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A STUDY ON ASSESSMENT OF BASIC DIPLOMATIC SKILLS
COURSE FOR DIPLOMACY

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A STUDY ON ASSESSMENT OF BASIC DIPLOMATIC SKILLS
COURSE FOR DIPLOMACY

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This is to certify that this thesis entitled “**A Study on Assessment of Basic Diplomatic Skills Course for Diplomacy**”, submitted as requirements for the degree of Master of Development Studies Programme has been accepted by the Board of Examiners.

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ABSTRACT

The study purposes on assessment of the basis diplomatic skills course at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Myanmar. The objective of the study is to examine the assessment of the basic diplomatic course under Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The study employs a descriptive methodology that utilizes both primary and secondary data. Primary data is gathered through a structured questionnaire administered to participants of the basic diplomatic skills course at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The study encompasses 120 participants enrolled in the basic diplomatic course at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Myanmar. The study found that the basic diplomatic skills course has significantly contributed to building a more capable and confident diplomatic workforce. The knowledge and skills acquired are not only relevant but essential in the evolving landscape of international diplomacy. This basic diplomatic skills course aims to provide participants with a solid foundation in the essential skills required for effective diplomacy. By fostering a deeper understanding of international relations and enhancing practical skills, the basic diplomatic skills course upgrades and refreshes participants' competencies, enabling them to contribute more effectively to the international arena through skilled and strategic diplomatic engagement.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BDS	Basic Diplomatic Skills
BIMSTEC	Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation
CHRD	Center of Human Resource Development
CID	Course in Diplomacy
DCM	Deputy Chief of Mission
EDS	Enhanced Diplomatic Skills
FES	Friedrich Ebert Stiftung
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
IMF	International Monetary Fund
ISIS	Institute of Strategic and International Studies
MBA	Master of Business Administration
MBF	Master of Banking and Finance
MPA	Master of Public Administration
MDevS	Master of Development Studies
MCATI	Myanmar Civil Aviation Training Institute
MOFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
SPDC	State Peace and Development Council
ToDs	Tracks of Diplomacy
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
WB	World Bank
WHO	World Health Organization
WTO	World Trade Organization
YUE	Yangon University of Economics

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Rationale of the Study

Diplomacy is widely recognized as an essential practice and profession for maintaining peaceful relations between nations. The success of diplomacy is based on a set of guiding principles that support constructive dialogue, negotiation, and compromise. These principles form the foundation of effective diplomatic efforts, enabling states to resolve conflicts, advance mutual interests, and forge alliances. Diplomats employ various methods, including diplomatic cables and direct conversations, to communicate messages in a diplomatic and precise manner. Establishing relationships is a vital principle of diplomacy, highlighting the importance of building rapport and trust among nations.

Diplomats work to create personal connections, encourage cultural exchanges, and promote interactions between people. By fostering strong relationships, diplomats can improve cooperation, ease negotiations, and support long-term stability. Advancing interests is another key principle of diplomacy, which emphasizes the promotion of national interests while taking into account the needs and concerns of other nations. Diplomats aim to find a balance between pursuing their own goals and achieving mutually advantageous results through compromise. The importance and application of these principles are critical in shaping international relations.

Effective diplomacy depends on the careful application and integration of these principles across various diplomatic situations. By comprehending and adhering to these fundamental principles, diplomats and policymakers can navigate intricate geopolitical environments, peacefully resolve conflicts, and build sustainable alliances. The principles of negotiation, communication, relationship building, and interest promotion contribute to a more stable and cooperative international order, effectively fostering peace and addressing global challenges.

In Myanmar, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is offering basic diplomatic skills courses for individuals interested in the study of diplomatic issues. This includes personnel from government organizations, officials and staff from various ministries, as well as members of the private sector who are involved in international relations. The course content is developed

in line with the suggestions of the trainers and reflects current domestic and international trends. This approach aims to enhance knowledge and comprehension of diplomatic matters for those pursuing studies in this field, while also addressing the actual requirements of the participants. In addition, the training work plans are designed to be more convenient in changing procedures and situations, and to implement more effective interests, and to support the state and the ministry in one way or another.

The study purposes on assessment of the basis diplomatic skills course at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Myanmar. The course is open available to individuals who are interested in studying diplomatic affairs across various private sectors. This includes employees and staff from ministries that engage and collaborate with the international community, entrepreneurs, corporate employees, and personnel from international organizations, as well as recent graduates.

1.2 Objective of the Study

This study mainly aims to examine the assessment of the basic diplomatic course under Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

1.3 Method of Study

The study is descriptive and uses primary and secondary data. Basic diplomatic skills course participants at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs complete a standardized questionnaire to collect primary data. The Myanmar Institute of Strategic and International Studies, under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, provides secondary data from pertinent papers, libraries, and websites.

1.4 Scope and Limitations of the Study

The study mainly focuses on the effectiveness and awareness the basic diplomatic skills course offered at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The study encompasses 120 participants enrolled in the basic diplomatic course at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Myanmar.

1.5 Organization of the Study

Five chapters comprise the study. Chapter one introduces the study's premise, objectives, method, scope, constraints, and organization. Chapter two reviews literature on diplomacy, international relations, and education. Chapter three presents an overview of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Chapter four is analysis on assessment of the basic diplomatic skills course for diplomacy. Chapter five is a conclusion with findings and suggestions.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Concept and Definition of Diplomacy

Diplomacy includes foreign policy, foreign relations, international negotiations, and diplomats' professional tasks (Benko, 1997). It is the main way foreign policy is implemented and a typical form of international communication (Vukadinovic, 1994). Diplomats advise, plan, and coordinate foreign policy to meet particular and broad objectives in international relations (Barston, 1988).

Diplomacy promotes national interests through persuasion (Smith, 1999). Foreign policy sometimes incorporates diplomacy, which manages international relations through negotiation and other peaceful means (Kleistra & Van Willigen, 2010). Diplomacy has many techniques and practices, some of which have grown in popularity in recent decades. The following section summarizes significant diplomatic ideas and kinds from the literature. The most common diplomacy methods are public, economic, and multilateral.

2.1.1 Public Diplomacy

Public diplomacy, frequently linked to international communications, is well regarded. Sommerfeldt and Buhmann (2019) define public diplomacy as the dissemination of information to foreign audiences and the building of long-term connections to support government goals. The phrase public diplomacy was first used in the 1960s to characterize US news broadcasting and cultural exchange programs during the Cold War (Pamment, 2014). Public diplomacy influences foreign policy by affecting public attitudes and opinions in other nations (Maronkova, 2018). It includes varied individuals and networks and is worldwide (Maronkova, 2018).

A brief study of the literature suggests that international organizations may define public diplomacy differently when developing their strategy. NATO includes public diplomacy in its strategic communication area, which includes public affairs, military public relations, psychological operations, and information operations (Maronkova, 2018). Melissen (2005) adds that multilateral public diplomacy is more collaborative than national diplomacy.

Cevik and Sevin (2017) highlighted two public diplomacy approaches: Creating and nurturing mutually beneficial partnerships through public diplomacy. (ii) Public diplomacy is a means of informing foreign audiences and affecting public opinion. Public diplomacy is

generally related to international communication and used to market a country's image for overseas audiences. Leonard (2002) defines public diplomacy as news management, strategic communication, and relationship development through 'competitive' and 'cooperative' operations. The five main components of public diplomacy are listening, advocacy, culture, exchange, and international broadcasting (Pamment, 2014).

Public diplomacy is often tied to international communication, overseas aid, and national branding and image. Mass communication and information-sharing technologies are used in public diplomacy to influence events (Phalavi, 2007). In recent years, non-official actors, such as individuals and representatives from NGOs and civil society organizations, have become third-party mediators in conflicts, engaging in various Tracks of Diplomacy. ToDs are "diplomatic initiatives by outside state or non-state parties to transform a dispute by communicating information, proposing new solutions, and directly influencing the crisis to help generate movement towards potentially overlapping bargaining positions" (Bohmelt, 2010).

2.1.2 Economic Diplomacy

Economic diplomacy refers to the application of a state's political power to advance its business interests in global markets. Rather than merely fulfilling the role of traditional political diplomacy, it has developed into a crucial component of it. The responsibility of economic diplomacy is to negotiate the freedom to export and invest on an international scale (Morillas, 2000). The domain of economic diplomacy encompasses all activities related to the processes and practices involved in international decision-making regarding economic cross-border activities in the real world (Pireva, 2014). Furthermore, it can be described as diplomatic efforts aimed at supporting a nation's business and financial sectors through the use of economic resources, such as sanctions or incentives, to achieve specific foreign policy objectives. The underlying assumption is that the state and public institutions play the exclusive role, overlooking the emerging influence of non-state actors.

The fundamentals of economic diplomacy involve the utilization of both positive and negative economic instruments to achieve political objectives (Berridge & James, 2001). The goal of trade and economic missions should be to gather reliable and easily accessible information regarding the interests and priorities of the nation, the degree of impartial interest in investments, and the mutual benefits (even if this necessitates making concessions) that surpass the costs associated with the mission (Фриццак, 2009). A well-functioning economic diplomacy system can enhance bilateral trade by six to ten percent (Lysak, 2005). Economic diplomacy encompasses three essential components: the establishment of specific political relationships with other countries, the safeguarding of national security through participation

in various international organizations, and the development of the state's reputation on the global stage (Rymarczyk, 2010). In terms of reputation management, it is important to note that diplomatic representatives now regard the digital realm as vital for engaging with the public both at home and abroad, articulating political views, addressing crises, and sharing ideas with peers (Baltezarević, 2021).

