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**A STUDY ON WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN THE KACHIN
LITERATURE AND CULTURE ASSOCIATION, LASHIO,
NORTHERN SHAN STATE**

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**A STUDY ON WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN THE KACHIN
LITERATURE AND CULTURE ASSOCIATION, LASHIO**

A thesis submitted as a partial fulfilment towards the requirement of the Degree of
Master of Development Studies (EMDevS)

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ABSTRACT

In Myanmar, women are still mostly excluded from full and equal participation in decision-making and leadership at all levels of society due to the traditional culture, norms, and stereotypes which favour and prefer men to take up leadership opportunities. The objectives of the study are to identify women's participation in the decision-making position by analysing the constraints and barriers they have encountered during their participation in the Kachin Culture and Literature Association of Lashio and to examine the benefits women's participation has on Kachin communities. This study is based on interviews with a total of fifty-seven member (22 males and 35 females) from the association. The findings of the study were that women agreed that they are confident and ready to represent in the leading roles. The Association should be empowered to improve women capacity and to build up leadership ability. The Policy needs to be changed to have more women participation, reinforcing respect and trust from the society.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|--------|---|
| ADB | Asia Development Bank |
| CBO | Community Based Organization |
| CEC | Central Executive Committee |
| CEDAW | Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women |
| CSO | Civil Society Organization |
| EAO | Ethnic Arm Organization |
| EC | Executive Committee |
| FGD | Focus Group Discussion |
| GAD | General Administration Department |
| INGO | International Non-Governmental Organization |
| LNGO | Local Non-Governmental Organization |
| JCM | Joint Ceasefire Monitoring Committee |
| KII | Key Informant Interview |
| LCA | Literature and Culture Association |
| MP | Member of Parliament |
| NCA | Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement |
| NGO | Non-Governmental Organization |
| NSPAW | National Strategic Plan for the Advancement of Women |
| PoVAW | Protection and Prevention of Violence against Women |
| SDG | Sustainable Development Goals |
| UN | United Nations |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Programme |
| UNFPA | United Nations Population Fund |
| UNICEF | United Nations Children's Fund |
| UPC | Union Peace Conference |
| UPDJC | Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee |

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Rational of the Study

Looking in detail at the claims of the United Nations' Development goals, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), it becomes clear that they cannot be fully reached without women's participation. In most of the developing countries, women comprise more than half of the human resources and are at the center of the economic as well as the social well-being of societies. SDG (5) aims to "Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision making in political, economic and public life." Women's participation in every sector and on all levels become an important role to achieve sustainable development outcomes and impacts.

The Government of Myanmar has demonstrated strong commitments to advance gender equality and promote the empowerment of women and girls, including through its National Strategic Plan for the Advancement of Women (2013-2022) (NSPAW), the Myanmar Sustainable Development Plan 2018-2030, the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement, and the draft Protection and Prevention of Violence against Women (PoVAW) Law in line with the government's commitments to the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Beijing Platform for Action, the Agenda 2030 and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the UN Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820. Both NSPAW and the PoVAW constitute essential steps for Myanmar's progress towards their commitment to ensure women have access to a legal framework that protects them from the disproportionate levels of discrimination and violence they experience in their home, work and public life.

One of the key objectives of Myanmar's National Strategic Plan for the Advancement of Women (2013-2022) is "to improve systems, structures and practices to ensure women's equal participation in decision-making and leadership at all levels

of society”. Until now, they are still mostly excluded from full and equal participation in decision-making and leadership at all levels of society mainly due to the traditional culture, norms, and stereotypes which favour and prefer men to take up leadership opportunities. Further, this includes a lack of experience and specific skills, low intra-household bargaining power, high time constraints, restrictions on women’s travel, a lack of confidence, and a lack of acceptance of female leadership. In addition, studies and say in general women in Myanmar have more responsible and spending better in healthcare, education, sanitation, and microfinance and also have different preferences for the regulation of social and intra-household behaviour (Oxfam C. T., 2013).

Myanmar is very much shaped by strong gender and age hierarchies, intersecting with ethnic, religious and socioeconomic factors (Gender situation analysis in Myanmar., 2014). There are strict expectations of which behaviours are deemed acceptable for women which contrast what is expected of men, starting from childhood into adulthood. For example, young girls tend to be socialised with an emphasis on obedience and following rules and elders, showing respect, being kind, not causing problems whereas in the raising of boys, more emphasis is placed on courage, intrepid behaviour, exploring and leadership (Jane Sail, 2016). In Myanmar, culturally men are the head of the household and women seen as dependent in the families and social groups. Patriarchal cultural values related to women’s roles and responsibilities still shape familial relationships. Contribute to the gendered division of labour and limit women’s participation in decision making at all levels. Key issues of concern include: high maternal mortality ratio and insufficient access to reproductive and basic health services; low levels of women’s participation in public decision making (Strategy, 2012-2014).

It is important to understand that the women's level of participation cannot be judged solely on the number of women within an institution, or even the number of women in a particular position within that institution. An individual can have a level of participation ranging from as low as being recorded as a member of the institution but might not make an input into decision making, or even show awareness of the decisions being made (nominal participation); to as high as having considerable voice and influence and holding a key decision-making position (interactive/ empowering participation (Participatory Exclusions, Community Forestry, and Gender: An Analysis for South Asia and a Conceptual Framework, 2001). However, women are

usually ignored in making decisions on important matters that concern development and resource allocation. They are usually the implementers of decisions that are made by men and their ideas, though important, are usually ignored or sometimes are not given chance to contribute. Moreover, if at all they are given chance, they are more likely to be found in less important and less influential positions (Stacey and Price, 1981).

In Myanmar, increasing numbers of women have been taking senior positions and leading roles in a different area, including civil society organizations, and actively engaging in social development and the political arena. Some of them are already involved in the policy development process and received great recognition from other development partners groups and different stakeholders for their leadership capacity. Therefore, equal participation of women at all levels is of vital value to demonstrate the individual and collective exercise of democratic rights and freedom, and a greater value to achieve the sustainable outcomes and impacts.

Myanmar is a country where over (100) multi-ethnic nationalities exist together with each ethnic group have distinct customs and traditions practices and ways of living due to diverse geographical locations, historical backgrounds, cultures, livelihoods and religious beliefs. They love their own literature, traditions and customary practices, and keen on maintaining and promoting them. To identify, enhance and maintain the ethnic group's literature, culture and to provide social assistance in accordance with their tradition and practice and customary Law, almost all ethnic groups in Myanmar have formed Literature and Culture Associations at the region, state and township level as an ethnic community-based organization.

The following study analysed and highlighted women's participation in the decision-making position in the Associations, especially the Kachin Culture and Literature Association based in Lashio and focused on the benefits for the Kachin community to solve social issues through the participation of women in the associations. The study will suggest to the members the Kachin Culture and Literature Association to improve women participation in the Association.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are to identify women's participation in the Kachin Literature and Culture Association of Lashio, to analysis the constraints and barriers of women's participation in the association and to examine the benefits of women's participation has on Kachin communities.

1.3 Method of Study

The study was based on both primary data and secondary data, using a descriptive method. The primary data was collected from key informant interviews and focus group discussions targeted to focal persons from the Kachin ethnic Literature and Culture Associations and community members of the selected area. The secondary data was taken from different sources such as public reports and reliable internet web sources.

1.4 Scope and Limitations of the Study

The study focuses on women's participation in the Literature and Culture Association of Kachin, Lashio from 2007 to 2017 (10) years. The study solely focused on ethnic Kachin groups in Lashio Township. In this study, the main limitation was there is a few literatures to review relating to the Literature and Culture Association. The survey was conducted in August and September 2019.

