YANGON UNIVERSITY OF ECONOMICS
DEPARTMENT OF APPLIED ECONOMICS
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A STUDY ON RECRUITMENT, RECREATION, EDUCATION AND HEALTHCARE OF CHILD LABOUR

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MPA – 2 (22nd BATCH)

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A STUDY ON RECRUITMENT, RECREATION, EDUCATION AND HEALTHCARE OF CHILD LABOUR

A thesis submitted as a partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Public Administration

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This is to certify that this thesis entitled "**A STUDY ON RECRUITMENT, RECREATION, EDUCATION AND HEALTHCARE OF CHILD LABOUR**", submitted in partial fulfilment towards the requirements for the degree of Master of Public Administration (MPA) has been accepted by the Board of Examiners.

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the working conditions of child labourers in the Yangon Region. It focuses on how children are recruited and their access to education, recreation, and healthcare. A total of 263 child labourers aged 13 to 17 were surveyed. They work in urban places such as tea shops (39.5%), restaurants (23.2%), markets, and car wash businesses. 93.2% were recruited informally by relatives or neighbours. These children often work long hours (with 68.8% working 11 hours or more per day), especially in restaurants and factories. 79.5% of the child labourers are not currently attending school, and they mostly rely on traditional medicine when they are sick. 51% reported losing part of their wages due to mistakes or absence caused by illness. 61.2% have no access to recreational activities. These findings reflect the exploitative working conditions and limited access to basic services experienced by salaried child labourers in urban Yangon.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CCT	Conditional Cash Transfer
FGLLID	Focal Group on Labour Law and International Labour Standards
IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons
ILO	International Labour Organization
MICS	Myanmar Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys
MOLIP	Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population
MSWRR	Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement
MY-PEC	Myanmar Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour
NAP	National Action Plan
NESP	National Education Strategic Plan
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
UN	United Nations
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund

CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Rationale for the Study

Child labour remains one of the most pressing global challenges, particularly in developing countries like Myanmar. The issue goes beyond mere employment—it encompasses recruitment into labour, lack of access to education and recreation, and poor healthcare, all of which severely impact children's development. According to the International Labour Organization (ILO, 2021), 160 million children worldwide are engaged in child labour, with nearly half involved in hazardous work that puts their health and safety at risk. The COVID-19 pandemic has further exacerbated this issue, reversing years of progress and pushing an additional 8.9 million children into labour (ILO & UNICEF, 2021).

Despite international efforts under Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Target 8.7, which calls for the elimination of child labour in all forms by 2025 (UN, 2015), the progress remains uneven and fragile. According to Suda (2011), child labour refers to any form of work that is dangerous or harmful to children's health or interferes with their education (Osment, L, 2014). UNICEF (2009) defines child labour as work that disrupts a child's education and development, exceeds acceptable working hours, involves hazardous conditions, or is carried out by underage children as defined by national legislation.

It is estimated that by 2025, around 121 million children will be engaged in child labour. Of these, 48% will be aged 5–11, 28% aged 12–14, and 25% aged 15–17 (Thévenon & Edmonds, 2019). Boys are more commonly engaged in external domestic labour than girls. The Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Target 8.7 aims to eliminate all forms of child labour by 2025 (Thévenon & Edmonds, 2019). In line with this, both national governments and international organizations have been working to reduce child labour, achieving some progress—152 million children were involved in child labour in 2016, compared to 246 million in 2000 (Thévenon &

Edmonds, 2019). However, the COVID-19 pandemic has threatened to reverse these gains, potentially increasing the prevalence of child labour.

In South Asia and Southeast Asia, including Myanmar, child labour is often normalized due to poverty, poor access to quality education, limited recreational facilities, and inadequate healthcare systems (Edmonds & Shrestha, 2014). In Myanmar alone, an estimated 1.1 million children are involved in child labour, many of whom work in dangerous conditions or are deprived of basic rights such as education and health services (UNICEF Myanmar, 2020). Cultural traditions often support child labour as a means of skill-building or income supplementation, but in reality, it undermines children's rights and long-term development (Ennew et al., 2007).

According to the United Nations, children are classified as child labourers when they are either too young to legally work or engaged in hazardous tasks that jeopardize their physical, mental, social, or educational development (UN, 2020). Key drivers of child labour include poverty, low household income, migration, poor education levels, and large family size (Khan et al., 2003). As noted earlier, the lack of a universal definition stems from the fact that child labour is a social construct that varies across cultures and contexts (Ennew et al., 2007). In countries like Pakistan, legislation exists to protect children's rights (Ullah et al., 2017).

As of 2020, approximately 160 million children nearly 1 in 10 globally were engaged in child labour, with nearly half performing hazardous work (ILO, 2021). These statistics represent a concerning reversal of earlier progress, particularly due to the economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Globally, the negative effects of child labour are well documented, including its detrimental impact on education, health, and psychological development. Although international frameworks such as SDG Target 8.7 aim to eradicate child labour by 2025, progress remains inconsistent (UN, 2015). In Myanmar alone, around 1.1 million children are involved in child labour (UNICEF Myanmar, 2020).

In Myanmar, the issue of child labour is deeply embedded in both cultural and economic practices. Traditionally, sending children to work has been seen as a means of imparting practical skills and supplementing the family income. However, this often exposes children to hazardous work environments that undermine their health, dignity, and long-term potential. Parents play a central role in deciding whether or not children engage in labour activities.

This study focuses specifically on the four major dimensions of child labour: recruitment practices, access to recreation, educational opportunities, and healthcare services. It examines how these factors affect the well-being and future prospects of child labourers in Myanmar. By exploring the root causes, such as low household income, large family size, and migration (Khan et al., 2003), the research aims to offer targeted policy recommendations that will improve the socio-economic conditions of affected families. In doing so, the study seeks to support ongoing international and national efforts to combat child labour and to ensure that children are protected, educated, and healthy.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

This study aims

(1) To analyze the key of child labour, including socioeconomic factors, family background, and policy frameworks

(2) To study the work conditions of child labourers, focusing on their access to recreation, education opportunities, and healthcare services, and to identify gaps and challenges in these areas.

1.3 Method of Study

This study uses a cross-sectional descriptive design using a quantitative approach to examine the determinants, recruitment processes, work conditions, recreation, education opportunities, and healthcare access among child labourers. The study is conducted in eight randomly selected townships of Yangon Region: Mhawbi Township, East and West Hlaing Tharyar Township, Ahlone Township, Kyimyindaing Township, Sanchaung Township, Dala Township, Kyautada Township. A total of 263 salaried child labourers under the age of 13 to 17 are recruited as study participants, focusing on those employed in urban workplaces like restaurants, grocery shops, market stall, car workshops, fuel station, clothing shop, factory and tea shops. The study applies univariate and bivariate analysis to examine patterns and associations among key variables, utilizing SPSS for statistical analysis. The study will span from January 2025 to June 2025.

1.4 Scope and Limitations of the Study

This study examines the recruitment processes, work conditions, recreation, education opportunities, and healthcare access of salaried child laborers aged 13 to 17 in Yangon Region. Data are collected from 263 participants across eight randomly selected townships, focusing on those employed in urban workplaces like restaurants, grocery shops, market stall, car workshops, fuel station, clothing shop, factory and tea shops. Data are analyzed with SPSS using univariate and bivariate methods. The study period spans January to June 2025.

Limitations include the exclusion of day-to-day wage earners, informal workers, rural child laborers in agriculture or livestock, and children involved in street-based work like waste collection. Additionally, the study focuses only on salaried child laborers, excluding those engaged in informal or unpaid labor, such as domestic work or family businesses.

1.5 Organization of the Study

The study is organized into five chapters to provide a thorough analysis of the contributing factors to child labour in Yangon City. Chapter 1 is the introduction of the study which involves the rationale of the study, objectives of the study, method of study, scope and limitations of the study and organization of the study. Chapter 2 presents a literature review, defining child labour and exploring the key socio-economic factors influencing it, such as poverty, family situations, and barriers to education. It also delves into the vicious cycle of child labour and its link to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goal 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) and Goal 4 (Quality Education). Chapter 3 focuses on the overview of child labor in Myanmar, Impact of Instability on Child Labour in Myanmar, Legal protection for child labour in Myanmar. In Chapter 4, survey profile, survey design, and survey results are presented. Finally, Chapter 5 concludes the study by summarizing the findings, offering policy recommendations, and suggesting areas for child labour in Yangon City.

CHAPTER II
LITERATURE REVIEW

Child labour remains a persistent problem in the world today. The latest global estimates indicate that some 138 million children were engaged in child labour in 2024. Over a third of them about 54 million are in hazardous work that directly endangers their health and safety (United Nations, 2024). Today, nearly 1 in 10 children worldwide are engaged in labor that denies them their basic human rights and harms their well-being. Child labor has been on the rise in recent years, driven by conflicts, crises, and the negative impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, which have pushed countless families deeper into poverty, according to the United Nations (United Nations, 2024). For these children, the struggle for survival has taken away their education, safety, and childhood. Despite global efforts, economic growth has not been enough to alleviate the hardships that force families to depend on child labor. Child labor, by definition, is a violation of child protection and human rights. Approximately160 million children have been forced into child labor since 2020. Of these children, 63 million were girls, and 97 million were boys. And nearly half of those young laborers 79 million children worked under hazardous conditions(ILO, 2021). Approximately 70% (112 million) of child laborers work in agriculture like farming and livestock herding. Sub-Saharan Africa has the highest number of child laborers at 86.6 million children, followed by Central and Southern Asia with 26.3 million(ILO, 2021) . June 12 marks the United Nations sanctioned World Day Against Child Labour, a time to reflect on young workers deprived of their childhood, education, and a rightful future (United Nations, 2024).

2.1 Definition of Child Labour

Child labour is defined as work activities performed by children under 14 in any capacity and work conducted by children aged 15 to 18 in hazardous occupations (ILO, 2021). Child labour is the exploitation of children through any form of work that interferes with their ability to attend regular school, or is mentally, physically,

socially and morally harmful(UNICEF, 2020). This definition encompasses both paid and unpaid work in various contexts, including domestic tasks, family enterprises, and external activities such as vending or scavenging. Such a broad definition aligns with international standards set by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and ensures a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon. The study excludes extreme cases, such as trafficking or highly dangerous work, to focus on common forms of child labour and the decision-making processes of households.

2.2 Influence Factors of Child Labour

Child labour is influenced by a complex set of factors, including poverty, lack of access to quality education, cultural norms, and economic pressures. According to the International Labour Organization (ILO, 2020), poverty and limited educational opportunities are the primary drivers of child labour worldwide. Cultural norms often create lasting barriers to the effectiveness of legal and policy solutions (Ennew, Myers, & Plateau, 2007). Parental attitudes toward child labour are shaped not only by economic necessity but also by cultural expectations, social beliefs, and traditional values (Basu & Tzannatos, 2003). These cultural influences can reduce the impact of formal interventions, even when social safety nets or child protection laws are in place (ILO, 2020). Thus, changing social attitudes requires more than legislative reform; it needs long-term educational and community engagement (Ennew et al., 2007). Moreover, conflict and displacement are also significant contributors, as these conditions often lead to economic insecurity and increase children's vulnerability to exploitation (UNICEF, 2020; ILO, 2021).

2.2.1 Socioeconomic Factors

Child labour is deeply rooted in a range of socioeconomic factors that compel families to prioritize immediate survival over long-term educational investment. One of the primary drivers is household poverty, which forces children to contribute to the family income at the cost of their education and development (Basu & Van, 1998). Parental education also plays a significant role when parents lack formal education, they are less likely to value schooling and more likely to permit or encourage child labour (Ray, 2000). Limited access to affordable and quality education further exacerbates the issue, particularly in rural areas where school infrastructure is poor or unavailable (Edmonds, 2007). Large family size and high dependency ratios increase

economic pressure, making child labour a coping strategy. Additionally, low adult employment opportunities and the growth of the informal sector create an environment where child labour is both accessible and normalized. Cultural norms and social acceptance of child work, especially in certain communities, reinforce the cycle (Bhalotra & Heady, 2003). These factors are often compounded by gender disparities, economic shocks, and inadequate social protection systems, all of which contribute to the persistence of child labour despite legal prohibitions (ILO, 2023; UNICEF, 2020).

2.2.2 Cultural Factors

Cultural factors play a significant role in shaping the prevalence and acceptance of child labour across various societies. In many communities, especially in rural and traditional settings, "child labour is not only accepted but often expected as a normal part of growing up" (Bhalotra & Heady, 2003). Bhalotra and Heady observed that "even in economically stable households, children are often involved in labour due to entrenched cultural beliefs, particularly in agricultural and family based work" (Bhalotra & Heady, 2003). Similarly, Ray noted that "parental attitudes deeply rooted in social and cultural norms frequently influence whether children attend school or are sent to work" (Ray, 2000). In Ghana, "parental perceptions of child labour are profoundly shaped by cultural ideas that associate employment with moral and social advancement", and many parents believe that "involving their children in work equips them for maturity, cultivates practical life skills, and enhances their character development" (Adonteng-Kissi, 2018). The International Labour Organization also explains that "cultural acceptance of child labour can weaken the enforcement of legal protections, as community members may not view child work as harmful" (ILO, 2023). UNICEF adds that "in many societies, traditional expectations and social norms normalize children's participation in household or informal economic activities" (UNICEF, 2020). These findings suggest that addressing child labour requires not only economic and legal interventions but also cultural and social change.