The primary advantage of a favorable national reputation is the attraction of foreign investments; thus, it can be asserted that cultivating a positive image of the country is a key concern for diplomatic missions. Facilitating favorable conditions for international economic collaboration positively influences the standard and quality of life for citizens. Currently, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs serves as the central hub for coordination and decision-making, making it the most prevalent organizational model for economic diplomacy. However, various strategies are employed in practice when organizing diplomatic activities overseas. This effort focuses on the economic adviser's office, the construction of the embassy's structural units that are related to both economic and trade matters and have dual subordination, the establishment of sales offices that report to the ministries of foreign trade and economy, and the creation of independent economic entities such as chambers of commerce (Flissak, 2009).

Economic diplomacy has undergone significant transformations due to globalization, which is reflected in its broadened scope and the rise of new areas of interest. Furthermore, it has profoundly influenced domestic politics, resulting in a greater number of stakeholders both within and outside a country's government. Numerous developing nations are now integrated into the global system, leading to a reduction in governmental resources and authority (Bayne & Woolcook, 2017). Globalization has impacted the social and political dimensions of society by altering the structure of global economic relationships. Various actors are influencing the outcomes of these established connections, resulting in a complex web of interdependence. Consequently, as globalization progresses, corporations increasingly shape national and international politics to their advantage through mergers and acquisitions. Countries are also engaged in intense competition for economic benefits to influence regulatory bodies in their favor (Hadjikoumis, 2021). While the globalization of the international economy has enhanced efficiency and competitiveness, it has simultaneously heightened the risk of economic and financial crises.

2.1.3 Multilateral Diplomacy

Liberal institutionalism, also referred to as institutional liberalism, is a theory in international relations that posits that cooperation among governments is both possible and sustainable, and that such collaboration can reduce conflict and competition (Powell, 1994).

International collaboration was the main reason the ineffectual European-colonial League of Nations became the UN in 1945. After World War II, the Bretton Woods institutions and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) were established, which later became the IMF, WB, and WTO. The concept of international cooperation, rooted in the principles of liberal institutionalism, constituted a significant theoretical foundation for liberal internationalism. This ideology is based on the central thesis of international organizations, multilateral diplomacy, and institutions governed by rules and norms that advocate for liberal democracy. It also encompasses the self-granted authority of international organizations to intervene in the affairs of other states for humanitarian and liberal purposes, which is why it is sometimes referred to as liberal interventionism, in contrast to isolationism and non-interventionism.

Keohane (2005), a political scientist instrumental in the advancement of liberal institutionalism, expresses his discontent with the labels "liberal" or "neoliberal" being applied to his work, as he also incorporates elements of realism, a perspective often juxtaposed with liberalism. Proponents of liberal internationalism argue that engaging in multilateral diplomacy through organizations like the United Nations can mitigate the most severe manifestations of "power politics" in international relations. Additionally, liberal internationalists contend that the most effective means of promoting democracy is by treating all states, regardless of their initial democratic status, with equality and cooperation. Institutions such as UNDP, UNICEF, WHO, and the UN General Assembly are frequently cited as exemplars of liberal internationalism (Abrahamsen et al., 2019).

Multilateral diplomacy is defined as the collaboration of three or more nations working together towards a shared objective. In the realm of international relations, multilateralism denotes a coalition of multiple nations striving towards a shared objective. International entities such as the United Nations (UN) and the World Trade Organization are inherently multilateral. The United States participates in approximately 50 multilateral organizations, which include prominent and widely recognized bodies like NATO, the World Trade Organization (WTO), and the United Nations, as well as smaller, specialized organizations such as the Universal Postal Union (Schaefer, 2011).

Multilateral institutions serve as arenas where major powers vie for influence over other members of the system, while less powerful nations endeavor to sway the dominant players. Major Powers also engage in signing multilateral agreements, establishing regulations, and enjoying advantages such as veto authority and special status. Gowan (2018) asserts that these multilateral institutions are not imposed upon nations but are instead established and embraced by them to bolster their capacity to safeguard their interests through policy coordination. Membership in international organizations through multilateralism aids in

constraining powerful states, discouraging unilateral actions, and providing smaller states with a voice and influence that they would otherwise lack (Gowan, 2018).

2.2 The Role of Diplomacy

Joseph V. Montville (1981) defined diplomacy as Track I diplomacy involves professional diplomats negotiating between governments, whereas Track II diplomacy involves non-state actors using workshops and seminars to resolve conflicts.

Track I diplomacy is the most traditional type of public diplomacy, which can include public conversations on international forums like UN summits and private negotiations behind closed doors. Track I negotiations aim to change power balances and resolve disagreements. Track I is unique since it involves state actors, high-ranking diplomats, officials, and negotiators in their professional responsibilities. Track projects with state actors are usually well-funded and supported by intelligence, security, and logistics. Track I diplomacy may leverage negotiations with financial, political, and perhaps military support, unlike other approaches.

Track I diplomacy is often considered the most successful owing to its greater leverage and resources, according to Böhmelt (2010). The Lancaster negotiations for Rhodesia-Zimbabwe independence in 1979 and the 1965 India-Pakistan talks, which were made possible by the UN and US military embargo, are track I diplomatic efforts. The 1994 NATO operation “Deliberate Force” bombarded the Bosnian Serb forces to force them to negotiate (Böhmelt, 2010). The mid-1990s Israel-Syria peace negotiations are another interesting Track I example. The American government suggested an unconventional method that allowed a formal and official negotiation process to take place in an informal location in Maryland over several days, focusing on relationship-building, a characteristic of Track II rather than Track I interventions (Chataway, 1998).

Track II techniques have risen in use, rearranging power relations in current diplomatic efforts. Former American diplomat Joseph Montville coined the term Track II diplomacy, which refers to non-official negotiations between opposing groups or nations on issues normally handled by diplomats (Yang, Chen and Poong, 2015). Track II includes a variety of unofficial contacts to develop tactics, influence public opinion, and pool resources for conflict resolution (Chataway, 1998). Track II may be pre-negotiation or part of an official negotiation process (Yang, Chen and Poong, 2015). Academics, non-governmental organizations, local and regional leaders, and grassroots movements can participate in Track II discussions (Böhmelt, 2010). Track II may include officials in their personal or private duties (Yang, Chen and Poong, 2015). Track II diplomacy can prevent wars. It addresses the flaws of conventional diplomacy through good communication. Additionally, it can help develop agreement by

bringing together representatives from both parties in informal seminars or problem-solving activities (Yang, Chen and Poong, 2015).

2.3 Importance of Diplomatic Skills in International Relations

International relations and diplomacy are undergoing continuous change, primarily due to the essential adaptation to the digital revolution, which has resulted in the creation of new platforms that report events in real time and facilitate easy access to global communication. Innovations in the education of international relations are vital for the success of graduate programs in these areas, which must remain flexible and reflective of the new, ever-evolving trends. Acquiring diplomatic skills solely through theoretical knowledge is challenging. Furthermore, practicing diplomacy is nearly impossible without being a professional diplomat, as diplomatic activities heavily rely on confidential information. The use of role plays and personalized learning to foster the development of various competencies is not a novel educational approach; however, it has been frequently highlighted in recent years as a potent tool for enhancing learning by stimulating students' creativity (Zhang et al., 2020).

Dynamic grouping strategies have proven effective in improving students' learning outcomes (Chen et al., 2019). The primary objective of education is to impart knowledge across diverse fields and to evaluate the competencies gained by measuring students' ability to apply what they have learned theoretically in practical situations (Kapp, 2012). The curriculum for international relations courses typically includes various diplomatic simulations. Existing research in the field of experiential learning indicates several significant learning benefits of simulations, such as establishing objectives, fostering interaction opportunities, and improving teaching materials; however, there is a scarcity of research concerning students' perceptions of relevant skill development (Smiderle et al., 2020). As young adults, students frequently engage in cyclical, experiential learning, as outlined by Kolb's Learning Cycle (Kolb, 2015). As noted by Duffy (2001), individuals exhibit variations in their learning processes, the manner in which they process information, and how they integrate and apply it in subsequent actions.

Kim (2016) posits that game theory, along with other behavioral disciplines, may provide a deeper insight into political science concepts. When instructing in political science, particularly in the realm of diplomacy, one faces a significant challenge how to cultivate relevant and applicable skills, considering the reality that in practical situations such as those encountered in Ministries of Foreign Affairs), there exists a pressing need for access to confidential information. The advantages of employing a combination of personalized learning and role-playing in political and social sciences are well-documented in educational literature

(Swennen, 2020). Hardy and Totman (2016) argue that the implementation of such mixed methodologies in international relations necessitates a discipline-specific analysis.

Diplomatic training helps people negotiate the complex world of international relations. The curriculum includes international law, economics, political science, languages, and cultural studies. It also involves learning negotiation, multicultural communication, public speaking, and dispute resolution. Diplomatic academies and schools of international relations help prepare diplomats for their jobs. While their focus, methods, and target groups vary, these institutes all promote diplomacy professionalism and expertise. Diplomacy and training benefit each other. Diplomats who understand international relations are essential to effective diplomacy.