1.5 Organization of the Study

The thesis is organized into five chapters and the general framework is as follows: Chapter (1) presents the introductory part comprising the rational of the study, objectives and method of the study, scope and limitation of the study and organization of the study. Chapter (2) focuses on the literature review regarding participation theory, including its main theories and approaches. It describes the impact of women's participation in the association and the Sustainable Development Goals and Women Participation. Chapter (3) presents the current situation of women's participation in the associations in Myanmar and Northern Shan State, and the Kachin women's participation in the associations. Chapter (4) presents the Ethnic Literature and Culture Associations, an analysis of the situation, as well as constraints and barriers of women's participation in the Kachin Literature and Culture Associations. Chapter (5) is the findings and suggestions.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Participation Theory

The concept of Participation is broadly understood as the involvement of the entire populace in the choice, execution and evaluation of programmes and projects designed to bring about significant improvement in the lives of the people. (Lisk, 1985). Chambers (1983) and Uphoff (1979) also argue that “Participation is about power, an increase in the power of the disadvantaged”. Therefore, Participation is seen not only as a management tool for the efficient execution of specific projects but also as a part of a drive for more democratic residents or households. In general, participation is referred to as involvement. More specifically in a certain context, “Participation” is interpreted differently by each one depending on his or her needs and biases. Looking at it from the general definition, it is necessary but not enough; it must further lead to institution building. Participation is a means to build a vision and mission of its own (Manuku, 2018).

Several models have been developed about participation over the years, including, Arnstein’s (1969) ladder of participation, Davidson’s (1998) wheel of participation and Agarwal’s (2001) typology of participation. Arnstein’s Ladder of Citizen Participation is still applicable to many areas today. For example, Arnstein (1969:216) developed the ladder of participation in response to the notion of citizen participation in federal social programmes in the United States in the 1960s although was created more than forty years ago. The notion of a ladder is premised on the understanding that those with power are often reluctant or unwilling to abandon it. Thus, she defined participation as a system in which there is a ‘redistribution of power that enables the have-not citizens presently excluded from political and economic processes to be deliberately included in the future’. She identified three stages of participation. The first stage involves non-participation, where the power holders educate or care for those without power. The second stage involves those in power

informing, consulting and placating those with less power. Participation at this level is largely tokenistic, where the participants are informed but still lack the power to inform decision-making. The third level of participation involves partnerships, where power is delegated downwards, and citizens have control over decision-making. A few decades later, there were several critiques of Arnstein’s model and alternative models started to emanate from it. Building on the model, scholars were of the view that participation must be underpinned by notions of inclusivity through collective engagement, cooperation and working together to benefit all members of a community(Manuku, 2018).

To understand participation, Agarwal (2001) developed a typology with six levels to describe who is expected to be involved, the goals of participating in an activity and the means to attain these goals (Table 1). According to the model, at the first level, there is nominal participation, often simply characterised by the membership of a group (Chopra, Kadekodi & Murty, 1990). The second level, passive participation, involves attending meetings without engaging in decision-making or being informed about decisions after they have been accepted. The third level is consultative participation, and involves soliciting opinions from the participants, but not really using them to inform decision-making. At the fourth level is activity-specific participation, where one is requested to complete predetermined tasks. The fifth level involves active participation, where one may offer unsolicited opinions and initiate certain activities. The highest level is interactive participation, which involves affording all participants an equal opportunity to make decisions which are crucial to the functioning of the group and the achievement of the organisation’s goals (Manuku, 2018).

Table 2.1 Typology of participation

| Form/level of participation | Characteristics/features |
|------------------------------------|--|
| Normal | Membership in the group |
| Passive | Being informed of decisions ex post facto; or attending meetings and listening on decision-making, without speaking up |
| Consultative | Being asked an opinion in specific matters without guarantee of influencing decisions |

| | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Activity-specific | Being asked to (or volunteering to) undertake specific tasks |
| Active | Expressing opinions, whether or not solicited, or taking initiative of other sorts |
| Interactive (empowering) | Having voice and influence in the group's decisions |

Source: Agarwal (2001:1624)

2.2 Women's Participation in the Social Institutions

Community-based organizations (CBOs) are not for profit, organizations on a local and national level, facilitating community efforts for community development. CBOs works through people-centred modes of development such as availability of micro-finance, community participation in development ensuring community health education and infrastructure improves over time. The purpose of CBOs is to plan, implement, and monitor social and economic development programs and provide technical and financial help to the communities. CBOs positively affects the process of rural change i.e. increase in income, improvement in health, nutrition and literacy status of the populations. Some of the programs that can ensure bring changes in the rural communities are the availability of micro-finance for micro-enterprise, health and education, sustainable agriculture, animal husbandry, safe water and sanitation. A number of researchers have highlighted the significance of CBOs and the contribution these organizations make in national social and economic development in general and rural communities in particular (ANWAR HUSSAIN*, 2008).

A community-based organization is an “organization entity made up of people whose membership is defined by a specific common bond and who voluntarily come together to work for a common goal” (Francis W. Mulwa and Strapola Mala, 2000). Ideally, a CBO is initiated, managed, and owned by the members themselves in a defined community. It is hoped that those who form the CBO will be able to enjoy the benefits of pulling their resources together and maximizing their outcomes for the betterment of the individuals and the whole community (Zablon Bundi Mutongu, 2012).

As acknowledged by the United Nations (1990), Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) have made a significant contribution to the “work of increasing women's participation in decision making at all levels of society”. Their contribution is notable

in Indonesia, Liberia, Haiti, and Mexico, among of (Zablon Bundi Mutongu, 2012) her countries. In Indonesia, for instance, CSOs were central in the building of a women's movement which resulted in the institutionalization of a 30% electoral quota. In Mexico, CSOs led the '2% + More Women in Politics' campaign which saw increased compliance to the electoral code's provision for political parties to avail 2% of party funding for political training for women. These cases reveal the significance and potential of CSOs in enhancing gender representation in politics and monitoring gender-equity provisions (Murage, *The Contribution of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in Advancing Women's Political Participation and Effectiveness*., 2015).

Participation and membership in social institutions/ CBOs is a good first step to getting women's voices heard in areas that particularly affect women's lives and livelihoods such as management of community resources, water supply and sanitation, etc. Women need complementary support to build their financial, technical, management, negotiation, and advocacy skills to help them influence key decisions and to make the transition to leadership positions. For women to become leaders of infrastructure management groups, gaining the support of male community members is equally important. Changing public perceptions and stereotypes of women as leaders is also required (ADB, *ADB Experiences*, 2014).

Women's participation in institutions is the concept of building women institution and compliance gender-sensitive policy in which empowering women inclusively and emphasizing progress and improvement not only for the well-being of individual life also family and community. Women's participation in social institutions/ community-based organizations have created an important space for women's exercise of voice across different arenas—access and control of community resources, enhanced decision-making power in the household and community, and chipping away social and cultural norms that constrain women's exercise of agency. Women are active participants in social institutions/ Community Based Organizations (CBOs) such as water user groups, sanitation committees, farmer groups, loans and savings groups, and irrigation user groups.

2.3 Women's Participation in Local Governance and Development Process

Women's participation in local governance is important in various way. Evidence from programmes and research indicates that women play a vital role as key

actors and decision-makers in the development process across a wide range of sectors. In fact, women's leadership and effective participation is increasingly on the agenda of governments and NGOs while greater participation in the development sector is considered to be an important factor to prosper gender equalities in social, economic and political sectors (Minoletti, 2014).

Edward Brenya (2015) in his study on "Women Participation in Local Governance: Due to the poor knowledge of gender issues in the government, they are not represented in the government's policies, which have thus failed to reflect the needs and interests of poor women. In the study of "Managing of Local government in Tanzania: Some Historical Insights and Trends" by Warioba explains that an improvement of women's participation in local governance will improve women's confidence with which they can freely give their own ideas pertaining to various developmental aspects in their localities. Women become more concerned about various aspects in their local areas like knowing about what is being done with their taxes and how it is being done as well as questioning various acts that pertain to corruption or extravagance. This means that they become part and parcel of the development process and hence they can contribute substantially and effectively (Warioba, 1999).

In addition, women's participation also improves sustainable use and conservation of local resources. It also enables women to become independent and even be able to lead their own life by facing various intricate challenges resolutely and confidently. Moreover, participation makes women able to create additional resources where they are scarce. For example, it can help in reclaiming marginal land leading to the expansion of the arable land in their localities (Warioba M. , 1999) .

2.4 Gender Socialization

Gender is defined as the active roles that men and women play in society and the label attached to these roles, signifying which of the roles is feminine and which is masculine (Stolen,1991). With regard to gender and politics, it must be taken into consideration that both women and men are "gendered" beings, whose operations are not natural, but historically, socially and culturally constructed. Gender is socially constructed and denotes the institutionalization of social and sexual difference. In most societies, girls are identified to socialize with family and the private sphere

while boys are grown up to perform in the public sphere. Not only in the family but also in the school, girls are trained to be good wives and mothers, while boys are taught to develop their confidence to act for public life. This concept is reinforced by gender stereotyping and the prejudice against women in educational materials as well as insufficient women role models in a leadership position. Thus, women are lack of proper skills and confidence to engage in public activities such as speaking up and raising their concerns and needs while men had been naturally gifted the chance to develop (Karl, 1995).

