



Lifestyles of Myanmar migrant workers under Thai socio-cultural context: A challenge of state management in the future

Kornkanok Sarapirom*, Pongsak Muensakda, and Thitiporn Sriwanna

College of Religious Studies, Mahidol University, Nakhon Pathom, Thailand

Abstract

In recent decades, millions of labors have gradually migrated to the destination countries in search of better economic opportunities and more fulfilling way of their lives. In Thailand, labor migration is highly affected in driving the Thai economic growth, especially increasing of total factor productivity due to efficiency gains generated by increased specialization in the labor forces. Concurrently, a rapid economic growth causing labor shortage, neighboring countries encounter the economic recession, lack of quality of life and migrants illegally immigrate into Thailand to find work. Around 3.7 million migrants are living in Thailand, however, most of them are from Myanmar which accounted for 79.28%. This study has aimed to investigate the context of wider lifestyle choices that Burmese migrants made. The participatory action approach was applied to explore and reflect the migrants' certain livelihood in Samut Sakhon Province of Thailand. The major finding shows means of Burmese migrant's livelihood when the most surviving and earning for their families and living in Burmese migrant communities located in the down town city. The essential conditions which drive migrant laborers to migrate to Thailand are the cycle-like process involving children, family, and social networks of migrant workers. Most of them recognize the benefits of Thai language adaptation as it will facilitate them to have better lives. However, many of them face difficulties in terms of lacking recognition and accessibility of their labor rights and public services. To solve these problems, it is essential for all migrants to improve Thai language skills along with better understanding of Thailand's legislation and regulations. In addition, relevant governmental agencies should join hands with employers to establish a protocol for the promotion and protection of migrants' rights. Particularly, all relevant institutions should seek the inclusion of the migrant community in developing policies, practices, and responses to help establish appropriate interventions to reduce the abuse, exploitation, and trafficking of migrant domestic workers. Finally, this welfare policy of migrant workers can be implemented successfully through adopting a holistic approach and collaboration among departments; economic and social development, education, public health, and human rights.

Keywords: lifestyle of Myanmar migrant workers, well being, state management

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1. Introduction

During the 1970s and 1980s, Thailand was an important exporter of migrant workers to the Middle East, East Asia, and Singapore. After the mid-1980s Thailand became a major receiving country in this region due to neighboring countries' political instability. [1] At present, the situation of migrant workers in Thailand is a highly significant aspect of driving the Thai economy and migrants are a crucial part of the Thai economy's success in recent decades. [2] The number of migrants in the 2017 census has increased dramatically, around 3.7 million migrants are living in Thailand, accounting for 5.5% of the total number of workers in the country. Only about a half or 2.06 million are legally registered migrant workers who are

permitted to work following the Thailand Working of Alien Act 2008, Section 59, Migrant labor-intensive in Elementary Occupations and Domestic Workers. [3] This migrant group is identified as Grassroot laborers, employed in various industrial sectors of Thailand's economic production, accounting for 44.7 percent of the whole workers in Thailand.

As a direct result of the grave political, economic, and cultural conflict in neighboring countries, many million people have crossed borders into Thailand without documentation. Fearing persecution, and often without recognition of their rights to receive refugee status and international protection, the vast majority of those migrating from Myanmar find themselves desperate to survive, obtaining work in underground and, often, illegal labor markets. The majority of migrants from Myanmar who flee their country end up in neighboring Thailand, where an estimated two