2.4 Role and Importance of Diplomatic Skills

Diplomacy and influence on education expands national interests. Education was vital to postcolonial national power (Peterson, 2014). Educational exchanges increase mutual understanding, improve the host country's image, and advance its foreign policy, according to Lima (2007). Today, governments of all sizes and powers participate in diplomacy depending on resources, opportunity, and strength. Higher education produces important soft power in a globalised culture (Li, 2018). Educational partnership in public diplomacy is well-known. Many nations use educational exchanges to promote global understanding and cooperation. Due to its rapid economic growth, Mandarin learners favor China (Wang, 2020).

Political and economic factors that expand international education are not inherently negative, but they are insufficient to meet certain criteria or achieve specific goals, particularly those related to global social mobility (Choudhry & Javed, 2020). US higher education, research, and innovation may affect global audiences. The Fulbright Program is America's most famous public diplomacy program, renowned worldwide. Modern strategies and programs to recruit young international students to education use soft power, which such activities boost (Aras & Mohammed 2019). Thus, internationalizing higher education promotes soft power, allowing a nation to leverage its reputation and influence regional and global dynamics by fostering positive student mobility and cultural, economic, and social connections (Byrne & Hall, 2014).

According to Metzgar (2015), educational exchange will humanize international relations like no other medium by turning nations into people. "The transaction is the best way to start and maintain relationships, even though it's inefficient (Zaharna, 2010). A long-term view of globalization initiatives in higher education is needed to evaluate international educational contacts inside national universities as public diplomacy (Metzgar, 2015). International students affect colleges beyond finance and reputation. Research shows that

Chinese students who studied in Japan viewed Japan more favorably than other nations (Han & Zweig, 2010). In other similar cases, a student who studies in a country is likely to have a good view of it.

Soft power works in higher education (Peterson, 2014). Higher education subsidies are being used by more nations to pursue their interests abroad (Aras & Mohammed, 2019). According to Castiello-Gutiérrez (2019), higher education boosts political soft power and promotes certain interests. Education is a key soft power tool in the US, UK, and Australia. After studying abroad, students commonly hold high jobs in their home countries, using their expertise (Nazar et al., 2019).

In contrast, diplomatic training curricula are constantly shaped by global diplomacy needs. Training programs have also included digital communication methods due to digital diplomacy and social media in international relations. Diplomatic training is crucial to building skills and competences in the continually changing area of diplomacy. Diplomats must improve their abilities in diplomatic training to negotiate, mediate, and discourse across cultures to advance national interests and promote international collaboration. Diplomats may build connections, resolve crises, and represent their country abroad with these skills.

2.5 Diplomatic Training of Ministry of Foreign Affairs

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) serves as a key institution, extending its role beyond merely training diplomats. The enhancement of power and influence can significantly amplify if the MOFA also extends support to both private and public entities engaged with third countries. This may involve utilizing regional centers managed by the MOFA to access the most remote areas within its own borders when necessary. Such initiatives, adopted by various medium and small nations, not only enhance the effectiveness of these institutions but also cultivate a significant domestic base of support for the MOFA, a goal that is often challenging to achieve. This matter warrants thorough examination to explore the diverse roles a MOFA can undertake on the international stage to strengthen its foreign policy. With that said, we shall return to the process of diplomat formation. The recognition of the necessity for effective diplomatic training has a long-standing history (Hocking & Spence, 2005).

Regardless of the size and financial resources available, the recruitment, education, and training of diplomatic personnel within the MOFA are crucial. The primary distinction lies in the fact that recruits from MFAs with greater resources can afford to select their specializations from the outset, including political, economic, consular, business, immigration, or administrative paths. Conversely, in other MOFAs, aspiring diplomats are typically provided with general training programs, preparing them to undertake any and all roles, including administrative duties. Career development is undoubtedly ongoing and presents numerous

options within the MOFA, whereas in smaller organizations, training tends to be sporadic and limited to issues of critical importance in their foreign policy. In certain instances, e-learning, video libraries, and CD-based training are prevalent resources, while in others, these remain a distant aspiration (Cascone, 2000).

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) delegates the responsibility of calling, selecting, and appointing candidates to their Human Resources Divisions, Academies, Institutes, or Training Centers. It is crucial that this process is extensively publicized and conducted transparently, ensuring that only the most qualified candidates are chosen. Typically, in most selection procedures, candidates are required to possess a university degree and proficiency in additional languages. Once accepted into the Foreign Service, the MOFA allocates a significant portion of the curriculum to enhance the language skills of their new recruits. Despite the stringent academic criteria, there is a considerable interest in pursuing a diplomatic career across all nations, a profession that is globally acknowledged as demanding, appealing, and replete with opportunities. There is no age restriction for applicants. They are evaluated by an admissions and educational committee appointed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which includes representatives from universities, trade unions, and chambers of commerce.

Candidates go through four selection stages: (1). Provide academic transcripts, CV, letters of introduction, and an essay outlining their motive for admission. 2. Passing a current affairs and general knowledge exam; 3. Psychological examinations and interviews for the top 98 scores, without regard to knowledge. The 42 top scorers progress to the final interview and language proficiency tests in the fourth round. A two-year training program for the top 30 candidates is described subsequently (Etchenique, 2005).

After being selected, candidates study at the Diplomatic Academy or Institute or receive practical training at their Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), where active and retired diplomats are likely to teach. Diplomatic Academies, Schools of Foreign Service, Institutes of International Relations, and International Training Organizations are Meerts (2000)'s four main Training Center models. The brochure is an example of content and synthesis, guiding countries and institutions who want to build diplomatic training centers to teach junior and mid-career diplomats (Meerts, 2000). The need for diplomatic training is clear. There is consensus that diplomacy cannot be improvised and requires ongoing progress, which can be achieved at a Diplomatic Academy or Institute, a Training Center, or through numerous training programs. Some nations, too small or young to maintain their own training institutes, send its officers overseas through cooperation arrangements with other international organizations.

2.6 Review on Previous Studies

Borzova et al. (2019) investigated international relations in Brazil and Bolivia, which originated under political science but became independent in universities and academies. Brazil's foreign policy priorities expand as international interactions are studied. Diplomatic staff are taught to a high quality at the Rio Branco Institute due to strict regulations. Academic research and diplomatic thought have converged in Brazil, enabling proactive foreign policy. Bolivia, unlike Brazil, has a weak international relations curriculum due to internal problems and political instability. However, in recent years, the government has focused on theoretical and practical tools to help professionals and academics negotiate this new international system.

In Yangon University of Economics, Su Sandar Hnin (2020) detailed the growth of CHRDP Programmed and studied student choice decision variables. Snowball sampling was used to pick 120 students from four Yangon University of Economics Diploma Courses. This study found that several factors affect student choice-making. Student choosing decisions are largely influenced by the university's reputation and tuition. The correlation data also showed that Yangon University of Economics' CHRDP Programmed offers student jobs. The university should provide appealing and informative CHRDP Programmed information on its website.

Kyaw Naing (2022), studied on job effectiveness of Myanmar Civil Aviation Training Institute. This study that the company provides opportunities for promotions and career advancement for the respondents based on their status. It has been observed that they must leverage their skills and abilities to the fullest extent in the ground handling industry. The respondents have been offered regular training, updates, and recurrent training sessions. The study reveals the level of job satisfaction among respondents in ground handling, as well as the degree of agreement regarding the impact of courses offered by MCATI on the ground handling sector.

Sein Lae Khine (2024) examined how postgraduate programs improve career prospects for Yangon University of Economics (YUE) MDevS, MPA, MBF, and MBA graduates. A survey of 200 postgraduate students was conducted using simple random sampling to assess postgraduate program job outcomes. YUE Master's degrees improve work opportunities, with most postgraduates reporting positive improvements. Some respondents said external factors affect job security. Many YUE professional master program alumni find it beneficial for their careers. YUE's postgraduate programs and Postgraduate program boost job growth.

CHAPTER III

AN OVERVIEW ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS OF MYANMAR

3.1 Diplomatic Skills in International Relations of Myanmar

Myanmar, a nation rich in cultural diversity and strategic geographical positioning, has navigated a complex landscape of international relations, particularly in recent decades. The diplomatic skills employed by Myanmar are crucial in shaping its foreign policy, fostering bilateral and multilateral relationships, and addressing both regional and global challenges. Myanmar has often found itself in the midst of regional conflicts and internal strife. The ability to negotiate and mediate has been essential for the country, particularly in peace processes involving ethnic armed groups. The government has engaged in dialogue with various factions, demonstrating a commitment to resolving conflicts through peaceful means. This skill is vital not only for internal stability but also for enhancing Myanmar's reputation on the international stage.

Myanmar's rich cultural heritage provides a unique platform for cultural diplomacy. By promoting its traditions, arts, and history, Myanmar can foster goodwill and strengthen ties with other nations. Cultural exchanges, festivals, and educational programs serve as tools for building relationships and enhancing mutual understanding, which are essential in a diverse and interconnected world. Given its geographical location between major powers like China and India, Myanmar has developed strategic alliances to bolster its international standing. The country has skillfully balanced its relationships with these nations, leveraging economic partnerships and security cooperation. This diplomatic skill allows Myanmar to navigate complex geopolitical dynamics while securing its national interests.

Myanmar's active participation in regional organizations, such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), showcases its commitment to multilateralism. By engaging in regional dialogues and initiatives, Myanmar can address common challenges, such as trade, security, and environmental issues. This involvement not only enhances its diplomatic profile but also fosters collaboration with neighboring countries. Myanmar has faced numerous crises, including political upheaval and humanitarian challenges. The ability to manage these crises diplomatically is crucial. Myanmar's government has sought to engage with international organizations and neighboring countries to address humanitarian needs and seek assistance, demonstrating a willingness to cooperate and find solutions in times of difficulty.

