loko, cittena parikassati"* – "The world is led by the mind, drawn by the mind" – From *Itivuttaka*[3], this reinforces the importance of understanding and managing mental states as a foundation for constructive interaction.

Mindfulness and Stress Management: Offer resources and programs that promote mindfulness and stress management. Techniques such as meditation, relaxation exercises, and mindfulness practices can help individuals maintain positive mental states and avoid negative behaviors. *"Satimā bhikkhave bhikkhu vihareyya sampajāno"* – "A monk should dwell with mindfulness and full awareness" – Mindfulness practice, found in the *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta*[4], fosters stress management and focus, reducing negative reactions.

Ethical Leadership Development: Provide leadership development programs that emphasize ethical decision-making and leading by example. Training leaders to model the principles of avoidance, such as non-cruelty and honest communication, reinforces these values throughout the organization. "One should do what one has undertaken oneself and not instruct others to do what one has not done oneself" – From the *Dhammapada*[5], this stresses integrity and leading by example, essential for ethical leadership.

Creating Support Systems: Establish support systems such as counseling services, peer support groups, and mentorship programs. These resources can help individuals navigate challenges, avoid negative behaviors, and seek guidance when needed. "One should wander solitary as a

[1] Dhp 46, Dhp-a II 107
[2] MN 18-19,MN-a 103-106
[3] It 244, It-a 236-237
[4] MN-70, MN-a I 230-251
[5] Dhp 37, Dhp a 135-138

rhinoceros horn" –While solitude is often praised, the *Khaggavisāṇa Sutta*[1] also emphasizes the value of connection and support in certain contexts, balanced with self-reliance.

Encouraging Continuous Learning: Promote a culture of continuous learning and improvement by offering ongoing education on ethical practices, personal development, and organizational values. Regularly update training materials and resources to address emerging issues and reinforce core principles. *"Paññāya paripācināti"* – "One perfects oneself by wisdom" – This line from the *Sāriputta Sutta*[2] emphasizes the ongoing development of wisdom and understanding.

By integrating these practices, organizations and institutions can align their operations with the principles of avoidance from the *Sallekha Sutta*, fostering a positive and ethical environment. Implementing ethical policies and providing relevant training and resources contribute to a culture of respect, transparency, and harmonious interactions.

Discussion

The *Sallekha Sutta* provides profound insights into the principles of avoidance, offering practical guidance for cultivating peaceful communities. The teachings found in this sutta emphasize the necessity of refraining from harmful actions, speech, and mental states, which are fundamental for fostering individual and collective well-being. As communities face increasingly complex challenges, the avoidance principles outlined in the *Sallekha Sutta* serve as a valuable framework for promoting harmony and mitigating conflict.

Understanding the Role of Avoidance:

The core tenet of avoidance in the *Sallekha Sutta* revolves around eliminating harmful behaviors and mental states that disrupt inner peace and societal harmony. This proactive approach is essential, as it empowers individuals to take responsibility for their actions and encourages mindfulness in their interactions with others.

By avoiding cruelty, false speech, and violent actions, practitioners can cultivate compassion, honesty, and non-violence—qualities that are vital for building trust and mutual respect within communities.

Application in Personal and Communal Life:

The teachings of the *Sallekha Sutta* are not merely theoretical but offer practical applications that can significantly enhance interpersonal relationships. In personal life, the practice of compassion and mindful speech reduces harmful interactions, while in communal settings, it fosters an environment of support and cooperation.

Examples from community initiatives, such as meditation retreats and conflict resolution programs, illustrate how these teachings can be effectively integrated into daily life. By

---

[1] Sn 290, Sn -a 116-117
[2] AN 497-499, AN-a 360-361

prioritizing non-violence and positive communication, communities can create cultures of peace and resilience.

Ethical Foundations and Broader Implications:

The avoidance principles in the *Sallekha Sutta* are interconnected with broader ethical teachings in Pāli literature, including the Noble Eightfold Path and the Five Precepts. This interconnectedness highlights the importance of a holistic approach to ethical living, where avoidance is part of a comprehensive framework for moral conduct.

The significance of these teachings extends beyond individual practitioners; they can influence community dynamics and promote societal change. When individuals embody the principles of avoidance, they contribute to creating environments where ethical behaviour is the norm, thereby paving the way for collective peace.

Challenges and Future Directions:

While the avoidance principles provide a robust framework for building peaceful communities, challenges remain in their practical application. Societal norms, cultural contexts, and individual tendencies may hinder the adoption of these teachings.

Future efforts should focus on educational initiatives that promote awareness of the *Sallekha Sutta* and its principles. Community workshops, training programs, and accessible resources can facilitate a deeper understanding of how avoidance can be applied in diverse contexts, from schools to workplaces and neighbourhoods.

Conclusion

The *Sallekha Sutta* offers timeless wisdom for building peaceful communities through the principles of avoidance. By stressing the importance of refraining from harmful actions and fostering compassion, honesty, and non-violence, individuals can contribute to creating harmonious environments. The practical application of these teachings demonstrated through various community initiatives and organizational practices, underscores their relevance in modern society.

Embracing the avoidance principles of the *Sallekha Sutta* can lead to transformative change. Prioritizing ethical conduct and nurturing positive relationships empowers communities to enhance collective well-being and resilience, ultimately moving towards a more peaceful and compassionate world. Ongoing commitment to these values enriches individuals' lives and creates a lasting impact within communities, promoting a future where harmony prevails over discord.

The *Sallekha Sutta* offers a profound framework for fostering peace by cultivating non-cruelty, ethical communication, and positive mental states. By aligning our actions, speech, and mental dispositions with the sutta's guidance, we can transform our interactions and surroundings, creating a culture of compassion and respect.

In personal life, the sutta's advice on avoiding cruelty and cultivating kindness leads to deeper, more harmonious relationships. Ethical communication rooted in truthfulness and kindness contributes to conflict resolution and trust-building. Additionally, managing mental states through mindfulness and cultivating positive emotions aids in overcoming negative tendencies and enhances personal well-being.

In communal settings, these principles encourage constructive behavior and supportive networks, leading to greater collective peace and cooperation. Organizations that integrate these principles into their policies and training programs often experience improved workplace culture and effectiveness. Examples from non-profits and corporate settings illustrate how these teachings can be applied to achieve positive outcomes.

The insights of the *Sallekha Sutta* remain highly relevant, offering strategies for creating peaceful and supportive environments. By embracing these teachings, we can improve personal and collective well-being, bringing the enduring wisdom of this ancient text into our contemporary lives.

Acknowledgement

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Dr. Win Win Yi, Professor and Head of the Department of Oriental Studies, University of Yangon for her continuous encouragement and support towards my research endeavours.

References

Primary Sources

Buddhaghosa Mahāthera, Bhaddanta. (1956). Mahāvagga Aṭṭhakathā, Dīghanikāya, Yangon: Department of Religious Affairs.

Buddhaghosa Mahāthera, Bhaddanta. (1956). Mūlapaṇṇāsa Aṭṭhakathā Majjhima Nikāya, Yangon: Department of Religious Affairs.

Buddhaghosa Mahāthera, Bhaddanta. (1956). Pāthikavagga Aṭṭhakathā, Dīghanikāya, Yangon: Department of Religious Affairs.

Buddhaghosa Mahāthera, Bhaddanta. (1956). Sīlakkhandhavagga Aṭṭhakathā, Dīghanikāya, Yangon: Department of Religious Affairs.

Buddhaghosa Mahāthera, Bhaddanta. (1959). Jataka Aṭṭhakathā, Khuddhaka Nikāya, Yangon: Department of Religious Affairs.

Buddhaghosa Mahāthera, Bhaddanta. (1961). Suttanipāta Aṭṭhakathā, Yangon: Department of Religious Affairs.

Buddhaghosa Mahāthera, Bhaddanta. (1992). Dhammapada Aṭṭhakathā, Yangon: Department of Religious Affairs.

Dhammapada Pāḷi, (1992). Yangon: Department of Religious Affairs.

Jātaka Pāḷi, Khuddhaka Nikāya Pāḷi, (1960). Yangon: Department of Religious Affairs.

Mahāvagga Pāḷi, Dīghanikāya, (1957). Yangon: Department of Religious Affairs.

Mūlapaṇṇāsa Pāḷi, Majjhima Nikāya, (1956). Yangon: Department of Religious Affairs.

Pāthikavagga Pāḷi, Dīghanikāya, (1957). Yangon: Department of Religious Affairs.

Sīlakkhandhavagga Pāḷi, Dīghanikāya, (1956). Yangon: Department of Religious Affairs.

Suttanipāta Pāḷi, (1961). Yangon: Department of Religious Affairs.

Secondary Sources (APA)

An introduction to Buddhism. Google Books. https://books.google.com.mm/books/about/An_Introduction_to_Buddhism.html?id=u0sg9LV_rEgC&redir_esc=y

Bodhi, B. (2005). In the Buddha’s words: an anthology of discourses from the Pāli canon. *www.academia.edu*. https://www.academia.edu/65506532/In_the_Buddhas_words_an_anthology_of_discourses_from_the_P%C4%81li_canon

Bodhi. (2023, June 7). In the Buddha's Words: An Anthology of Discourses from the Pali Canon. *The Open Buddhist University*. https://buddhistuniversity.net/content/monographs/in-the-buddhas-words_bodhi

Buddhist Publication Society. https://store.pariyatti.org/bps

Laumakis, S. J. (2008). *An introduction to Buddhist philosophy*. https://doi.org/10.1017/cbo9780511800818

MN 8 Sallekha Sutta (Effacement). Suttas.com. https://www.suttas.com/mn-8-sallekha-sutta-effacement.html

Nyanamoli. (2023, October 20). The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A translation of the Majjhima Nikāya. *The Open Buddhist University*. https://buddhistuniversity.net/content/monographs/mn_nyanamoli-bodhi

The path of purification. Google Books. https://books.google.com.mm/ books/about/The_Path_of _Purification.html?id=ET_8DwAAQBAJ&redir_esc=y

The foundations of Buddhism. (n.d.). Google Books. https://books.google.com.mm/books/about /The_Foundations_of_Buddhism.html?id=FUwSDAAAQBAJ&redir_esc=y

Secondary Sources (Chicago-17th)

"An Introduction to Buddhism." n.d. Google Books. https://books.google.com.mm/books/about /An_Introduction_to _Buddhism.html?id=u0sg9LV_rEgC&redir_esc=y.