*Corresponding author; email: kornkanok.sar@mahidol.ac.th

million people have taken up squalid residence working “3-D jobs” (dangerous, dirty, and difficult), for pay well below minimum wage, accounting for 79.28% of all migrant workers. [4] The province with the highest number of migrant workers in Thailand is Samut Sakhon. It is also a province with a high concentration of Burmese migrants with 307,443 people, accounting for 91% of all migrant workers. [5] Samut Sakhon is a province with remarkable fishery industries in the country. It is the center of the trading of aquatic animals and products. There are extreme demands of migrant laborers because Thai laborer is not popular in the fishing industry. Employers prefer migrants over Thai workers since most migrants do not mind accepting heavy and unpleasant work. However, migrant workers from neighboring countries particularly Myanmar poured into Thailand. [6] This is a crucial issue that is raising awareness of the dynamics of population change in Thailand along with a making-of insightful understanding of the migrants’ lifestyles. Whereas a lifestyle typically reflects an individual’s attitudes, way of life, values, or world view and is a means of forging a sense of self and to create cultural symbols that resonate with personal identity. Not all aspects of a lifestyle are voluntary. Surrounding social and technical systems can constrain the lifestyle choices available to the individual and the symbols she/he can project to others and the self. Lifestyle may include views on politics, religion, health, intimacy, and more. All of these aspects play a role in shaping someone’s lifestyle. Eventually, an earlier study on lifestyles [7] focuses on the analysis of the social structure and of the individuals’ relative positions inside it. It showed that lifestyle is the most visible manifestation of social differentiation, even within the same social class, and in particular, it shows the prestige which the individuals believe they enjoy or to which they aspire. Significantly, lifestyles made up mainly of social practices, and closely tied to individual tastes, represent the basic point of intersection between the structure of the field and processes connected with their neighbors. While social and cultural phenomena are other points that reflect the discrimination or integration of living with Thai people. For this reason, the researchers are interested in studying the livelihoods of migrant workers in Samut Sakhon. Although the Thai government shows a growing awareness of their isolation and vulnerability to labor exploitation and violence, there is little data available documenting their realities under the questions of how Burmese migrants living among ethnic, racial, social, and cultural differences, what is the way of their lives today, and what obstacles do they face? This results in the disaffection of domestic workers and extends the disregard for their labor and basic rights. This information is useful for the future management of migrant workers.

2. Objectives

This research has overall aimed to describe the lifestyles of migrants from Myanmar, as well as their employment and working environment, adaptation, and the social reunion of diversified ethnic groups. The special objective of this study was to explore whatever new trends in socio-cultural issues of the studied area relating to widespread dissatisfaction with rural living conditions and services and to make policy suggestions and state management directions that would promote better living conditions for the migrants.

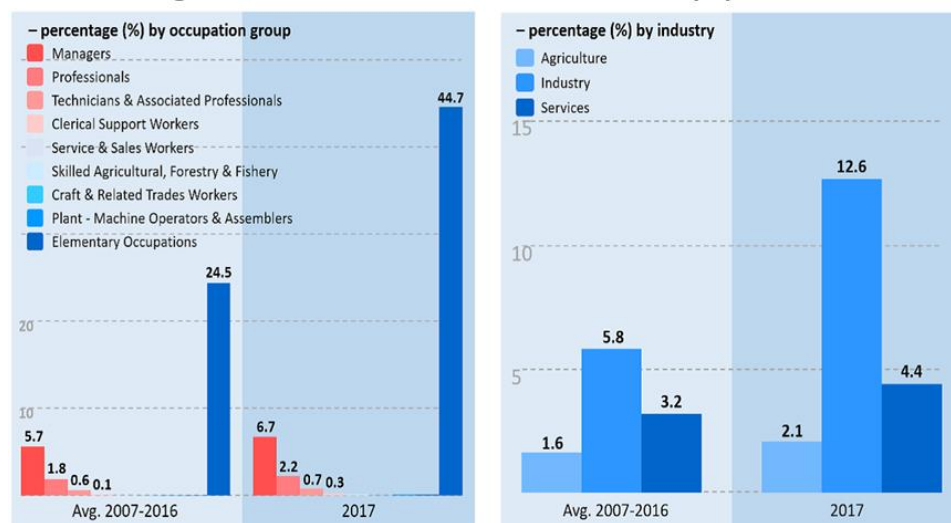
3. Research Methods

This research employed a qualitative study of Burmese migrant workers living in Samut Sakhon Province, Thailand. The fieldwork of the study employed in-depth interview by using a semi-structured interview schedule along with using participant observation approach as a specific form of field research in which the researcher participated as an actor in the events under study. This methodology of data collection employed both scientific observations and general observations with the target groups to identify key characteristics of migrant networks, broker employer relationships, and the relationships of workers with one another and with brokers and employer. Information was also gathered on the working and living conditions of migrant workers to track their experiences and gain better insight into their living standards and daily struggles. The sample size of 36 key informants consisting of 9 from each of the 4 studied groups, to achieve diversity of “typical case” perspectives without achieving “data saturation” were selected for in-depth interview—the point at which additional interviews supply essentially redundant rather than new and significant information. [9]