In an era of global communication, Myanmar has recognized the importance of public diplomacy. By engaging with foreign audiences through social media, international events, and outreach programs, Myanmar can shape its narrative and improve its image abroad. This skill is particularly important in countering negative perceptions and promoting a more positive understanding of the country. Myanmar's diplomatic skills in international relations are multifaceted and essential for navigating the complexities of the global landscape. Through negotiation, cultural diplomacy, strategic alliances, participation in regional organizations, crisis management, and public diplomacy, Myanmar aims to enhance its international standing and foster peaceful relations with other nations. As the country continues to evolve, these skills will play a pivotal role in shaping its future in the international arena.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) of Myanmar plays a pivotal role in shaping the country's international relations and diplomatic engagements. Given Myanmar's unique geopolitical position and its historical context, the ministry employs a range of diplomatic skills to navigate complex global dynamics. During the Second World War and the withdrawal of the British Government to India in 1942, the Defence Department was responsible for the foreign affairs of Burma. After the end of the Second World War, the British Government returned to Burma from India and the Burma Act, 1935, was revived. To carry out the provisions of section 7 of the Act, a Defence and External Affairs Department was established, headed by an advisor to the Governor.

At the end of October 1946, at the request of the Burmese people, the Department was placed under the Executive Council of the Governor. At that time, General Aung San, the Vice-Chairman of the Governor's Executive Council, took charge. Later, following an agreement between the Burmese delegation led by General Aung San and the British Government, Burma was granted the right to act independently in foreign affairs, and the Department of Foreign Affairs was established separately under the supervision of General Aung San by Order 77 D.M. 47 of the Department of Defence and External Affairs dated 17 March 1947.

The date on which the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was established is considered to be the date of its establishment. At the time of its establishment, there were only (1) Secretary, (1) Director of Office, (3) Senior Clerks, (1) Junior Clerks, (2) Ministers, a total of (1) Officer and (8) Staff. On 4 May 1948, the Department of Foreign Affairs was renamed the Foreign Office, the term "Secretary" was changed to "Permanent Secretary". On 25 May 1967, the name of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was changed from "Ministry of Foreign Affairs". The following is a list of the 24 Foreign Ministers and 2 Union Ministers who have served from 1947 to the present:

Table (3.1) Ministers of Ministry of Foreign Affairs Ministers

No.	Name	Terms of Office
1.	General Aung San	17 March 1946 to 19 July 1947
2.	U Nu	21 July 1947 to 1 August 1947
3.	U Lun Baw	2 August 1947 to 30 October 1947
4.	U Tin Htut	31 October 1947 to 16 August 1948
5.	U Kyaw Nyein	14 September 1948 to 31 March 1949
6.	U Aye Maung	5 April 1949 to 20 December 1949
7.	U Sao Hkun Hkio	10 December 1949 to 28 October 1958
8.	U Thein Maung	29 October 1958 to 13 February 1959
9.	U Chan Tun Aung	27 February 1959 to 3 April 1960
10.	U Thi Han	2 April 1962 to 18 June 1969
11.	Dr. Maung Lwin	19 June 1969 to 4 August 1970
12.	Dr. Hla Han	4 August 1970 to 20 April 1972
13.	U Kyaw Soe	20 April 1972 to 1 March 1974
14.	U Hla Hpone	2 April 1974 to 3 March 1978

Table (3.1) Continued

15.	U Myint Maung	3 March 1978 to 18 March 1980
16.	U Lay Maung	19 March 1980 to 9 November 1981
17.	U Chit Hlaing	9 November 1981 to 4 November 1985
18.	U Ye Goung	4 November 1985 to 18 September 1988
19.	Senior General Saw Maung	20 September 1988 to 17 September 1991
20.	U Ohn Gyaw	18 September 1991 to 15 November 1998
21.	U Win Aung	15 November 1998 to 17 September 2004
22.	U Nyan Win	19 September 2004 to 30 March 2011
23.	U Wunna Maung Lwin	30 March 2011 to 30 March 2016
24.	Daw Aung San Suu Kyi	30 March 2016 to 31 January 2021

25.	U Wunna Maung Lwin	1 February 2021 to 1 February 2023
26.	U Than Swe	1 February 2021 to Incumbent

Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) in Myanmar plays a crucial role in shaping the country's foreign policy and managing its international relations. Established in 1948, shortly after Myanmar gained independence from British colonial rule, the ministry has evolved through various political landscapes, reflecting the country's shifting priorities and governance structures.

Post-Independence Era (1948-1962): After gaining independence, Myanmar sought to establish itself on the global stage. The MOFA focused on building diplomatic relations, particularly with neighboring countries and former colonial powers. The country adopted a policy of non-alignment during the Cold War, aiming to maintain sovereignty and avoid entanglement in superpower rivalries.

Military Rule (1962-2011): Following a military coup in 1962, Myanmar's foreign policy became more isolationist. The military government, known as the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC), prioritized national security and regime stability over international engagement. The MOFA's activities were often limited, and the country faced international sanctions due to human rights violations and lack of democratic governance.

Transition to Civilian Rule (2011-Present): In 2011, Myanmar began a process of political reform, leading to a more open foreign policy. The MOFA played a pivotal role in re-establishing diplomatic ties with Western nations and enhancing relationships with ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) and other regional partners. The ministry focused on attracting foreign investment, promoting trade, and addressing humanitarian issues.

The MOFA is adept at conducting negotiations with other nations, both bilaterally and multilaterally. This skill is crucial for securing trade agreements, fostering economic cooperation, and addressing regional security issues. The ministry's ability to engage in constructive dialogue helps Myanmar to build and maintain strong relationships with key partners, including neighboring countries and major global powers. In times of political or humanitarian crises, the MOFA plays a critical role in managing Myanmar's international response. The ministry's crisis diplomacy involves engaging with international organizations, such as the United Nations, and neighboring countries to seek assistance and mediate solutions. This skill is essential for mitigating the impact of crises on Myanmar's international standing and ensuring the welfare of its citizens.

The MOFA recognizes the importance of cultural diplomacy in enhancing Myanmar's image abroad. By promoting the country's rich cultural heritage, traditions, and values, the ministry fosters goodwill and mutual understanding with other nations. Public diplomacy initiatives, including cultural exchanges and participation in international events, help to build positive relationships and counter negative perceptions. Effective communication is a cornerstone of the MOFA's diplomatic efforts. The ministry employs strategic communication to articulate Myanmar's foreign policy objectives, respond to international concerns, and engage with foreign media. By clearly conveying its positions and initiatives, the MOFA can influence public opinion and enhance Myanmar's diplomatic narrative on the global stage.

As a member of ASEAN and other regional organizations, the MOFA actively promotes regional cooperation and integration. The ministry's diplomatic skills in fostering collaboration on issues such as trade, security, and environmental sustainability are vital for addressing shared challenges. By participating in regional dialogues, Myanmar can strengthen its ties with neighboring countries and contribute to regional stability. The MOFA invests in capacity building and training for its diplomatic personnel to enhance their skills and effectiveness. This includes training in negotiation techniques, international law, and cultural awareness. By equipping its diplomats with the necessary skills and knowledge, the ministry ensures that Myanmar is well-represented in international forums and negotiations.

The MOFA recognizes the importance of engaging with civil society, academic institutions, and other stakeholders in shaping its foreign policy. By incorporating diverse perspectives and expertise, the ministry can develop more comprehensive and effective diplomatic strategies. This engagement also fosters transparency and builds trust with the public and international community. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Myanmar employs a diverse array of diplomatic skills to navigate the complexities of international relations. Through effective negotiation, crisis diplomacy, cultural and public diplomacy, strategic communication, regional cooperation, capacity building, and stakeholder engagement, the MOFA aims to enhance Myanmar's global standing and foster constructive relationships with other nations. As the international landscape continues to evolve, these skills will be crucial for Myanmar in addressing emerging challenges and opportunities (MOFA, 2025)

3.2 Role and Functions of Ministry of Foreign Affairs

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) is a significant ministry within a nation. The MOFA serves as the governmental body responsible for managing the state's diplomatic relations, foreign policy, and providing assistance to citizens residing abroad. It maintains connections not only with foreign nations but also with various regional, sub-regional, political,

and economic organizations. The MOFA is led by Foreign Ministers, who are typically members of the Cabinet or the principal political entity. Essentially, the Foreign Minister heads the MOFA and reports directly to the President or Prime Minister.

Traditionally, the MOFA has played a crucial role in policy formulation, issuing necessary directives to diplomatic missions. However, advancements in communication and technology have enabled these missions to have a greater input in policy development. In light of the upheavals and importance of international organizations, most foreign ministries now include multilateral departments. Occasionally, the MOFA is instrumental in evaluations conducted by high-level inter-departmental committees.