2.2.3 Political and Institutional Factors

Political and institutional factors play a critical role in influencing the prevalence of child labor. In many developing countries, weak governance structures,

poor law enforcement, and lack of political will hinder the effective implementation of child labor regulations (Edmonds & Pavcnik, 2005). Government failure, including corruption and insufficient enforcement capacity, often undermines existing labor laws designed to protect children (Edmonds & Pavcnik, 2005). Without strong institutional frameworks, laws remain ineffective, allowing child labor to persist even when legal prohibitions exist (UNICEF, 2021). The success of policies aimed at reducing child labor largely depends on the strength and integrity of political institutions and the commitment of governments to enforce such policies (Basu & Tzannatos, 2003). Inadequate institutional mechanisms, such as weak labor inspection systems and limited resources for social protection, create an environment where child labor can thrive (ILO, 2020). These findings underscore the importance of political commitment and institutional capacity in addressing child labor effectively (UNICEF, 2021; ILO, 2020).

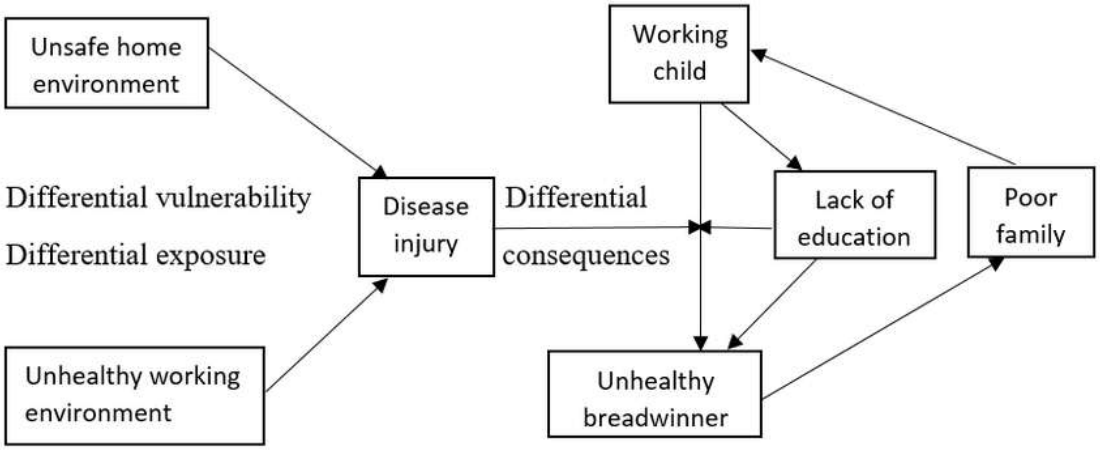
2.2.4 Other Influencing Factors

Natural disasters and climate change, debt bondage, migration, and refugee situations are interconnected with child labor, often exacerbating vulnerability and pushing families into exploitative labor practices. Disasters like floods, droughts, and hurricanes can disrupt livelihoods, leading families to rely on children for survival, while debt bondage, a form of modern slavery, can trap families in cycles of debt where children are forced to work. Migration and refugee situations also create vulnerabilities, as displaced families may be more susceptible to exploitation and child labor, especially if they lack access to resources and support.

The consequences of climate change and environmental stressors can be linked to modern slavery. Various forms of modern slavery labor patterns are found concurrently in regions that disproportionately bear the brunt of climate change impacts, ecological conficts, and environmental transformations, which encompass degradation and environmental offenses (Brown et al., 2021). According to the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) (2021), climate change exacerbates existing conficts and insecurity in regions affected by drought, famine, foods, and displacement. This can increase the risk of recruitment and use of child soldiers, sexual violence, and forced marriage by armed groups and militias. However, wide-ranging literature has not detected a robust and general effect linking climate to confict onset, although substantial agreement exists that climatic changes

contribute to confict under some conditions and through certain pathways (Koubi, 2019). For example, climatic conditions breed confict in fertile grounds, such as regions dependent on agriculture, and in combination and interaction with other socio-economic and political factors, such as a low level of economic development and political marginalization (Koubi, 2019).

2.3 Poverty and Child Labor: A Vicious Cycle



Source: Poverty and Hazardous Child Labor in Bangladesh: Brutal circle

Poverty and child labor are closely intertwined, forming a vicious cycle. When families lack the resources to meet basic needs, they may be forced to send their children to work, which in turn perpetuates poverty by hindering the children's education and future opportunities. This creates a cycle where poverty leads to child labor, and child labor then reinforces poverty across generations. The role poverty plays in influencing the participation of children in labor activities draw an increasing attention in recent times. An early empirical support regarding whether poverty is influencing child labor or not in developing countries were provided by some scholars (Basu, 1998; Blunch and Verner, 2001; Nkamleu, 2006).

Child labour is firmly established in a self-perpetuating cycle that sustains intergenerational poverty and obstructs social advancement. Comprehensive research has established that economic disadvantage compels children to enter labour markets prematurely, frequently undermining their scholastic achievement and long-term development. The cyclical relationship between poverty and child labour establishes

structural impediments that hinder impacted individuals and communities from transcending chronic poverty.

In 2024, 712 million people are living in extreme poverty, a marked increase from 2020 turn down by the impacts of COVID-19, conflict and extreme weather. For those affected, circumstances fuel a cycle of poverty that they're unlikely to break on their own. Many have inherited this cycle from their parents. Many will pass it on to their own children (Bloxham, 2023).

The opportunity cost of child labour is considerable. Children involved in labour frequently cannot attend school consistently or are compelled to discontinue their education altogether. This not only deprives kids of fundamental literacy and numeracy abilities but also reduces their opportunities for obtaining skilled job in maturity. Consequently, they frequently find themselves confined to low-wage, informal sectors, reflecting the economic hardships of their parents. This results in the continuation of poverty within the household and across generations (Basu & Van, 1998).

In regions where child labour is prevalent, the larger community also experiences systemic developmental deficiencies. Communities characterised by elevated rates of child labour frequently exhibit poor educational systems and fragile labour market infrastructures. The deficiency in investment in quality education, frequently intensified by low school attendance resulting from child labour, further undermines the region's human capital foundation. Basu and Van (1998) contend that the cumulative effect of pervasive child labour diminishes average productivity and wage rates in an economy, hence perpetuating the circumstances that originally fostered child labour.

The lack of efficient social support systems, including specific welfare initiatives, availability of free or subsidised education, and child safety agencies, exacerbates the entrenchment of the child labour-poverty connection. In the absence of safety nets to alleviate economic shocks, families often resort to child labour as a financial safeguard. This is especially pertinent in rural or marginalised populations where alternative income-generating options are scarce, and institutional assistance is sometimes insufficient or altogether absent (ILO, 2020).

The research of Basu & Van (1998) and ILO (2020) aligns in asserting that child labour should be considered within the wider framework of socio-economic vulnerability, institutional instability, and intergenerational disadvantage. Failure to

address these interrelated variables will likely perpetuate the destructive cycle of child labour, obstructing both individual potential and communal advancement.

2.4 Sustainable Development Goals and Child Labour

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), also known as the Global Goals, are a collection of 17 interlinked goals designed to be a "blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet". Adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015, the SDGs aim to address global challenges like poverty, inequality, climate change, environmental degradation, and promoting peace and justice by 2030. These goals are universal, meaning they apply to all countries, and require collaborative action from governments, businesses, civil society, and individuals.

Child labour is closely linked to the global development agenda, specifically the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which represent a universal mandate to eradicate poverty, safeguard the planet, and guarantee that all individuals experience peace and prosperity by 2030. SDG 8 and SDG 4 are closely involved in initiatives to eradicate child labour. SDG 8 aims to "promote sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all," whereas SDG 4 emphasises guaranteeing "inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all" (UN, 2015). The continuation of child labour not only infringes upon children's rights but also considerably hinders the achievement of developmental goals.

2.4.1 SDGs 4 Quality Education for Children

Goal 4 aims to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. This goal supports the reduction of disparities and inequities in education, both in terms of access and quality. It recognizes the need to provide quality education for all, especially for vulnerable populations, including poor children, children living in rural areas, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, and refugee children (United Nations, 2015). This goal is of critical importance because of its transformative effects on the other Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Sustainable development hinges on every child receiving a quality education. When children are provided with the tools to develop to their full potential, they become productive adults capable of contributing to their communities and breaking the cycle of poverty. Education enables upward socioeconomic mobility.

Significant progress was achieved during the last decade in increasing access to education and school enrolment rates at all levels, particularly for girls. Despite these gains, about 260 million children were out of school in 2018, representing nearly one-fifth of the global population in that age group (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2019). Furthermore, more than half of all children and adolescents worldwide are failing to meet minimum proficiency standards in reading and mathematics (UNESCO, 2020). UNICEF's contribution towards reaching this goal centers on equity and inclusion, aiming to provide all children with quality learning opportunities and skills development programmes, from early childhood through adolescence. UNICEF works with governments globally to enhance the quality and inclusiveness of schools. As custodian for global monitoring of Indicator 4.2.1, UNICEF tracks the percentage of children aged 24–59 months who are developmentally on track in at least three of the four domains: literacy-numeracy, physical, socio-emotional, and learning (UNICEF, 2021).

2.4.2 SDGs 8 Decent Work & Economic Growth for Children

Goal 8 aims to promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all. In relation to children, Target 8.7 specifically seeks to eliminate the worst forms of child labour, including the recruitment and use of child soldiers, and to end all forms of child labour by 2025 (United Nations, 2015). Children are considered to be engaged in child labour when they are either too young to work or involved in activities that jeopardize their physical, mental, social, or educational development (ILO, 2017).

Child labour is both a cause and consequence of poverty, reinforcing cycles of social inequality and discrimination. Globally, an estimated 152 million children are currently engaged in child labour, of whom 72 million are involved in hazardous work (ILO & UNICEF, 2021). Although child labour declined by 94 million over the past two decades, the COVID-19 pandemic has threatened to reverse this progress and increased the risk of more children entering hazardous work environments (ILO & UNICEF, 2021).

The UN Secretary-General's annual report on children and armed conflict highlights the persistent issue of child recruitment by state and non-state armed groups, with more than 75,000 cases of children involved in armed conflict documented over the first 15 years of reporting (United Nations, 2021). Globally,

youth unemployment remains high at 14%, nearly three times the adult rate. Without significant investment in education and skills training, the rapidly growing youth population—expected to reach nearly 2 billion by 2030—will face serious barriers in joining the workforce (UNICEF, 2021a).

UNICEF contributes to the achievement of this goal by working to prevent and respond to child labour, address the impact of business practices on children, and provide rehabilitation and reintegration services. Through partnerships such as Generation Unlimited, UNICEF collaborates with other UN agencies to promote youth skills and employment and to ensure that every young person is engaged in education, training, or employment by 2030 (UNICEF, 2021a). UNICEF and the ILO are also co-custodians of SDG Indicator 8.7.1, which measures the proportion and number of children aged 5–17 engaged in child labour, disaggregated by sex and age (ILO & UNICEF, 2021).

2.5 Reviewing the Previous Studies

Child labour has been the subject of substantial global research, with several studies investigating its root causes, effects, and possible policy responses across diverse geographical, socio-economic, and cultural contexts. This thesis examines the opinions of parents from low-income households in Yangon, Myanmar, by highlighting the social, economic, and cultural aspects that influence their decisions to involve their children in employment. This section reviews prior research by detailing the authors, publication year, study location, design and population, sample size, principal findings, and identified limitations, thereby situating the current research within the established academic dialogue.

Edmonds and Schady (2012) undertook a critical cross-national quantitative analysis examining the household-level factors of child labour in various developing nations in Latin America. The research utilised extensive national household survey data, examining more than 10,000 families. Poverty is seen as the primary catalyst for child labour, with families engaging in child employment as a survival strategy due to insufficient cash. The research determined that economic imperatives frequently supersede the significance of education. Nonetheless, a significant weakness was that the data was confined to specific locations and may not comprehensively reflect the cultural elements driving child labour in non-Latin American contexts (Edmonds & Schady, 2012).

Basu and Tzannatos (2003) conducted a theoretical and empirical analysis of child labour economics, utilising data from low- and middle-income nations. Their review, encompassing various secondary sources and case studies, emphasised that families in extreme poverty frequently prioritise immediate survival requirements over long-term educational investments. The results are broadly relevant to nations where subsistence living prevails. The authors conceded that their economic models failed to incorporate regional cultural differences or parental values, thus constraining the explanatory breadth of their findings (Basu & Tzannatos, 2003).