3.1 Population and recruitment

Purposive sampling was used to recruit Burmese migrant workers who worked in Samut Sakhon Province classified by 4 major types of working engagement; 1) fishing boat, 2) seafood processing industry, 3) factory, and 4) agriculture. A total of 36 cases were selected for conducting in-depth interviews using contacts listed by one of the key informants who also acted as a field researcher, coordinator, and interpreter for this research. Besides, two from each type of working engagement group or 8 migrants were invited to engage in a focus group discussion. The researchers need to negotiate with participants on their availability for focus group discussion and interviews, so as not to interfere with the participant’s working schedule.

Share of Migrant Workers in Thai Labour Market (%)



Source: Data from Foreign Workers Administration Office, MOL and Labour Force Survey 2017 [8]

Figure 1: Migrant workers in Thailand classified by occupation groups and types of industries (2017)

3.2 Data collection and analysis

The qualitative study was implemented by the Mahidol University research team and two coordinators who also acted as our field researchers from non-governmental organizations (NGOs) were employed as they have the capacity to reach migrant communities in the target provinces and can understand Burmese language. Besides, the study was supported by a research advisor who worked with teams throughout the entire research process. The data was collected using observational checklist, in-depth interview, and focus group discussion techniques. The venue for interview was at Drop-in Center, a public place and meeting point for Burmese migrants located in downtown of Samut Sakhon as well as at their places of work, from June 2016 to February 2017. A semi-structured interview guideline was developed to assess individuals' perception of their position in life in the context of their surrounding culture and value systems concerning their goals, expectations, standards, and concerns. Thirty-six individuals participated in in-depth interviews each lasting 60-90 minutes. Initially, the field researchers randomly met migrant workers in the markets or temples and others were appointed by the field coordinators. The field researchers never tried to interview at the first meeting. The initial meeting was to introduce themselves and the project, request their consent to participate, observe the environment, and discuss the best way of meeting again. The in-depth interviews were undertaken over extended periods, often necessitating five to six visits over three months. Also, field notes were taken to keep track of the researchers' informal interviews and participant observations, decisions, and thoughts during the data-gathering process. Participant observation is a specific

form of field research in which the researcher participates as an actor in the events. [10] The observation was performed for one month. Moreover, the research team employs an ethnographic method by following up with the participants over a while to track their experiences and gain better insight into their living standards and daily struggles. The researchers test the scientific rigor of the study: validity, reliability, and confirmability. The collection of data was guided by adherence to ethical principles. Ethics approval was granted to conduct the study from the Human Research Ethics Committee, Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, Mahidol University, Thailand. Five key ethical principles were adhered to in the study: obtaining informed voluntary consent; ensuring privacy and confidentiality; making sure the workers who took part did not experience harm as a consequence of involvement in the study; respecting their right to withdraw at any time without explanation or penalty, and maintaining secure storage of data.

The analysis of data is concentrated on the interrogation of the migrants' daily lives and routine works to explore their diversified lifestyles and life struggles, thus it can be concluded as significant supporting and hindering factors for improving and formulating a long-term government policy under the realistic conditions. The data have been used for content analysis giving spotlight on five domains; 1) General information and inside story, 2) Employment conditions and working environment, 3) Actual way of life underlined at social contribution and cultural engagement, 4) Reunion setting of diversified Myanmar ethnic workers and 5) State challenges in managing Myanmar migrant workers. The researchers transcribed the audio recordings into text and read and re-read the transcripts to be-

come familiar with the data. Raw data were manually analyzed using line-by-line analysis, to break down and code the data. Following this, codes were clustered into groups and then categorized. Patterns and connections were then identified within and between categories. Findings are presented in terms of qualitative and descriptive insights.