The main responsibility of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is to implement the foreign policy set by the state. The foreign policy is implemented in accordance with the following five (5) principles of peaceful coexistence:

- (a) mutual respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty;
- (b) to abide by mutual non-aggression;
- (c) non-interference in each other's internal affairs;
- (d) respect for mutual equality and to work for mutual benefit; and
- (e) peaceful co-existence

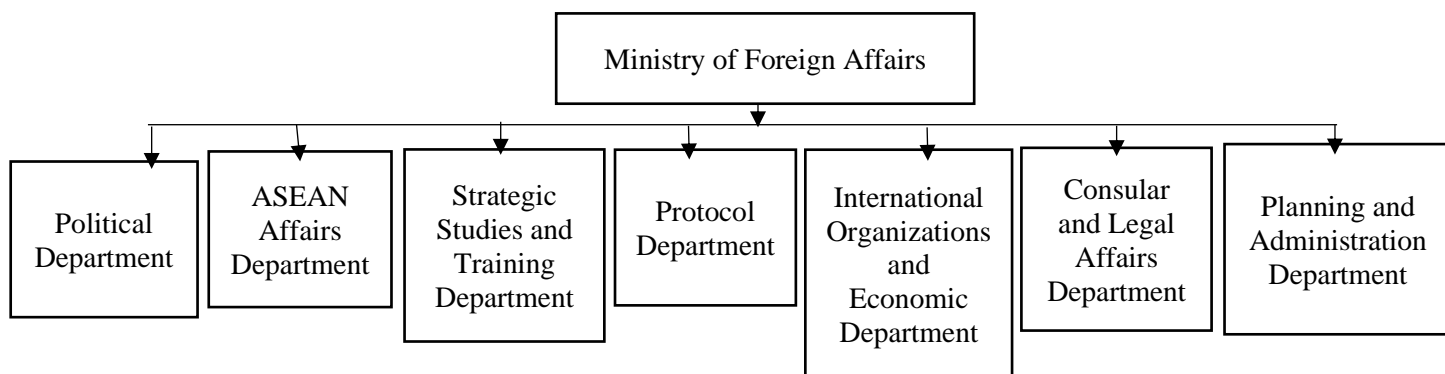
The MOFA status as the 'lead department' through negotiations concerning global matters. Additionally, the MOFA temporarily exchanges personnel with other ministries to enhance collaboration in the fields of trade, commerce, and energy. Most governments are more forgiving with diplomats' political and ethical conduct, although there is worry about their criminal and civil immunity being misused. The MOFA provides psychological assistance to visiting dignitaries and diplomatic embassies in some nations. Senior MOFA officials often answer foreign embassies' questions. Myanmar maintains diplomatic links with 125 nations and is strategically located between South and Southeast Asia, with maritime access and enormous natural resources. Myanmar borders five countries: India, China, Bangladesh, Laos, and Thailand. Thus, Myanmar follows the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Independent and Active Foreign Policy of positive ties with all nations, especially neighboring countries. Myanmar's continued support and active participation in the UN and its affiliated organizations, regional organizations like ASEAN, BIMSTEC, and CLMV, and mutually beneficial bilateral and multilateral cooperation programs are vital to the MOFA. Through its skilled diplomats, MOFA promotes international peace and security and an equitable economic order by opposing imperialism, colonialism, intervention, aggression, and hegemonism.

MOFA promotes regional cooperation and country image. The MOFA oversees global, regional, diplomatic, bilateral, and multilateral security, and national security. It staffs

the state's diplomatic and consular missions abroad, including jobs at international organizations' headquarters. This includes hiring, training, and choosing mini ambassadors. In emergencies, the MOFA helps ambassadors and their families.

The MOFA controls all exterior diplomatic and consular missions, requiring other ministries to report through the ambassador. It gives top MOFA officials key responsibilities in high-level committees. Union Minister of Foreign Affairs leads MOFA with deputy ministers and seven ministries. Political, ASEAN Affairs, Strategic Studies and Training, Protocol, International Organizations and Economic, Consular and Legal Affairs, and Planning and Administration Departments. (Figure 3.1)

Figure (3.1) Organization Structure of Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2025)



Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs

3.3 Strategic Studies and Training Department

The Strategic Studies and Training Department of the MOFA was established in 1996 and it is based in Yangon taking in charge of the strategic studies, training courses, research, archives and library of the ministry. The strategic studies and research divisions take responsible to observe the political, economic and social development and the stand of other nations concerning policies and make analysis on them and report the findings which relates the policies of the State and the ministry. The archive and library division in Nay Pyi Taw and Yangon offers fiction as well as non-fiction and many reference books on several subjects including diplomacy, foreign policy and relations, etc. It also maintains very important documents such as treaties, MoU, press releases, speeches and messages of the Heads of State.

The training division under the Strategic Studies and Training Department conducts not only capacity building courses for the staff of the MOFA with the aim of upgrading the capacity and language skills but also Certificate Course in Basic Diplomatic Skills (BDS) and Certificate Course in Enhanced Diplomatic Skills (EDS) for the staff from other ministries who

relate with international community and those from various fields who have a great desire to learn diplomatic techniques.

The courses organized by the training division for the staff of MOFA are (1) one - month Course for Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM) for those who are going to serve as the deputy chief of mission abroad, (2) three-month Course in Diplomacy (CID) for the junior diplomats/ officers those who newly join the MOFA to get better knowledge on diplomatic and international relations as well as legal and administrative matters, (3) three-month Course for Attache on English Proficiency and Foreign Service Skills for the Attache/Branch Clerks who have first foreign assignment to serve at the missions abroad, (4) one-month Course for Junior Staff on Basic Office Skills Training for newly appointed clerks. Short Interpreter Courses were also held for the enhancement of the language skills of the Foreign Service personnels.

For those who have keen interest in international relations and diplomacy from the various sectors, the courses conducted by the training division of the Strategic and Studies and Training Department are Certificate Course in Basic Diplomatic Skills (BDS) and Certificate Course in Enhanced Diplomatic Skills (EDS). The Basic Diplomatic Skills Course was first introduced in 2000. From the first batch to 43th BDS Batches were conducted in Yangon and starting from 44th BDS batch, the Courses were simultaneously opened in both Nay Pyi Taw and Yangon. Each course accepts about 60 participants in the morning and evening sections, totally 120 participants at a time. The BDS courses were held continuously to 46 batches with more than 8,200 participants now.

The objective of the organizing of the BDS Course is to support the development of Myanmar's human resources from one side for those from private sectors including those who work in the governmental institutions and respective ministries engaging in international relations, interested in studying diplomatic matters, international relations, international laws, current international affairs and economics issues.

The criteria for the applicants for the BDS course should be a graduate holder from the university with good health and no criminal record. If the applicants is a government staff, it is necessary to present the approval letter from the concerned department to join the course. The important thing is that the applicants can attend the course without absence during the course period. The applicants are chosen through interview with the course supervisory committee led by the Director-General of the Department. The duration of the BDS Course is 3 months.

Table (3.2) Basic Diplomatic Skills Course Subject Area

Subject Area	Description
Diplomacy	Diplomatic Principles, Negotiation, Representation
International Relations	Theories, Institutions, Foreign Policy
International Law	Treaties, Customary Law, Conventions
Economics/Political Economy	Trade Policy, Macroeconomics, Economic Diplomacy
International Affairs	Current Global Political Events and Trends
Negotiation Skills	Multi-party Bargaining, Mediation, Communication
International Conferencing	Planning and Managing Diplomatic Meetings/Events
General Knowledge	Prep Techniques, Protocol, Briefing Formats

Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Certificate Course in Enhanced Diplomatic Skills (EDS) can be joined those finished the BDS course with success. EDS course was initiated in 2015 and 7 courses have been conducted until now. The course lasts for 2 months and accepts 50 participants once it is held.

3.4 Myanmar Institute of Strategic and International Studies

Myanmar Institute of Strategic and International Studies (MISIS) is an Institute affiliated to the MOFA, and it is practicing the Track 2 Diplomacy nowadays in international arena with its members of well-experienced in diplomatic, politics, economic and educational fields. The State Law and Order Restoration Council of Myanmar created it on July 2, 1992, by Cabinet Notification No. 37/92, with the then-Minister for Foreign Affairs as its head. Myanmar ISIS experienced multiple reconstitutions in succeeding years due to government decisions, membership changes, and other circumstances. The institute has sent delegates to many meetings, seminars, workshops, and roundtable discussions conducted by international studies institutes or think tanks throughout Asia and elsewhere during the past decade.

Myanmar ISIS has also conducted seminars and workshops with foreign foundations including the Hanns Seidel Foundation, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES), and Sasakawa Peace Foundation. Myanmar ISIS aims to be an academic institution that studies international relations and foreign policy. Strategic studies and research on regional and international issues are also conducted. Myanmar ISIS also provides timely insights, perspectives, and

recommendations for bilateral and multilateral policy and decision-making to serve Myanmar's national interests and promote peace, friendship, and cooperation with other nations.