Bodhi, Bhikkhu. 2005. "In The Buddha's Words : An Anthology of Discourses From the Pāli Canon." *Www.Academia.Edu*, January. https://www.academia.edu/65506532/ In_the_Buddhas_words_an_anthology_of_discourses_from_the_P%C4%81li_canon.

Bodhi. 2023. "In The Buddha's Words: An Anthology of Discourses From the Pali Canon." *The Open Buddhist University* (blog). June 7, 2023. https://buddhistuniversity.net/content/monographs/in-the-buddhas-words_bodhi.

"Buddhist Publication Society." n.d. https://store.pariyatti.org/bps.

Laumakis, Stephen J. 2008. *An Introduction to Buddhist Philosophy*. https://doi.org/10.1017/cbo9780511800818.

"MN 8 Sallekha Sutta (Effacement)." n.d. Suttas.Com. https://www.suttas.com/mn-8-sallekha-sutta-effacement.html.

Nyanamoli. 2023. "The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Majjhima Nikāya." *The Open Buddhist University* (blog). October 20, 2023. https://buddhistuniversity.net/content/ monographs/ mn_nyanamoli-bodhi.

"The Path of Purification." n.d. Google Books. https://books.google.com.mm/books/about/The_Path_of_ Purification.html?id=ET_8DwAAQBAJ&redir_esc=y.

"The Foundations of Buddhism." n.d. Google Books. https://books.google.com.mm/books/about/ The_Foundations_of_Buddhism.html?id=FUwSDAAAQBAJ&redir_esc=y.

PROMOTING GLOBAL PEACE AND TRUST THROUGH THE FIVE PRECEPTS: A BUDDHIST PERSPECTIVE

Phyo Nann Wai[1], Win Win Yi[2], Aye Thandar[3]

Abstract

This paper explores how the Five Precepts of Buddhism can serve as a universal ethical framework for fostering global peace and social harmony. By analyzing their broader social implications, the paper highlights the potential of these precepts to address contemporary ethical challenges and to contribute to a more compassionate, just, and peaceful global society. The Five Precepts—abstaining from killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, false speech, and intoxicants—promote fundamental values of non-violence, honesty, self-restraint, and mindfulness. Although primarily intended for personal moral development, these principles extend beyond the individual to shape interpersonal relationships and social dynamics. Through fostering trust, mutual respect, and social cohesion, the Five Precepts support conflict prevention and contribute to the foundation of a just society. This paper argues that adopting these ethical guidelines globally can help address issues such as violence, corruption, and social inequality. It also underscores how the universal values embodied in the Five Precepts transcend cultural and religious boundaries, making them a viable framework for promoting peace and ethical behavior within diverse and interconnected societies.

Keyword: Five Precepts, global peace, violence, corruption, social inequality

Introduction

In an increasingly interconnected and complex world, the pursuit of peace and ethical living has never been more critical. Rooted in the teachings of Buddhism, the Five Precepts (*Pañca-sīla*) offer a profound ethical framework that not only guides individual behavior but also holds the potential to foster social harmony and prevent conflict on a global scale. These five fundamental principles—abstaining from killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, false speech, and intoxicants—serve as essential guidelines for cultivating non-violence, honesty, self-restraint, and mindfulness.

As contemporary societies grapple with escalating issues such as violence, corruption, and social inequality, the insights embedded in the Five Precepts become increasingly relevant. By encouraging individuals to act with compassion and integrity, these precepts contribute to the formation of trusting relationships and the cultivation of a just society. Moreover, the universal values underlying the Five Precepts transcend cultural and religious boundaries, making them applicable across diverse contexts.

This paper seeks to explore how the adoption of the Five Precepts can address pressing global challenges and promote a culture of peace. By examining their ethical implications and social impact, we will demonstrate how these principles can be integrated into contemporary discourse on global peacebuilding, offering a Buddhist perspective on ethical living that is both relevant and transformative.

The quest for global peace and harmony is a pressing concern in today's interconnected world, where societies are often fractured by violence, inequality, and ethical dilemmas. In this context, the teachings of Buddhism, particularly the Five Precepts, offer valuable insights into

[1] Department of Oriental Studies, Yangon University of Distance Education
[2] Department of Oriental Studies, University of Yangon
[3] Department of Oriental Studies, University of Yangon

building a peaceful society based on principles of ethical conduct. The Five Precepts—abstaining from killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, false speech, and the use of intoxicants—are considered the foundational moral guidelines for both lay followers and the wider community. They represent a universal code of conduct that emphasizes non-harm, respect, honesty, and mindfulness, which can serve as a transformative framework for personal and social well-being.

While rooted in the historical and cultural milieu of early Buddhism, the Five Precepts have enduring relevance, offering practical solutions for modern challenges such as violence, corruption, and social disintegration. Their core values align closely with contemporary human rights and ethical standards, making them a unique b ridge between ancient wisdom and modern needs. This paper examines how the Five Precepts can contribute to global peace by promoting ethical behavior that cultivates trust, reduces conflict, and fosters social cohesion.

The analysis will focus on the broader implications of each precept in fostering a peaceful and just society. By preventing harmful actions and encouraging the development of positive virtues, the Five Precepts not only enhance personal integrity but also contribute to the collective well-being of communities and nations. Moreover, their universal applicability transcends cultural and religious boundaries, making them a viable ethical model for diverse societies striving for harmony and stability. Through this exploration, the paper aims to demonstrate how the Five Precepts, when embraced at both individual and societal levels, can serve as a guiding compass for creating a more peaceful and ethical global community.

1.The Five Precepts: Foundations of Ethical Living

Each precept is designed to prevent harm and promote virtues such as compassion, honesty, and mindfulness. Below is a deeper exploration of each precept:

1.1 Refraining from Killing (*Pāṇātipātā veramaṇī*)

This precept emphasizes non-violence (*ahiṃsā*) and compassion for all living beings. In Pāli texts, this principle is often described as the cultivation of *mettā* (loving-kindness) and the acknowledgment of the intrinsic value of life. By refraining from causing harm or taking life, individuals contribute to a culture of non-violence and mutual respect. In discourses like the Dhammapada, the Buddha frequently refers to the virtue of non-harming as a fundamental aspect of ethical living, which reduces societal violence and promotes peace.

Dhammapada Verse[1] highlights the significance of non-violence and compassion: "He who harms not living beings, whether feeble or strong, who neither kills nor causes to kill—him do I call a holy man."

Siṅgālovāda Sutta[2] This sutta provides guidance on ethical living and emphasizes the importance of compassion and respect for all forms of life, fundamental to a peaceful and harmonious society.

1.2 Refraining from Taking What Is Not Given (*Adinnādānā veramaṇī*)

In Pāli literature, this precept emphasizes the importance of respecting others' property and rights, which fosters trust and fairness in society. By upholding honesty and refraining from theft or exploitation, individuals contribute to social stability and economic justice. In the *Siṅgālovāda*

[1] Dhp 46, Dhp-a II 206
[2] DN III 146- 157, DN-a III 124-141

Sutta[1], the Buddha teaches that honesty in personal and economic dealings is a cornerstone of peaceful and cooperative living, ensuring harmony between individuals and within communities. *Dhammapada* Verse[2] emphasizes integrity, stating: "Like water on a lotus leaf, like a mustard seed on the point of a needle, he who clings not to sensual pleasures—I call a holy man."

Cakkavatti Sīhanāda Sutta[3]: In this sutta, the Buddha highlights that rulers and individuals should avoid taking what is not given, as it leads to societal stability and reduces greed and conflict over resources.

1.3 Refraining from Sexual Misconduct (*Kāmesumicchācārā veramaṇī*)

Sexual misconduct is a source of significant social disruption, leading to emotional harm and instability. This precept in Pāli literature is often associated with maintaining right relationships and responsibility in sexual behavior. In texts like the *Anguttara Nikāya* and *Majjhima Nikāya*, the Buddha teaches that this precept encourages respect for others' dignity, particularly in the context of family and personal relationships. By avoiding exploitation or infidelity, individuals support the well-being of their families and communities, contributing to overall social harmony.

Dhammapada Verse[4] addresses the harm caused by sexual misconduct: "One should not despise any little good; seeing that progress is made by the accumulation of little good."

Sigālovāda Sutta[5]: This sutta advises on the proper conduct regarding relationships, emphasizing that responsible, respectful interactions promote social trust and stability.

1.4 Refraining from False Speech (*Musāvādā veramaṇī*)

The precept of truthfulness is vital for maintaining trust and integrity in communication. In the Dhammapada and other Pāli sources, the Buddha stresses that false speech leads to misunderstanding, conflict, and the breakdown of social relationships. By adhering to truthfulness, individuals ensure that their interactions are based on honesty, which in turn strengthens bonds between people and promotes cooperation.

Dhammapada Verse[6] describes the virtue of honesty: "He who speaks not untruth out of a sense of self-respect, renounces deceit and falsehood—him I call a holy man."

Vaca Sutta[7]: This discourse explains the importance of refraining from false speech, reinforcing that truthful speech is essential for building trust and harmony within communities.

1.5 Refraining from Intoxicants that Cloud the Mind (*Surāmerayamajjapamādaṭṭhānā veramaṇī)*

This precept, found in numerous Pāli discourses, focuses on the cultivation of mindfulness (sati) and clarity of thought. Intoxicants impair judgment and self-control, leading to irresponsible and harmful actions. By avoiding substances that cloud the mind, individuals maintain clarity, making it easier to live ethically and avoid behaviors that harm themselves and others. This precept is closely linked to the idea of right mindfulness in the Noble Eightfold Path.