4. Results and Discussion

Lifestyles of Burmese migrant Workers under Thai Socio-cultural Context in this study is highlighted in 5 extremes: 1) General information and inside story, 2) Employment conditions and working environment, 3) Actual way of life underlined at social contribution and cultural Engagement, 4) Reunion setting of diversified Myanmar ethnic workers, and 5) State challenges in managing Burmese migrant workers.

4.1 General information and inside story of the Burmese migrant workers

The studied participants consisted of 36 migrant workers in Samut Sakhon Province, comprising of 20 males and 16 females. Most of them were in the adult aged group, 28 to 47 years old. And among this key informant population group, majority of them, that is, 29 participants have registered for work permits. Because of their poor family status, they have to come to work at an early age to earn living for themselves and their families. Some of them have finished elementary and junior high school in Myanmar. Most participants were in a common-law relationship or single. Their average monthly income was over 5,000 Baht, and the average length of time that they had worked in Thailand was 4 years.

With indispensability, it revealed that an inside story on living and family life of migrant workers before migrating to Thailand is a fundamental influence onto the migration into Thailand. Life of the workers and their families are certainly poor and full of hardship. The most of them finished only the primary school education without chance to further their studies due to their poverty, large families, and low-income occupation, particularly farming. The study also found that the political instability raised from racial and cultural conflict in Myanmar had pushed the migrants to cross the border to Thailand. As they said that *"A rather backward economic in the downturn city and sometimes war in the country caused an insecurity in life and property, so made me decided to kick off migration to Thailand."* The economic hardship of the origin is another key factor that motivates the migrants to migrate to work in Samut Sakhon City in Thailand. The results show that social motives are less prominent than economic motives for migration.

4.2 Employment conditions and working environment

The findings show that workers working on fishing boats encounter in general extremely poor conditions, much worse than those in other sectors: the seafood processing industry, factory, and farming sector. It is no doubt that migrant workers especially those who are being forced by their employers to work are more likely to end up working aboard fishing boats. Physical and verbal abuse by employers is common in the fishing sector, and alarmingly this seems to be more commonly faced by child workers aged below 15 [11] and as pointed out by one migrant labor ... *"I have observed that especially most child laborers they can't leave because if they leave, they won't get paid, and if they want to leave it is possible only if the employers allow them. In addition, if the young child leaves without getting their money and (pink) card, they have to obtain their permission"*. Most migrants work under pitiable conditions and most of them feel that they can't leave their jobs because of fear of police arrest.

Most migrants work at an average for 12 hours per day as they start the work even before 5 am on days when there is a heavy workload, and a few get an hour or less break time per day. On average they can take 4 days off per month, only some are paid for these days off. Certainly, working such long hours is considered unacceptable for the migrants especially if the overtime paid and the kind of treatment are not guaranteed. Most jobs for migrant workers in the fishing sector are insecure due to variable working hours and payment methods and rates. Migrants employed on fishing boats work in inferior conditions, in nearly all aspects, when compared with migrants employed in fish processing. Jobs on fishing boats are less attractive than in fish processing factories because of the nature of work which is tough, dangerous and it is lonely being far away from family. In light of this, migrants working aboard fishing vessels maybe those who have nowhere else to go, or those who have fewer job opportunities, such as unregistered migrants or child workers. This could easily force these workers into more vulnerable situations than other migrant workers.

Financial reward affected the migrants' cognitions of well-being. Workers, who were satisfied with their wages, were typically paid more than the standard wage. Their salary was dependent upon the level of productivity. Some daily wage earners, who received less than standard wage, were dissatisfied but reluctant to raise this with employers as they were fearful of losing their jobs. Significantly, the findings showed that even though nearly all the workers were poor, those who had stable employment and earned an adequate income were more satisfied with their jobs as having a stable income enabled them to meet their basic needs and send money to their families in Myanmar. Whilst workers who were paid less than the standard wage felt unhappy and were dissatisfied with their jobs. [12]

As a whole, most workers accepted they had insufficient money to cover their expenses. As they had increasing debts from a combination of sending money to family members in their homeland and having to spend money to live and work in Thailand. This seems to be affecting the migrants' perception of their well-being.