Adonteng-Kissi (2018) conducted a qualitative study in Ghana, sub-Saharan Africa, which included interviews and focus group discussions with 60 parents and community leaders. The research sought to comprehend the cultural rationalisations for child labour. It was determined that child employment was frequently perceived as a means of socialisation and preparation for maturity, rather than as exploitation. The findings highlight the extent to which entrenched cultural norms may perpetuate child labour practices. The study's drawback, albeit enlightening, is its small sample size and localised emphasis, which constrain greater generalisability (Adonteng-Kissi, 2018).

The International Labour Organisation (ILO, 2020) performed a mixed-methods study in Nepal to examine the socio-cultural aspects of child labour in South Asia. This research encompassed household surveys with more than 1,000 participants and comprehensive interviews. It disclosed that numerous parents perceived child employment as a cultural imperative, particularly in familial occupations. A significant constraint identified was the underreporting of informal or illicit child labour activities stemming from fear of legal repercussions, potentially compromising data veracity (ILO, 2020).

Rahman et al. (2019) conducted a cross-sectional study in Bangladesh, utilising a sample of 400 working children from economically disadvantaged metropolitan areas. The research revealed that several children participated in perilous employment as a result of the interplay between poverty, limited access to education, and inadequate legal enforcement. The researchers employed structured interviews to gather data. They determined that structural deficiencies, including inadequate educational infrastructure and lenient law enforcement, perpetuate child labour. The study exclusively examined urban slums, thus constraining its relevance to rural or semi-urban settings (Rahman et al., 2019).

The International Labour Organization (ILO, 2020) undertook comparative research in Southeast Asia, using data from 800 homes in Vietnam. The research indicated that parental education markedly diminishes the prevalence of child labour, as educated parents are inclined to prioritize their children's education. However, the study mostly concentrated on rural settings, whereas the present thesis highlights urban poverty (ILO, 2020).

Ballard Brief (n.d.) provided an evidence-based policy brief using literature reviews and statistical data to analyze cultural perspectives on child employment in Southeast Asia. It observed that filial obligation and societal expectations frequently motivate children's involvement in labour. Although instructive, the brief lacks primary data collection and hence fails to directly convey the lived experiences of families (Ballard Brief, n.d., 2022).

Admassie (2002) performed an anthropological study in Ethiopia with 120 participants to investigate the role of cultural normalization in sustaining child labour. The research underscored how cultural acceptance and household norms contribute to the persistence of child employment despite legal prohibitions (Admassie, 2002).

CHAPTER III
OVERVIEW OF CHILD LABOUR IN MYANMAR

In Myanmar, there are approximately 1.1 million children between the ages of 5 to 17 involved in child labor (ILO, 2021). Domestic demand, familial poverty, Myanmar's education system, government laws, and filial piety perpetuate the employment of children (UNICEF, 2020; Osment, 2014). Child laborers suffer from physical health issues, are more likely to drop-out of school, and stall the growth of a skilled labor force in Myanmar (USDOL, 2022; ILO, 2021). Focusing on educating child workers and re-funding the Myanmar Program on the Elimination of Child Labor can eliminate the number of children involved in the employment sector (ILO Myanmar, 2021).

3.1 Child Labour in Myanmar

Child labour continues to be a significant issue in Myanmar, driven by political instability, economic difficulties, and entrenched societal norms that perpetuate its prevalence throughout the nation. The problem is most pronounced among low-income families, many of whom live in urban slums and rural areas where formal employment possibilities for adults are limited and access to essential services like education and healthcare is inadequate. Consequently, children are sometimes obligated to augment the household income, either by participating in informal labour marketplaces, assisting with family enterprises, or labouring under perilous and exploitative circumstances.

Child labor is one of the prevalent issues that the government is trying to tackle, but it remains common in Myanmar. The worst forms of child labor include slavery, sexual exploitation, illicit activities or work that by nature is likely to harm the health, morals or safety of children. Despite the new government body's attempt to eradicate child labor, it remains a huge challenge in Myanmar due to its limited resources.

Table (3.1) Child Labour in Myanmar

Designation	2017 Child Labour Survey			2018 Child Labour Survey (First Report)			2018 Child Labour Survey (Second Report)		
	Boys	**Girls**	**Total**	**Boys**	**Girls**	**Total**	**Boys**	**Girls**	**Total**
Number of Children (5-17 years old) (in millions)	6.16	6.25	12.41	6.15	6.25	12.40	6.14	6.24	12.38
Working Children (in millions)	0.36	0.28	0.64	0.33	0.28	0.61	0.28	0.16	0.44
Working Children (percentage)	5.8	4.5	5.2	5.4	4.4	4.9	4.6	2.6	3.6
Child Labour (in millions)	0.24	0.18	0.42	0.24	0.18	0.42	0.22	0.12	0.34
Child Labour (percentage)	4.0	2.9	3.4	3.9	2.9	3.4	3.6	2.0	2.8
Child Labour in hazardous workplaces (in millions)	0.23	0.17	0.40	0.23	0.17	0.40	0.20	0.11	0.31
Child Labour in hazardous workplaces (percentage)	3.7	2.7	3.2	3.7	2.7	3.2	3.3	1.7	2.5

Sources: Report of Myanmar National Action Plan (NAP) (2019-2023)

The Myanmar National Action Plan (NAP) on the Elimination of Child Labor for 2019-2023 was a strategy developed with the support of the International Labour Organization (ILO) to address and eliminate child labor, including its worst forms. The plan aimed to prevent, withdraw, rehabilitate, and reintegrate children from child labor situations. Key components included raising awareness, reviewing and revising laws, building government capacity, and establishing a monitoring and evaluation framework. A National Committee for the Elimination of Child Labour (MNCECL) was established to oversee the implementation of the NAP.

3.2 Impact of Instability on Child Labour in Myanmar

While child labour and displacement existed before the 2021 political turmoil, their current magnitude is unparalleled. The UNHCR reports that the number of

internally displaced individuals (IDPs) escalated from roughly 289,000 before February 2021 to an estimated 2,863,500 by April 2024, representing an increase of nearly growth. Furthermore, approximately 60,000 individuals have sought asylum in adjacent nations. This significant displacement has directly impacted children's life, frequently compelling them to struggle to sustain their families amid worsening economic and security circumstances.

Moreover, economic constraints have compelled families to prioritise immediate survival above long-term educational investments. Internally displaced families and rural households encounter significant financial limitations, frequently relying on the income or labour of children, particularly on family farms where adult workers have emigrated.

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) and Myanmar's Labour Force Survey (2019) indicate that almost 1.13 million children aged 5 to 17 years were involved in child labour in Myanmar, constituting 9.3% of the children in that demographic. Of these, around 600,000 were engaged in perilous employment. This represented a minor reduction from the ILO's previous estimate in 2015, which identified 1.21 million children (about 10.5%) engaged in child employment. Nonetheless, advancement has been inconsistent. The Myanmar Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) 2019-2020 indicated that the prevalence of child labour was greatest in rural regions (12%), in contrast to urban areas (5%), and disproportionately impacted males and children from impoverished households.

Regionally, Myanmar's child labour rate in 2019 (9.3%) was significantly above that of Vietnam at 4.8% (from its 2018 National Child Labour Survey) and Thailand at 2.2% (according to its 2017 Labour Force Survey). These nations have achieved greater advancement, mainly owing to enhanced enforcement of child safety legislation and increased educational accessibility. Between 2012 and 2018, Vietnam decreased its child labour rate from 9.6% to 4.8%, and Thailand diminished hazardous child work from 3.2% to 1.3% during the same timeframe. Conversely, Myanmar has faced challenges in sustaining consistent declines, as economic shocks and educational interruptions, particularly those resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, have increased child participation in the informal sector, especially in agriculture, mining, and small-scale manufacturing. In the absence of focused initiatives and data monitoring, Myanmar risks lagging behind its regional

counterparts in fulfilling Sustainable Development Goal Target 8.7, which mandates the eradication of child labour in all its manifestations by 2025.

3.3 Sectors and Work Conditions of Child Labour in Myanmar

Child work in Myanmar occurs in various forms and sectors, fueled by poverty, inadequate educational opportunities, societal norms, and insufficient enforcement of labour regulations. The Labour Market Profile Myanmar 2021/2022, issued by the Danish Trade Union Development Agency (Union, 2022), indicates that child labour in Myanmar continues to be a substantial issue, especially in informal and unregulated industries. Numerous youngsters engage in relatively "invisible" labour, such as domestic service or family-based agriculture, while others partake in more perilous occupations, like mining, construction, and industrial work. This section offers a detailed overview of the primary forms and sectors where child labour is common in Myanmar.

The highest percentage of child labour in Myanmar is concentrated in the agriculture, forestry, and fishing industries. The Union (2022) study indicates that more over 52% of working children are employed in agriculture, predominantly in rice farming, tea harvesting, rubber tapping, or fishing, particularly in coastal and delta areas. Child labourers in this industry frequently endure extended hours in severe conditions, subjected to inclement weather, hazardous instruments, and toxic substances such as pesticides.

Child labour in Myanmar's manufacturing and industrial sectors is especially alarming in industries such as garment fabrication, brick kilns, furniture workshops, and food processing. The Labour Market Profile (Union, 2022) designates light manufacturing as an expanding employment sector for children, particularly in urban and peri-urban regions such as Yangon, Mandalay, and Bago. In these environments, children typically partake in repetitive, tedious, and physically arduous work such as cutting, stitching, packing, lifting large weights, or operating machinery, often without enough safety training or protective gear.

Garment factories have faced criticism for utilising underage labour in subcontracted operations with inadequate regulation. Children are paid less than adults often below the minimum wage and face verbal and sometimes physical abuse. Workdays may extend beyond 10 hours, and some children are forced to sleep on

factory premises. This type of labour infringes upon Myanmar's minimum age and hazardous work regulations, despite inadequate enforcement.

A significant number of working children in Myanmar are involved in informal urban employment, such as selling food, flowers on the streets; collecting garbage or recyclables; shining shoes; or working in small family owned businesses like teashops and grocery stalls. This form of employment is generally unregulated and subjects children to several physical and psychological hazards.

The Labour Market Profile Myanmar, 2021/2022 notes that children working in teashops, especially in Yangon and Mandalay, often work 12 to 14 hours a day with limited breaks. Many of these children live on-site in cramped and unhygienic sleeping quarters. In addition to fatigue, they face frequent verbal abuse and are sometimes victims of exploitation or even trafficking. These occupations are especially prevalent among youngsters from migrant households, who lack adequate identity or legal status, rendering them particularly susceptible to exploitation.

Street youth operating autonomously face significant risks of police harassment, gang violence, and substance misuse. They encounter societal stigma and are marginalised from social services, encompassing healthcare and education. According to Union (2022), urban informal work is growing among children as economic hardship and displacement due to conflict and natural disasters increase.

Child domestic employment represents one of the most concealed yet highly exploitative forms of child labour in Myanmar. Girls, in particular, are employed as live-in domestic helpers in private households, where they clean, cook, care for younger children, and run errands. Their isolated working environments make them particularly vulnerable to emotional, physical, and sexual abuse.

The Labour Market Profile (Union, 2022) emphasizes that domestic child workers are often deprived of rest, education, and basic freedom of movement. These children rarely receive formal wages and are instead paid “in-kind” through food and lodging, which makes them dependent on their employers. Because they are hidden from public view, their rights are frequently violated without consequences for the perpetrators.

Although less common than agriculture or urban informal work, child labour is also present in construction and mining sectors, particularly in remote or conflict-affected areas. Children working in brick-making factories or construction sites are exposed to extreme heat, heavy loads, dust, and unsafe equipment. Many of them

work barefoot and without gloves, which leads to frequent injuries and long-term physical damage.

In jade and gold mining regions of Kachin and Sagaing, reports indicate that children are involved in digging, panning, and sorting minerals—dangerous work often conducted without any safety gear. Union (2022) warns that these environments pose life-threatening risks such as landslides, mine collapses, or exposure to toxic substances like mercury. Children in these areas are also at heightened risk of exploitation by armed groups or drug trafficking networks, especially in territories outside government control.

In addition to the above, Myanmar continues to face challenges with the worst forms of child labour, as defined by ILO Convention No. 182. These include child trafficking, sexual exploitation, forced labour, and recruitment into armed conflict. According to the Labour Market Profile (Union, 2022), such forms are more prevalent in conflict zones, border areas, and urban slums where children are unprotected and easily manipulated. Children, especially girls, are sometimes trafficked into neighbouring countries like Thailand and China for sexual exploitation or forced marriage. Meanwhile, boys have been recruited by both state and non-state armed groups, although efforts have been made in recent years to demobilize child soldiers.

3.4 Legal Protection for Child Labour in Myanmar

Myanmar has pledged to tackle the issue of child labour using multiple legal frameworks, both national and international. The efficacy of these legal protections is constrained by enforcement gaps, ambiguities in legal definitions, and structural obstacles in governance and economic development. Win Thein Aung (2019) asserts that Myanmar's legal framework for safeguarding children from labour exploitation has evolved over several decades; yet, it still encounters obstacles in providing substantial protections for at-risk children nationwide.