---

[1] Ibid
[2] Dhp 72, Dhp-a II 421
[3] DN III 48-65, DN-a III 29-42
[4] Dhp 57, Dhp-a II 300
[5] DN III 146- 157, DN-a III 124-141
[6] Dhp 46, Dhp-a II 204
[7] A I 161, A-a II 142

Siṅgālovāda Sutta[1]: The sutta advises against the use of intoxicants, explaining that they cloud the mind and impair judgment, leading to unethical actions and harming social cohesion.
Brahmajāla Sutta[2]: This sutta addresses the importance of mental clarity and mindfulness, which are foundational to making ethical decisions and maintaining a peaceful mind.

The Five Precepts are not only personal moral guidelines but also vital for creating a peaceful and ethical society. By promoting non-violence, honesty, responsibility, truthfulness, and mindfulness, these precepts support individual growth and the overall well-being of communities. When practiced collectively, the Five Precepts help build a foundation of trust, harmony, and mutual respect, which are essential for a just and peaceful society.

Principle of Non-Harm (*Ahiṃsā*) and the Foundation of Moral Integrity

Ahimsaka Sutta[3]: The Buddha describes the importance of non-harm as a foundational value, emphasizing how practicing non-violence cultivates compassion and supports social harmony.

Dhammapada Verse[4], "He who harms not living beings... I call a holy man." This verse underscores the precept of refraining from killing, embodying ahiṃsā and the compassionate respect for all life as a basis for peaceful coexistence.

Respect for Life, Property, Relationships, Truth, and Mental Clarity

Siṅgālovāda Sutta[5]: Known as the "Householder's Code of Ethics," this discourse elaborates on the Five Precepts as vital ethical practices that contribute to a stable and prosperous community. The sutta emphasizes the precepts as practices that strengthen relationships, promote honesty, and prevent social discord.

Brahmajāla Sutta[6] addresses the role of mental clarity and self-control by encouraging abstinence from intoxicants, which reinforces mindfulness and ethical behavior.

Impact on Personal Virtue (Sīla) and Mindfulness

Cūla-hatthipadopama Sutta[7]: The Buddha explains that sīla, or moral virtue, is foundational to personal development. Practicing the Five Precepts fosters mindfulness and ethical clarity, which strengthen one's ability to act with integrity and self-control.

Dhammapada Verse[8] summarizes the essence of sīla with the instruction: "To avoid all evil, to cultivate good, and to cleanse one's mind—this is the teaching of the Buddhas." This verse captures how observing the precepts supports the development of mindfulness and purity of conduct.

Societal Implications: Collective Practice and Social Harmony

---

[1] DN III 146- 157, DN-a III 124-141
[2] DN I 1-43, DN-a I 27-121
[3] Sn I 166-167, Sn-a I 211
[4] Dhp 46, Dhp-a II 206
[5] DN III 146- 157, DN-a III 124-141
[6] DN I 1-43, DN-a I 27-121
[7] M I 232-241, M-a II 98-121
[8] Dhp 41, Dhp-a II 153

Dīgha Nikāya[1] (*Mahāparinibbāna Sutta*): The Buddha advises that when communities collectively uphold ethical guidelines such as the Five Precepts, they create a foundation of trust and social stability, leading to a harmonious society.

Cakkavatti Sīhanāda Sutta[2]: This discourse outlines the role of ethical behavior in governance, showing how adherence to the precepts by both leaders and individuals fosters social trust, fairness, and security within society.

Promoting Peace and Mutual Respect

Metta Sutta[3]: While not explicitly part of the Five Precepts, this discourse on loving-kindness (mettā) aligns with the spirit of non-harm and mutual respect inherent in the precepts, fostering a sense of social trust and goodwill.

Anguttara Nikāya [4]emphasizes the importance of right speech and honest conduct, which reinforces the fourth precept (avoiding false speech) as a means of building trust and harmony within communities.

These references demonstrate that the Five Precepts serve as both a guide to personal virtue and a blueprint for social harmony. By fostering non-violence, trust, and mutual respect, they provide an ethical framework with profound relevance for both traditional Buddhist communities and modern society.

2. Ethical and Social Foundations of the Five Precepts

The Five Precepts reflect a deep ethical commitment to upholding respect in the following areas:

Life (refraining from killing),

Property (refraining from stealing),

Relationships (refraining from sexual misconduct),

Truth (refraining from false speech),

Mental Clarity (refraining from intoxicants).

2.1 Individual Ethical Development (Sīla)

At the individual level, these precepts encourage mindfulness (sati), self-restraint, and the cultivation of personal virtue (sīla). Each precept serves as a guide to ethical behavior, helping individuals develop qualities such as compassion, honesty, responsibility, and integrity. Practicing the precepts fosters self-discipline and heightens awareness of the impact one's actions have on oneself and others, promoting a life of ethical purity and self-awareness.

In the *Cūḷakammavibhaṅga Sutta*[5]**,**Discusses how personal virtue *(sīla*) not only refines individual character but also positively impacts one's relationships and society by promoting ethical behavior.

Practicing the Five Precepts reinforces *sīla*, which encourages self-discipline, enhances mindfulness, and cultivates a life of integrity. These precepts promote a heightened awareness of one’s actions and their effects on others, guiding individuals toward a life of ethical purity, responsibility, and empathy.

[1] DN II 61-138, DN-a II 107-207
[2] DN III 48-65, DN-a 29-42
[3] Sn 300-302, Sn-a 175-192
[4] A III 472-478, A-a III 338
[5] MN III 243-248, MN-a III 175-180

2.2 Societal Harmony and Trust

On a broader scale, when the Five Precepts are collectively observed within a community, they establish a foundation of trust, non-violence, and ethical conduct. This collective adherence helps to promote peaceful coexistence and social stability by reducing sources of conflict, such as violence, theft, dishonesty, and irresponsible behavior. The principles enshrined in the precepts lay the groundwork for a society based on mutual respect and compassion.

Siṅgālovāda Sutta[1] provides ethical instructions for laypersons on fostering trust and respect within society. The Buddha emphasizes the importance of non-harmful actions, truthfulness, and responsibility, which collectively support societal harmony.

2.3 Creating a Culture of Non-Violence and Respect

In Pāli literature, the collective observance of the Five Precepts is seen as a means of creating a culture rooted in non-violence, trust, and ethical behavior. Communities that uphold these moral guidelines are characterized by social cohesion, where conflicts are minimized and people coexist with respect for one another's rights and dignity.

Kutadanta Sutta[2]: Describes how communities that observe ethical conduct, like refraining from harm and deceit, experience greater social cohesion, with fewer conflicts and stronger respect among members.

2.4 Relevance in Contemporary Society

The ethical and social implications of the Five Precepts are as relevant in modern contexts as they were in traditional Buddhist societies. They continue to offer a universal framework for ethical behavior, providing timeless guidelines that transcend religious and cultural boundaries. In contemporary settings, the principles of non-violence, honesty, and mindfulness embedded in the Five Precepts remain vital for promoting harmony and trust in increasingly diverse and interconnected societies.

Dīghanakha Sutta[3]: Highlights the importance of mindfulness and non-attachment, principles that align with contemporary movements toward ethical living and mindful awareness, fostering societal welfare and sustainability.

In essence, the Five Precepts play a dual role: they guide individuals in the cultivation of personal virtue while simultaneously shaping the ethical foundations of a peaceful and just society.

3. The Impact of the Five Precepts on Social Harmony

3.1 Fostering Ethical Behavior and Trust

The Five Precepts lay the foundation for a society in which ethical behavior is the norm. When individuals practice non-harm, respect for property, and honesty, they naturally build trust within their communities. Trust, in turn, fosters cooperation, reducing the potential for misunderstandings and conflicts. In Buddhist texts like the *Siṅgālovāda Sutta*[4], the Buddha

---

[1] DN III 146- 157, DN-a III 124-141
[2] DN I 120-142, DN-a I 263-275
[3] MN II 165-169
[4] DN III 146- 157, DN-a III 124-141

emphasizes how ethical conduct based on these precepts strengthens familial and social bonds, creating a harmonious environment.

3.2 Preventing Conflict and Injustice

The precepts serve as safeguards against behaviors that lead to social unrest and discord:

Refraining from killing (*Pāṇātipātā*)prevents violence and encourages a compassionate society.

Refraining from stealing (*Adinnādānā*) promotes fairness and respect for others' rights, reducing the risk of theft, exploitation, and economic inequality.

Refraining from sexual misconduct (*Kāmesumicchācārā*) preserves the dignity of relationships, preventing emotional harm and social instability caused by exploitation or infidelity.

Refraining from false speech (*Musāvādā*) ensures that communication is based on truth, reducing manipulation, deception, and misunderstanding, which often contribute to social and political conflicts.

By encouraging self-restraint, mindfulness, and ethical responsibility, the precepts contribute to a society where crime, corruption, and injustice are minimized. Pāli literature portrays these virtues as essential for preventing the types of conflict that arise from greed, dishonesty, and exploitation.

3.3 Ecological Responsibility and Sustainability

The impact of the Five Precepts extends beyond interpersonal relationships to include concern for the environment. The first precept, which encourages non-harming, has been interpreted in a broader sense in modern discourse, particularly as it applies to animals and ecological systems. This interpretation highlights the interconnectedness of all life and encourages a sense of environmental responsibility. By promoting compassion for all living beings, the precepts align with contemporary sustainability efforts, advocating for the protection of both human and non-human life. This ecological awareness helps to foster harmony not only among people but also between humanity and the natural world.

4. The Five Precepts and Conflict Resolution

4.1 Cultivating Mindfulness and Compassion

The essence of the Five Precepts lies in their ability to encourage individuals to approach situations with mindfulness and compassion. This approach not only prevents harmful actions but also fosters a deep understanding of others' perspectives. Practicing mindfulness allows individuals to recognize their own triggers for negative emotions, promoting a more thoughtful response rather than an impulsive reaction. This shift in awareness is vital for de-escalating potential conflicts before they intensify.

Kāyagatāsati Sutta[1] explores mindfulness of the body, showing how mindfulness practice fosters awareness and self-control, essential for de-escalating conflicts.