Projecting Myanmar's accurate image and improving worldwide knowledge of its viewpoints, policies, and actions on numerous topics is also crucial. Myanmar Institute of Strategic and International Studies-MISIS changed names in 2013. Since its founding, MISIS, associated with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, has evolved into a Myanmar think tank with four-year boards. Myanmar ISIS is an academic center studying international relations and foreign policy. Strategic studies and regional and international research are also their focus. Its major goal as a think tank is to participate in Track-Two Policy Think Tank networks including:

- (a) The Network of East Asia Think Tank
- (b) The Network of ASEAN China Think Tank
- (c) The Network of ASEAN India Think Tank
- (d) The Network of ASEAN Russia Think Tanks
- (e) The ASEAN Institute for Peace and Reconciliation
- (f) The Global Centre for Mekong Study
- (g) BIMSTEC Network of Policy Think Tanks
- (h) Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific
- (i) Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies
- (j) Institute for Peace and Democracy
- (k) Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses
- (l) Kuming University
- (m) BIMSTEC Network of Policy Think Tanks
- (n) Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific
- (o) Korea National Diplomatic Academy
- (p) International Studies Center, Thailand
- (q) China Institute of International Studies
- (r) China Institute for Reform and Development
- (s) Moscow State Institute for International Relations
- (t) Pathfinder Foundation, Sri Lanka
- (u) Institute of China and Contemporary Asia, Russia Academy of Sciences

It has further networked locally with the following Institutes:

- (a) The Centre for Strategic and International Studies
- (b) The Thayninga Institute for Strategic Studies

The Myanmar-ISIS was reestablished and restructured in July 2022 for its Third Four-year term. The third term of MISIS has commenced with expanded objectives, inviting a wider array of scholars, practitioners, and former diplomats. A Board of senior advisors, consisting of eight esteemed scholar-practitioners, supports the Board of Executives. MISIS is now tasked with a broader scope of study, analysis, and the generation of recommendations regarding forthcoming international and regional dynamics in the areas of security, economy, and cultural affairs. The key focus areas for MISIS's activation and collaboration have become:

- (a) Involvement in research and joint research programs to promote national and regional peace, prosperity and stability.
- (b) Cooperation and exchange among think tanks and establishment of foundations for better understanding and relations among the states in both multilateral and bilateral fields.
- (c) Assistance to the activities of people-to-people relationships among nations.
- (d) Participation and assistance in research and development of National Strategy and Policy formulations.
- (e) Production of timely reports, articles and papers towards providing a better understanding of state policy and activities to the public and international community.

The primary objective of the reconstituted Institute is to conduct research on current issues related to internal and international affairs. Additionally, it will aim to expand and cultivate relationships with other academic institutions both domestically and internationally. As the Myanmar-ISIS progresses, its research endeavors will become its foremost priority. Research papers, reports, and recommendations produced by MISIS are submitted to the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation as contributions to policy and strategy development.

The responsibilities of MISIS can only be effectively fulfilled through the collaboration and joint efforts of local and international partner think tanks, scholars, and officials which may call through the use of Track II Diplomacy. Collaboration among scholars, practitioners, and former diplomats aimed at producing optimal policy recommendations will be significantly enhanced through comprehensive exchanges and sharing with both regional and international partners. The structure of MISIS underwent reorganization in July 2022, establishing three tiers of Boards: the Board of Trustees, the Senior Advisory Board, and the Executive Board. The Global Go to Think Tank Index, based on a survey by the Lauder Institute's Think Tank and Civil Societies Program, ranks MISIS 37th among 110 think tanks in South and Southeast Asia

and the Pacific (excluding India) for 2020. The success of the MISIS shows the importance of Track II Diplomacy in international relations (MOFA, 2025).

CHAPTER IV

SURVEY ANALYSIS

4.1 Survey Profile

The basic Diplomatic Skills Course was initiated in 2000 with the objective of enhancing the development of the nation's human resources. The courses are designed for individuals interested in studying diplomatic affairs from various private sectors, including employees of ministries that engage and collaborate with the international community, entrepreneurs, corporate staff, and personnel from international organizations, as well as recent graduates. The goal is to train and cultivate the country's human resources by equipping them with knowledge and insights into diplomacy, diplomatic practices, and international relations.

The basic diplomatic skills course encompasses subjects related to Diplomacy, International Relations, Law, Economics, Myanmar Affairs, and Practical Practices in Conducting International Conferences, along with general knowledge topics that the trainees should be familiar with. Directors-General, Deputy Directors-General, Directors, Retired Ambassadors, Veteran Diplomats, University Professors and Teachers, Subject Matter Experts, and Officials from various ministries, including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Planning and Finance, Ministry of Investment and Foreign Economic Relations, Ministry of Information, and Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation, teach the Basic Diplomatic Skills.

The basic diplomatic skills course is a highly beneficial course for the trainees/participants as retired ambassadors, professors, and subject matter experts from universities, as well as specialists from various ministries deliver the lectures. These instructors impart knowledge not only on practical implementation and policy matters but also on the foreign policies and international laws of numerous countries worldwide. This course is particularly beneficial for those involved in diplomatic studies. It aims to enhance knowledge and comprehension of diplomatic affairs for individuals interested in this field, including officials and staff from various government organizations and ministries engaged in international relations, as well as representatives from the private sector. The curriculum is

currently undergoing revisions based on the trainers' recommendations to better equip trainees with the necessary knowledge and understanding of diplomatic affairs, thereby addressing their actual needs.

4.2 Survey Design

This study employed a descriptive methodology utilizing both primary and secondary data. To obtain primary data, a structured questionnaire was distributed to the candidates of the Basic Diplomatic Skills Course. A survey was conducted in June, 2025, and used a random sampling method. Participants were allotted five days to complete the survey. An open-ended question was incorporated to elicit responses relevant to the study's scope. The Likert scale was utilized, presenting a series of attitude statements, with subjects of the study responding on a five-point scale. The survey questionnaire comprises three sections. Section (A) reports the characteristics of the respondents, Section (B) assesses the effectiveness of diplomatic skills, and Section (C) evaluates the basic diplomatic skills course. The collected data was analyzed, employing a statistical technique using SPSS to organize the data according to the items outlined in the various sections of the questionnaire. The responses were tabulated to display frequencies and percentages. The findings are presented in tables, accompanied by a discussion of the results and their relevance to the study area.

4.3 Analysis of Survey Result

This section covers survey data analysis. First, respondent characteristics are shown. The second segment shows diplomatic efficacy. Evaluation of basic diplomatic skills training in third portion.

4.3.1 Characteristics of Respondents

Table (4.1) shows gender, age, educational degree, current employment, and working experience from 120 respondents.

Table (4.1) Characteristics of Respondents

Particular	No. of Respondents	%
Gender		
Male	48	40.0
Female	72	60.0
Total	120	100
Age (Years)		
25 to 35	56	46.7
36 to 45	47	39.2
Above 45	17	14.2
Total	120	100
Educational Qualification		
Graduate	66	55.0
Postgraduate	56	45.0
Total	120	100
Current Occupation		
Government Employee	23	19.2
Private Employee	29	24.2
Business Owner	35	29.2
Others	33	27.5
Total	120	100
Working Experience		
Less than 5 Years	58	48.3
5 Years to 10 Years	1	0.8
10 Years to 15 Years	45	37.5
More than 15 Years	16	13.3
Total	120	100

Source: Survey data, 2025

Regarding from 120 respondents (Table 4.2), 72 respondents (60%) are female, while 48 respondents (40%) are male. There is a higher attendance of female candidates compared to male candidates. Regarding age distribution, 56 respondents (46.7%) are within the age range of 25 to 35 years, 47 respondents (39.2%) fall between 36 to 45 years, and 17 respondents

(14.2%) are over 45 years old. Concerning the educational qualifications of the 120 respondents, 66 respondents (55%) have obtained a bachelor's degree, whereas 56 respondents (45%) possess a master's degree. Consequently, business owners represent the largest occupational group, accounting for 35 respondents (29.2%), followed by 33 respondents (27.5%) in other professional roles, 29 respondents (24.2%) as private employees, and 23 respondents (19.2%) as government employees. The majority of responders had fewer than 5 years of work experience, followed by 10–15 and 15+ years. Diplomatic effectiveness in respect to professional and social skills is discussed next.

The typical values of the five-point Likert scale are: (1.00 – 1.80) strong disagreement, (1.81 – 2.60) disagreement, (2.61 – 3.40) neutrality, (3.41 – 4.20) agreement, and (4.21 – 5.00) strong agreement (Best, 1977). Table (4.3) shows 120 respondents' professional skills.

Table (4.2) Professional Skills

No.	Particular	Mean	Std. Dev
1	Searching and filtering information in virtual space	4.20	0.478
2	Problem solving	4.33	0.585
3	Task partitioning	3.54	0.548
4	Assertiveness	4.37	0.649
5	Attention to details	4.80	0.402
6	Giving and receiving feedback	4.80	0.442
7	Decision making based on information received	4.46	0.697
8	Analysis capacity	4.10	0.600
9	Change management	4.13	0.668
10	Planning and organizing the work	4.22	0.676
11	Writing reports using a diplomatic language	2.98	0.850
12	Procedures compliance	4.37	0.607
Overall Mean Value		4.20	

Source: Survey data, 2025

The mean professional skills result of 120 respondents (Table 4.3) was 4.20, indicating that respondents agreed that virtual information must be searched and filtered. The mean value of 4.33 shows that respondents significantly supported problem-solving. Task partitioning agreement was shown by the mean value of 3.54. The mean level of 4.37 shows that respondents highly favored assertiveness.

The responders highly agreed on the significance of detail (mean = 4.80). The mean score of 4.80 shows that respondents strongly supported offering and receiving feedback. The mean value of 4.46 shows that respondents significantly supported information-based decision-making. The mean score of 4.10 indicates that respondents agreed on their analytical skills.

Change management agreement was indicated by the mean value of 4.13. The mean score of 4.22 shows that respondents highly agreed on the significance of planning and arranging activities. Respondents agreed to use diplomatic language in report writing (mean = 2.98). The mean score of 4.37 shows that respondents strongly supported procedural compliance. The mean value of 4.20 shows that respondents felt the basic diplomatic skills course will improve their professional skills.