There were concerns about several aspects of their living circumstances, such as the number of people who shared dwellings, unhygienic conditions, and the proximity of their homes to their places of work. With the level of occupancy, some lived in overcrowded conditions lacking in privacy. For instance, two families who shared a small room had to take turns to carry out personal activities like dressing and undressing clothes. Concerning their hygiene condition, most residents lacked proper cooking facilities; food was prepared and cooked on the ground. As a result of this poor environmental conditions, many were at risk to get sick. Most of their children frequently developed respiratory and digestive illnesses, such as common colds, coughs, and diarrhea.

4.3 *Actual way of life underlined at social contribution and cultural engagement of diversified ethnic Burmese workers*

In Samut Sakhon City, lifestyle migrants' search for a better way of life is a relative struggle, defended against negative presentations of life before migration. Migration is therefore described as 'getting out of the trap', 'making a fresh start', or 'a new beginning'. [13] The life stories of Myanmar migrants told in this study include tales of individualism and consumerism of contemporary lifestyles.

Nevertheless, the migrants' lifestyle in this study focuses on everyday lives including leisure and working, how to negotiate, adjust and improve their lives, somehow, they described this in terms of their adjustment and excitement about stepping on an accelerator or increased adaptation and autonomy. Several of the migrants express an entrepreneurial spirit, establishing their 'dream' businesses, or illustrating their potentiality within the labor market. In these cases, migrant workers described that ...

"I had wanted to be the owner of one seafood shop and working to have a more fulfilling alternative for my better life. I have learned many things while working in the seafood industry and met many likeminded people from whom I can get the aspiration."

Overwhelmingly, this reflected their entrepreneurial passion which would give them greater control over their working lives. As for the others who work in the agriculture sector to raise the well beings, they imagined to even return to their home country once they have enough money to invest in their fruit orchard. Many of the migrants are establishing a more favorable work-life balance as they think it is a key feature

to enhance their good lives shortly. Interestingly, one migrant worker said ...

"I want to make my life more meaningful and escaping to the Good Life. I also have preferred to provide a better way of life for my children, I wish to protect them from the materialism and push them to have such a good education".

When exploring the lifestyle affected by social and cultural differences experienced by Mahee (not real name), a Burmese migrant working in a factory, spoke out that *"Social and cultural difference made my life-limited and cause frustration. As I got married with a Thai-Chinese man and had become part of the hierarchical and mixed tradition structure family, most of my autonomy had been limited. My life following migration is thus causing frustration."* The study also reveals that the reality of migrants' life after the migration is often in opposition to their original aspirations. It is shown that many lifestyle migrants seek social goodness which is often similarly attended by their friends or other countrymen. At the same time, some migrants demonstrate the extent to which establishing new social relations is part of their everyday lives following migration. Through their participation in certain groups, voluntary organizations, and attendance at various events, migrants build up new social relations and implanted themselves within the regional social structure, in the process of stocking up whatever social capital.

In terms of the migrants' requiring particular support it has shown that family and relatives are central support figures for most migrants, this is especially the case for migrants employed in fish processing. Migrants employed on fishing boats depend more on their workmates and friends and less on family members and relatives. This is due to the unique physical environment of working on fishing boats and spending long periods at sea. There is no support from employers in giving social security or welfare benefits to care and support these migrant workforces. However, the migrant workers have to depend on employers for basic information such as working registration and accessibility to health services and some of these migrants are exploited and harassed by their employers. One migrant complained that *"I think we need help. Sometimes we need the company that will be able to help us with every problem. We cannot change our job frequently as it was hard for us to get adjusted in a new work place and employer"* Therefore, work information and advice should be provided through leaflets, Drop-in centers, Multicultural events, etc. which most migrants are accessible. Doing this will help to ensure the migrant workers to have access to general information and advice related to employment of work Myanmar migrant community.