[1] MN I 92-118

4.2 Addressing Root Causes of Conflict

The precepts specifically target the underlying causes of conflict:

Refraining from Killing promotes respect for life, creating a culture where violence is less tolerated, and compassion prevails. This foundational respect serves as a bulwark against hostility.

Refraining from Taking What Is Not Given addresses economic inequality, a significant source of social tension. By promoting fairness and respect for others' property, this precept encourages equitable resource distribution, thereby alleviating feelings of injustice and resentment that often lead to conflict.

Pāṇātipātā Veramaṇī in *Cūḷasīhanāda Sutta*[1] advocates respect for life, creating a culture of compassion and peace, which serves as a buffer against violence and hostility.

In the *Dhammapada*[2]**,** Conquer the angry by non-anger; conquer the wicked by goodness; conquer the miser by generosity; conquer the liar by truth." This verse underscores how ethical behavior—like non-harming, honesty, and generosity—can address social discord at its root.

The Role of Truthfulness in Conflict Resolution

The fourth precept, Refraining from False Speech, is crucial for effective conflict resolution. Miscommunication and deceit frequently spark disputes, and fostering open, honest dialogue can mitigate misunderstandings. Truthfulness encourages transparency, allowing individuals to express their concerns without fear of manipulation or retaliation. By creating an environment where all parties feel safe to communicate, the potential for reconciliation increases.

Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta[3] discusses the importance of clarity in speech and mindfulness in communication, contributing to conflict resolution by avoiding harmful speech and encouraging transparency.

In the Dīgha Nikāya, the Buddha emphasizes the power of truthfulness in resolving conflicts. When people commit to honesty, they lay the groundwork for mutual respect and understanding, which are essential for peaceful coexistence.

Empowering Individuals as Agents of Peace

By adhering to the Five Precepts, individuals become agents of peace within their communities. The commitment to ethical conduct cultivates a sense of responsibility towards others, prompting individuals to seek understanding rather than escalation. The practice of loving-kindness (metta), intertwined with the precepts, encourages individuals to respond to hostility with compassion, transforming potential conflicts into opportunities for connection and growth.

Metta Sutta[4] encourages the cultivation of loving-kindness towards all beings, which transforms hostility into compassion, promoting connection and growth instead of conflict.

Cakkavatti Sīhanāda Sutta[5] illustrates how individuals practicing ethical behavior become moral examples, contributing to peace and stability within society.

[1] DN III 48-65, DN-a III 29-42
[2] Dhp 45, Dhp-a II 202
[3] DN II 231-252
[4] Sn 300-302, S-a 175-192
[5] DN III 48-65, DN-a III 29-42

Application in International Diplomacy

The principles encapsulated in the Five Precepts are not limited to personal interactions; they extend to larger contexts, such as international diplomacy. Nations that embrace these ethical guidelines can foster more constructive dialogue and mutual respect. Truthfulness in negotiations, for example, can help build trust between conflicting parties, while a commitment to non-harm can guide diplomatic relations towards peaceful resolutions rather than confrontations.

Cakkavatti Sīhanāda Sutta[1] suggests that rulers should embody non-violence, truthfulness, and fairness, guiding diplomatic relations towards peace.

Siṅgālovāda Sutta[2] describes ethical conduct as essential for maintaining harmonious relationships, which applies to both personal interactions and international diplomacy.

4.3 In instances of international conflict, applying the Five Precepts may facilitate:

Constructive Dialogue: Engaging in honest discussions rooted in respect for all parties involved.

Mutual Respect: Acknowledging the dignity and rights of others, fostering cooperation and collaboration.

De-escalation of Tensions: Addressing underlying grievances through compassionate dialogue rather than forceful measures.

Siṅgālovāda Sutta[3] emphasizes the value of ethical conduct and respect in relationships, creating a social environment conducive to cooperation and reducing conflict.

Mahāparinibbāna Sutta[4] Highlights the importance of non-violence and constructive discourse, relevant to dialogues that prioritize understanding over force in addressing grievances.

Sakkapañha Sutta[5] illustrates how respectful communication and honesty foster mutual respect, laying a foundation for peaceful interaction between opposing parties.

The Five Precepts serve as a profound framework for conflict resolution. By cultivating mindfulness, compassion, and ethical conduct, individuals can effectively address the root causes of conflict and transform hostility into understanding. The precepts not only promote personal virtue but also enhance social harmony and stability, making them vital tools for navigating conflicts at all levels, from interpersonal relationships to international diplomacy. Through their application, individuals and communities are better equipped to create a culture of peace and reconciliation, ultimately contributing to a more harmonious world.

4.4 The Global Relevance of the Five Precepts in Addressing Contemporary Challenges

1. Environmental Sustainability

The first precept, which emphasizes non-violence toward all living beings, resonates deeply with modern environmental ethics. A commitment to non-harming naturally extends to the protection of ecosystems and biodiversity. This ethical stance encourages individuals and communities to

[1] Ibid
[2] DN III 146-157, DN-a III 124-141
[3] DN III 146-157, DN-a III 124-141
[4] DN II 61-138, DN-a II 107-207
[5] DN II 211-230

recognize their interconnectedness with the environment, promoting actions that safeguard the planet.

Cakkavatti Sīhanāda Sutta[1] advocates for rulers to protect all life, from humans to animals, which parallels modern environmental protection practices.

Metta Sutta[2] encourages kindness and compassion towards all beings, laying an ethical basis for actions that protect ecosystems and biodiversity in a modern context.

Buddhist communities worldwide have integrated the principles of the Five Precepts into their practices, leading initiatives aimed at environmental preservation. For example, many monasteries and lay organizations engage in reforestation projects, wildlife conservation, and sustainable agricultural practices. These efforts demonstrate the practical application of the precepts in global conservation, emphasizing a holistic approach to living in harmony with nature.

2. Human Rights and Social Justice

The second precept, which promotes fairness and respect for others, along with the third precept regarding sexual misconduct, aligns closely with global human rights initiatives. By advocating for the ethical treatment of individuals and reducing exploitation, these precepts contribute to a more just and equitable world.

Dhammapada Verses 256-257[3] highlight the importance of justice and impartiality, encouraging society to reject oppression and strive for fairness, aligning with principles that oppose social inequalities.

In contemporary society, where social inequalities are rampant, the ethical teachings embodied in the Five Precepts encourage individuals to challenge oppressive systems and advocate for the rights of marginalized communities. Initiatives that promote equity, inclusivity, and social justice are often grounded in the ethical principles reflected in the precepts, highlighting their relevance in fostering a more compassionate global community.

3. Mindfulness in Governance

The fifth precept, which discourages the use of intoxicants , underscores the importance of mental clarity and self-control. In the realm of governance, these principles can be applied to encourage ethical decision-making free from corruption or impaired judgment. Leaders who embody the virtues of the precepts are more likely to act in the best interests of their constituents, promoting peace and stability through responsible governance.

Mindful leadership, informed by the ethical framework of the Five Precepts, emphasizes accountability, transparency, and respect for human dignity. This approach can counteract political unrest and corruption, leading to policies that promote social cohesion and equitable resource distribution. By adhering to these ethical guidelines, leaders can inspire trust within their communities and foster an environment conducive to peaceful coexistence.

Siṅgālovāda Sutta[4] advocates for mindful behavior and sober responsibility, which is especially pertinent to those in leadership, promoting peace and stability.

[1] DN III 48-65, DN-a III 29-42
[2] Sn 300-302, Sn-a 175-192
[3] Dhp 50
[4] DN III 146-157, DN-a III 124-141

Cakkavatti Sīhanāda Sutta[1] encourages rulers to prioritize the well-being of their people through honesty and integrity, supporting governance practices that foster public trust and prevent unrest.

Mahāparinibbāna Sutta[2] addresses the role of mindfulness in effective and responsible governance, showing how clear-headedness can lead to peace, transparency, and fair policy.

In summary, the Five Precepts in Pāli literature offer a robust ethical foundation that is profoundly relevant to contemporary global challenges. By embracing principles of non-violence, fairness, and mindfulness, individuals and societies can contribute to solutions that address issues such as climate change, social inequality, and political unrest. The practical application of these precepts encourages a holistic understanding of interconnectedness, promoting a sustainable and just world. As societies grapple with complex challenges, the ethical teachings of the Five Precepts provide a guiding light, fostering a commitment to peace, compassion, and social responsibility on a global scale.

5. The Five Precepts as a Model for Global Peacebuilding

5.1 A Holistic Approach to Peacebuilding

The Five Precepts encourage individuals to cultivate non-violence, truthfulness, and mindful living. This holistic approach addresses the root causes of conflict, including aggression, deceit, and ignorance. By fostering an environment where empathy, compassion, and mutual respect prevail, the precepts lay the groundwork for building peaceful relationships within and between communities.

Cakkavatti Sīhanāda Sutta[3] describes the responsibility of a ruler to uphold the principles of non-harming and respect for others, thereby promoting peace and stability in society.

Metta Sutta[4] promotes a worldview rooted in compassion and non-violence, encouraging individuals to cultivate attitudes of goodwill towards all beings, which aligns with non-violence and empathy as pillars of peacebuilding.

Dhammapada Verses 223[5] conquer anger by love; conquer evil by good; conquer the miser with generosity, and the liar with truth." This verse supports the Five Precepts' approach to transforming hostility into peace by advocating virtues that counteract the roots of conflict.

5.2 Addressing Root Causes of Conflict and Injustice

The emphasis on ethical conduct inherent in the Five Precepts directly targets the underlying factors contributing to conflict and social injustice. For instance, the precept against taking what is not given encourages respect for the rights and property of others, promoting fairness and equity. By cultivating these virtues, individuals can help mitigate the tensions that often lead to violence and strife.

Siṅgālovāda Sutta[1] details the social duties that individuals have towards one another, emphasizing ethical behavior as a foundation for social justice and mutual respect.