Table (4.3) Social Skills

No.	Particular	Mean	Std. Dev
1	Ability to dialog	4.57	0.498
2	Building relations within the team	4.87	0.341
3	Team coordination	4.88	0.332
4	Self-control and confidence	3.98	0.654
5	Flexibility	4.57	0.529
6	Team motivation	4.78	0.471
7	Initiative and creativity	3.83	0.653
8	Quality of work and accuracy	4.57	0.583
9	Emotional intelligence	3.54	0.697
10	Conflict management	4.60	0.556
11	Stress management	3.47	0.673
12	Care for order	4.62	0.488
Overall Mean Value		4.36	

Source: Survey data, 2025

The mean social skills score of 120 respondents (Table 4.4) was 4.57, indicating that respondents highly agreed on their ability to communicate. The mean score of 4.87 shows that respondents highly agreed on team building. The mean value of 4.88 indicates that respondents significantly supported team cooperation. Respondents agreed on the importance of self-control and confidence (mean 3.98). The mean value of 4.57 indicates that respondents greatly supported flexibility. The mean value of 4.78 shows that respondents significantly valued team motivation. The mean rating of 3.83 shows that respondents valued initiative and innovation.

The mean score of 4.57 indicates that respondents highly agreed on job quality and accuracy. According to the mean score of 3.54, respondents believed that emotional intelligence is important. The mean score of 4.60 shows that respondents strongly agreed on conflict management's efficacy. The mean value of 3.47 shows that respondents valued stress management. The mean value of 4.62 indicates that respondents highly supported order. The mean score of 4.62 shows that respondents highly agreed that the basic diplomatic skills course will improve their social abilities.

Table (4.4) Rate of Overall Quality of Basic Diplomatic Skills Course

Particular	No. of Respondents	%
Excellent	91	75.8
Good	29	24.2
Total	120	100

Source: Survey data, 2025

According to Table (4.4), most respondents rated the overall quality of the basic diplomatic skills course as excellent.

Table (4.5) Course Relevant in International Relations

Particular	No. of Respondents	%
Somewhat relevant	31	25.8
Very relevant	89	74.2
Total	120	100

Source: Survey data, 2025

According to Table (4.5), most of the respondents are very relevant the basic diplomatic skills course content to current or future role in international relations. The basic diplomatic skills course has proven to be highly effective in enhancing the professional competencies of junior diplomats and relevant personnel. The course provided a comprehensive foundation in key areas essential to diplomatic work, including negotiation, protocol, communication, international law, and regional/international relations.

Table (4.6) Field Most Beneficial for Diplomacy

Particular	No. of Respondents	%
Above all	83	69.2
Communication skills	5	4.2
Communication skills and cultural awareness	3	2.5
Communication skills, protocol and etiquette	3	2.5
Conflict resolution	4	3.3
Conflict resolution and communication skills	3	2.5
Negotiation techniques	4	3.3
Negotiation techniques and communication skills	5	4.2
Negotiation techniques and conflict resolution	1	0.8
Negotiation techniques, protocol and etiquette	2	1.7
Protocol and etiquette	7	5.8
Total	120	100

Source: Survey data, 2025

According to Table (4.6), the respondents learn effective communication techniques, which are essential for diplomacy. This includes verbal and non-verbal communication, active listening, and negotiation skills. The basic diplomatic course provides a solid foundation in international relations, foreign policy, and the workings of diplomacy, which is essential for new diplomats or those interested in a diplomatic career. The respondents gained practical experience in both verbal and written communication, allowing for more articulate and diplomatic expression in formal and informal settings. This has resulted in greater confidence during bilateral meetings, official correspondence, and multilateral dialogues. Understanding in diplomatic protocol and international etiquette has ensured that the respondents can properly manage official ceremonies, receptions, and high-level engagements, thereby upholding the image and integrity of the Ministry.

The course emphasized strategic thinking and negotiation techniques, helping officers develop the ability to handle sensitive discussions with clarity, tact, and effectiveness. These skills are now being applied in real-world settings, particularly during regional summits and bilateral talks. The respondents learned how to prepare concise, informative, and policy-relevant reports and briefs. These skills are vital for timely and accurate information sharing with decision-makers at the Ministry and diplomatic missions abroad.

The course broadened participants' understanding of global and regional dynamics, including ASEAN affairs, UN mechanisms, and international legal frameworks, allowing for better-informed policy recommendations and engagement strategies. In conclusion, the basic diplomatic skills course has significantly contributed to building a more capable and confident diplomatic workforce. The knowledge and skills acquired are not only relevant but essential in the evolving landscape of international diplomacy. Continued investment in such training programs will further strengthen Myanmar's representation on the global stage.

Table (4.7) Effectiveness of Course Instructors

Particular	No. of Respondents	%
Effective	12	10.0
Somewhat effective	7	5.8
Very effective	101	84.2
Total	120	100

Source: Survey data, 2025

According to Table (4.7), most respondents said that the teachers were very effective in delivering the course such as diplomacy, international relations, international law, economics, current international affairs, negotiation skills, international conferencing and general knowledge. The course often covers cultural sensitivity and awareness, helping diplomats understand and respect different cultures, which is crucial in international relations.

Table (4.8) Applicable of Diplomatic Skills Learned

Particular	No. of Respondents	%
Frequently	115	95.8
Occasionally	5	4.2
Total	120	100

Source: Survey data, 2025

According to Table (4.8), most of the respondents applied the diplomatic skills in their organization and in other relationships. The respondents can connect with peers and experienced diplomats, fostering relationships that can be beneficial for future collaborations and information sharing. The respondents may engage in simulations and role-playing exercises that provide hands-on experience in handling diplomatic situations, enhancing their problem-solving abilities.

Table (4.9) Confidence After Completing the Basic Diplomatic Skills Course

Particular	No. of Respondents	%
Confident	20	16.7
Very Confident	100	83.3
Total	120	100

Source: Survey data, 2025

According to Table (4.9), most of the respondents are very confident in their diplomatic skills after completing the course. Completing the course can enhance a participant's qualifications, making them more competitive for positions within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs or related fields. A basic diplomatic skills course offered by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Myanmar presents several advantages, including improved communication skills,

cultural awareness, and networking opportunities. However, potential disadvantages such as limited scope and resource constraints should also be considered. Overall, the effectiveness of the course will depend on its design, delivery, and the specific needs of the participants.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

5.1 Findings

The report evaluates Myanmar's Ministry of Foreign Affairs' diplomatic skills training. Basic Diplomatic Skills Course was launched in 2000 to strengthen the nation's human resources. The courses are designed for individuals interested in studying diplomatic affairs from various private sectors, including employees of ministries that engage and collaborate with the international community, entrepreneurs, corporate staff, and personnel from international organizations, as well as recent graduates. The goal is to train and cultivate the country's human resources by equipping them with knowledge and insights into diplomacy, diplomatic practices, and international relations.

The study includes 120 participants enrolled in the basic diplomatic course at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Myanmar. The survey revealed a higher attendance of female candidates compared to their male counterparts. Regarding educational qualifications, the majority of respondents hold a bachelor's degree. Among the total respondents, business owners represent the largest occupational category. The participants concurred on the importance of searching for and filtering information within a virtual context. They strongly advocated for the development of problem-solving abilities and supported the notion of assertiveness. The respondents highlighted the significance of meticulous attention to detail. They also expressed strong agreement on the practice of providing and receiving feedback, as well as making decisions informed by the available information.

The respondents expressed strong agreement regarding their capacity to engage in dialogue. They acknowledged the importance of self-control and confidence. Additionally, the respondents recognized the value of initiative and creativity. They strongly affirmed the effectiveness of conflict management strategies. A majority of the respondents found the content of the basic diplomatic skills course to be highly relevant to their current or future roles in international relations. The course offered a thorough foundation in essential areas pertinent to diplomatic work, such as negotiation, protocol, communication, international law, and regional/international relations.

The course placed a strong emphasis on strategic thinking and negotiation techniques, equipping officers with the skills necessary to navigate sensitive discussions with clarity, tact, and effectiveness. These competencies are currently being utilized in practical settings, particularly during regional summits and bilateral negotiations. The respondents acquired the ability to prepare concise, informative, and policy-relevant reports and briefs. The basic diplomatic skills course provided by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Myanmar offers numerous benefits, including enhanced communication skills, cultural awareness, and opportunities for networking.

5.2 Suggestions

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is offering basic diplomatic skills courses to those interested in studying diplomatic matters, including government organizations and officials/staff from various ministries and the private sector, who are engaged in international relations. The curricula are designed in accordance with the recommendations of the trainers and the current domestic and international developments, in order to provide more knowledge and understanding of diplomatic affairs for those interested in studying diplomatic affairs, and to support the actual needs of the trainees.

In addition, the training work plans are designed to be more convenient in changing procedures and situations, and to implement more effective interests, and to support the state and the ministry in one way or another. This basic diplomatic skills course aims to provide participants with a solid foundation in the essential skills required for effective diplomacy. By fostering a deeper understanding of international relations and enhancing practical skills, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Myanmar can better prepare its diplomats for the challenges of the global stage.