According to Cornell's analysis that is presented by Janice McLaughlin, everyone needs their own space to construct their own version of what their life should be. But women are in a disadvantaged position compared with men for achieving the equal right to construct their own version since they are being judged against norms within the patriarchy society. The notion of "equivalence" has been highlighted as not only equality but also the recognition of being differently positioned in society. The same literature said that, while Okin agrees on this concept, she also raises the importance of family as a ground where people learned to be gendered individuals and experienced gender equality (Laughlin, 2003). Socialization is a process through which people learn to be an adult human being within their own society. It operates through various social institutions such as families, school, work, media, and generally through social interaction. According to The American philosopher and a social psychologist George Herbert Mead (1934), the development stage as an adult is learning to take the role of "the generalized other"; an individual's total impression of the judgments and expectations that other persons have toward him/her. He explains that when babies start learning in the early stage, they copy the action of people around them. When they become older, they then start to be aware of the significant others. Gradually they become slightly sophisticated realization of themselves in relation to others. The general values and moral rules involved in the culture where they are developing (Holmes, 2007).

Ann Oakley in 1972 developed gender socialization theory, which describes four ways to take place in the development of children. When children are young their parents manipulated with diverse physical and verbal. Then they let girls wear a feminine dress in the early stage but later on children are introduced the Barbie dolls or sports activities; it is known as canalization whereby boys and girls gave certain

toys. Later, children are introduced to verbal applications like “good girls” and/or “naughty boys”. After that they are exposed to different activities like boys are going out while girls are helping mother and seemingly boys can have more freedom (Holmes, 2007). Even some parents have resisted societal roles and train their children in non-sexiest ways but there are information sources that they get from secondary agencies like education, mass media, religious and peer as well. In terms of education, boys and girls learn to behave differently although they study the same thing. Goffman analyzes that an unequal social position of women is appeared “natural”; men are described as active protectors of the community, while women take shelter in their arms, thus, men display as tough and superior and women display as subtle and childlike that people come to believe. This cumulative effect of gender-display constitutes the hierarchy between women and men. Furthermore, there are many factors anticipated in the socialization process, which is accepted by society. Women are seen as “taking care of others”, “forming and maintaining the relationship”, “busy with household chores” and listening to others. These perceptions become a barrier to leadership aspirations as girls usually pay attention to what others will see and think of them (Zaslow E. &, 2012).

2.5 Cultural Constraints

In many countries, cultural attitudes and social norm are major obstacles for attaining gender equality. They discourage women not to seek political office or offer gate-keepers to adopt them and lead to discrimination. Most societies differentiate the roles of men and women: women to caring home and family while men to take a lead. Moreover, gender stereotypes further reinforce the belief of women not to seek political office (UNDP, 2012). For example, in Myanmar, Aung San Su Kyi is the leader of the country (although she is a female) meaning female in Asia mostly can inherit the position of power due to inheritance e.g Pakistan, India, etc.

Many women in leading roles are aware of these stereotypes, norms and gender-related discrimination as barriers for their attempt to improving their professionals and how these obstacles further contribute to the views of men. The occurrence of gender-related stereotypes had an impact on women's confidence in leading and representing, and their abilities to properly execute their roles. Additionally, those stereotypes and norms have a negative effect on women in their access to decision-maker positions as well as the capability to be a competent

person. Furthermore, the challenge of balancing “triple burden” – paid work, household chores, and caretaking was a significant barrier for women. The key challenges faced by women are their struggle in making the balance between home care and other outside tasks, and effort in managing restriction and expectation of their family members. It was often required to get permission from husbands or extended family members for participation. Therefore, it is crucial to take action for raising awareness of men on gender stereotypes and women’s rights issues (Oxfam C. A., 2011).

2.6 The Sustainable Development Goals 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

The sustainable development goals seek to change the course of the 21st century, addressing key challenges such as poverty, inequality, and violence against women. Women have a critical role to play in all of the SDGs, with many targets specifically recognizing women’s equality and empowerment as both the objective and as part of the solution. Goal 5 is known as the stand-alone gender goal because it is dedicated to achieving these ends. While a record 143 countries guaranteed equality between men and women in their Constitutions by 2014, another 52 had not taken this step. In many nations, gender discrimination is still woven through legal and social norms. Deep legal and legislative changes are needed to ensure women’s rights around the world. Stark gender disparities remain in economic and political realms. While there has been some progress over the decades, on average women in the labour market still earn 24 per cent less than men globally. As of August 2015, only 22 per cent of all national parliamentarians were female, slow rise from 11.3 per cent in 1995 (UN Women). The Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing in 1995, drew attention to the persisting inequality between men and women in decision-making. The Beijing Platform for Action emphasized that “women’s equal participation in decision making is not only a demand for justice or democracy but can also be a necessary condition for women’s interests to be taken into account. Without the perspective of women at all levels of decision-making, the goals of equality, development and peace cannot be achieved.”(Para 181). The Beijing Platform for Action defined two strategic objectives in its critical area of concern on women in power and decision-making:

- To ensure women's equal access to and full participation in power structures and decision making;
- To increase women's capacity to participate in decision-making and leadership.
- The recommended by the Beijing Platform for Action for the implementation of the first strategic objective:
 - To achieve gender-balanced composition in governmental bodies and committees, as well as in public administration and in judiciary, through setting specific targets and, if necessary, establishing a positive action policy;
 - To integrate women into elective positions in political parties; to promote and protect women's political rights; and
 - To reconcile work and family responsibilities for both men and women.

Taking into account the importance of increasing women's participation in positions of power and decision-making, the General Assembly, at its fifty-eighth session in 2003, adopted resolution 58/142 on women and political participation which urged Governments, the UN system, NGOs and other actors to develop a comprehensive set of policies and programs to increase women's participation in decision-making, including in conflict resolution and peace processes, by addressing the existing obstacles women are facing in their struggle for participation. The resolution also addressed the importance of supporting and generating political will, serious commitment to the promotion of the advancement of women and the goals of gender equality through the organization of awareness raising campaigns. The resolution requested the Secretary-General to include information on the political participation of women in his report to the fiftieth session of the Commission in 2006, when the Commission will consider the theme on equal participation of women and men in decision-making processes at all levels (Paul Minoletti, *Women's Participation in the Subnational Governance of Myanmar*, 2014).

CHAPTER 3

MYANMAR OVERVIEW OF WOMEN PARTICIPATION

3.1 Gender Norms

In Myanmar, gender inequality is not always recognized as an issue of concern, with a persistent narrative around the ‘empowered Bamar women’ reinforced by references to Daw Aung Sang Suu Kyi as the female de-facto leader of the country (The Gender Equality Network Yangon, 2015). From the grassroots to business leaders, male stakeholders deny the existence of gender inequalities by referring to Daw Suu’s leading role (International Alert across Myanmar during 2017 – 2019). However, Myanmar is very much shaped by strong gender and age hierarchies, intersecting with ethnic, religious and socioeconomic factors (Asian Development Bank, 2016). There are strict expectations of which behaviours are deemed acceptable for women which contrast what is expected of men, starting from childhood into adulthood. For example, young girls tend to be socialised with an emphasis on obedience and following rules and elders, showing respect, being kind, not causing problems – whereas, in the raising of boys, more emphasis is placed on courage, intrepid behaviour, exploring and leadership (UNICEF, 2016).

Gender plays a significant role in the division of labour in Myanmar. Culturally, women are homemakers while men are decision-makers. A tradition which is not limited to the private sphere. Even the constitution perpetuates this tradition and cultural understanding by referring to women as mothers and legitimizing gendered division of labour in civil service appointments. Despite the government’s official position that women do not face any barriers for equal enjoyment of rights, reality reveals otherwise. Socialized and institutionalized gendered traditions have manifested into today’s economic, social, and structural barriers for females (Murage, The Contribution of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in Advancing Women’s Political Participation and Effectiveness, 2017).