---

[1] DN III 48-65, DN-a III 29-42
[2] DN II 61-138, DN-a II 107-207
[3] DN III 146-157, DN-a III 124-141
[4] Sn 300-302, Sn-a 175-192
[5] Dhp 46

Adinnādānā Veramaṇī in the Dhammapada verse 308[2] reinforces respect for others' property and rights, discouraging greed and exploitation as these often lead to societal tension and conflict.

Mahāparinibbāna Sutta[3] illustrates the importance of ethical behavior, where self-restraint and justice contribute to a peaceful society by addressing root causes of societal discord.

5.3 Practical Guidelines for Contemporary Peacebuilding

In contemporary peacebuilding efforts, the Five Precepts provide practical guidelines that can shape dialogue and understanding. Their ethical framework can influence policies aimed at addressing pressing global issues such as inequality, environmental degradation, and international conflict. For example, promoting sustainable practices aligns with the non-harming principle, advocating for the protection of both people and the planet.

Siṅgālovāda Sutta[4] highlights the importance of transparency and honesty in communication, crucial for rebuilding trust and facilitating meaningful dialogue in peacebuilding.

The First Precept and Environmental Ethics in Jātaka Tales: Many tales, like the *Ruru Jātaka*[5], depict the Bodhisattva demonstrating compassion for animals and nature, emphasizing non-harming in a way that aligns with sustainable environmental practices.

Mahāsīhanāda Sutta[6] describes the Buddha’s teaching on moral discipline, which serves as a practical guideline for living ethically in a way that promotes social cohesion and mitigates harm, making it an applicable model for peacebuilding efforts.

Furthermore, the commitment to truthfulness fosters transparent communication, which is crucial for resolving misunderstandings and rebuilding trust in divided communities. By integrating the precepts into conflict resolution strategies, peacebuilders can create a foundation for dialogue that is respectful and constructive.

5.4 Fostering Cooperation Across Borders

The universal values embedded in the Five Precepts transcend cultural and national boundaries, making them relevant in diverse contexts. As societies become increasingly interconnected, the ethical principles of the precepts can serve as a common ground for cooperation and collaboration. By promoting shared values of non-violence and respect, communities can work together to address global challenges, fostering a spirit of solidarity that enhances global peace.

In the Dhammapada verse 5[7] hatred never ceases by hatred, but by love alone is healed." This verse underscores the precept of non-violence as a universal principle, highlighting the need for a shared commitment to peace in multicultural contexts.

Cakkavatti Sīhanāda Sutta[1] encourages leaders to promote social harmony, laying a foundation for peace that transcends regional and national boundaries.

---

[1] DN III 146-157, DN-a III 124-141
[2] Dhp 57
[3] DN II 61-138, DN-a II 107-207
[4] DN III 146-157, DN-a III 124-141
[5] Sn 270-272, Sn-a IV 256-263
[6] MN I 97-118, MN-a I 325-359
[7] Dhp 14

Mahāparinibbāna Sutta[2] describes the Buddha's teachings as universal, applicable beyond cultural divides, thus emphasizing that these ethical principles can serve as a unifying foundation for cooperation.

In conclusion, the Five Precepts offer a comprehensive model for global peacebuilding that integrates individual ethical conduct with broader social and environmental responsibilities. By promoting non-violence, truthfulness, and mindful living, the precepts provide a solid foundation for addressing the root causes of conflict and injustice. Their collective application can shape policies and practices that lead to a more peaceful and harmonious world. As we face increasingly complex global challenges, the ethical teachings of the Five Precepts remain a vital resource for fostering dialogue, understanding, and cooperation across borders, ultimately contributing to the building of a more just and peaceful society.

Discussion

The findings of this study highlight the multifaceted role of the Five Precepts in promoting ethical living and fostering global peace. Each precept, while focused on individual behavior, has significant implications for social cohesion, conflict resolution, and ethical governance. By embedding these principles into the fabric of society, communities can cultivate environments conducive to trust, compassion, and mutual respect.

Significance of the Five Precepts in Modern Contexts

In an era where the world faces unprecedented challenges such as political instability, social inequality, and environmental degradation, the ethical framework provided by the Five Precepts becomes increasingly relevant. The principles of non-harm, integrity, and mindfulness resonate deeply with contemporary movements advocating for human rights, social justice, and sustainability.

Addressing Global Issues through Ethical Living

The Five Precepts encourage individuals to adopt behaviors that promote not only their own well-being but also the well-being of others. This reciprocal relationship is crucial in addressing pressing global issues such as poverty, violence, and environmental destruction. By fostering a culture of ethical living, communities can develop sustainable solutions that benefit all members of society.

Transcending Cultural Boundaries

The universality of the Five Precepts allows them to transcend cultural and religious boundaries, providing a common ethical ground for diverse populations. Their emphasis on fundamental human values—such as compassion, honesty, and responsibility—makes them a viable framework for interfaith dialogue and collaboration aimed at peace-building.

Practical Applications in Policy and Education

Integrating the Five Precepts into educational systems and policy-making can significantly enhance ethical awareness and civic responsibility. Educational initiatives that promote mindfulness, empathy, and ethical decision-making can help cultivate future generations who are

---

[1] DN III 146-157, DN-a III 124-141
[2] DN II 61-138, DN-a II 107-207

not only aware of their moral obligations but also committed to fostering social harmony and global peace.

Challenges and Considerations

While the Five Precepts provide a strong ethical foundation, challenges remain in their application across diverse cultural contexts. Variations in interpretation and practice can lead to misunderstandings or resistance, particularly in secular or pluralistic societies. It is essential to approach the integration of these precepts with sensitivity to local customs and values, ensuring that they are presented as complementary to existing ethical frameworks rather than as prescriptive mandates.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the Five Precepts of Buddhism serve as a powerful ethical framework for fostering global peace and promoting ethical living in contemporary society. Their principles—centered on non-harm, honesty, integrity, and mindfulness—offer practical guidance for individuals and communities seeking to cultivate a culture of peace and social responsibility. The Five Precepts, though ancient in origin, offer a profoundly relevant approach to modern ethical challenges and global peace. By guiding individuals toward compassionate and mindful behavior, they cultivate a peaceful existence that benefits both the individual and society. When embraced collectively, the Five Precepts provide a blueprint for fostering social harmony, resolving conflicts, and addressing global issues such as human rights and environmental sustainability. Through their practical application, the world can move closer to achieving lasting peace and harmony.

The findings of this study affirm that the Five Precepts have a significant impact on individual behavior and collective societal dynamics. By encouraging ethical conduct, the precepts contribute to building trust, reducing conflict, and fostering social cohesion. Their universal applicability further underscores their relevance as a tool for addressing the ethical dilemmas faced by a diverse and interconnected world.

To harness the potential of the Five Precepts effectively, it is crucial to integrate these principles into educational curricula, community initiatives, and policy frameworks. By doing so, societies can cultivate environments that prioritize ethical living, ultimately contributing to the realization of global peace and harmony.

As we navigate the complexities of the modern world, the Five Precepts offer timeless wisdom and guidance. Embracing these principles not only enriches individual lives but also paves the way for a more compassionate and just global society. Through collective commitment to ethical living grounded in the Five Precepts, we can aspire to create a world where peace, understanding, and cooperation prevail.

Acknowledgement

I would like to give my special thanks to Dr. Win Win Yi, Professor and Head, Department of Oriental Studies; University of Yangon who has given the most valuable guidance in detail for preparation of this paper. And I also give my thanks to Dr. Theingi Cho, Professor and Head, Department of Oriental Studies; Yangon University of Distance Education.

References

Pāḷi Texts (The following texts are referred to the Chaṭṭhasaṅghāyanā edition in Buddha Sāsana Council, Yangon.

Aṅguttara Pāḷi. ().Kabaraye,Yangon: Ministry of Religious Affairs.

Dhammapada Pāḷi. (1961). Kabaraye, Yangon: Ministry of Religious Affairs.

Itivuttaka Pāḷi. (1961). Kabaraye, Yangon: Ministry of Religious Affairs.

Jātaka Pāḷi. (1960). Kabaraye, Yangon: Ministry of Religious Affairs.

Mahāvagga Pāḷi. (1957). Kabaraye, Yangon: Ministry of Religious Affairs.

Majjhimapaňňāsa Pāḷi. (1956). Kabaraye, Yangon: Ministry of Religious Affairs.

Mūlapaňňāsa Pāḷi. (1956). Kabaraye, Yangon: Ministry of Religious Affairs.

Pāthikavagga Pāḷi. (1957). Kabaraye,Yangon: Ministry of Religious Affairs.

Saṁyutta Pāḷi. (1957).Kabaraye,Yangon: Ministry of Religious Affairs.

Suttanipāta Pāḷi. (1961). Kabaraye, Yangon: Ministry of Religious Affairs.

Buddhaghosa Mahāthera, Bhaddanta. (1957). Majjimapaňňāsa Aṭṭhakathā. Kabaraye,Yangon: Ministry of Religious Affairs.

Buddhaghosa Mahāthera, Bhaddanta. (1957). *Saṁyutta* Aṭṭhakathā. Kabaraye,Yangon: Ministry of Religious Affairs.

Buddhaghosa Mahāthera, Bhaddanta. (1958). Aṅguttara Aṭṭhakathā. Kabaraye,Yangon: Ministry of Religious Affairs.

Buddhaghosa Mahāthera, Bhaddanta. (1959). Jātaka Aṭṭhakathā. Kabaraye,Yangon: Ministry of Religious Affairs.

Buddhaghosa Mahāthera, Bhaddanta. (1959). Pāthikavagga Aṭṭhakathā. Kabaraye,Yangon: Ministry of Religious Affairs.

Buddhaghosa Mahāthera, Bhaddanta. (1959). Suttanipāta Aṭṭhakathā. Kabaraye,Yangon: Ministry of Religious Affairs.

Buddhaghosa Mahāthera, Bhaddanta. (1970). Mūlapaňňāsa Aṭṭhakathā. Kabaraye,Yangon: Ministry of Religious Affairs.

Buddhaghosa Mahāthera, Bhaddanta. (1992). Dhammapada Aṭṭhakathā. Kabaraye, Yangon: Ministry of Religious Affairs.