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APPENDICES**APPENDIX I****List of Countries Having Diplomatic Relations with Myanmar**

No.	Name of Country	Date of Establishment
1.	United Kingdom	7 July 1947
2.	Pakistan	1 August 1947
3.	United States of America	19 September 1947
4.	Netherlands	22 December 1947
5.	India	4 January 1948
6.	Russian Federation	18 February 1948
7.	France	28 February 1948
8.	Thailand	24 August 1948
9.	Sri Lanka	7 June 1949
10.	Indonesia	27 December 1949
11.	China (PRC)	8 June 1950
12.	Italy	24 November 1950
13.	Serbia	29 December 1950
14.	Austria	9 July 1953
15.	Israel	13 July 1953
16.	Australia	1 August 1953
17.	Egypt	8 August 1953
18.	Belgium	19 September 1953
19.	Germany	3 August 1954
20.	Finland	22 July 1954
21.	Japan	1 December 1954
22.	Denmark	22 April 1955
23.	Cambodia	12 July 1955
24.	Laos PDR	12 July 1955
25.	Poland	11 November 1955
26.	Bulgaria	18 November 1955
27.	Czech Republic	3 January 1956
28.	Slovak Republic	3 January 1956
29.	Hungary	5 March 1956
30.	Romania	15 March 1956

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31.	Norway	18 May 1956
32.	Iraq	23 July 1956
33.	The Philippines	30 July 1956
34.	Mongolia	28 September 1956
35.	Afghanistan	8 November 1956
36.	Sweden	1956
37.	Switzerland	1957
38.	Malaysia	1 March 1958
39.	Greece	20 March 1958
40.	Canada	9 August 1958
41.	Turkey	2 September 1958
42.	New Zealand	15 November 1958
43.	Nepal	3 March 1960
44.	Singapore	12 August 1966
45.	Spain	11 March 1967
46.	Iran	8 August 1968
47.	Algeria	15 November 1968
48.	Maldives	15 January 1970
49.	Nigeria	24 January 1970
50.	Bangladesh	21 March 1972
51.	Syria	15 June 1972
52.	Argentina	28 February 1975
53.	Korea, Republic of (ROK)	19 May 1975
54.	Vietnam	28 May 1975
55.	Mexico	1 October 1976
56.	Mauritania	5 October 1976
57.	Cuba	12 October 1976
58.	Portugal	14 November 1976
59.	Albania	15 December 1976
60.	Costa Rica	8 March 1977
61.	Morocco	31 July 1978
62.	Mauritius	30 December 1978

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63.	Chile	22 April 1982
64.	Panama	15 July 1982
65.	Brazil	1 September 1982
66.	Cyprus	15 July 1985
67.	Vanuatu	28 January 1987
68.	Colombia	28 November 1988
69.	Peru	28 August 1989
70.	Venezuela	20 November 1990
71.	Papua New Guinea	24 July 1991
72.	Brunei Darussalam	21 September 1993
73.	Ghana	13 January 1995
74.	South Africa	20 April 1995
75.	Kenya	26 September 1997
76.	Kuwait	16 December 1998
77.	Ukraine	19 January 1999
78.	Azerbaijan	3 August 1999
79.	Georgia	16 August 1999
80.	Turkmenistan	26 August 1999
81.	Croatia	3 September 1999
82.	Belarus	22 September 1999
83.	Kazakhstan	23 September 1999
84.	Tajikistan	29 September 1999
85.	Jamaica	6 December 1999
86.	Kyrgyzstan	9 November 2000
87.	Uzbekistan	8 February 2001
88.	Uruguay	22 February 2001
89.	North Macedonia	9 July 2003
90.	Ireland	10 February 2004
91.	Sudan	20 May 2004
92.	Saudi Arabia	25 August 2004
93.	State of Qatar	26 September 2005
94.	East Timor	26 September 2006

124.	Republic of Nicaragua	6 August 2020
125.	United Arab Emirates	9 November 2020
126.	The Republic of Guinea-Bissau	6 March 2023

Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs

List of Countries Having Close Relations with Myanmar

No.	Name of Country	Relationship Type
1.	China	“Pauk-Phaw” friendship with Strategic Cooperative Partnership
2.	Thailand	Long-standing traditionally economic and friendly relationship
3.	India	Warm relationship with cooperation in regional and multilateral forum
4.	Russia	Strengthening friendship and economic relations
5.	Viet Nam	Friendly relationship with comprehensive cooperative partnership
6.	Singapore	Warm bilateral relationship with growing economic relations
7.	Cambodia	Long-standing friendly relationship with cultural and religious similarities
8.	Laos	Long-standing friendly relationship and economic relations through border trade
9.	Malaysia	Social and economic relationship with exchange of trade and migrant workers
10.	Indonesia	Warm relationship with cooperation in regional and multilateral forum
11.	Brunei	Warm relations
12.	Philippines	Long-standing friendly relations
13.	Korea (ROK)	Strong and growing relationship particularly in economic and cultural cooperation

95.	Montenegro	27 November 2006
96.	Republic of Slovenia	18 December 2006
97.	Korea, Democratic People's Republic of (DPRK)	First established 1975-1983 (re-established diplomatic relations in 26 April 2007)
98.	Principality of Andorra	11 February 2009
99.	Republic of Zimbabwe	27 August 2009
100.	The Kingdom of Bahrain	10 November 2009
101.	The Republic of Fiji	10 May 2010
102.	The Sultanate of Oman	14 December 2010
103.	The Republic of Gambia	13 January 2011
104.	Bosnia and Herzegovina	25 August 2011
105.	Republic of Malawi	30 January 2012
106.	Kingdom of Bhutan	1 February 2012
107.	The Grand Duchy of Luxembourg	31 July 2012
108.	Republic of Latvia	26 September 2012
109.	Republic of Estonia	26 September 2012
110.	Republic of Iceland	19 December 2012
111.	Republic of Armenia	31 January 2013
112.	Republic of Angola	19 September 2013
113.	Republic of Lithuania	8 October 2013
114.	Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia	28 December 2015
115.	Republic of Malta	5 April 2017
116.	Republic of Ecuador	6 April 2017
117.	Republic of Marshall Islands	21 April 2017
118.	Republic of Liberia	5 May 2017
119.	Holy See (Vatican City)	5 May 2017
120.	Republic of Guinea	6 June 2017
121.	Republic of Seychelles	12 July 2017
122.	Republic of Benin	2 July 2019
123.	Republic of Togo	31 July 2019

14.	Japan	Historically friendly relationship with strongest ties among Asian countries
15.	Nepal	Age-old relationship based on mutual respect, trust and cooperation
16.	Sri Lanka	Friendly and cooperative bilateral relations with strong ties in trade, investment, tourism and cultural exchange, collaboration at regional and international levels including within organization like BIMSTEC
17.	Bangladesh	Maintaining small scale trade relations

Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs

SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

I am currently pursuing a Master of Development Studies at Yangon University of Economics. I have created the following questionnaire for the study titled "**A STUDY ON ASSESSMENT OF BASIC DIPLOMATIC SKILLS COURSE FOR DIPLOMACY**," which is essential for my thesis work and a requisite for completing my Master's Degree.

All information provided will be kept confidential, and the researcher commits to not disclosing any personal information that may be included in this questionnaire. You will need approximately 20 minutes to complete these questionnaires. Please read the questions carefully and indicate your responses by marking a tick in the box provided. Thank you for your participation.

Section (A) Characteristics of Respondent

1. Gender

Male

Female

2. Age (Year)

25 to 35

36 to 45

Above 45

3. Educational qualification

Graduate

Postgraduate

4. Current Occupation

Government Employee

Private Employee

Business Owner

Others

5. Working experience

Less than 5 years

5 years to 10 years

10 years to 15 years

More than 15 years

Section (B) Benefit of Diplomatic Skills

Please a tick in the box your opinion on scale of (1) Poor, (2) Fair, (3) Neutral, (4) Good, (5) Excellent.

No.	Professional Skills	1	2	3	4	5
1	Searching and filtering information in virtual space					
2	Problem solving					
3	Task partitioning					
4	Assertiveness					
5	Attention to details					
6	Giving and receiving feedback					
7	Decision making based on information received					
8	Analysis capacity					
9	Change management					
10	Planning and organizing the work					
11	Writing reports using a diplomatic language					
12	Procedures compliance					

Please a tick in the box your opinion on scale of (1) Poor, (2) Fair, (3) Neutral, (4) Good, (5) Excellent.

No.	Social Skills	1	2	3	4	5
1	Ability to dialog					
2	Building relations within the team					
3	Team coordination					
4	Self-control and confidence					
5	Flexibility					
6	Team motivation					
7	Initiative and creativity					
8	Quality of work and accuracy					
9	Emotional intelligence					
10	Conflict management					
11	Stress management					
12	Care for order					

Section (C) Basic Diplomatic Skills Course Evaluation

1. How would you rate the overall quality of the Basic Diplomatic Skills Course?

- Excellent
- Good
- Fair
- Poor

2. How relevant do you find the course content to your current or future role in international relations?

- Very relevant
- Somewhat relevant
- Not very relevant
- Not relevant at all

3. Which topics did you find most beneficial?

- Negotiation techniques
- Conflict resolution
- Cultural awareness
- Communication skills
- Protocol and etiquette
- Other (Please specify) _____

4. How effective were the instructors in delivering the course material?

- Very effective
- Effective
- Somewhat effective
- Not effective

5. Since completing the course, how often have you applied the diplomatic skills learned?

- Frequently
- Occasionally
- Rarely
- Never

6. How confident do you feel in your diplomatic skills after completing the course:

- Not confident
- Confident
- Very confident