Table (3.2) Legal Protection for Child Labour in Myanmar

Law / Policy	Type	Year	Key Provisions	Limitations
Child Law (1993; amended 2019)	National Law	1993 → 2019	Under 18 age as child, minimum work age 14, bans hazardous work and exploitation, aligns with UNCRC	Slow implementation, unclear enforcement roles, no finalized hazardous work list
Factories Act (amended)	National Law	1951 → 2016	Prohibits work for under14 age, requires medical clearance for 14–18, bans hazardous work under 18	Covers only formal sector; weak enforcement, especially in rural areas
Shops & Establishments Act (amended)	National Law	1951 → 2016	Prohibits work for under 14 age, regulates work hours for 14–18, bans hazardous/late/night work	Limited to formal businesses, excludes informal rural/family work
National Education Law	National Law	2014	Free, compulsory education up to Grade 5	Enforcement issues in remote/conflict-affected regions, insufficient school access
ILO Convention No. 182	International Convention	Ratified 2013	Requires prohibition of worst forms of child labour	Slow integration into national law, weak monitoring/reporting
ILO Convention No. 138	International Convention	Ratified 2020	Sets minimum employment age, prohibits hazardous work under 18	National adoption is recent, early stages of regulatory alignment
UN CRC	International Treaty	Ratified 1991	Defines child as under 18 age, broad child protection obligations	National laws now aligning, but implementation remains inconsistent
National Action Plan (NAP) on Child Labour	Policy Plan	2019–2025	Aims to eliminate worst forms of child labour by 2025 (SDG 8.7), includes legal reform, data, coordination, awareness	Lacks strong enforcement, needs better coordination and resources

Sources: Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population. (2019)
National Action Plan on the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour (2019-2025). Nay Pyi Taw: Government of Myanmar International Labour Organization. (2020)

The primary legislative framework addressing child labour domestically is the Child Law (1993), which was amended in 2019 to better conform to international norms. The amended legislation elevated the definition of a child to encompass those under 18 years of age, aligning with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). It also established measures to safeguard children against economic exploitation, hazardous jobs, and any work that could disrupt their schooling or impede their physical and mental development. Aung (2019) asserts that although the amended Child Law represents a notable advancement, it is deficient in clarity concerning implementation procedures and the delineation of enforcement roles among several ministries.

The Shops and Establishments Act (2016) and the Factories Act (1951) have stipulations about the minimum age and working conditions for child labourers. The Shops and Establishments Act prohibits the employment of children under 14 in any store or commercial business, but individuals aged 14 to 18 may work under regulated hours and conditions. The Factories Act forbids the employment of children under 14 in any workplace and requires medical fitness certifications for individuals aged 14 to 18. Nonetheless, these rules predominantly govern the formal sector and neglect the extensive informal economy, where the majority of child labour in Myanmar transpires (Aung, 2019). This systemic constraint permits many forms of child employment, especially in rural regions and family-run businesses, to persist unregulated.

Myanmar is an international signatory to several critical accords that underpin global child labour protection. This encompasses the International Labour Organisation (ILO) Convention No. 138 regarding the Minimum Age for Employment and ILO Convention No. 182 addressing the Worst Forms of Child Labour. Myanmar adopted Convention No. 182 in 2013 and Convention No. 138 in 2020, demonstrating a formal commitment to combating child labour. Aung (2019) underscores that the incorporation of these international norms into national legislation has been irregular and sluggish, with insufficient procedures for compliance monitoring or reporting.

A significant deficiency in legal protection is the absence of a comprehensive and cohesive framework that encompasses all facets of child labour. Aung (2019) observes that Myanmar's legal system is disjointed, with many laws administered by distinct ministries, including the Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population; the

Ministry of Education; and the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement. The absence of coordination among these entities frequently results in enforcement inefficiencies and ambiguity over jurisdictional obligations. Moreover, the lack of effective labour inspection systems and constrained administrative capabilities hinders compliance monitoring, especially in rural and conflict-affected areas.

A notable concern is the inadequate sanctions linked to child labour infractions. The amended Child Law (2019) stipulates penalties, including fines and jail, for individuals convicted of child labour exploitation; nevertheless, implementation is hindered by corruption, insufficient political commitment, and a lack of knowledge among businesses and the public. Aung (2019) emphasises that numerous local authorities prioritise economic development and community stability over child safety, particularly in regions where child employment is perceived as essential for household survival.

The school system is pivotal in addressing child labour, and regulatory frameworks concerning compulsory education are fundamentally linked to this matter. The National Education Law of Myanmar (2014) stipulates free and compulsory education for children till Grade 5. In actuality, numerous children, particularly in distant or disadvantaged regions, discontinue their education prematurely due to financial constraints, limited access, or linguistic obstacles. Aung (2019) contends that in the absence of authentic access to quality education, children remain susceptible to premature entry into the labour field, irrespective of regulatory restrictions.

In addressing these concerns, the government has partnered with international organisations, including the ILO and UNICEF, to formulate national action plans and awareness campaigns. The National Action Plan on Child Labour (2019–2025) seeks to eradicate the most egregious types of child labour by 2025, by Sustainable Development Goal Target 8.7. This strategy delineates tactics that include fortifying legal frameworks, augmenting data gathering, expanding inter-ministerial coordination, and advocating for community-based solutions. Although this program shows promise, Aung (2019) cautions that without enhanced legal enforcement and community involvement, these objectives may primarily remain aspirational.

Furthermore, the problem of child labour in Myanmar is inextricably linked to the wider socioeconomic framework. Elevated poverty levels, internal displacement resulting from armed conflict, and restricted access to social assistance collectively

perpetuate the prevalence of child work. Aung (2019) asserts that legislative protections are insufficient to combat child labour without the implementation of complete policies aimed at alleviating poverty, enhancing education, and empowering families. Legal reforms must consequently be integrated into a comprehensive, multi-sectoral strategy for child welfare and human development.

Myanmar has significantly enhanced its legal safeguards for children against labour exploitation, primarily through the adoption of international agreements and the amendment of local legislation, including the Child Law (2019). Nonetheless, as Aung (2019) persuasively contends, the efficacy of these legislative frameworks is significantly obstructed by institutional deficiencies, enforcement shortcomings, and the prevalence of child labour in the informal sector. To effectively defend children's rights, Myanmar must transcend legal change and allocate resources towards the practical execution of child protection systems, public awareness initiatives, and poverty alleviation methods that tackle the underlying causes of child labour.

3.5 Government and Legal Framework for Child Labour Rights in Myanmar

Myanmar has made formal commitments to tackle child labour through its ratification of ILO Conventions No. 138 and No. 182 and by enacting laws such as the Child Law (2019), which sets the minimum working age at 14 and prohibits hazardous work for those under 18. However, enforcement remains weak, particularly in informal sectors where most child labour occurs. Regulatory gaps persist, including the absence of a clear definition of "light work" and an official list of hazardous occupations, enabling employers to exploit legal ambiguities.

Legislation such as the Factories Act (1951) and the Shops and Establishments Act (2016) primarily applies to formal sectors and offers limited protection in the informal economy. The Yangon case study highlights that children are widely employed in teashops, food stalls, and construction sites under poor conditions, often without access to education or health services.

Institutional weaknesses—including fragmented responsibilities among ministries, limited inter-agency cooperation, and under-resourced labour inspectorates—further hinder enforcement. The Ministry of Labour and MSWRR lack sufficient personnel, child-specific training, and clear operational protocols, leading to inconsistent penalties and ineffective action against violators. Aye Chan Thar and Kovudhikulrungsri (2024) also emphasise that the absence of a centralised monitoring

body creates confusion in accountability, allowing exploitative practices to go unchecked.

Socio-economic drivers such as poverty, low school accessibility, and inadequate social support systems compel families to rely on child labour. Although compulsory education is mandated by the National Education Law (2014), enforcement is poor, and drop-out rates remain high in underprivileged areas. Many children leave school to help their families survive. As noted by Aye Chan Thar and Kovudhikulrungsri (2024), child labour in urban areas often reflects systemic failure, where legal mechanisms exist on paper but remain practically out of reach for many working children.

The legal framework's failure to distinguish between acceptable light work and exploitative labour, especially for children aged 14–17, remains a key criticism. Observations from Yangon show children engaged in dangerous tasks such as welding or street vending in high-risk areas without protection, which contradicts international standards.

In conclusion, while Myanmar has established legal commitments and frameworks to combat child labour, enforcement is undermined by institutional, legal, and socio-economic challenges. Effective change requires clearer legal definitions, strengthened inspections, inter-ministerial collaboration, investment in education, and poverty alleviation. Without these reforms, legal protections alone will not suffice to eliminate child labour.

3.6 Causes and Consequences of Child Labour in Myanmar

Child labour persists as a significant and entrenched problem in Myanmar, where thousands of youngsters, some as young as eight, are employed in informal and frequently perilous conditions to aid their families. Despite Myanmar's ratification of various international treaties, including ILO Convention No. 138 concerning Minimum Age and Convention No. 182 addressing the Worst Forms of Child Labour, the effective enforcement of these regulations is markedly deficient, especially in rural regions and urban outskirts. Comprehending the underlying causes and the multifaceted repercussions of child labour is crucial for developing effective treatments. This section examines the fundamental causes and extensive consequences of child labour within the context of Myanmar.

3.6.1 Causes of Child Labour

Poverty is the primary determinant of child labour in Myanmar. Aung (2019) reports that more than 78% of working children in Pathein Township originated from households with monthly wages beneath the national poverty threshold. Numerous families relied on informal employment, such street sales, fishing, or casual labour, which were not permanent nor adequate to meet daily necessities. Consequently, children were obligated to augment household incomes by engaging in employment as vendors, tea shop helpers, domestic workers, or rubbish pickers. The economic need is particularly evident in female-headed homes or in cases where a parent experiences illness, incapacity, or substance use. Nady (2021) noted that in Insein Township, 62% of child labourers originated from fractured homes or households with missing parents owing to migration or divorce. These children were frequently regarded as a vital labour resource within the familial structure.

Despite the formal provision of free primary education in Myanmar, ancillary expenses such as uniforms, textbooks, school donations, and transportation inhibit several low-income families from enrolling their children in school. Moreover, the calibre of education continues to pose a substantial obstacle. Rural schools frequently suffer from a deficiency of competent educators, essential learning resources, and secure infrastructure. Nady (2021) disclosed that around 65% of child labourers in Insein Township had abandoned their education before to finishing basic school. Numerous individuals indicated that their family urged them to discontinue their education due to the perceived unpredictability of its benefits, particularly in a society where employment is frequently secured through personal networks rather than meritocratic principles.

In numerous regions of Myanmar, child labour is institutionalised and seen as a rite of passage. Cultural ideas frequently assert that early engagement in labour cultivates character and imparts discipline to children. Aung (2019) observed that several households considered child labour more advantageous than education, particularly for boys anticipated to be providers and girls fated for early matrimony. This societal normalisation complicates the struggle against exploitative child labour practices.

Protracted armed confrontations in border regions, including Kachin, Shan, and Rakhine States, have compelled thousands of families to evacuate their residences. In displacement situations, children are among the most susceptible. They

frequently forfeit access to education, fundamental healthcare, and familial protection. The likelihood of minors being conscripted by armed factions is elevated in conflict-affected regions. Although precise figures are difficult to ascertain, both domestic and foreign NGOs have documented instances of underage recruitment. Displaced children are often discovered labouring in jade mines, charcoal kilns, or vending food and cigarettes at roadside booths.

The COVID-19 pandemic significantly exacerbated pre-existing vulnerabilities. Ko Ko and May Oo (2022) report that the epidemic resulted in the closure of more than 60,000 schools nationally, displacing around 12 million youngsters from classrooms. A significant number did not return. Concurrently, job reductions among adults heightened household reliance on child income. Throughout the epidemic, numerous children engaged in the informal economy, serving as scavengers, delivery personnel, or assisting at street-side establishments. The circumstances were more dire for orphans and youngsters from single-parent families. A troubling trend has arisen in which children are increasingly coerced into the most egregious types of child labour, including as drug trafficking, begging syndicates, and transactional sex work, due to the collapse of family budgets.

3.6.2 Consequences of Child Labour

A prominent result is educational disruption. Children engaged in labour frequently abandon their education indefinitely. Individuals who endeavour to mix employment and study typically exhibit subpar academic performance and are more prone to grade repetition or eventual dropout. Nady (2021) indicated that 82% of child labourers in her research had not finished primary education. Insufficient education severely restricts future employment prospects and perpetuates a cycle of poverty and vulnerability.

Child labourers often endure severe health complications resulting from extended hours, perilous working conditions, and inadequate nourishment. In metropolitan environments, youngsters employed at teashops or construction sites encounter hazards like burns, respiratory ailments, and injuries from heavy machinery. In rural environments, juvenile labourers in agriculture are subjected to chemical exposure, snake bites, and severe weather conditions. Aung (2019) recorded instances of child labourers in Pathein Township suffering from persistent back pain, hunger, and unaddressed injuries. Numerous individuals lacked access to healthcare

or were deterred from seeking assistance owing to threats from employers or fear of job termination.