According to the 2014 census, more boys than girls drop out of secondary school in 12 of 14 administrative areas (UNDP Integrated Household Living Conditions Assessment). So even though girls in Myanmar, on average nationally, achieve higher rates of school completion and tertiary education, and higher grades, most leadership positions from a class president into the political and economic sectors tend to be more filled by men. These expectations usually emphasise being good, respectful to religion and elders, being charitable. Bearing and raising children are also core gendered expectation of women, with high reproduction rates linked to poverty, lack of information and access exacerbated by traditions. Gendered norms revolve around cultural assumptions of men's superiority rooted in the concept of 'hpon' – a kind of 'masculine power' or honour, which is thought to be unobtainable to women (Myanmar time, 2015). This is partly attributed to traditional, unscientific interpretations of menstruation as 'dirty', relegating women to a secondary status of inferiority to men.

Various traditional practices derive from this which are still practised and continue to discriminate against women, such as denying women access to some parts of holy sites and temples. These hierarchical gender relations have been internalized among "both men and women, making them not only hard to see but also very hard to question" (Pansy Tun Thein). The traditional gender roles and norms limit women's activities and access to power in the household and community. Women in northern Shan and southern Kachin reported having little to no decision-making power in their homes or about their families' future. Traditionally, the women are expected to look after chores within the household (cooking, cleaning, child care) while men would be expected to provide for the family and protect the household/family or ethnic community (INTERSOS, 2014).

3.2 Impact of Gender Norms on Women's Economic Participation

Research has documented that social and cultural norms strongly prejudice women's ability to access resources, technologies, information and training opportunities that are required in order to function in an economically productive and efficient manner (The Gender Equality Network Yangon, 2015). They also limit women's access to networks and decision-making processes that influence the allocation of resources, as well as the utilisation of women's time and household

income. This cycle of inequality is perpetuated through reinforcing messages that have become entrenched in the education system, the way women are portrayed in the media, and in discriminatory laws and policy frameworks CEDAW Shadow Report, July 2014. Myanmar is currently 80 out of 159 countries on the 2016 Gender Inequality Index UNDP, Gender Inequality Index, a position that could be significantly improved.

The report on the Gender Dimensions of the 2014 census, therefore, saw “a need for affirmative action policies to increase women’s visibility in economic spheres in order to enhance their contribution to the economic development of Myanmar.” While women in Myanmar are economically active, this does not automatically guarantee women’s empowerment or equality: social inequalities are often reflected in the workplace. Women are less likely to be in positions of business leadership, management and ownership, making up only 27 per cent of owners and 30 per cent of managers. About t 35% of firms in Myanmar are owned by female entrepreneurs, lower than the average of 47% for East Asia and the Pacific according to the preliminary analysis of the WB’s recent Enterprise Survey(WB, 2014)..

Work and livelihood opportunities for men and women are strongly linked to gendered norms and expectation. The work that is expected of men versus women is framed as being the “hard” work in the public sphere (outside) versus women’s work being considered ‘easy’ and less valued, i.e. “just the domestic work of cooking, cleaning, laundry, childcare, care of the elderly and sick” traditionally limited to the domestic sphere. Gender Equality Network, 2015. This division has been widely internalised, regardless of the fact that women play a common role in Myanmar’s construction industry and on road works/road building, where they appear to be engaged in very physically demanding hard labour. Overall this division links to cultural expectations portraying the male breadwinner as head of the household, and relegating women to ‘dependent’ status with little regard to the volume of work they undertake on the family farm or the funds they contribute to the family budget.

3.3 National Strategic Plan for the Advancement of Women

The key document of Myanmar’s GEWE architecture is the National Strategic Plan for the Advancement of Women (NSPAW), which was adopted by the first quasi-civilian Thein Sein government in 2013 based on extensive consultations with

national WNOs and international actors. This plan is essentially structured around the 12 thematic areas of the BPPFA and aligned with CEDAW. Nationally, the implementation of this plan and national commitments on gender equality is led by the Department for Social Welfare (DSW), particularly the Women's Development Division, housed within the Ministry for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement (MSWRR).

Some civil society voices, like the Gender Equality Network (GEN), have called for a higher state authority on gender, such as a gender adviser at ministerial level or to the offices of the President of the State Counsellor implementation and GEWE architecture is overseen by the Myanmar National Committee for Women's Affairs (MNCWA), which consists of senior-level cross Ministerial representatives and including two WNOs (GEN and Women Organisation Network – WON), a significant advocacy achievement. The MNCWA meets with parliamentarians and representatives from line ministries to discuss gaps and challenges in implementing CEDAW and discuss how best to move forward. There is a vision to set up MNCWAs at all levels, from the state/region level down to district and township levels. There is partial progress on the setting up of this more devolved structure – they can be a promising entry point for the promotion and coordination of GEWE related activities where they have benefitted from targeted donor support and capacity building

The main implementation and coordination structure for the NSPAW are four technical working groups (TWGs – on Mainstreaming, VAWG, Participation (Political and Economic) and Women, Peace and Security). The TWGs are chaired by government ministries and co-chaired by civil society organisations and bring together government, civil society and international actors. The NSPAW architecture is overseen by the Myanmar National Committee for Women's Affairs (MNCWA), which consists of senior level cross Ministerial representatives and including two WNOs (GEN and Women Organisation Network – WON), a significant advocacy achievement. The MNCWA meets with parliamentarians and representatives from line ministries to discuss gaps and challenges in implementing CEDAW and discuss how best to move forward. There is a vision to set up MNCWAs at all levels, from the state/region level down to district and township levels. There is partial progress on the setting up of this more devolved structures – they can be a promising entry point for the promotion and coordination of GEWE related activities where they have

benefitted from targeted donor support and capacity building (thematically on gender, as well as direct support to understand the mandate and act as convener at the state/region level).

3.4 Women's Participation in CBOs, CSOs, NGOs in Myanmar

CBOs, CSOs, NGOs in Myanmar are important stakeholders who have unique social capitals to building the state and social development in Myanmar. They play a vital role for community development and bridging the gaps for the people to access basic education, health care, economic development and natural resources management. The social volunteerism spirit is a fundamental driven factor of CBOs, CSOs, NGOs in Myanmar to carry out social changes in both rural and urban communities (Thura Tun, 2018).

Civil society structures in Myanmar traditionally existed at the local level within religious groups, emerging from Buddhist and Christian-led social welfare activities and focusing on poverty, health, and the daily needs of communities. There are three types of civil society organizations (CSOs) in Myanmar: community-based organizations (CBOs), and local and international nongovernment organizations (NGOs). The CBOs are informal or voluntary associations formed at the village level to perform social and religious functions, including health, education, and social services. Many of them are ethnics and religious-based and providing support for funerals and family or community emergencies. They do not normally have paid staff, and members are typically beneficiaries (Thura Tun, 2018).

Although there are no government or other statistics on these groups, one estimate puts the number of community-based organizations in Myanmar at 214,000 (B. Heidel, 2006) Local NGOs typically originate from cities, townships, or population centers and maintain connections with communities. Moreover, A number of government officials and retired officials founded professional and service organizations that, technically, are not government-organized NGOs but are not entirely independent of the government. These organizations, including the Myanmar Nurse and Midwife Association and Myanmar Health Assistant Association, are well resourced, with high levels of technical skills, have working relationships with international agencies, and a presence in many areas of the country (ADB, Civil Society Briefs, Myanmar, 2015).

3.5 Women's Political Participation in Myanmar

According to the research of Women's Political Participation in Myanmar carried out by The Asia Foundation and Phan Tee Eain in 2017, The 2015 general elections, the number of women parliamentarians increased significantly to a total of 151 elected seats across both national and state/region levels. The number of female representatives in the National Parliament more than doubled from 6.0% to 13.7% of all elected MPs; 23 women parliamentarians entered the upper house and 44 in the lower house. The military appointed only two female MPs to the lower house. When all MPs are considered, which include the appointed military MPs, the number of female MPs declines from 13.7% to 10.5%. At the state/region level, 84 women were elected tripling the number of female elected parliamentarians from 3.8% to 12.7%. Thus far, the military has only appointed two female MPs in the states and regions (one in Yangon Region and one in Shan State), bringing that percentage down to 9.7% when all MPs are considered. Across the 14 states and regions, there are also only four women holding ministerial positions in the current government, with two in Yangon Region and two in Ayeyarwady Region. For the first time, there are two female chief ministers in Kayin State and Tanintharyi Region (Shwe Shwe Sein Latt K. N., 2017).