4.4 Reunion setting of diversified Myanmar ethnic workers

Social and community networks play a major role in connecting migrant laborers with relatives, friends, and employers. Social support can be both tangible (informational and instrumental support) and intangible support (emotional support) that a person receives from network members. It is well documented that social supports are the functional aspects of social relationships and act as mediating factors between social networks and health. [14] Many migrants rely on their social network as a key source of information, which they may consult before deciding to work aboard or take up a job at a specific place. [15] Social networks also help facilitate a migrant family's living arrangements. These agents are an essential element that enables the cycle of labor migration to Samut Sakhon to continue.

Some workers developed good relationships with the Thai people in the local communities where they resided. Some of the workers established close personal relationships and married Thai citizens. In contrast, a few workers perceived that the Thai communities they lived in generally discriminated against them. Some workers also lacked the self-confidence to approach or initiate activities with the Thai people in their community, perceiving that they were viewed as foreigners. As one of the migrant workers said that ...

"I stay in the factory all the time. I have never joined in any activities in the community. I go out only to buy things in the market. When I walk in the market, I feel Burmese. I am afraid that someone might catch me."

Most workers felt they maintained a good relationship with their family members in Thailand, while a few acknowledged that their relationships were poor. Generally, however, they loved each other and perceived that conflict, such as disagreements between spouses, was a normal part of family life. Several workers indicated that they maintained good relations with their Thai employers. They believed their employers were generally good people who did what they could to support them, such as providing a place to live, taking ill workers to the hospital, and occasionally lending money without charging interest. When workers experienced difficulties, they usually consulted their employers.

However, after migrating, they must establish strong social networks among transnational migrants to accommodate their needs and adapt to unfamiliar situations in the destination country. Social networks and social relationships, such as friends and acquaintances, are usually established in a workplace, construction site, church, or temple. This study proposes three ways to strengthen and maintain the social network of Myanmar migrant workers: 1) the development of environments or situations that stimulate the social networks, social activities, and network man-

agement; 2) the development of network organization, and 3) persuade the migrant workers to participate and join as a member to help or support their social and economic problems.

4.5 State challenges in managing Burmese migrant workers in Samut Sakhon province

The Thai government is certainly aware of the low potential in the migrant labor supply from Myanmar, and especially accounting for formalizing labor importation arrangements with other countries, such as Vietnam and Cambodia. When considering beyond the industries which will likely be most affected by rapid changes in the migration patterns among Myanmar group of labors. Since nowadays Thailand carries out under the model of low-wage employment, it is just an illusion to expect that other foreign migrant workers would be willing to come to Thailand through a formal labor migration scheme and agree upon such wages. Also, with rising production and labor costs in Thailand, the labor-intensive, low-technology manufacturing sector has, in general, lost the comparative advantage it previously held. However, workers imported from other countries may work for some job sectors in mainly non-border provinces, where the level of income is mostly above the minimum wage. [16]

Thailand has strictly applied the migrant worker's registration regulations as a tool to enable them to work legally. From the first registration in 1996 to the recent one in 2018, the process covers the registration of migrant workers by employers, the conduct of a health examination, preparation of a photo identification card and fingerprint procedures, and the issuance of a work permit. In each registration, the government announced its policy through cabinet resolutions; the process requires the cooperative effort of various government offices.

In responding to migration issues, the Thai government emphasizes establishing cooperation agreements with many neighboring countries. The government has also routinely conducted registration of undocumented migrant workers from Cambodia, Laos PDR, and Myanmar. The Thai government has continued to provide the exception and establish procedures for registration of undocumented migrant workers every one or two years, since 1996. Undocumented migrants from three neighboring countries – Cambodia, Laos PDR, and Myanmar, have been allowed to register and work. [17]

There is also a crucial point from another edge that if the Thai government plans to accept migrant workers from other countries, the registration system will need to be worked out thoroughly. This study suggested that Thailand is nowadays entering a new phase of labor importation. To draw in a steady flow of migrants with a low turnover, both the employers and the government should work out to sustain the minimum standards that are promised to migrant work-

ers, as these standards are already quite low, even for labor-receiving markets. Besides, historically Thailand has never achieved formally imported workers in the millions. – What is currently dominating the migrant workers' management system is the need and effort to recognize who came to Thailand through unregulated channels, and the recruitment of regular workers through the official channel. The regular recruitment system should thus be revised and enhanced as Thailand moves away from its dependency on Myanmar migrant workers. [18]

