



Factors linked of unattainable right to tertiary education in Myanmar

Pann Ei Phyu Aung

Abstract

Most university students are now facing the challenges in attaining the right to education. Although the interim universities are trying to fulfil their requirements, the dropout rates of these universities are still increasing. Hence, this study aims to find the factors that linked unattainable right to tertiary education in Myanmar. A total of 100 university students participated in this study. This study was based on four dimensions of right to education such as availability, accessibility, acceptability and adaptability. Students were assessed using researcher-developed survey questionnaire in both quantitative and qualitative perspectives. Based on the results, the sample interim university students were relatively the highest attainability at the adaptability dimension of right to education (M=91%) compared to the lowest 31% unattainability at the availability dimension of right to education (M=31%). The sample students showed the highest mean value 31% at unattainable in availability, whereas the unattainable at adaptability dimension indicated the lowest mean value at 9%. Concerning unattainable points at accessibility and acceptability were 16% and 18%, respectively. This research was only intended to identify the challenges of right to education for interim universities and not the university students who joined the universities under military regime.

Keywords: *right to education, availability, accessibility, acceptability, adaptability*

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Introduction

All over the world, there are millions of people who have unattainable right to education due to many reasons; personal circumstances not to join tertiary education or external factors beyond control. When the Myanmar military seized power on first February 2021, it dragged the country into a half-century of impoverishment and isolation, which had devastating effects on higher education. Most of the university students had protested and participated in the Civil Disobedience Movement as CDM-students. Many educated people and professionals left their bright futures to serve the spring revolution for the country. Higher education campuses were raided and occupied by military forces in an effort to quash dissent and establish military control over those institutions; thousands of academics and other higher education personnel were suspended from their positions for protesting against the coup. Many university students have been arrested and some of them are scarified in the Spring Revolution. During the spring revolution, many global campuses have been established and implemented for university students who do not choose to continue their tertiary education under military regime. Given these challenges, this study aims to find the factors affecting the unattainable right to education. Specifically, it aims to identify additional factors that are linked to the unattainable right to tertiary education after the military coup in Myanmar.

2. Methodology

Quantitative and qualitative research methods were used in the study. Students were examined by using questionnaires survey methods. Stratified sampling, which targeted students that are not joining university under the military regime. The sample of this study consists of the 100 students from the interim universities and colleges.

The quantitative data were analyzed by descriptive and confirmatory factor analysis. Descriptive statistics were used to describe mean and qualitative analysis were analyzed from students' responses.

3. Findings

It was observed that 82% of students obtained the right to education at acceptability factors but 18% were not attained. Students' satisfaction in accreditation of interim

universities would be challenged at this factor. Most of the students would need recognition and want to get job opportunities. The accreditation might threaten their future career pathway. On the other hand, 16% of students unattained tertiary education at accessibility factor. There were still enrollment criteria and internet barriers to attain and reach at right to tertiary education. Meanwhile 83% of students could attain the right to education but this study would emphasize an unattainable percentage. Most significant was the availability factor that was an unattainable right to tertiary education faced by 31% of students.

After the military regime, some students who took part in the civil disobedience movement were trying to continue their education in foreign countries. But their grade point average score sheet in previous universities are controlled by the terrorist army. Scholarship opportunities were lost under the military regime. Similarly, Covid-19 pandemic and military coup caused low socioeconomic status of their family. Therefore, some students did not continue their education and did not find any job. In addition, interim universities are not motivated to continue their education journey due to emotional and personal issues. However, CDM students have the desire to avail online classes offered by their respective universities according to the guidelines of each interim council affiliated by the Ministry of Education, MOE via National Unity Government, NUG. For NUUM, some students feel less confident to enroll in NUUM due to the requirement of English proficiency. Most of the interim universities offered short term courses but students are not confident of the assessment and accreditation.

4. Conclusion

This study found that most students obtained the right to education by four factors. The mean scores in all factors are not below 50%. It may be remarked that they have attained the right to tertiary education from the interim universities. With regards to the the unattainable cases, students' responses at the availability factor were the highest among them. This finding was similar to the previous research studies that also showed power outage, and poor internet connection as the main challenges for achieving university education.

In this regard, the interim universities should be aware of the flexibility of enrolment criterion, accreditation, education policy and creation of job opportunities. Students' motivation, their resilience, no time investment in education and invaluable at tertiary

education might be challenges for continuing tertiary education. The findings of this study suggest that interim universities should be aware of their university policies and regulations, and take advantage of the education workshops for professional development.

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