Myanmar now has more than 90 political parties, but only a handful have concrete policies promoting women's participation or set aside reservations for women candidates. According to a survey of 34 leading political parties carried out by Phan Tee Eain in December 2014, 60% of party members in Myanmar are men and 40% women. The gender imbalance within the Central Executive Committees (CECs) of political parties was striking; 90% of CEC members are male. The percentage of women holding decision-making positions is even lower (6%) in state/region and district level party organization structures. Women held only two of the 33 ministerial positions in President Thein Sein's government. When Daw Mya Mya Ohn Khin was appointed minister of Social Welfare, Relief, and Resettlement in December 2012, she was Myanmar's first female cabinet minister in 60 years. (Daw Ba Maung Chain from Karen State in 1953 was the last.) (Michaels, 2014). The other female minister was Daw Khin San Yi, formerly a deputy minister of the Ministry of National Planning and Economic Development, who was appointed as a minister for the Ministry of Education in February 2014 (Snaing, 2014). Six women were appointed to deputy

ministerial positions: Daw Le Le Thein (Ministry of National Planning and Economic Development); Daw Sandar Khin (Ministry of Culture); Daw Su Su Hlaing (Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement); Dr. Daw Thet Thet Zin (Ministry of Environmental Conservation and Forestry); and, Daw Win Maw Tun (Ministry of Health).

The number of women in senior judiciary positions is also discouraging. None of the seven Supreme Court justices are women, and of the 52 High Court judges in the 14 states and region High Courts, only 17 are women. While the number of women MPs at both national and state/region levels has increased post-2015 elections, the only woman in the cabinet of the new NLD-led government formed in March 2016 is Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. The 14 chief ministers of the states/regions appointed by the President are all NLD members, but only two are women (Shwe Shwe Sein Latt K. N., 2017).

There are a few women township administrators anywhere in Myanmar. Of Myanmar's 16,785 ward and village administrators, only 42 are women (UNDP Myanmar, 2015). None of the country's 330 township administrators are women. Township administrators are the key decision-makers at township level, and are appointed by the GAD, rather than being elected as are most of the state and region MPs and ministers, and all of the ward/village tract administrators. This absence from decision-making positions are striking given that women make up, on average, 38% of GAD staff below 'officer' level in the state and region, township, and ward/village tract administrations (Kyi Pyar Chit Saw and Matthew Arnold, 2015).

3.6 Women's Participation in the Peace Process

The lack of women's voices in the informal peace negotiations are emblematic of the overall 21st Century Panglong Union Peace Process, where women's participation has been limited, although slowly growing to 17% in the last UPC in 2017. While this falls far below the 30% affirmed in the ceasefire, it is a sign of progress. This is important as where women's participation is missing, this undermines the chances for peace global data shows that peace processes in which women are meaningfully involved are more likely to reach an agreement and are more likely to be implemented successfully with women's participation. "When women are included in peace processes there is a 20 per cent increase in the probability of an

agreement lasting at least 2 years, and a 35 per cent increase in the probability of an agreement lasting at least 15 years” (Laurel Stone, 2015)

According to the report from Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies Published on 08 Aug 2019 —View Original, Akanksha Khullar examines the challenges and opportunities to women's inclusion and participation in the peace process currently underway in Myanmar. For years, women in Myanmar have been powerful advocates for comprehensive peace and good governance, calling for reconciliation and democratic transition; demanding legislations that protect women’s rights; and leading civil society initiatives for reform. Yet, as Myanmar chugs forward with its ongoing peace process with the numerous Ethnic Armed Organisations (EAO) operating in the country, women’s meaningful inclusion in this mammoth exercise is yet to become substantial and comprehensive. For instance, women-led and focused organisations have been conducting mass advocacy campaigns to secure women’s representation and involvement in the process by means of a 30 per cent reservation for women at different levels of political dialogue and peace negotiations.

This demand not only arises from the need for affirmative action to facilitate women’s participation in the process but is also in line with the country’s obligation as a signatory to the CEDW. Nonetheless, these demands were neither included in the initial 2011 peace negotiations nor in the landmark peace accord—Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA)—signed between Naypyidaw and eight EAOs in October 2015. In fact, the text of NCA simply calls for the inclusion of a “reasonable number of women representatives in the political dialogue process.” In January 2016, only 2 women served on the 48-member Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee (UPDJC)—the leadership body of the Union Peace Conference (UPC); and women comprised merely 7 per cent of the 700 participants at the UPC when it first convened (Khullar, 2019).

Currently, there are only 4 women among 78 participants within Myanmar’s NCA mechanisms; women comprise only 9 per cent of the Joint Ceasefire Monitoring Committee (JCM) members; and have no representation at the union level. This demonstrates a lack of a gender-equitable approach in Myanmar’s national peace process, where women’s participation is extremely limited not only at the highest

levels but also at the operational levels such as in ceasefire monitoring and substantive peace negotiations (Khullar, 2019).

3.7 Women's Participation in Shan State's Governance Structures

Administratively, Shan State is composed of 55 townships, more than any other region or state. The region with the second-highest number of townships is Yangon with 45, followed by Sagaing (38) and Mandalay (30). Three townships (Narphan, Pangwain and Mongmao), all in the Wa Self-Administered Division, only have village tracts and no (urban) wards. Because of its size, and certainly, for the organisational arrangements of government departments, the area was in the past subdivided for administrative purposes into Shan South (where the State capital Taunggyi is located), Shan North (with Lashio as centre) and Shan East (with Kengtung as centre). Although that subdivision no longer officially exists, still, for many government departments the State level director is seated in Taunggyi, while deputy directors are being stationed in Lashio and Kengtung respectively, and as such forming some sort of an administrative intermediate level (UNDP M. , 2015)..

Shan State's exceptional position relates to its size, being the biggest of all the ethnic States, to its location and its topography. In contrast to the lowlands of central Myanmar, Shan State occupies a hilly plateau, the Shan Plateau, with an average elevation of 1,000m asl, with some mountains rising up to almost 3,000m, dissected by a number of rivers, in particular the Thanlwin (Salween or Namhkong) River, which runs through the State from North to South. The area formed in the past kind of a natural border, or at least buffer zone, between the Anglophone and Francophone spheres of influence. Perhaps more than any other of Myanmar's States and Regions, Shan is known for its specific identity and special status as the first among the predominantly non-Burman States. While its administrative structure follows that of other States and Regions, there are a number of features for which Shan State stands out. It is the only State that has several Self-Administered Areas (four 'Zones' and one 'Division'), which were established by the 2008 Constitution. Shan State has a larger number of districts, townships and towns than any other State or Region in the country. Shan State ranks second for the number of urban wards (after Yangon Region) and only Ayeyarwady and Sagaing have more village tracts (UNDP M. , 2015).

In Shan State Parliament, there are only 7 women out of 96 civilian MPs at the State level. Accordingly, there is no female minister in the cabinet of Shan State Government. Among 7 female MPs of Shan State Parliament, 3 women (Shan State Parliament n.d.) are from Northern Shan State; one from Namatu township, one from Thibaw and one from Theinny township. Likewise, women participation in decision-making processes of EAOs is very low. There are only a few junior officers in all EAOs in Northern Shan State.

The role of women in the decision-making process is strongly linked to social norms in Shan State. According to the report by SHRF & SWAN, the traditional rural Shan society is male-dominated, and women play no role in decision-making at the community level: Men occupy all leading positions in the public sphere, serving as village chiefs and members of village and temple committees. In family life, men are regarded as the heads of the household, as illustrated by an old Shan proverb: “*nang ying ker lii pho, to sat ker lii cao*” (a woman respects her husband; an animal respect its master) (<https://www.burmalink.org/background/burma/ethnic-groups/shan/>, 2014).