Child labour adversely impacts both physical health and psychological well-being. Myint et al. (2024) examined the correlation between domestic violence and child employment, demonstrating that working children are more susceptible to verbal abuse, physical punishment, and emotional neglect in both household and occupational settings. A multitude experiences anxiety, depression, and diminished self-esteem. Females, especially those employed as domestic workers or in marketplaces, are vulnerable to sexual abuse and harassment. The enduring trauma endured by young children has far-reaching consequences in adulthood, impairing their capacity to establish relationships, maintain employment, and constructively engage with society.

An alarming result of unregulated child work is that numerous children are ultimately coerced into the most egregious types of child employment, such as commercial sexual exploitation, child trafficking, and compelled criminal behaviour. Ko Ko and May Oo (2022) documented a notable increase in such instances during and subsequent to the COVID-19 epidemic. Children from migratory or displaced families, lacking connection to community protection agencies, are particularly susceptible to exploitation by traffickers or predatory employers.

Child labour in Myanmar arises from a multifaceted interaction of poverty, restricted educational opportunities, inadequate legal enforcement, cultural tolerance, displacement due to conflict, and, more recently, the socio-economic repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic. The ramifications of this deeply rooted issue extend beyond the affected children, impacting society as a whole through diminished human capital, the continuation of poverty, and a weakened social structure. Initiatives to eradicate child labour must tackle both legal reforms and the fundamental socio-economic factors. Investing in education, social safety, targeted family support initiatives, and comprehensive child welfare systems is crucial for fostering a future in which children may develop safely, receive an education, and remain free from exploitation.

CHAPTER 4
SURVEY ANALYSIS

4.1 Survey Profile

This survey profile represents the demographic and socio-economic characteristic of the 263 child labor who are live in the Yangon Region, Myanmar. Theis study investigate the lived experiences, determinants, recruitment methods, and working conditions of child workers by directly engaging with them using well structure questionnaires. The participants encompassed several occupational sectors, including car workshop, general store, factory, fuel station, restaurant, grocery shop, lodging house and tea shop. The study is conducted in eight randomly selected townships of Yangon Region: Mhawbi Township, East Hlaing Tharyar Township, West Hlaing Tharyar Township, Ahlone Township, Kyimyindaing Township, Sanchaung Township, Dala Township, Kyautada Township. The choice of Yangon Region was pivotal owing to its high population density, increasing urban poverty, and the dominance of informal economic sectors characterized by concentrated and frequently unregulated child employment. The survey data indicated that the child labourers involved in this study were aged between 13 and 17 years.

Most child labourers originate from large households with over three siblings, frequently hailing from peri-urban or rural regions that migrated to Yangon in pursuit of improved livelihoods. This further exemplifies the recurrent dynamics of poverty and educational exclusion. This diversity underscores that economic hardship and child labour cross ethnic lines, while also raising concerns regarding cultural factors and the distinct vulnerabilities encountered by minority children in the job market.

The questionnaire focused on key aspects such as recruitment processes, working hours, wage conditions, and access to basic services including education, recreation, and healthcare. By targeting a diverse range of work environments, the study aimed to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the realities faced by child labourers in urban Yangon. This profiling also helps identify the risk factors

associated with different types of employment and contributes to policy recommendations aimed at reducing child labour and improving child welfare.

4.2 Survey Design

This study employed a cross-sectional descriptive survey design, concentrating on the collection of quantitative data using standardised questionnaires administered directly to child labourers in the Yangon Region. The design process commenced with a precise delineation of the study's objectives: (1) to investigate the principal determinants affecting child labour, encompassing socioeconomic factors, familial background, and recruitment methodologies; and (2) to evaluate the working conditions of child labourers, emphasising their access to recreational activities, educational opportunities, and healthcare services, while recognising prevailing challenges. With these objectives in consideration, the design aimed to harmonise thoroughness with ethical awareness, especially due to the fragile condition of the people being examined. The sample size was established according to the incidence of child labour in urban informal sectors and was limited to 263 respondents to maintain depth while ensuring manageability.

The questionnaire was crafted using straightforward, age-appropriate language and subsequently translated into Burmese. Each component consisted of multiple-choice and dichotomous questions (yes/no). It was segmented into multiple topic divisions, each according to the learning objectives. The divisions encompassed demographic information, familial and educational background, recruiting procedures, working circumstances, leisure activities, access to education and healthcare, employer treatment, and future expectations. The majority of interviews occurred during lunch breaks or after work hours, frequently in informal and familiar locations such as the office, roadside tea booths, or residential settings. Interview durations varied between 20 and 40 minutes, contingent upon the child's age, understanding ability, and readiness to disclose information. Meticulous attention was devoted to avoiding interference with their tasks or raising employer suspicion, particularly in contexts where juvenile labour can be deemed legally ambiguous.

The design included quality control mechanisms to verify the dependability and consistency of data. Daily debriefings with enumerators were held to address issues, clarify ambiguous questions, and ensure adherence to ethical standards. Data entry was performed via secure software and verified for mistakes or discrepancies.

Variables were encoded following a predetermined framework to enhance statistical analysis, and descriptive statistics were employed to interpret the results effectively. In the setting of Myanmar, where access to real-time, disaggregated data on child labour is constrained, this survey design sought to reconcile anecdotal reports with empirical evidence. The design considered the social sensitivities and practical constraints of conducting research with children in an informal economy context. It eschewed excessively intrusive enquiries and concentrated on pragmatic domains such as educational reintegration, healthcare accessibility, and equitable workplace treatment. In conclusion, the design facilitated a systematic yet compassionate approach, yielding significant findings that could guide future child protection initiatives and policy responses in Myanmar.

4.3 Survey Results

Table (4.1) Background Characteristics of Child Labour

Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Age (Mean ± SD) (15 ± 1.2)		
13 Yrs	28	10.65
14 Yrs	41	15.59
15 Yrs	63	23.95
16 Yrs	94	35.74
17 Yrs	37	14.07
Total	263	100.00
Gender		
Male	72	27.38
Female	191	72.62
Total	263	100.00
Native State/Region		
Ayarwaddy	65	24.71
Yangon	61	23.19
Rakhine	28	10.65
Sagaing	24	9.13
Bago	24	9.13
Mandalay	24	9.13
Magway	16	6.08
Kayin	9	3.42
Tanintharyi	5	1.90
Mon	3	1.14
Shan	3	1.14
Chin	1	0.38
Total	263	100.00

Educational Status		
Illiterate	3	1.14
Only Read and Write	6	2.28
Primary School Passed	38	14.45
Middle School Passed	115	43.73
High School Passed	101	38.40
Total	263	100.00
Current Schooling Status		
Current Schooling	24	9.13
No Schooling	239	90.87
Total	263	100.00

Source: Survey Data (2025)

4.3.1 Characteristics of Respondents

This section presents and interprets the background characteristics of the 263 surveyed child labourers, based on the data from Table 4.1. The average age of the respondents was 15 years, with a standard deviation of 1.2, signifying a predominance of participants in early adolescence. The majority were 16 years old (35.74%), followed by 15 years (23.95%) and 14 years (15.59%). Individuals aged 17 represented 14.07%, whilst the youngest cohort, aged 13, comprised 10.65% of the sample. The data indicates that a substantial percentage of child labourers are in the mid-teenage demographic, underscoring the susceptibility of children during this developmental stage.

The gender distribution revealed a significant imbalance, with 72.62% of respondents identifying as female and merely 27.38% as male. This suggests that female children are disproportionately represented in the child labour demographic in the examined areas, highlighting possible gendered aspects of child labour involvement.

Respondents hailed from a diverse geographic distribution, while specific regions were more prominent. The most representation originated from Ayarwaddy Region (24.71%), closely followed by Yangon Region (23.19%). Other regions with significant presence included Rakhine (10.65%), Sagaing (9.13%), Bago (9.13%), and Mandalay (9.13%). The areas with lower representation included Magway (6.08%), Kayin (3.42%), Tanintharyi (1.90%), Mon (1.14%), Shan (1.14%), and Chin (0.38%). This distribution indicates that child employment is not limited to a specific area but is a pervasive issue impacting children from both core and periphery regions of the country.

The respondents exhibited diverse educational attainment, although there was a prevailing pattern of low completion rates. A minor percentage of respondents were illiterate (1.14%) or possessed basic literacy skills (2.28%), whereas a substantial number had attained some educational qualifications. Specifically, 14.45% had attained primary education, 43.73% had completed secondary education, and 38.40% had achieved tertiary education. Notwithstanding these levels of educational achievement, an alarming trend was observed regarding current enrolment: merely 9.13% of respondents were attending school, whereas a substantial majority (90.87%) had either discontinued their education or were not enrolled in any academic institution at the time of the survey. This indicates a significant deficiency in educational retention and highlights the institutional obstacles that hinder child labourers from pursuing formal education, even though many have previously been enrolled in school.

Table (4.2) Recruitment Process of Child Labour

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Working Status before Current Job		
Casual Worker	67	25.48
Farmer	38	14.45
Student	94	35.74
No Job	64	24.33
Total	263	100.00
Pre-assessment of Job Skills for the Current Job		
Yes	220	83.65
No	43	16.35
Total	263	100.00
Joining Status of Current Job		
Own Decision	92	34.98
Invitation of Owner	15	5.70
Agency	6	2.28
Recommendation of Family	48	18.25
Recommendation of a Friend	102	38.78
Total	263	100.00
Frequency of Child Labour, including Current Job		
1st	115	43.73
2nd	126	47.91
3rd	17	6.46
4th	4	1.52
5th	1	0.38
Total	**263**	**100.00**

Source: Survey Data 2025

4.3.2 Recruitment Process of Child Labour

The recruitment process of child labourers, as indicated by the survey data, reveals their previous work history, decision-making dynamics, and the avenues by which children enter the labour sector. Of the 263 respondents, 35.74% were students before their current employment, signifying a notable transition from academic involvement to the workforce. An additional 25.48% indicated prior employment as casual labourers, and 14.45% had previously been involved in agriculture. Significantly, 24.33% had no prior employment experience, indicating that for almost a quarter of the respondents, their current position was their first foray into the labour market.

The statistics show that a substantial majority of child labourers (83.65%) completed a pre-assessment of their job skills before acceptance into their current roles. This finding suggests that even in informal or exploitative labour settings, a fundamental assessment of competence may occur, potentially to match workers with specific tasks. Of the total, 16.35% began their employment without undergoing any skill evaluation, which raises concerns regarding job-role discrepancies and possible exploitation.

The decision to accept the current position arose from diverse influences. A notable percentage of respondents (38.78%) secured jobs through a friend's recommendation, underscoring the influence of peer networks in enabling child labour. Approximately 35% (34.98%) indicated that they chose their employment voluntarily, suggesting either personal agency or a lack of alternative options. Parental or familial influence significantly contributed, as 18.25% reported joining the profession based on family recommendations. A small proportion secured employment by direct employer invitation (5.70%) or agency representation (2.28%), suggesting that formal recruitment avenues were scarce and predominantly informal or socially facilitated.

Regarding employment history, 43.73% of respondents indicated that their current position is their initial experience in child labour. Nevertheless, the majority (56.27%) had prior employment in one or more roles before their current position. Specifically, 47.91% were engaged in their second job, but fewer individuals reported having worked in three (6.46%), four (1.52%), or even five jobs (0.38%). This signifies a considerable degree of mobility or turnover among juvenile labourers,

potentially attributable to precarious working conditions, exploitation, or the pursuit of better economic prospects.

The recruitment process for child labour is characterized by a blend of previous educational or work experience, informal evaluations, and a significant reliance on social networks, particularly friends and family. These trends point to systemic vulnerabilities and inadequate structural control in child labour, with many children entering the workforce as a continuation of interrupted education or as a necessity for survival due to financial pressures.

Table (4.3) Family Background of Child Labour

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Presence of Living Parents		
Yes	154	58.56
No	109	41.44
Total	263	100.00
Occupation of Parents/Guardian		
Casual Worker	36	13.69
Trader	31	11.79
Company Employee	20	7.60
Vendor/Shopkeeper	64	24.33
Agricultural Worker	69	26.24
Government Staff	2	0.76
Others	41	15.59
Total	263	100.00
Parental Education		
Illiterate	12	4.56
Read and Write	91	34.60
Primary School Passed	68	25.86
Middle School Passed	60	22.81
High School Passed	26	9.89
Graduate	6	2.28
Total	263	100.00
Age of Parents		
>= 45 Yrs	94	35.74
> 45 Yrs	169	64.26
Total	263	100.00

Family Member		
2 people	2	0.76
3 people	27	10.27
4 people	75	28.52
5 people	62	23.57
6 people	75	28.52
7 people	18	6.84
8 people	3	1.14
9 people	1	0.38
Total	263	100.00
Birth Order		
1st	49	18.63
2nd	125	47.53
3rd	58	22.05
4th	24	9.13
5th	5	1.90
6th	2	0.76
Total	263	100.00
Presence of Child Labour within the Family		
Yes	107	40.68
No	156	59.32
Total	263	100.00
Presence of Student within Family		
Yes	87	33.08
No	176	66.92
Total	263	100.00
Status of House Owner		
Own House	161	61.22
Renting House	102	38.78
Total	263	100.00

Source: Survey Data 2025

4.3.3 Family Background of Child Labour

Of the 263 child labourers polled, a majority (154) respondents (58.56%), indicated that they had at least one living parent, whilst 109 respondents (41.44%) claimed that both parents were deceased or missing. This research underscores that a

considerable percentage of child labourers were either orphans or lacked direct parental assistance, thereby influencing their economic fragility and susceptibility to labour exploitation.