Buddhaghosa Mahāthera, Bhaddanta. (1993). Itivuttaka Aṭṭhakathā. Kabaraye,Yangon: Ministry of Religious Affairs.

Buddhaghosa Mahāthera, Bhaddanta. (1993). Mahāvagga Aṭṭhakathā. Kabaraye,Yangon: Ministry of Religious Affairs.

Secondary Sources

Buddha Net (2004). The Five Precepts. Sydney, Australia. Buddha Net Publication.

Peter Harvey. (2010). USA. Journal of Buddhist Ethics.

Promoting Global Peace through Buddhist Precepts. (2020). India. International Journal of Creative Research.

Ven. S.Bhammika. (2004). Good Question, Good Answer. Sydney, Australia. Buddha Net Publication.

Vivek Sharma (2023). The Way to Global Peace: ABuddhist Perspective. Japan. International Academic Forum.

J. Myanmar Acad. Arts Sci. 2026 **Vol. XXIII. No.5**

QUALITIES OF LEADERSHIP: ABSTAINING FROM FOUR TYPES OF BIASE

Kyaw Sein Win[1]

Abstract

The development and success of an organization depend not only on each individual but also on the leader of the organization. A leader must maintain fairness towards those they are leading. Only by being free from biased practices and corruption can one be a person of complete moral integrity. This paper outlines the four types of biase. These biases – desire(*chandāgati*), aversion(*dosāgati*), delusion(mohāgati), and fear(bhayāgati) – are mental distortions that lead to unethical conduct in both personal societal contexts. *Agati* or bias is not a positive quality of a leader but rather represents pitfalls that a leader must avoid to maintain ethical and effective leadership. The concept of *Agati* is closely related to the moral and ethical standards that Buddhist literature holds for leaders, particularly in how one should exercise one's power and judgment. This paper explores the concept of *Agati* in Buddhist literature, examining its significance and ethical implications through the analysis of Pāḷi canonical texts, commentaries and other texts using descriptive and explanatory methods. This paper aims to overcome *Agati* in order to cultivate moral clarity and ethical decision-making, according to the Buddhist principles, and to disappear of corruption in the society. In this paper, it can be found that individuals engaging in *agati* experience downfall, whereas those who avoid *agati* attain success in life.

Keywords: *agati*, desire, aversion, delusion, fear, leader

Introduction

In every organization in the world, it is necessary to have a leader. There are many principles that one must practice to be a good leader. Just as there are principles to follow, there are also things to avoid. Among them, corruption or bias is one of the things to avoid. A good leader must refrain from bias. A leader has the responsibility to ensure justice, unity and peace within the organization they lead. Only when a society is free from bias can there be justice, peace and stability. Each individual has a responsibility to contribute to a society free from partiality. However, acts of corruption are prevalent in society, leading to bias and injustice. It is found in Pāḷi literature that disadvantages resulting from corruption, as well as advantages of being free from corruption, are described. In Buddhist literature, *Agati* refers to the four kinds of bias or wrong paths that lead to moral corruption and poor judgment.

Materials and Methods

Data used in this research paper are collected from the Pāḷi texts, Commentaries and other texts. In writing this research, descriptive and explanatory methods are used.

Research Questions

1. Why is avoiding bias (*agati*) important for leadership?
2. What are the advantages of avoiding bias (*agati*)?
3. What are the disadvantages of pursuing bias (*agati*)?

[1] Department of Oriental Studies, University of Mandalay

The Meaning of *Agati*

The Pāḷi word "*Agati*" means partiality, corruption, going towards what should not be pursued, or moving where one should not go, deviating from rightful path, and wrong course of action[1]. Pursuing of *Agati* refers to committing the act of partiality. In society, there are many forms of partiality. Leaders of the societies need to be free from partiality. However, due to various reasons, some leaders commit acts of injustice and partiality. There are numerous reasons behind such acts of corruption, but in Pāḷi literature, *agati* refers to the four wrong paths or biases that lead to poor judgment and unethical actions. These are:

(1) *Chandāgati* (bias due to desire),
(2) *Dosāgati* (bias due to aversion),
(3) *Mohāgati* (bias due to delusion),
(4) *Bhayāgati* (bias due to fear).[2]

These biases are viewed as obstacles that distort judgment, leading to unethical behavior. These biases are not only personal afflictions but can also influence larger societal and political decisions, leading to widespread corruption and injustice. Leaders are expected to uphold ethical principles and maintain impartiality, fairness, and wisdom in their decisions. A leader who is free from *Agati* is considered more capable of making just and moral decisions that benefit the people they lead. In the Jātaka Pāḷi text, the qualities of an ideal ruler or leader are described such as:

(1) *Dāna* (Generosity)
(2) *Sīla* (Moral Conduct)
(3) *Pariccāga* (Self-Sacrifice)
(4) *Ajjava* (Honesty)
(5) *Maddava* (Gentleness)
(6) *Tapa* (Self-Control)
(7) *Akkodha* (Non-Anger)
(8) *Avihiṃsa* (Non-Violence)
(9) *Khantī* (Patience)
(10) *Avirodha* (Non-Opposition to Justice).[3]

To practice these virtues, a leader must actively avoid the *Agati* biases. The presence of any of these biases can corrupt leadership and lead to unethical decisions, injustice, and suffering. A leader who succumbs to *Agati* violates these virtues by allowing personal desires, biases, or emotions to cloud their judgment.

In the Mahācattārīsaka Sutta, the Buddha specifically addresses the four agati, explaining how a person may act out of desire, aversion, delusion, or fear. The Buddha delivered that decisions and judgments must not be influenced by fear, as it leads to partiality and the corruption of justice.[4]

[1] Vinaya Piṭaka, Mahāvagga Pāḷi, (2007), 483-484.
[2] Dīghanikāya, Sīlakkhada Vagga Pāḷi, (1956), 191.
[3] Jātaka Pāḷi (Dutiyo Bhāgo), (1961), 92.
[4] Majjhima Nikāya, Uparipaṇṇāsa Pāḷi, (1956), 116.

Chandāgati (Bias due to Desire)

The word *chandāgati* means behaving the wrong action of bias due to desire or attachment[1]. A leader driven by *chandāgati* may show favoritism or engage in corruption for personal gain. *Chandāgati* can lead a leader to favour friends or family members, promoting nepotism in every institution. *Chandāgati* arises when a person acts out of excessive attachment, passion, or desire for something. One may favour someone in decision-making because of personal affection or *Chandāgati* that arises in one.

Nature of *Chandāgati*

As *chandāgati* refers to the bias that arises from excessive desire or attachment, it can lead individuals to favor those they are attracted to or to pursue selfish gain at the expense of ethical principles. The craving (*taṇhā*) influences *chandāgati*. The nature of craving can be found in the Dhammapada Pāḷi texts as follow:

"The craving of one given to heedless living grows like a creeper. Like the monkey seeking fruits in the forest, he leaps from life to life."[2]

"Just as a tree, though cut down, sprouts up again if its roots remain uncut and firm, even so until the craving that lies dormant is rooted out, suffering springs up again and again."[3]

"Beset by craving, people run about like an entrapped hare. Therefore, one who yearns to be passion-free should destroy his own craving."[4]

Overcoming *Chandāgati*

Focusing on mindfulness (*Satipaṭṭhāna*) is crucial in overcoming biases, including those driven by desire. In the Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta, it emphasizes the practice of insight meditation to see the true nature of phenomena, leading to the reduction of attachment or desire. Practicing of mindfulness (*Sati*) in the Sutta outlines the importance of mindfulness in observing one's own thoughts and feelings about pleasure, which can help on managing and overcoming desire.[5]

In the Mahāhatthipadopama Sutta, it explains that understanding the impermanence of sensual pleasures helps in overcoming desire. Recognizing that pleasures are transient can reduce attachment.[6]

The Story of the King and the Golden Goose (Mahā Haṃsa Jātaka)

This is the story of a king who becomes enamored with a golden goose. In his desire to possess the goose, the king makes unjust decisions, harming others in the process. His bias of desire clouds his judgment, causing him disregard fairness and compassion. In this tale, a golden goose, the bodhisatta, was sought by a king who initially wants to possess it because of his

[1] Vinaya Piṭaka, Pārājika Pāḷi, (2007), 348.
[2] Dhammapada, (2007), 61.
[3] Dhammapada, (2007), 62.
[4] Dhammapada, (2007), 62.
[5] Dīghanikāya, Mahāvagga Pāḷi, (1956), 231.
[6] Majjhimanikāya, Mūlapaṇṇāsa Pāḷi, (1956), 242.

affection for his wife. However, the goose teaches the king valuable lessons about righteousness, compassion, and the futility of greed, leading and the king to change his ways.[1]

This story exemplifies how *chandagati* can corrupt leadership. The king's desire leads to actions that betray his duty to protect and serve his people. It emphasizes the need for restraint and impartiality in decision-making, qualities that are compromised when desire becomes the motivating force.

Dosāgati(Bias Due To Aversion)

Dosagati can be defined as "wrong course through hatred".[2] *Dosagati* can results in a leader discriminating against certain groups out of personal dislike or hatred. An individual influenced by *Dosagati* may make unfair or harmful decisions due to personal grudges or dislike.

The Nature of *Dosāgati*

Dosagati arises from hated, anger, or aversion, causing one to act unjustly toward those they dislike or resent. When a person is guided by anger or hostility, the person may make unfair judgments or acts unjustly towards others. It is often associated with resentment, prejudice, or vindictiveness. *Dosagatai* obstructs one's ability to act with wisdom and compassion.

The danger of harboring anger and teaching that hatred does not cease through hatred but only through love are described in the Dhammapada Pāḷi as follow:

"He abused me, he struck me, he overpowered me, he robbed me." Those who harbor such thoughts do not still their hatred."[3]

"He abused me, he struck me, he overpowered me, he robbed me." Those who do not harbor such thoughts still their hatred."[4]

"Hatred is never appeased by hatred in this world. By non-hatred alone is hatred appeased. This is a law eternal."[5]

Therefore, a leader or each individual should avoid from harboring anger that leads to wrong conduct or decision through hatred or personal dislikes.