3.8 Kachin Women’s Participation in the Institutions

women's level of activity and leadership in Myanmar is higher in the spheres of civil society and community activism than in 'formal politics'. Women in Myanmar generally tend to have strong representation in CBOs, LNGOs, and INGOs working on development issues. This was particularly the case in Kachin State where women typically account for the majority of CBO, LNGO and INGO staff, and also account for a high proportion of senior staff. More importantly, women's opportunities for active participation in decision-making there are highest in NGOs and civil society, lowest in government, and somewhere in between for political parties and church-led social organizations. The Community Development Department of the Kachin Baptist Convention also employs high proportions of women, with approximately two-thirds of its 35 staff members being female. However, women's representation in key decision-making roles is relatively low here, with women accounting for only two of the six key decision-making positions.

Traditionally, the role and status of Kachin women is a housewife and bringing up the children. Women’s participation in politics is very rare and that it is

perhaps due to the circumstance of the unprivileged. Throughout Kachin history, no women have been involved in political activities in Kachin state but recently a few women participate in politics. Some Kachin women have access to higher education: there is no considerable number in the professions, but a small number of these women participate in political affairs. Women have long been restricted to the family and separated from social affairs. Hence many women do not have any interest in this area and gradually lack participating, knowledge and awareness. All the Kachin people accept until today the original idea that participating in political activity is inappropriate and unsuitable for women.

3.9 Gender roles of the Kachin Community

The traditional gender roles and norms limit women's activities and access to power in the household and community. Traditionally, Kachin society is male-dominated, with men holding a leading position in political and religious areas. Today, community leaders and pastors in Kachin community are almost all men. Women are expected to look after the kids, elders and do chores within the household (cooking, cleaning, etc.) while men would be expected to provide for the family and protect the household/family or ethnic community. Many Kachin believe that they value women. However, this is just nominal and in practice their values are attached to their role in the household management and in the kitchen. Women are said, in the proverb, that they are the main pillar or the centre. They are the mothers of the wood which is the biggest one and therefore they are the mothers of the house. This mother of the house is invaluable. This Kachin traditional proverb pictures that women playing an essential role in a family are very important in a society as well.

Another Kachin culture that discriminates women is about sharing the inheritance of the family. In Kachin families, it is customary for the youngest son to inherit the house and lands, and the responsibility to look after his parents, giving the younger son enhanced powers in decision making on social issues. The older son receives a share of each of all portable property and can remain in the village or move away, as they like. Inheritance never goes to the female side of the family. Because the girl is regarded as the saleable property of her parents, being bought with the price becomes the inseparable property of her husband's family. A tradition of, "a girl never belongs to her family she was born in" still exists in present Kachin society.

CHAPTER 4

SURVEY ON WOMEN’S PARTICIPATION IN THE LCA

LASHIO, NORTHERN SHAN STATE

4.1 Overview of Northern Shan State

Myanmar has organized by seven States and seven Regions and six self-Administered Zones. Among these, Shan State is one of the seven States with five Self- Administered Zones. It is largest of the 14 administrative divisions in Myanmar, covering 155, 458 km², almost a quarter of the total country area. It is bordered by China to the north, China and Laos to the east, Thailand and Kayah and Kayin States to the south, and Mandalay and Sagaing Regions to the west. Occupying about a quarter of Myanmar’s total land area. Shan States has divided into three parts, Southern Shan State, Northern Shan State and Eastern Shan State. The three biggest cities, Taunggyi (Shan State’s official capital), Lashio and Kengtung, are capitals of the administrative sub-divisions Shan South, Shan North and Shan East, respectively. Shan State’s population represents a variety of ethnic communities. Beside the Shan, who are the numerically largest population group in Shan State, Kachin, Taang/Palaung, Kokang and Wa are the main population groups in North Shan.

Northern Shan State is geographic sub-region within Shan State, along with eastern and southern Shan State. Northern Shan State borders China’s Yunnan Province, Kachin State, the Sagaing and Mandalay regions, and the southern and eastern regions of Shan State. Northern Shan State covers 60,559km administratively divided into 20 townships, some of which fall within the Self-administered Zones of Pa Laung, Wa and Kokang. In Northern Shan a large part of the population is composed of diverse ethnic groups. While the majority are Shan, other ethnic groups such as Kachin, Palaung, Kokang, Lahu, Danu, Pao Hmong, Lisu and Wa live in this region. The capital of Northern Shan is Lashio.

Lashio is the largest town in Northern Shan State, about 200 kilometres (120 mi) north-east of Mandalay. Lashio is the administrative center of Lashio Township and Lashio District. Lashio Township lines between North latitude 22° 36' and 23° 4' and East longitude 97° 31' and 98° 33'. The boundaries of Lashio Township are east in Kunlung Township and Tangyan Township, west in Hsipaw Township, south in Mungyai, and north in Hsinwi Township. Lashio Township formed by 12 Wards, 75 village Tract and 490 villages. According to the source of General Administration Department 2018, total population is 289091, with male 140200 (48%) and female 148891(52%). The population density of Lashio Township is 76 persons per square kilometre. Total 289091 people living in Lashio Township. 142559 (49%) population are living in urban area and 146532 (51%) population are living in rural area.

In Lashio Township, there are 20 different ethnics group are living. The majority are Shan (30.75%), Kokaint (24.54%), Barma (16.48%), Palaung (8.33%), Kachin (6.1%), and (13.8%0 are other ethnic groups of Manwung (Bamar) Kayar, Kayin, Chin, Mon, Rakhaing, Lahu, Lisu, Wa, Myauzi, Pa O, Danu and Foreigners.

4.2.1 Survey Profile

There are 8 Literature and Culture Associations (Shan, Kachin, Wa, Ta'ang, Lisu, Lahu, Kokant and Myauzi) and 2 Culture Association (Barma and Mungwin (Barma) in Lashio. The objective of forming LCAs are to maintain the literature, cultures, customary practices and their precedents and traditions of nationals. To foster the progressive measure for teaching with respect to ethnics' literature, to maintain cultural heritages, to resolve every social issue through negotiation and coordination, to take continuous measures on the affairs of unity of ethnic people and the unity of all ethnic nationals residing in the Union of Myanmar and to perform the cultural exchange and fellowship program with other ethnic groups.

- 1) The Kachin Literature and Culture Association was formed in 1965, Lashio, Northern Shan state with 5 Advisory Board members and 9 Executive Committee members (president, vice president, secretary, treasurer and members).
- 2) Kokant Literature and Culture Association was formed in 1976, Lashio, Northern Shan state with 5 Chairpersons, 9 committee members (president, vice president, secretary, treasurer and members).

- 3) Lahu Literature and Culture Association was formed in 1989, Lashio District (Lashio, Theinni and Thant Yan), Northern Shan state with 11 committee members (president, vice president, secretary, treasurer and members).
- 4) Lisu Literature and Culture Association was formed in 1970 and officially registered in 2016 in Myanmar with 17 committee members (president, vice president, secretary, treasurer and members).
- 5) Myauzi Literature and Culture Association informally started in 1994, formed 2010 and registered in 2016, Lashio, Northern Shan State with 15 committee members (president, vice president, secretary, treasurer and members).
- 6) Shan Literature and Culture Association was formed 2074 in Lashio, Northern Shan State run with 5 Chairpersons, 15 committee members (president, vice president, secretary, treasurer and members).
- 7) Palaung (Ta'ang) Literature and Culture Association was formed in 1972 and official registered in 2016 in Lashio, Northern Shan State with 15 committee members (president, vice president, secretary, treasurer and members).
- 8) Wa Literature and Culture Association was formed in 10 December 1968 in Pan Wai Region by Captain Than Lwin and U Myo Lwin. In 1971 moved to Hopan-Kunlung-Lashio from Pan Wai. Officially registered in 1990 May 18. The working committee are 15 members (president, vice president, secretary, treasurer and members).
- 9) Barma Culture Association was starting since 2012 and officially formed on 7 July 2016, Lashio, Northern Shan State. The objectives are to give awareness raising about Barma culture collaborating with Education Department and University and enhance and maintain Barma culture, music's and instruments. The working committee are 15 members (president, vice president, secretary, treasurer and members).
- 10) Mungwin (Barma) Culture Association was formed 2016 Lashio, Northern Shan State with the objectives of maintaining the cultures, and traditions of Mungwin nationals. The working committee are 15 members (president, vice president, secretary, treasurer and members).