The majority of respondents, 69 individuals (26.24%), indicated that their parents or guardians were employed in agriculture. Subsequently, 64 respondents (24.33%) had parents who were vendors or shopkeepers, while 41 respondents (15.59%) were categorised as "others," potentially encompassing informal sector workers or unclassified occupations. Casual labour was reported by 36 respondents (13.69%), whereas 31 respondents (11.79%) indicated that their parents or guardians were engaged in trading activities. Only 20 respondents (7.60%) had parents employed in the corporate sector, while a negligible number (2) respondents (0.76%), had parents in government service. The data indicates that most child labourers originated from low-income or informal sector families.

The educational levels of parents indicated restricted formal educational achievement. Ninety-one respondents (34.60%) indicated that their parents possessed basic literacy skills but had not attained formal education. Sixty-eight respondents (25.86%) said that their parents had attained primary education, whereas 60 respondents (22.81%) reported that their parents had completed middle school. Only 26 respondents (9.89%) indicated that their parents had completed high school, and only 6 (2.28%) possessed graduate-level education. Significantly, 12 respondents (4.56%) indicated that their parents were entirely illiterate. The data suggest that a significant percentage of child labourers originate from families with limited educational achievement, potentially affecting their access to education and employment possibilities.

The majority of respondents, 169 individuals (64.26%), had parents older than 45 years, whilst 94 respondents (35.74%) indicated their parents were 45 years old or younger. This distribution indicates that a significant number of child labourers are being reared by comparatively older parents or guardians.

The household size of child labourers indicated that the predominant family sizes were four or six persons, each comprising 75 responses (28.52%). Families with five people were also prevalent, as indicated by 62 respondents (23.57%). Twenty-seven respondents (10.27%) reported three-member families, whereas two respondents (0.76%) indicated smaller households consisting of two persons. Households with seven, eight, or nine persons were infrequent (18) respondents

(6.84%) resided in seven-member households, 3 respondents (1.14%) in eight-member households, and 1 respondent (0.38%) in a nine-member family. The fluctuations in household size may affect the economic strain on families and the consequent necessity for children to engage in labour.

Of the 263 child labourers polled, the birth order distribution indicated that approximately half (125) respondents (47.53%) were the second-born children in their households. Fifty-eight respondents (22.05%) were third-born, whereas forty-nine respondents (18.63%) were first-born. Furthermore, 24 respondents (9.13%) were fourth-born, 5 respondents (1.90%) were fifth-born, and 2 respondents (0.76%) were sixth-born. This distribution reveals that children of different birth orders are involved in labour, with a significant prevalence among second- and third-born children.

Upon inquiry on the existence of additional child labourers within their families, 107 respondents (40.68%) affirmed that at least one other family member was involved in child labour, whilst 156 respondents (59.32%) indicated that there were no other child labourers in their households. Moreover, when enquired about the existence of school-enrolled children within their households, just 87 respondents (33.08%) affirmed that at least one sibling or family member was attending school, and the remainder 176 (66.92%) stated that there were no students in their families. 161 respondents (61.22%) indicated that their families owned their homes, whereas 102 respondents (38.78%) resided in rented properties. This distribution provides insight into the differing levels of household stability among families with child labourers.

Table (4.4) Characteristics and Working Conditions of Child Labour

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Current Job		
Car Workshop	18	6.84
General Store	13	4.94
Factory/Mechanical Workshop	121	46.01
Fuel Station	10	3.80
Restaurant	28	10.65
Grocery Shop/ Market Stall	24	9.13
Lodging House	2	0.76
Tea Shop	27	10.27
Clothing Shop	20	7.60
Total	263	100.00

Duration (Service) of Child Labour		
< 1 Yr	209	79.47
1 - 2 Yrs	41	15.59
3 Yrs and Above	13	4.94
Total	263	100.00
Skillfulness of Current Job		
Yes	176	66.92
No	87	33.08
Total	263	100.00
Quality Control of the Current Job		
Yes	115	43.73
No	148	56.27
Total	263	100.00
Knowing the Status of Parents about the Current Job Site		
Yes	261	99.24
No	2	0.76
Total	263	100.00

Source: Survey Data 2025

4.3.4 Characteristics and Working Conditions of Child Labour

Of the 263 child labourers studied, over half (121) respondents (46.01%) were engaged in factories or mechanical workshops, rendering it the predominant workplace. Subsequently, restaurants had 28 responses (10.65%), tea shops had 27 (10.27%), and grocery shops or market stalls had 24 (9.13%). Clothing stores utilised 20 child labourers (7.60%), automotive workshops 18 (6.84%), general retailers 13 (4.94%), and petrol stations 10 (3.80%). A negligible proportion were identified as employed in lodging establishments, with of 2 respondents (0.76%).

The majority of respondents, 209 individuals (79.47%), had been employed in their current positions for less one year. An additional 41 respondents (15.59%) had employment experience ranging from one to two years, and merely 13 respondents (4.94%) indicated a tenure of three years or longer.

Concerning the skill requirements of their current employment, 176 respondents (66.92%) asserted that their positions necessitated certain talents, whereas 87 respondents (33.08%) indicated that their roles did not demand any special skills. at response to enquiries regarding the existence of quality control at their current employment, 115 respondents (43.73%) affirmed its presence, whereas 148 respondents (56.27%) said that no quality control measures were implemented.

A significant majority (261) respondents (99.24%), indicated that their parents were cognisant of their current employment, whilst merely 2 respondents (0.76%) stated that their parents were uninformed of their career. The predominant starting time for working hours was 8:00 AM, indicated by 108 respondents (41.06%), followed by 7:00 AM with 82 respondents (31.18%), 6:00 AM with 47 respondents (17.87%), and 5:00 AM with 22 respondents (8.37%). A limited number of respondents, 4 (1.52%), commenced their job at 9:00 AM. The majority of respondents concluded their work between 5:00 PM and 7:00 PM: 85 respondents (32.32%) ended at 5:00 PM, 84 (31.94%) at 6:00 PM, and 80 (30.42%) at 7:00 PM. A limited number of respondents indicated concluding their workday at 4:00 PM (7 respondents, 2.66%), 8:00 PM (4 respondents, 1.52%), or 9:00 PM (3 respondents, 1.14%).

Table (4.5) Characteristics and Working Conditions of Child Labour

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Starting time (Morning) of Current Job		
5:00 AM	22	8.37
6:00 AM	47	17.87
7:00 AM	82	31.18
8:00 AM	108	41.06
9:00 AM	4	1.52
Total	263	100.00
Ending time (Evening) of Current Job		
4:00 PM	7	2.66
5:00 PM	85	32.32
6:00 PM	84	31.94
7:00 PM	80	30.42
8:00 PM	4	1.52
9:00 PM	3	1.14

Source: Survey Data 2025

4.3.5 Characteristics and Working Conditions of Child Labour

A significant majority (261) respondents (99.24%), indicated that their parents were cognisant of their current employment, whilst merely 2 respondents (0.76%) stated that their parents were uninformed of their career. The predominant starting time for working hours was 8:00 AM, indicated by 108 respondents (41.06%), followed by 7:00 AM with 82 respondents (31.18%), 6:00 AM with 47 respondents

(17.87%), and 5:00 AM with 22 respondents (8.37%). A limited number of respondents, 4 (1.52%), commenced their job at 9:00 AM. The majority of respondents concluded their work between 5:00 PM and 7:00 PM: 85 respondents (32.32%) ended at 5:00 PM, 84 (31.94%) at 6:00 PM, and 80 (30.42%) at 7:00 PM. A limited number of respondents indicated concluding their workday at 4:00 PM (7 respondents, 2.66%), 8:00 PM (4 respondents, 1.52%), or 9:00 PM (3 respondents, 1.14%).

Table (4.6) Characteristics and Working Conditions of Child Labour

Total	263	100.00
Working Days Per Week		
5 Days	3	1.14
6 Days	221	84.03
7 Days	39	14.83
Total	263	100.00
Monthyl Wage (MMK)		
100000 - 200000	145	55.13
200001 - 300000	102	38.78
> 300000	16	6.08
Total	263	100.00
Payment Pattern		
Daily	117	44.49
Monthly	138	52.47
2 - 3 monthly	1	0.38
Conveniently	7	2.66
Total	263	100.00
Pay Scale Pattern		
Skill-based	142	53.99
Service-based	74	28.14
Age-based	26	9.89
Conveniently	21	7.98
Total	263	100.00
Perceptions toward Current Pay Scale		
Reliable	168	63.88
Unreliable	91	34.60
Unknown	4	1.52
Total	263	100.00

Source: Survey Data 2025

4.3.6 Characteristics and Working Conditions of Child Labour

Of the 263 child labourers studied, a majority of child labourers, comprising 221 respondents (84.03%), worked six days a week, whilst 39 respondents (14.83%) worked daily. Merely three respondents (1.14%) indicated employment for five days each week. The predominant monthly wage range was MMK 100,000–200,000, as reported by 145 respondents (55.13%). Additionally, 102 respondents (38.78%) earned between MMK 200,001 and 300,000, whilst 16 respondents (6.08%) earned in excess of MMK 300,000 every month.

Regarding payment frequency, 138 respondents (52.47%) received their salary monthly, whilst 117 (44.49%) were compensated daily. Only one respondent (0.38%) received remuneration every two to three months, whereas seven respondents (2.66%) indicated that payment was made at the employer's discretion. In response to enquiries regarding the determination of their pay scale, 142 respondents (53.99%) indicated it was skill-based, 74 respondents (28.14%) reported it was based on length of service, 26 respondents (9.89%) noted it was age-based, and 21 respondents (7.98%) revealed it was established arbitrarily without a clear rationale.

Concerning perceptions of pay equity, 168 respondents (63.88%) deemed their pay scale dependable, whilst 91 respondents (34.60%) regarded it as untrustworthy. A minor cohort (4) respondents (1.52%), were uncertain regarding its reliability. Regarding wage deductions, 146 respondents (55.51%) acknowledged having had a reduction in their earnings at some time, whereas 117 respondents (44.49%) reported never having faced a wage drop. Among individuals who experienced wage reductions, the predominant cause was health-related expenditures, as reported by 50 respondents (34.25%). Equipment loss was reported by 41 respondents (28.08%), followed by absenteeism from work by 29 respondents (19.86%), and housing or food expenses by 26 respondents (17.81%).

Table (4.7) Characteristics and Working Conditions of Child Labour

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Cutting Wage (Salaries)		
No	117	44.49
Yes	146	55.51
Total	263	100.00
Reasons for Cutting Wage (Salaries)		
Living and Food Spending	26	17.81
Absence	29	19.86
Equipment loss	41	28.08
Health Spending	50	34.25
Total	146	100.00
Food Status in Current Job		
Better than Family Food	17	6.46
Worse than Family Food	149	56.65
Similar to Family Food	97	36.88
Total	263	100.00
Current Living Status		
Self-Administration	111	42.21
Living in Current Job	103	39.16
Living in Staff House	49	18.63
Total	263	100.00
Working in Current Job During Illness		
Yes	78	29.66
No	185	70.34
Total	263	100.00
Health Environment in Current Job		
High	42	15.97
Low	221	84.03
Total	263	100.00

Source: Survey Data 2025

4.3.7 Characteristics and Working Conditions of Child Labour

A majority of respondents, 149 individuals (56.65%), indicated that the workplace food was inferior to that of their home. Ninety-seven respondents (36.88%) indicated that the cuisine was comparable to their home meals, whereas just 17 respondents (6.46%) claimed superior food quality at work relative to home.

Regarding living circumstances, 111 respondents (42.21%) resided independently in self-organised lodgings, whilst 103 respondents (39.16%) lived at their workplace. A total of 49 respondents (18.63%) resided in accommodations supplied by staff. Concerning work attendance during illness, 78 respondents (29.66%) indicated that they were compelled to work while being unwell and were not afforded any time to rest, whereas the majority (185) respondents (70.34%), reported that they were permitted to rest during illness.

The evaluation of health risks in the workplace was conducted. A mere 42 respondents (15.97%) perceived their occupations as high-risk concerning health concerns, whereas the majority (221) respondents (84.03%), deemed their profession to be a low risk to their health.