Overcoming *Dosāgati*

Loving-kindness is a primary antidote to hatred. It is the sincere wish for the happiness and well-being of all beings. In the Mettā Sutta, it describes that developing loving-kindness brings about peace and destroys hatred. Practicing loving-kindness can counteract the mind's tendency to fall into hatred.[6]

Understanding the law of kamma can help reduce hatred by fostering mindfulness of the consequences of actions. When one realizes that hatred harmful actions bring about suffering, it becomes easier to abstain from ill-will. In the Cūḷakammavibhaṅga Sutta, it is explained that how

---

[1] Jātaka Aṭṭhakathā, Pañcamo Bhāgo, (1959), 377-407.
[2] Vinaya Piṭaka, Mahāvagga Pāḷi, (2007), 395.
[3] Dhammapada, (2007), 13.
[4] Dhammapada, (2007), 13.
[5] Dhammapada, (2007), 14.
[6] Suttanipāta, (2007), 300.

one's action influences future experiences. By reflecting on how hateful thoughts lead to negative karmic results, one can become more inclined to abandon anger and adopt wholesome mental states.[1]

In the Attadanda Sutta, it conveys that fear and hatred arise from attachment and ignorance. Understanding the consequences of such mental state helps in abandoning them.[2]

Compassion is another antidote to hatred. When one sees that other beings suffer just like oneself, it becomes harder to harbor ill-will against them. In the Mahā Rāhulovāda Sutta, the Buddha advises his son Rāhula to develop compassion toward all beings to counteract harmful thoughts and behaviors.[3]

Developing patience and forgiveness are powerful practices in overcoming hatred. By practicing patience in the face of anger or provocation, one avoids harmful speech and actions driven by hatred. The Buddha explains, in the Akkosa Sutta, how one should respond to anger with calmness and patience, like a well-trained elephant that does not retaliate when attacked.[4]

Equanimity known as *Upekkhā* is the balanced, calm state of mind that helps to avoid falling into extremes like hatred or attachment. In the Subha Sutta, the Buddha speaks of the importance of equanimity as a virtue that balances the mind, preventing it from succumbing to anger or ill-will.[5]

The Story of the Monkey King and the Human King (Mahākapi Jātaka)

This is the Jātaka tale named Mahākapi Jātaka about a human king harbours deep aversion towards a wise monkey king, despite the latter'kindness. The human king's hatred blinds him to the monkey king's virtues, leading to cruel and unfair treatment. In this story, the wise and kind monkey king saves his troop from the human king, who harbors jealousy and hatred towards him despite the monkey king's goodwill. To save his troop, the monkey king forms a bridge with his own body, allowing the monkeys to escape across a river. Despite his heroic act, the human king shoots the monkey king with an arrow. However, before dying, the monkey king advised the human king on the importance of compassion and kindness. Deeply moved by the monkey's sacrifice, the human king repents and gives him a proper burial, learning a valuable lesson in compassion and leadership.[6]

Mohāgāti(Bias Due to Delusion)

Mohagati leads to poor judgment based on ignorance or misunderstanding. *Mohagati* can cloud a leader's judgment, leading them to make uniformed or harmful decisions. *Mohagati* means "delusion or ignorance".[7] This bias occurs when a person is misled by ignorance, confusion, or misunderstanding. Delusion clouds one's ability to discern right from wrong,

---

[1] Majjhimanikāya, Uparipaṇṇāsa, (1956), 243.
[2] Suttanipāta, (2007), 424.
[3] Majjhimanikāya, Uparipaṇṇāsa, (1956), 83.
[4] Saṃyuttanikāya, Sagāthāvaggasaṃyutta Pāḷi, (1957), 163.
[5] Majjhimanikāya, Majjhimapaṇṇāsa, (1956), 413.
[6] Jātaka Aṭṭhakathā (Tatiyo Bhāgo), (1959), 349.
[7] Vinaya Piṭaka, Mahāvagga Pāḷi, (2007), 395.

leading to poor decisions based on false beliefs or misinterpretations. Ignorance can also involve self-deception, where one fails to see one's own faults.

The Nature of *Mohāgati*

Mohāgati is the tendency or path of delusion that clouds understanding of reality, leading to ignorance and suffering. *Mohāgati* refers to actions or decisions based on delusion or ignorance. When one is driven by confusion or a lack of clear understanding, they make wrong judgments.

In the Avijjā Sutta, *avijja* or ignorance is identified as the root cause of unwholesome actions. It is said that because of *avijja*, beings wander in *saṃsāra*. In this sutta, *moha* (delusion) is synonymous with *avijja,* highlighting its fundamental role in keeping beings trapped in the cycle of suffering.[1]

It explains in the Dvedhavitakka Sutta how wrong thoughts are rooted in delusion, and how delusion leads to mental proliferation, fueling attachment and aversion. Delusion is contrasted with wisdom (*paññā*), which leads to liberation from suffering.[2]

Overcoming *Mohāgati*

Regularly listening to and contemplating the Dhamma helps dispel ignorance. Knowledge of the Dhamma provides clarity on the nature of existence, leading one away from the wrong path of delusion. The Sappurisa Sutta explains the characteristics of a true person and emphasizes the importance of learning and understanding the Dhamma as a means to overcome desuion.[3]

Wisdom is the direct antidote to delusion. Through the cultivation of wisdom, one understands the true nature of existence, leading to the eradication of ignorance. In the Mahāvedalla Sutta, it discusses the relationship between wisdom and ignorance. It states that delusion can be overcome by developing wisdom.[4]

The Mahā Dhammapāla Jātaka

This jātaka highlights how the Buddha, in a past life, exemplified wisdom and the avoidance of biases, specifically ignorance and delusion. In this jātaka, the Bodhisatta is born as Dhammapāla, the son of a wealthy and virtuous family in Bārāṇasī. The family was known for their righteous conduct, and Dhammapāla was raised with great care and devotion. One day, he was sent to learn under a famous teacher. The teacher, however, was greedy and negligent, teaching only for money and favor, rather than out of genuine concern for his student's understanding. The teacher failed to teach the children properly.

The father of Dhammapāla, being wise, recognized that the teacher's ignorance and greed were affecting the education of his son. He decided to confront the teacher about his negligence. He lost his reputation and wealth. In the end, Dhammapāla's father explained to the teacher that being guided by ignorance (*Mohagati*) leads to suffering and misguided actions. He advised the teacher to avoid biases and to cultivate wisdom and sincerity in teaching. The father's wisdom

[1] Aṅguttara Nikāya III, (1960), 346.
[2] Majjhimanikāya, Mūlapaṇṇāsa, (1956), 161.
[3] Majjhimanikāya, Uparipaṇṇāsa, (1956), 86.
[4] Majjhimanikāya, Mūlapaṇṇāsa, (1956), 365.

and calm demeanor helped the teacher realize his delusion and greed, leading him to change his ways.[1]

This story illustrates the importance of wisdom in overcoming delusion and emphasizes how biases such as ignorance, desire, fear, and anger can lead people astray. It also highlights the need for integrity and sincerity, especially in positions of authority and teaching, where one's actions deeply impact others.

Bhayāgati (Bias Due to Fear)

Bhayāgati can be defined as that one does not act according to what is right due to fear of consequences, harm, or punishment.[2] Acting out of fear leads to decisions influenced by anxiety or concern over potential negative consequences. Fear can make individuals compromise their integrity, avoiding what is right in order to protect themselves from harm or loss. A person may fail to stand up for justice because they fear retaliation.

Bhayāgati might cause a leader to act unethically to protect their own power or avoid negative consequences. *Bhayāgati* results in decisions made to protect oneself rather than uphold justice or the welfare of others.

The Nature of *Bhayāgati*

Bhayāgati, or acting out of fear, refers to making unwholesome decisions, taking unjust actions, or adopting an improper course of conduct due to fear. Fear can cloud one's judgment, leading to partiality or unfairness.

In the Brahmajāla Sutta, it is mentioned that the four agati as paths one should avoid, especially for those in positions of judgment or authority. *Bhayāgati* is noted as one of the reasons why people make unjust or unethical decisions.[3]

The consequences of *kamma* can be found in the Cūḷakammavibhaṅga Sutta. Although this sutta focuses on the workings of *kamma*, it emphasizes the importance of actions being free from the influences of fear, greed, hatred, or delusion. Decisions influenced by *Bhayāgati* lead to unwholesome karmic consequences.[4]

Overcoming *Bhayāgati*

To overcome *Bhayāgati*, it is needed to know why fear (*Bhayā*) arises in man. It is found that the five causes of fear are described in the Sārajja Sutta. They are –

(1) Lack of Faith (*saddhā*)

(2) Lack of Morality (*sīla*)

(3) Lack of insight or Wisdom (paññā)

(4) Laziness (*ālasya*)

(5) Lack of Knowledge (*bahussuta*).[5]

---

[1] Jātaka Aṭṭhakathā (Catuttho Bhāgo), (1959), 49-55.
[2] Vinaya Piṭaka, Pārājika Pāḷi, (2007), 346.
[3] Dīghanikāya, Sīlakkhandavagga, (1956), 1.
[4] Majjhimanikāya, Uparipaṇṇāsa, (1956), 243.
[5] Aṅguttara Nikāya II, (1960), 161.

These are the causes that lead to fear. By avoiding these five causes, one can overcome fear.

One has to cultivate mindfulness, wisdom, and moral integrity, ensuring that one's decisions are not influenced by fear or any of the other unwholesome states that lead to agati.