5. Conclusion

Disruptive change in living circumstances among Myanmar migrants is undoubtedly in chaotic situation, leading to many transformations in their lives. Within the context of the individualized seeking behavior for a better way of life, these transformations are indicated as personal challenges to be conquered through the migrants' individual and group mobilization. They will be able to learn how to live with their new lifestyle choices, how to cope with lives led in their workplaces, how to make new friends, and how migrants manage cultural differences including establishing new social relations which is part of everyday life following migration. Their way of migration is essentially a form of spatial mobility. However, spatial mobility can involve moving anything, from people to goods, money, information, and so forth, while the migration is a subject of spatial mobility that is limited to the movement of people. [19] Mobility can be categorized in different ways based on its application: temporally vs. spatially, nationally vs. internationally, and forced vs. voluntary. These categorizations stress the different types of migrations and highlight their vast array of applications. For instance, the forced migration of refugees is very different from the case of retirees in search of a good life, although both may end up in the same destination and both would be considered migrants.

In conclusion, the way of life of Myanmar migrant workers on the economic aspect of income is not enough to spend, it must save money, find hard work and low labor costs living in a family with relatives, the environment is generally crowded. Employers have legitimate wages in the social and cultural aspect, some migrants had unanticipated experiences and reality of upset living condition following migration caused by social and cultural differences, as they are often in opposition to their original aspirations. It is also shown that the lifestyle of migrants seeks social goodness which is often similarly attended by their friends or other Burmese natives. At the same time, some migrants demonstrate the extent to which establishing new social relations is part of their everyday lives.

It is apparent that migrants' effort and success is on

the way to a better way of life, to stimulate the sense that they are bettering themselves; as individuals in the contemporary world, they have taken their lives into their own hands and are engaged in the process of improvement. Overcoming the obstacles in their way, their difficulties at adapting to life in the destination are presented positively. They learn how to cope with insecurity or their uncertain futures through their entrepreneurship passion and initiative. They express a sense of empowerment from taking individual responsibility for their actions and lifestyles as well as the extent to which dreams of self-realization and improvement has been realized. The lifestyle of migration is a complicated and disruptive phenomenon, varying from one migrant to another, from one location to the other. It keeps at its core social transformation and broader processes; and it is a response to practical, moral, and emotional conditions.

Regarding the management of immigration of CLM migrants, the Thai government adopted an inconsistent and pro-employer policy. There have been endless rounds of registration which do not promote a good climate for the regularization of migrant workers and do not allow the cooperative agreement or feeling systems to work. There are neither effective preventive or/and subjective measures nor other contributing measures to discourage reliance on migrant workers. Besides, the regulation of labor protection law is always questionable concerning migrant workers. To effectively operate the worker immigration management, the following steps are recommended; 1) The government should include efforts to educate employers about the rights of migrant workers, establish channels for reporting complaints, prosecute, and abusive employers. And at the same time, the government should provide interpreters to facilitate reporting of complaints by migrant workers as well as provide referrals to legal assistance and protection. 2) The government should provide educational opportunities for migrant workers, such as language classes and regulation of the labor protection law. 3) The government and Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) should play a crucial role in outreaching to non-registered migrant workers, raise awareness of their hidden and isolated realities, identify their critical challenges and introduce them effective action strategies, provide more space and establish supportive environments or organization that stimulate the social networks, social activities, and network management, and make wisely investigate, formulate and implement the international policy for low-skilled workers in the ASEAN countries. 4) All relevant institutions should seek the inclusion of the migrant community in developing policies, practices, and responses to help establish appropriate interventions to reduce the abuse, exploitation, and trafficking of migrant workers, especially it requires a holistic approach and collaboration among departments; economic and social development, education,

public health, and human rights. 6) Finally, every sector should “understand” the flow of migrant workers of the world and Thailand, as well as trying to balance between dependencies on migrant workers and enhancing the use of technology and skills development.

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