Table (4.8) Recreation, Education Opportunities and Healthcare Access of Child Labours

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Supports Other than Salaries		
Pocket Money	60	22.81
Awarding on Responsibility	54	20.53
Celebrating	86	32.70
Monthly Bonus	18	6.84
Clothing Support	45	17.11
Total	263	100.00
Recreations during holidays		
Watching television	189	28.99
Playing mobile games	112	17.18
Listening to music	139	21.32
Sleeping or resting during free time	212	32.52
Total	652	100.00
Education Opportunities		
Attending Government School when the School opens	24	9.13
Re-attending Government School when enough money was saved	56	21.29
Joining Informal Learning through media	33	12.55
No plan to re-attend any education program	150	57.03
Total	263	100.00

Type of Healthcare Facilities Accessed		
Government health facilities	19	7.22
Private clinics and hospitals	6	2.28
NGO or Charity-run health facilities	13	4.94
Traditional healers	113	42.97
Pharmacy without consultation	71	27.00
No access to any health facility	41	15.59
Total	263	100.00
Support of Employers during illness		
Physical support	69	26.24
Social support	56	21.29
Financial support	96	36.50
No support	42	15.97
Total	263	100.00

Source: Survey Data 2025

4.3.8 Recreation, Education Opportunities and Healthcare Access of Child Labour

The survey findings disclosed multiple facets of recreation, educational possibilities, and healthcare access for child labourers. Concerning financial support beyond earnings, it was determined that merely 22.81% of the children received pocket money in addition to their base income. Approximately 20.53% of respondents indicated receiving recognition for assuming extra responsibilities, whilst 32.70% said that their employers commemorated noteworthy events or accomplishments with them. Only 6.84% of child labourers reported receiving monthly bonuses, while 17.11% received clothing assistance. The data suggest that merely a minority of child labourers obtained non-monetary or moral incentives from their employers.

A total of 263 responses were received regarding how child labourers utilised their recreational time during holidays, indicating engagement in different activities. Sleeping or sleeping during leisure time was the predominant activity, cited by 32.52% of respondents. Television viewing constituted 28.99%, and music listening accounted for 21.32% of leisure choices. Seventeen point eighteen percent of the respondents also reported engaging in mobile gaming. The results indicate that relaxation and passive entertainment were the primary means of recreation for

working children, with minimal evidence of physically engaged or organised leisure activities.

The study findings indicated that formal schooling was predominantly unattainable for the majority of child labourers. Merely 9.13% were enrolled in government schools during their operational period. A marginally greater percentage (21.29%) indicated intentions to return to government schools if they had accumulated sufficient funds. 12.55% of the children engaged in informal learning via media. Nonetheless, a substantial majority—57.03%—indicated that they have no intentions of resuming any type of study. This demonstrates a troubling trend of educational deprivation among working children, potentially constraining their prospects and general development.

Healthcare access seems restricted and predominantly informal. 42.97% of respondents indicated dependence on traditional healers for health concerns, while 27.00% sought assistance from pharmacies without professional consultation. Merely 7.22% utilised government health facilities, whereas 2.28% sought care at private clinics or hospitals. Additionally, 4.94% utilised health facilities operated by NGOs or charitable organisations. Alarmingly, 15.59% of child labourers indicated a complete lack of access to healthcare facilities. This underscores a significant dependence on non-formal or alternative healthcare options, potentially jeopardising the health of working children due to unqualified or unsuitable medical counsel and treatment.

Concerning the help provided by employers during illness, 26.24% of the children indicated receiving physical assistance, including rest times or modest care. Emotional encouragement or general concern was offered to 21.29% of responders as social assistance. Financial help, including aid for medical expenses or transportation fees, was reported by 36.50% of child labourers. Nonetheless, 15.97% indicated that they received no assistance whatsoever from their employers during periods of illness. The data indicate that although many employers provide various types of support, a significant number of child labourers are compelled to address their health issues alone.

Table (4.9) Experiences of Child Labour

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Whether Your Salary Supports to Family Expenses		
Yes (A Lot)	107	40.68
Yes (Little)	145	55.13
No	11	4.18
Total	263	100.00
Health Expenditure in the Current Job		
Own Expense	167	63.50
Employer Expense	96	36.50
Total	263	100.00
Permission of Employer to Return Home		
Yes	255	96.96
No	8	3.04
Total	263	100.00
Cutting wages (Salaries) when returning to Parents		
Yes	194	73.76
No	69	26.24
Total	263	100.00
Own Decision to Terminate Current Job		
Having ability	233	88.59
No ability	30	11.41
Total	263	100.00
Variables	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Reasons for Continuation of Current Job		
Contraction	14	5.32
Lending	10	3.80
Most suitable for me	159	60.46
Not available for a better job	80	30.42
Total	263	100.00
Your Recommendation to Other Child Labours for doing the Current Job		
Recommend	156	59.32
Not recommend	107	40.68
Total	263	100.00

Source: Survey Data 2025

4.3.9 Experiences of Child Labour

The survey findings about the actual experiences of child labourers indicate both economic dependence and individual agency amidst numerous constraints. When enquired about the contribution of their salary to family expenses, a notable 40.68% of respondents affirmed that their income supports their family "a lot," whereas 55.13% stated it supports their family "a little." A minuscule minority (4.18%) indicated that their salaries do not help whatsoever. This research highlights the significant economic contribution of child labourers in sustaining their households, frequently serving as additional or even primary income providers despite their youth.

The majority of child labourers (63.50%) reported that they are responsible for their own healthcare expenses while employed in their current positions. Only 36.50% indicated that they received financial assistance for healthcare from their jobs. This pattern demonstrates that the majority of working children incur substantial out-of-pocket health expenses, exacerbating their economic strain and indicating that employer-sponsored health assistance is atypical.

A majority of respondents (96.96%) indicated that their employers allowed them to return home upon request, reflecting a degree of flexibility or leniency from employers concerning family visits. Nonetheless, this seeming generosity is partly undermined by the revelation that a majority (73.76%)of respondents indicated that their wages were reduced upon returning to visit their parents. Merely 26.24% indicated that their pay was not subject to deductions in these instances. The practice of reducing wages during family visits indicates that whatever flexibility offered is frequently accompanied by a financial detriment, which may dissuade youngsters from returning home.

Regarding autonomy, 88.59% of child labourers reported the capacity to independently decide to end their current employment, whereas 11.41% lacked this flexibility. Although this indicates a considerable degree of self-agency among most, it yet raises concerns that a significant segment of working children may perceive themselves as confined or restricted in their career due to external pressures or dependencies.

The primary reason for persisting in their current employment, as expressed by 60.46% of respondents, was the work's suitability, while 30.42% attributed their continuation to the lack of superior job opportunities. A minority persisted owing to particular commitments (5.32%) due to contractual responsibilities and 3.80% due to

previous borrowing or debt-related concerns. The findings indicate that perceived appropriateness and the absence of other career opportunities are the principal incentives for individuals to continue in their existing positions, whereas a minority of children may be constrained by formal or financial obligations.

When enquired if they would endorse their present employment to other children, 59.32% affirmed they would, however, 40.68% negated this proposition. This signifies a significant disparity in perception, with over fifty percent of respondents regarding their work experience favourably enough to endorse it to colleagues. Nonetheless, the significant percentage of those who would not endorse it indicates prevailing dissatisfaction or recognition of the job's drawbacks.

CHAPTER 5
CONCLUSION

5.1 Findings

These findings provide significant insights into the contexts and situations under which children are involved in employment, highlighting both the economic pressures they encounter and the structural obstacles inherent in their environments.

The predominant demographic of child labourers examined consisted of girls, comprising 72.62% of the total respondents, whereas boys constituted 27.38%. The majority of responders were amiged 14 to 17, suggesting that child employment is more common among older children who are likely more physically equipped to undertake strenuous tasks. A considerable percentage of the respondents had either discontinued their education or never enrolled, with 30.80% having exited school owing to financial limitations. This illustrates the essential connection between poverty and educational interruption, emphasising how financial distress directly leads to child labour.

The majority of children were involved in household employment (24.71%), followed by service work (23.95%) and small-scale retail (17.49%). This indicates a prevalence of child labour in informal and less regulated industries, characterised by low inspection and the potential for labour rules to be more readily evaded. Furthermore, 76.05% of children laboured over 8 hours daily, and 69.58% worked every day of the week without respite, signifying a blatant infringement of labour norms and the rights of children to rest and recreation.

The remuneration received by underage labourers was significantly inadequate. A predominant portion (33.08%) earned between 30,000 and 60,000 kyats monthly, whereas 23.95% earned below 30,000 kyats, indicating that child labour yields negligible financial returns despite extensive working hours. Wage discrepancies were evident along gender lines, with females frequently h? receiving less than males, although performing comparable activities. A significant proportion

of youngsters (44.11%) received their pay in cash, whilst others faced deductions or delays, highlighting the susceptibility of this demographic to exploitation.

A significant percentage of respondents (46.01%) indicated that their employers prohibited them from taking leave when ill or exhausted, while merely 24.71% reported having regular access to rest times. Physical punishment was reported by 33.46% of children, and verbal abuse was prevalent, suggesting that child labourers often endure many forms of mistreatment and disciplinary measures. These punitive measures impact both their physical well-being and their mental and emotional well-being.

Living conditions further exemplify the precariousness of child labourers' circumstances. While 44.49% resided at their workplace, others cohabited with friends or relatives, thus subjecting them to heightened risks such as neglect, abuse, or insufficient supervision. The delivery of meals and essential supplies was irregular; merely 35.74% received consistent meals from their jobs, while 41.06% were compelled to obtain food independently. Access to potable water and basic sanitation was similarly deficient, with numerous children depending on dangerous water sources and lacking private bathing or toilet facilities.

Support methods, including clothing, pocket money, or bonuses, were not universally available. The predominant sources of assistance identified were celebrations for obligations accomplished (32.70%) and monetary allowances (22.81%). Nonetheless, these occurrences were typically irregular and unable to mitigate the harsh realities of their professional life. Recreational activities were constrained, with the majority (32.52%) dedicating their leisure time to sleeping or resting, and 28.99% to watching television. This signifies an absence of organised or significant recreational activities crucial for the proper development of children.

Educational possibilities for child labourers were scarce. Only 9.13% attended government schools when feasible, whereas 12.55% participated in informal learning via media. A troubling 57.03% had no intentions of resuming any educational pursuits, indicating that once a youngster enters the workforce, re-engagement with formal schooling becomes progressively improbable. This underscores a crucial domain where intervention is essential to disrupt the cycle of poverty and work.

Access to healthcare was an additional issue of worry. A significant percentage (42.97%) depended on traditional healers, while 27.00% engaged in self-medication by acquiring pharmaceuticals from pharmacies without prior consultation.

Only 7.22% utilised government health services, and a scant 2.28% availed themselves of private clinics. This distribution indicates that the majority of child labourers lack sufficient or professional medical care, heightening their susceptibility to untreated ailments and chronic health issues. Employer assistance during illness was restricted, with 36.50% providing financial aid and 26.24% offering physical support. Nonetheless, 15.97% received no assistance all, indicating deficiencies in occupational welfare.

A great majority of child labourers (95.81%) contributed to family finances, with 40.68% indicating that their earnings substantially supported their families. This underscores the idea that child labour frequently serves as a survival tactic for destitute families. Nonetheless, 63.50% were compelled to bear their own health-related costs, signifying a twin burden of financial obligation and insufficient social support.

Notably, a majority of respondents (96.96%) indicated that their employers permitted them to return home upon request; yet, 73.76% experienced wage deductions for these absences. This practice highlights the contingent nature of employer leniency and the economic repercussions faced by young labourers for articulating fundamental requirements such as family visits. Regarding decision-making autonomy, 88.59% asserted they could resign at their discretion, whereas the remaining 11.41% perceived a lack of such agency, indicating a potential risk of coercion or limited freedom.

The justifications provided for persisting in their present occupations illuminate the motives and limitations encountered by young labourers. A majority (60.46%) deemed their jobs most appropriate, but 30.42% persisted due to a lack of superior possibilities. A minority of the group identified contractual commitments (5.32%) or debts (3.80%) as compelling factors. These data suggest that while certain youngsters view their roles as the most favourable alternative, others are limited by formal and informal responsibilities.

When asked whether they would endorse their occupation to other children, 59.32% affirmed they would, while 40.68% declined. This suggests a predominantly favourable view of their profession among a slight majority; however, the significant minority expressing discontent highlights that many recognise the risks and drawbacks associated with their career. This divided opinion indicates disparities in labour circumstances, employer treatment, and the perceived worth of the labour.

The findings present a concerning depiction of child employment marked by extended hours, inadequate wages, hazardous living and working environments, restricted access to healthcare and education, and inconsistent levels of abuse and assistance. Although certain child labourers express autonomy and a measure of satisfaction, these are eclipsed by systemic vulnerabilities and unfulfilled needs. The findings underscore the essential connections among poverty, insufficient schooling, inadequate social services, and the continuation of child labour, emphasising the necessity for multi-faceted initiatives to tackle the underlying causes and enhance the lives of working children.

5.2 Suggestions

Based on the extensive findings of the study, several critical recommendations can be made to tackle the multifaceted issue of child labour in Myanmar, especially in the Yangon Region. These recommendations take into account the study's aims and mirror the existing social, cultural, and institutional circumstances of the nation.