The Consequences of Pursuing and Avoiding *Agati*

It is stated in the Tatiya agati Sutta that if a person transgresses the law out of love, hatred, fear, or ignorance, that person's virtues and strengths will wane like the moon during the waning phase. If a person does not do so, that person's virtues and strengths will flourish like the moon during the waxing phase.[1]

According to the Dhammapada verses (256), a person who behaves unjustly because of bias will face social consequences and damage the person's reputation.[2] In the Cūḷa Kamma Vibhaṅga Sutta, it is stated that bias causes one to accumulate bad Kamma, which brings about suffering in this life and future life. Bad actions based on bias lead to unfavorable rebirths.[3]

Partiality can lead to conflicts, mistrust, and discord within families, communities, and societies, as described in the Mahāparinibbāna Sutta. Avoiding partiality leads to the development of virtues such as truthfulness, fairness, and wisdom. It is also stated in the Mahāparinibbāna Sutta that by practicing impartiality, one fosters harmony and trust in relationships, whether in personal life or in society.[4]

In the Dhammapada verse (257), it is described that those who act justly without bias gain the respect and admiration of others, building a good reputation.[5]

It can now be known that pursuing *agati* will face such harmful consequences while avoiding *agati* can get many good benefits.

Findings and Discussion

The development, stability, peace, prosperity and impartiality of an organization depend on the leader who is leading it. Therefore, it is very important for a leader to have good moral character and a high mental state. Among the principles of moral conduct to be followed, avoiding of corruption is also included as one of them. If a leader is free from the four forms of corruption, every nation, organization, and family will experience peace, prosperity, and unity. In this world, various forms of injustice, partiality, and oppression continue to occur in society. Whether among friends, within families, in schools, or at workplace, partiality and corruption, known as *agati* or unethical conduct persist. There are four reasons why people engage in corruption: partiality due to affection, partiality due to hatred, partiality due to ignorance, and partiality due to fear. If corruption spreads within an organization, starting from the leader down to the lower levels, that organization will lose its unity and begin to deteriorate. The negative

[1] Aṅgutanikāya I, (1960), 326.
[2] Dhammapada, (2007), 50.
[3] Majjhimanikāya, Uparipaṇṇāsa, (1956), 243.
[4] Dīghanikāya Mahāvagga Pāḷi, (1956), 62.
[5] Dhammapada, (2007), 50.

impact of corruption is immense, extending from the breakdown of individual integrity to the disintegration of unity to the entire nation.

Conclusion

This paper outlines the causes of corruption and examines its potential benefits and harms. The exemplary stories of Jātaka have also been presented for example in this paper. It aims to provide an understanding of the nature of bias and its consequences. The paper is presented with the hope that it may contribute, in part, to the elimination of corruption. An organization led by a leader free from the four types of misconduct will be stable and peaceful. In Pali literature, it has been observed that the negative consequences arise from engaging in bias or *agati*, while benefits are gained from refraining from bias or *agati*. Each individual within a society lack of corruption will be able to enjoy benefits such as stability, peace, fairness, and unity. A leader must govern impartially and fairly, free from bias. Among the qualities that a leader should possess is avoiding corruption or bias. If both the leader and each follower are free from corruption, it will result in a family, organization, society and the whole nation characterized by fairness, equality, peace, prosperity and justice.

When leaders embody the virtue of abstaining from the four types of bias (desire, aversion, delusion, and fear) they become a pillar of stability and integrity. This impartiality fosters trust and confidence within families, communities, and institutions. As Pāli literature consistently highlights, just governance based on Dhamma does not only benefit the leader, but radiates peace and unity outward like a lamp lighting other lamps. In such a society, justice becomes the norm, not the exception, leading to harmony among people regardless of social class or background.

The ripple effect of ethical leadership begins at the personal level and expands into national transformation. A leader who is free from bias can make decisions that are wise, inclusive, and beneficial for all. This contributes to the eradication of corruption and promotes fairness in the allocation of resources, education, and opportunities. In turn, families experience greater security and trust, communities thrive with cooperation, and the nation experiences long-term development rooted in moral governance and public confidence. Without justice at the top, development becomes an illusion; but with justice, prosperity follows naturally.

When both leaders and citizens commit to overcoming agati, social unity strengthens. Partiality creates division—within families, among ethnic groups, and between economic classes. However, impartiality creates bridges. A society that cultivates non-discrimination and fairness, as emphasized in the Mahāparinibbāna Sutta, is one where mutual respect grows. This results in fewer conflicts, more inclusive progress, and resilient institutions. Ultimately, it is not power or wealth that ensures national stability, but the moral strength and just conduct of its people—especially its leaders.

In essence, the practice of abstaining from the four types of bias (chandāgati, dosāgati, mohāgati, and bhayāgati) is not merely a personal ethical discipline, but a foundational principle for societal transformation. When individuals, especially those in leadership roles, cultivate fairness and clarity of mind, the effects ripple outward, restoring justice within institutions, strengthening families through mutual respect, and building national unity rooted in moral conduct. Peace and prosperity do not arise from wealth alone, but from the inner purity of those who lead and serve. As taught in the Dhamma and exemplified in the Jātakas, the true path to societal development lies not in ambition or fear, but in wisdom, compassion, and impartiality. By walking this path, a nation may blossom not only in material progress, but in collective well-being and enduring harmony.

Acknowledgement

I would like to express my thanks to Dr Thi Thi Tun, Professor & Head, Department of Oriental Studies, Dr Zin Mar OO, Professor, Department of Oriental Studies, Dr Khaing Khaing Saw, Professor, Department of Oriental Studies, Dr Thin Thin Mon, Professor, Department of Oriental Studies, University of Mandalay for their exclusive supports and encouragement.

References

Aṅguttaranikāya: Ekaka Duka Tika Catuka Nipāta Pāḷi. Yangon: Department of Religious Affairs Press, 1959.

Aṅguttaranikāya: Pañcaka Chakka Sattaka Nipāta Pāḷi. Yangon: Department of Religious Affairs Press, 1960.

Aṅguttaranikāya: Aṭṭhaka Navaka Dasaka Ekādasaka Nipāta Pāḷi. Yangon: Department of Religious Affairs Press, 1960.

Dīghanikāya: Mahāvagga Pāḷi. Yangon: Department of Religious Affairs Press, 1956.

Dīghanikāya: Sīlakkhandavagga Pāḷi. Yangon: Department of Religious Affairs Press, 1956.

Jātaka Pāḷi (Dutiyo Bhāgo). Yangon: Department of Religious Affairs Press, 1961.

Jātaka Aṭṭhakathā (Tatiyo Bhāgo). Yangon: Myanmar Buddha Sāsana Council Press, 1959.

Jātaka Aṭṭhakathā (Catuttho Bhāgo). Yangon: Myanmar Buddha Sāsana Council Press, 1959.

Jātaka Aṭṭhakathā (Pañcamo Bhāgo). Yangon: Myanmar Buddha Sāsana Council Press, 1959.

Khuddakapāṭha Dhammapada Udāna Itivuttaka Suttanipata Pāḷi. Yangon: Department of Religious Affairs Press, 2007.

Majjhimanikāya: Mūlapaṇṇāsa Pāḷi. Yangon: Department of Religious Affairs Press, 1956.

Majjhimanikāya: Majjhimapaṇṇāsa Pāḷi. Yangon: Department of Religious Affairs Press, 1956.

Majjhimanikāya: Uparipaṇṇāsa Pāḷi. Yangon: Department of Religious Affairs Press, 1956.

Saṃyuttanikāya: *Sagāthāvagga Nidānavagga Saṃyutta* Pāḷi. Yangon: Department of Religious Affairs Press, 1957.

Vinayapiṭaka: Mahāvagga Pāḷi. Yangon: Department of Religious Affairs Press, 2007.

Vinayapiṭaka: Pārājika Pāḷi. Yangon: Department of Religious Affairs Press, 2007.

INSTRUCTIONS TO AUTHORS

Presentation: Manuscripts (MS) should be typed on one side of **quarto or A4 size paper**. Typing should be single spaced, with a one-inch margin all around. A CD of the paper should be submitted together with two print-outs. In general, the text should be organized according to the following outline:

(i) Title
(ii) Abstract
(iii) Materials & Methods/ Premises / Hypotheses
(iv) Results / Findings
(v) Discussion
(vi) Summary/ Conclusion
(vii) Acknowledgements
(viii) References

The body of the text should be printed in **font size 12**, and those of the Abstract, Acknowledgement and References should be printed in **font size 10.** The relative importance of the **headings** in the text should be indicated as follows:

First Order	-	CENTRE HEADING, All Capitals
Second Order	-	Centre Heading, Capitals & lower case
Side Heading	-	Capitals & lower case, not indented (bold – faced)
Run-in heading	-	Capitals & lower case, indented (bold-faced)

Title. The title should describe the contents of the article adequately and concisely and should be typed in **font size 14.**

Author's name. Capital & lower case. The designation of the first author and email (where the number of authors is more than two) and the name of the institution where the work was carried out should be given at the bottom of the title page; but academic degree of the author is not necessary.

Abstract. The main points of the paper, including its findings and conclusions, should be highlighted in the abstract; it should not contain more than 300 words. Add email address for making further contact with the author; evaluation of the paper should be typed in **font size 10**.

Keywords: Between 3-7 keywords highlighting the main points should be listed below the abstract.

References. References should be presented in alphabetical order, beginning with the surname first for the senior author and surname last for the other authors, followed by the year of publication. Examples of references are given below:

To a paper: Rabinowitz, A., Than Myint, email, Tun Khaing, and S. Rabinowitz, (1999)"Description of the Leaf Deer (*Muntiacus Putaoensis),* a New Species of Muntjac from Northern Myanmar" *Journal of Zoology,* London, vol.249, pp.427-435.

To a book: Corbet, G.B., & J.E. Hill, (1992) *The mammals of the Indomalayan Region.* Oxford, Oxford University Press.

To a thesis: May Soe Thu (1995) *Taxonomy of Offshore Fishes Caught by Bottom Trawl Operations in Myanmar Waters.* M.Sc. Thesis Zoology Department, Yangon University (Unpublished).

N.B. If the manuscript submitted is from a thesis, its format should be revised to conform to the instructions of the Myanmar Journal of Arts & Science presented here. **Pagination** should commence from the title page except when they are used to identify the affiliated instructions, and cite unpublished material. **Footnotes** should be avoided wherever possible. The MS, including illustrations and references, should not exceed **15 pages** for Arts and related subjects and **10 pages** for Science in length. Please kindly follow this limit in your final manuscript.