4.2.2 Background of Kachin Literature and Culture Association

The term Kachin is referred to a distinctive people who are considered as one of the major ethnic groups in Myanmar. The Kachin people live in northern Burma on

the border with China, mainly in Kachin State. There are no reliable statistics on the Kachin population, however, estimates suggest there are around one million. The Kachin are one of the largest Christian minorities with around 10 per cent following Buddhist practices, with some elements of animism.

The term 'Kachin' typically refers to a number of linguistic groups and clans or families that have historically lived in the India- and China-Myanmar border regions. Kachins were first categorized by the British colonialists who governed the country as part of British India from 1886 until independence in 1948, and the term was used later by the post-independence, national governments. In Myanmar, Kachin came to be used as an overarching, unifying identity, while in China and India the term 'Jingpo' is used instead. (Lahtaw 2007). Jinghpaw is the main language used by the Kachin people, and it is commonly used to refer to all Kachin living in Myanmar regardless of their linguistic affiliation (Lintner 1990). Kachins in Myanmar are predominantly Christian, unlike their relatives in neighbouring China, where many are Animists, and in India, where Theravada Buddhism dominates (Sadan 2013). The Kachin language was first written down by a Baptist missionary in 1885 and consequently, religious texts were the first to appear in Kachin (Hanson 1913) (Hedstrom, 2015).

Kachin generally represents all of the Kachin tribes, namely (1) Lhaovo (Maru), (2) Lachid (Lashi), (3) Zaiwa (Atsi), (5) Rawang (Nung), and (6) Jinghpaw. The language among the Kachin tribes are more or less similar for some, and on the other hand, some are quite different from each other. Of the language among the Kachin tribes, Jinghpaw has been widely spoken. In Northern Shan State, The Kachin people are estimated over 200,000 and numerous live in Namkham, Muse, Namhpaka, Kutkai, Kawng Hka, Mungmyit Kodawng, Lashio and along the Burma-China Border in Northern Shan.

Kachin Literature and Culture Association is distinct from other association of literature and culture in a way in which it negotiates and mediates over, marriage affairs, land, inheritance and succession, marriage procession through Kachin customary precedents disputes. It assists both parties to disputes to reach digested settlement over disputes and makes sure either side will put away the enmity between them in future. KLCA in Lashio is made up of (10) different levels of associations

such as township, village and ward. It has many such committees as women affairs, youth, research and entertainment etc. undertaking their own activities. Kachin nationals have the practice to resolve disputes and conflicts at the relevant level of LCA located at their village, ward and township.

The disputes were mostly settled at the village level, involving sometimes also the village elders. Where cases were reported to the LCAs, they were usually dealt with by the social affairs sub-committee as these matters pertained to custom and tradition. They also noted that the specific if any decision would vary from place to place, as the rules were different from village to village. Every household would be invited to participate in the meeting, during which the community would decide on the village rules and regulations, including any amendments, and a new village leader might be elected (by one representative from each household).

Customary rules and regulations exist within Kachin's communities, and these laws are not binding outside of the community. Implementation is done through a bottom-up approach using a participatory decision-making process. For local communities, customary law acts like formal legislative law while remaining accessible and subject to local adaptation and improvement. One of the most significant characteristics of customary law is its flexibility and ability to adapt in accordance with the changing social, economic and cultural circumstances. Furthermore, customary law is deep-rooted in the community and it reflects the historical background, values and needs of the community

The Kachin LCA has the following duties and responsibilities:

- To specifically assume responsibility for customary practices and precedents and traditional inheritance case
- To negotiate and mediate by a responsible committee over disputes of inheritance, succession and rights to an estate when occurred and referred to different levels of nearby LCA located in a village, township and district.
- To consult by elders and emissaries from both sides of asking-family and giving-family on a marriage procession under existing customary practices after the information is sent to a working committee.
- To take action over in accordance with customary rules and regulations, negotiate and reconcile cases.

- To negotiate by a committee over physical violence for a settlement, and if the violence is a severe offence, it will be resolved through coordination with relevant government authorities and departments.
- To consult and resolve minor and sever matters through negotiation and mediation in accordance with customary rules and regulations, and to take disciplinary action on the act of breaching the customary precedents and to document and record the disciplinary action.
- To coordinate with other relevant associations of ethnic groups to resolve a matter and dispute between a Kachin national and a national belonging to another ethnic group.

All members of LCA at each level are pure volunteers, serving the functions on free of charge and in voluntary spirit.

4.3 Survey Design

This study aims to highlight on women’s participation in the decision-making roles by representing constraints and barriers they have encountered during their presence in the Kachin Culture and Literature Association of Lashio and to examine the benefits of women’s participation has on Kachin communities. To achieve the objectives of the study, data is collected from both primary and secondary sources and conducted qualitative and destructive method. The interview questionnaire is used with open type questions to primary sources that are women and men members from the association. Secondary data and information from publications; books, journals, articles, reports and documents are also utilized to complement the study. This study is applied two different methods of data collection; namely 1) key informant interview (KII) and 2) Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with respective respondents.

Study Sample

Pease see the following table for the sampling method. The following approach has been used to select the sample for the interviews.

Table 4.1 Sampling for the survey (Kachin Literature and Culture Association, Lashio)

| No | Position | 2007-2010 | | 2011-2014 | | 2015-2018 | | Total member from 2007-2018 | Total Members available for interview (Formal and Current) | # M & F Participated in the Survey | Sample (%) |
|----|--|-----------|----|-----------|----|-----------|-----|-----------------------------|--|------------------------------------|------------|
| | | M | F | M | F | M | F | | | | |
| 1 | Advisory Board Member | 5 | | 5 | | 5 | | 15 | 11 | 4 | 36% |
| 2 | Excultive Committee Member | 9 | | 9 | | 9 | | 27 | 14 | 8 | 57% |
| 3 | Women Committee (1) | | | | 9 | 1 | 6 | 16 | 11 | 7 | 64% |
| 4 | Women Committee (2) | | | | | 1 | 6 | 7 | 7 | 4 | 57% |
| 5 | Women Committee (3) | | | | | 1 | 6 | 7 | 7 | 3 | 43% |
| 6 | Youth Committee | 5 | 4 | 5 | 4 | 6 | 3 | 27 | 17 | 6 | 35% |
| 7 | Entertainment Committee | 5 | 4 | 5 | 4 | 5 | 4 | 27 | 15 | 4 | 27% |
| 8 | Communication Committee | 3 | | 3 | | 3 | | 9 | 3 | 0 | 0% |
| 9 | Literature Committee | 5 | 4 | 5 | 4 | 5 | 4 | 27 | 13 | 3 | 23% |
| 10 | Archival Research Committe | 7 | 2 | 7 | 2 | 7 | 2 | 27 | 12 | 2 | 17% |
| 11 | Women Committee at 10 Wards/Villages level | | | | | | 150 | 150 | 150 | 16 | 11% |
| | Total | 39 | 14 | 39 | 23 | 43 | 181 | 339 | 260 | 57 | 22% |

In the first stage, the total survey participants are Male 22, Female 35- total 57. The sample fulfils 22% of the total members available for the interview. The available members were selected from the holding position of 3 service terms from 2007-2018. A total of 260 members are available for the interview, and 57 participants (22%) has been selected to take part in the interviews.

In the second stage, based on the holding position from the list 1-11, at least 10 % of the interviewees from each position were selected to include in the sample. For example, 4 out of 11 members (36%) of the sample were selected for the interviews for the holding position of Advisory Board member who served between 2007-2018. The details can be seen in the following table.

4.5 Survey Results

The following section is presented in the overview of the respondent's profile to understand the background of individual members, and to analyze the participation of women in the association from their perspectives. In addition, the section will provide challenges among female to participate in the association, while highlight the recommendations to overcome those challenges.

1 Respondent's Age Group

Based on the constitution, the legal age to join the Association is 18 years old. A total of 57 members (22 males, 35 female) participated in the research. Age group are divided as the following table. Majority of respondents (91.23 per cent) are from age between 25-55 years old, and only 8.77 per cent are aged above 66 years old. The findings show over 70 per cent of women are under 55 years old and they have the potential to play a great role in the present role and for the future as well.

