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SANDAR KYAW: CHALLENGES TO THE RIGHTS TO EDUCATION IN  
MYANMAR: THE ROLES OF CIVIL SOCIETY AND MONASTIC  
SCHOOLS

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Although the Myanmar education system has been continuously deteriorated in terms of accessibility and quality, education still remains as one of the first priorities for the people. As a result, when a high dropout rate—before the students finish their education in primary schools—is approximately at 50 percent, several non-profit and civil society organizations have been bridging the gap of accessibility and quality in education. Along with the organizations, monastic schools play an important role in providing education as well. The main objective of the study is to analyze the civil society activities trying to meet the Right to Education in Myanmar.

The research is conducted at two schools: *Phaung Daw Oo* and *Oo Bo* Monastic schools in Aung Mye Tha Zan Township of Mandalay (central Myanmar), where the semi-structured open questions were used and 69 subjects were interviewed. The study finds influential factors having both positive and negative ways for the civil society organizations to implement the Right to Education. In terms of the positive factors, particularly, the recognition of the monastic schools makes better implementation for civil society organizations and monastic schools so that they can fulfill the right to access to education. The Child Centered Approach and its methodology are currently being introduced in the country to accomplish the best interest of the children.

Nonetheless, a number of challenges are also found in the study. There is resource constraint in term of teacher capacity and support and the lack of infrastructures and resources. As well, insufficient capacity, lack of knowledge on the Right to Education, and the wrong conceptualization on Child Centered Approach stimulate the government to issue policies restricting the activities of monastic schools. That points out the barrier preventing the country to meet the Right to Education since the monastic schools are there for ensuring the access to education to the Myanmar children.

The study concludes that although there are a number of influential factors, they are associated with challenges that can be conquered if the government is willing to improve its policies on education.

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