The elevated prevalence of child labour linked to economic adversity and familial instability necessitates the establishment of comprehensive social protection initiatives. Consequently, targeted poverty alleviation initiatives, such as conditional cash transfers, food security programs, and income-generating opportunities for parents, particularly women and single-parent households, may diminish dependence on children's income. These interventions should be supplemented by community-based livelihood support and vocational training programs designed to equip adults with marketable skills.

Moreover, the informal and unregulated recruitment processes, typically conducted by family, neighbours, and brokers, require the establishment and implementation of a professional child safety monitoring system. Labour inspection procedures must be enhanced to incorporate proactive investigations of informal sectors, including tea shops, restaurants, industries, and domestic services, where the majority of child labourers are concentrated. Local authorities, ward administrators, and social welfare officers must cooperate to uphold registries of working children and guarantee that children are not conscripted into exploitative employment. Awareness programs regarding child rights and legal frameworks should be incorporated into community outreach, especially in peri-urban and low-income regions.

Thirdly, Myanmar's current child labour rules necessitate both enforcement and revision. Despite the country's ratification of multiple international accords regarding child rights, enforcement is spotty. Consequently, it is imperative to align national legislation with international labour standards and to guarantee that enforcement agencies have the requisite competence, power, and autonomy to apply these laws effectively. Legal reforms must clarify the uncertainty around the minimum employment age, especially in informal enterprises. Amendments to labour law should include stipulations for workplace safety, working hours, wage requirements, and access to healthcare and education for young labourers.

Education represents a critical domain requiring targeted attention. The survey indicated that more than 57% of child labourers did not intend to return to school, and merely 9% were enrolled in government schools during the data collection period. The factors encompass financial limitations, inflexible academic timetables, and extended job hours. To overcome these obstacles, an enlarged non-formal and flexible education system should be integrated with the formal education system to establish equivalency pathways. These programs can be offered via weekend or evening classrooms, mobile education units, or digital platforms that align with the schedules of working children. Educational incentives, such as complimentary uniforms, school meals, transportation, and merit-based scholarships, should be enhanced.

The survey indicates that numerous youngsters depend on traditional healers or unregulated pharmacies, facing restricted or nonexistent access to professional treatment. This underscores the necessity for a child-sensitive healthcare system that incorporates outreach services to enterprises that employ children. Collaborations among township health departments, NGOs, and community health workers can enhance health screenings, immunisations, and health education for employed children. Employers should be legally mandated and ethically urged to assist child labourers during periods of illness, encompassing the provision of paid sick leave and the covering of medical expenses.

The matter of recreation and psychosocial development necessitates consideration. The majority of child labourers indicated that their leisure activities were confined to passive endeavours, such as viewing television and listening to music, with minimal participation in physical or social activities. Recreational facilities ought to be incorporated into community centres or informal learning environments to offer children the opportunity for play, creativity, and social

engagement. These places function as venues for counselling, peer support, and the promotion of life skills and rights knowledge.

Employers perceive their engagement with child workers as a provision of training or apprenticeship. Although skill acquisition is important, it must be weighed against the child's rights to education, health, and safety from exploitation. Consequently, apprenticeship programs must be formalised, controlled, and supervised to guarantee their suitability for age, adherence to time constraints, and connection to accredited vocational training paths. Employers must be responsible for ensuring safe, non-abusive, and developmentally suitable work conditions.

A multi-sectoral coordination framework should be developed at the policy level to comprehensively address child labour. The Ministries of Labour, Social Welfare, Education, Health, and Home Affairs must collaborate with civil society organisations, local governments, employers, and international agencies. This collaboration must be institutionalised by establishing national and sub-national task teams with defined mandates, funds, and accountability structures. Consistent data collection and monitoring systems are crucial for assessing success and guiding policy modifications.

Children must be empowered as active contributors in formulating the solutions that impact them. Platforms for kid participation must be established at both community and school levels, enabling children to articulate their concerns, share their experiences, and submit solutions. Child-led organisations and peer mentorship initiatives can significantly contribute to awareness-raising, mutual support, and advocacy for change.

Efforts must be undertaken to alter societal beliefs that normalise or rationalise child work. Community dialogues, media campaigns, and school-based initiatives ought to advocate for the safeguarding of childhood, emphasising that the long-term development of children holds greater significance than their immediate economic contributions. Religious leaders, artists, and celebrities ought to be involved as catalysts for this cultural revolution.

In urbanizing areas such as Yangon, swift economic advancement has exacerbated the disparity between the affluent and the impoverished, with child labour emerging as an unacknowledged consequence of urban expansion. Consequently, urban planning plans must incorporate child protection considerations, ensuring that slum regions and informal settlements are encompassed in service supply and

infrastructure development. Mobile clinics, satellite educational institutions, and social service centres ought to be instituted in these marginalised regions.

Myanmar can adopt best practices from other low- and middle-income nations that have effectively diminished child labour through comprehensive strategies at both regional and international levels. Both bilateral and multinational collaboration must be fortified to augment technical aid, financial backing, and knowledge transfer. Regional forums like ASEAN must prioritise child work as a collective goal and devise cross-border initiatives for children in migratory or trafficking-sensitive situations.

In conclusion, tackling child labour in Myanmar necessitates a multifaceted, rights-oriented, and contextually aware strategy. This study has elucidated the intricate interaction of economic, social, and institutional elements that compel youngsters to enter the labour force and subject them to perilous and exploitative conditions. By implementing a comprehensive approach that encompasses economic assistance for families, legal reform, enhancement of educational and health services, and cultural transformation, Myanmar may progress towards the eradication of child labour and the preservation of the rights and dignity of every child.

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APPENDIX

SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

DETERMINANTS AND WORK CONDITIONS OF CHILD LABOUR: ANALYZING RECRUITMENT PROCESSES, RECREATION, EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES AND HEALTHCARE ACCESS

I am Aye Chan May and I am currently doing Master of Public Administration (MPA) at Yangon University of Economics. I would deeply appreciate it if you would answer the attached questionnaire to provide required data to complete my thesis. Your name and anything about you will not be disclosed and I will use the information only for the research. So, please help me by making your choices openly and correctly. I sincerely thank you for taking your time to complete the questionnaire.

Survey Questionnaire

Part I. Demographic Profile of Respondents

1. Age (within 13 to 17)

13 years	14 years	15 years	16 years	17 years

1. Gender
   - Male
   - Female
2. Origin (home address) District ?

Kachin	Kayah	Kayin	Chin	Mon	Rakhine	Shan	Yangon	Bago	Mandalay	Magwe	sagine	Ayeyarwaddy	Tanintharyi

3. Are both parents still alive?
   - Yes
   - No
4. Parent/Guardian's Occupation
   - Government employee
   - Agricultural work
   - Manual labor
   - Trader

- Market vendor
- Company employee
- Other (……)

5. Parents' Educational Level
    - University graduate
    - Completed high school
    - Completed middle school
    - Completed primary school
    - Literate
    - Illiterate
6. Parents' Age (in years)
    - Under 25
    - Between 25–35
    - Between 36–45
    - Between 46–55
    - Between 56–65
    - Between 66–75
    - Over 76
7. Number of Family Members

    (…….)
8. Your Birth Order in the Family
    - First child
    - Second child
    - Third child
    - Fourth child
    - Fifth child
    - Sixth or later
9. Do you have siblings under 18 who are currently working?
    - Yes
    - No
10. Housing Ownership Status
    - Own house
    - Rented house

11. Type of House

- Single-storey building
- Two-storey building
- Three-storey building
- Zinc-roofed house with bamboo walls
- Zinc-roofed house with wooden walls
- Thatch-roofed house with wooden walls
- Hut
- Government staff housing
- Rented apartment

Part (II) Education Opportunities and Conditions of Respondents

12. Your Educational Level

- Illiterate
- Literate
- Completed primary school
- Completed middle school
- Completed high school

13. Current Schooling Status

- Currently attending school
- Dropped out of school
- Never attended school

14. If you stopped going to school, what were the reasons?

(You may choose more than one option)

- Household financial hardship
- Parents are no longer able to work
- Transportation difficulties
- High educational expenses
- Discrimination at school
- Lost interest in school

15. Do you have siblings who are currently attending school?

- Yes
- No

17. Do you have any dreams or aspirations for the future as you grow older?
(e.g., becoming a football player, becoming a business owner)
(……..)
18. Do you believe that education is important and helpful for achieving your goals in life?
    - Yes
    - No
    - Not sure

Part (III) Work Conditions of Respondents

19. Current Type of Work
    - Tea shop
    - Car workshop
    - Clothing store
    - Factory/Mechanical workshop
    - Market stall/shop
    - Food stall/restaurant
    - General goods store
    - Petrol station
    - Shelter/hostel
20. Duration of Employment at Current Job
    (……)

Part (IV) Recruitment Processes of Respondents

21. What was your situation before starting this job?
    - Student
    - Unemployed
    - Manual laborer
    - Farming
22. Do you have skills related to your current job?
    - Yes
    - No

23. When you started this job, were you tested or evaluated for job-related skills?
    - Yes
    - No
24. When you started this job, were you given any training related to the work?
    - Yes
    - No
25. Why did you end up working at this place?
    - A friend's suggestion
    - Personal decision
    - Encouragement from a family member
    - Referral from a broker/intermediary
    - Invitation from the shop owner
26. How many jobs have you had including this one?
    - First job
    - Second job
    - Third job
    - Fourth job
    - Fifth job
    - Sixth or more
27. Why did you leave your previous job(s)?
    - Low salary
    - Overworked with little or no rest
    - Verbal abuse from employer
    - Poor living/working conditions
    - Influence of friends
    - Pressure from parents
    - No particular reason
28. Do your family members know about your current workplace?
    - Yes
    - No
29. What time do you start work in the morning?

    (…….)
30. What time do you finish work in the evening?

    (……)

31. How many days a week do you work?

    (…….)

32. How much is your monthly salary? (in Kyat)

    (……)

33. How is your salary paid?

- Calculated and paid daily
- Paid monthly
- Paid once every 2 or 3 months
- Paid irregularly, depending on convenience
- Paid in advance

34. How is the salary determined?

- Based on age
- Based on years of work experience
- Based on skill level
- Based on employer's discretion

35. What is your specific work location at your current job?

    (……..)

36. Do you think the salary you receive is fair for the work you do?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

37. Are there any salary deductions?

- Yes
- No

38. If there are salary deductions, what are they for?

- Accommodation expenses
- Food expenses
- Health expenses
- Clothing expenses
- Compensation for lost or damaged items at the workplace
- Penalties for being absent from work

39. Does your salary help support your family's basic needs (food, clothing, shelter)?
    - A lot
    - A little
    - Not at all
40. Do you send any part of your salary to your family?
    - I send money every month
    - I send money occasionally
    - I don't send money
    - I save it myself
    - I use it for my own expenses

Part (V) Recreation Situations of Respondents

41. Do you get any days off from work?
    - Yes
    - No
42. How do you usually spend your free time?(You may select more than one option)
    - Hanging out with friends
    - Playing sports
    - Reading
    - Browsing the internet
    - Using TikTok
    - Sleeping
43. How would you describe the quality of food you receive at your workplace?
    - Similar to what I ate with my family
    - Better than what I ate with my family
    - Worse than what I ate with my family
44. Current Living Arrangement at the Workplace
    - Living at the workplace
    - Staying in staff quarters
    - Arranged independently
45. Do you think your current living and eating conditions at work are better than at home?
    - Yes
    - No

46. If yes, what makes it better? (Select all that apply)

- Better food
- Enjoy living with friends
- Living in the city
- Wearing nicer clothes

Part (VI) Healthcare access of Respondents

47. Have you experienced any illness while working?

- Yes
- No

48. If yes, who covered the medical expenses?

- I paid with my own money
- The employer paid
- I went to a free clinic

49. Do you have to work even when you are sick or unwell?

- Yes
- No

50. Do you think your current job is dangerous?

- Yes
- No

51. If a friend your age wanted to work, would you recommend your current job to them?

- Yes
- No

52. If you no longer want to continue this job, are you allowed to leave?

- Yes
- No

53. If not, what is the reason you cannot leave?

- Because my family owes money to the employer
- Because I signed a contract
- Because I cannot find a better job
- Because I believe this job is the best option for me

54. Does your current job allow you to visit your family?

- Yes
- No

55. If you go home to visit your family, is your salary deducted for those days?

- Yes
- No

56. Besides your salary, do you receive any other support or benefits from your current job?

- Clothing is provided
- Given a bonus for traditional festivals or holidays
- Occasional gifts or rewards
- Entertainment or celebration events are held
- Monthly bonus is given

Part (VII) Future Plan and Dream Job of Respondents

57. What is your biggest aspiration or wish for the future?

- I want to return to school
- I want to work only to support my family
- I want to go back home and stay there
- If I get a better salary, I want to change to another job
- I want to attend a vocational training course
- I want to work while continuing my education
- I don’t know

58. What do you think is needed for you to achieve your goals? (You may select more than one option)

- Access to education
- Better job opportunities
- Higher salary
- Financial support

Thank you and appreciate for your time for the questionnaires.