Table 4.2 Respondent's Age Group

| Age group (n=57) | Male | Female | Total % |
|------------------|-----------|-----------|---------|
| 25-35 years | 3 | 6 | 15.79 |
| 36-45 years | 6 | 10 | 28.07 |
| 46-55 years | 7 | 11 | 31.58 |
| 56-65 years | 4 | 5 | 15.79 |
| 66-75 years | 2 | 3 | 8.77 |
| Total | 22 | 35 | 100 |

Source: Own Survey (August 2019)

2 Respondent's Marital Status

The following table shows the marital status of the respondents with 17.54 per cent are single, 64.91 per cent are married, and 17.54 per cent are widow or widower. There are no members with divorce status. In fact, over 50 per cent of the female respondents are married therefore it is assumed that they will have more confidence in dealing with social issues such as gender-based violence, women issues, youth and health, and also youth and child development as well.

Table 4.3 Respondent's Marital Status

| Marital Status (n=57) | Male | Female | Total % |
|-----------------------|-----------|-----------|---------|
| Single | 4 | 6 | 17.54 |
| Married | 14 | 23 | 64.91 |
| Divorce | 0 | 0 | 0.00 |
| Widow/ widower | 4 | 6 | 17.54 |
| Total | 22 | 35 | 100 |

Source: Own Survey (August 2019)

3 Respondent’s Level of Education

The respondents are asked for their education level. A total of 10.53 percent has completed middle school 24.56 percent high school, 10.53 percent University, 52.63 percent Graduate Degree and only 1.75 percent have completed the master’s degree. In fact, women have similar education background compare to men. Even though it is hard to assume an educated people will have more confidence than others to lead in the association, but for sure that education plays a crucial role in making smart decision.

Table 4.4 Respondent’s Level of Education

| Education Status (n=57) | Male | Female | Total % |
|-------------------------|------|--------|---------|
| Middle School | 10 | 6 | 10.53 |
| High School | 3 | 11 | 24.56 |
| University | 2 | 4 | 10.53 |
| Graduate Degree | 16 | 14 | 52.63 |
| Master Degree | 1 | 0 | 1.75 |
| Total | 22 | 35 | 100 |

Source: Own Survey (August 2019)

4 Respondent’s Occupational Status

Respondents’ occupational status is highlighted in the following table. Analyzing the occupational status of the respondents, there is a wide range of professions in the association, ranging from Civil Service, Teacher, Lawyer, Religious Leader to the business owner, housewife and others. Among them, 14.04 per cent are housewife-which shows participation from all occupation in the Association. This can also have indicated that regardless of occupation status, women can work together and utilizing different resources to maximize the outcome and results of the activities. Since the Association has the responsibility for the settlement of divorce or other social issues among the communities, it is important to have members from diverse background and occupational status in order to have a fair settlement.

Table 4.5 Respondent’s Occupational Status

| Occupation (n=57) | Male | Female | Total % |
|-------------------|------|--------|---------|
| Business | 8 | 5 | 22.81 |
| Civil Service | 0 | 4 | 7.02 |
| Teacher | 0 | 2 | 3.51 |
| Retired | 3 | 1 | 7.02 |
| Grocery | 4 | 4 | 14.04 |
| Housewife | 0 | 8 | 14.04 |
| Vendor | 0 | 5 | 8.77 |
| NGO/CSO staff | 2 | 3 | 8.77 |
| Lawyer | 2 | 2 | 7.02 |
| Religious leader | 3 | 1 | 7.02 |
| Total | 22 | 35 | 100 |

Source: Own Survey (August 2019)

5 Position of EC member at the Kachin Culture and Literature Association (Lashio)

The study also highlighted the role of women in the Association. The following table shows that most of the positions are filled by male where most decision making is made. Even though the constitution has a mandate to have 30% of women participation in the Association, unfortunately, no female has been nominated for the EC members. However, women are taking roles in the sub-working committee in the facilitation roles to deal with the community directly.

Table 4.6 Position of EC Committee at the Kachin CLA

| Position | Male | Female | Total |
|--------------------|------|--------|-------|
| Advisory Board | 5 | 0 | 5 |
| Chairman | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Vice Chairman | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Secretary | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Vice Secretary (1) | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Vice Secretary (2) | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Treasurer | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Members | 3 | 0 | 3 |
| Total | 14 | 0 | 14 |

Source: Own Survey (August 2019)

6 Position of Women Committee at the Kachin CLA

Even though lack of women participation in the decision-making role, women are also taking important roles in the women committee of the main level as the facilitation roles to deal with the community directly. In fact, women roles are highly appreciated by the communities for their role as mediator, transformer, peacemaker, and educator while improving the relationship between the Kachin Culture and Literature Association (KCLA) and the communities in Lashio. The following table shows that female participation is 83 per cent of total position in the sub-committee. This allows female to engage more with the community, deal with the situation, solving the problems.

Table 4.7 Position of Women Committee at the Kachin CLA

| Position | Male | Female | Total | Total % |
|--------------------|------|--------|-------|---------|
| Advisory Board | | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Chairman | | 1 | 1 | 4.55 |
| Vice Chairman | | 3 | 3 | 13.64 |
| Secretary | | 2 | 2 | 9.09 |
| Vice Secretary (1) | | 1 | 1 | 4.55 |
| Vice Secretary (2) | | | 0 | 0.00 |
| Treasurer | | 3 | 3 | 13.64 |
| Member | 3 | 9 | 12 | 54.55 |
| Total | 3 | 19 | 22 | 100 |

Source: Own Survey (August 2019)

7 The perceive of women participation in the LCA

All respondents were asked on how people perceive – participation of women in the LCA. In order to get a diverse view of responses, male respondents were also asked the question. Most agreed that Advisory Board Member and EC are formed under the levels of the township, and women committee is formed in the village and ward level. Majority members of Advisory Board Member and EC are men, and they have been in leading positions for many decades.

Most female respondents agreed that it is a custom to elect men by nominating a team comprised of men only. However, they underscored the importance of women's decision-making-role in the committee or not aware of 30 per cent quota for women participation in the executive committee. Maybe, men themselves are not aware of gender knowledge that 30 per cent of women participation must be ensured in a process of the Association. Some men have gender knowledge that doesn't always translate into practical actions, and some cannot yet accept the truth of this gender knowledge in their heart.

Another possible reason for women not to give time in the associations might be the nature of voluntariness in serving in the association with no incentive or personal benefits. However, all members and leaderships of Kachin women affairs that have been formed at the township, village and ward levels since 2011, are women, and most agreed that they have confidence and ready to represent in the leading position.

Respondents agreed that women are more likely to attend community level meetings and training, as the men are reported to be less interested. Meanwhile, male respondents argued that women are not in the executive committees because of their (lack of) interest – this can serve as an illustration of how social norms are so deeply entrenched that they are not visible to gender blind perspectives. This is due to social norms that don't recognise gendered barriers to women's leadership and excuse it as their personal choice rather than dismantling the underlying unequal structures. This "interest" is not individual but socially created in a gendered way – Women are raised to attend the action / work-focused social activities, while men are raised to be 'interested' in decision making – i.e. they are raised to feel entitled to make decisions, while the women are conditioned to follow.

Women's satisfaction on Current Status

Further, as they are coming from different career background when asking about the satisfaction of what they have done in last year, "sharing knowledge on culture and literature" and "taking care of social issues" has the most respondents, while the rest women expressed their satisfaction on other achievements such as learning achievements, taking part in social activities and taking care of social issues

such as divorce settlement, family issues, etc. The finding shows that diverse background has a different interest as taking part in the association.

Table 4.8 Women’s participation in current status

| Position (n-35) | Female | Total % |
|---|--------|---------|
| Learning and training achievements | 4 | 11.43 |
| Sharing knowledge on culture and literature | 7 | 20.00 |
| Gender awareness in the community | 6 | 17.14 |
| Taking GBV issues | 5 | 14.29 |
| Taking care of social issues | 7 | 20.00 |
| Taking part in social activities | 6 | 17.14 |
| Total | 35 | 100 |

Source: Own Survey (August 2019)

One woman shared that,

“All members of Kachin Literature and Culture Association are men. There was not a women affairs group. And activities of the LCA Association were not allowed by former (military) regime to freely and openly conduct. No mistake was forgiven or relaxed. Super caution and care needed to take for conducting an activity. We were, then, admitted to the group for the purpose of greeting VIP or senior officials hospitably in traditional costumes and assisting young people design and arrange their Kachin costumes to be worn when entertaining with traditional dance before the VIP or senior authorities. I was the only woman in the group and was not included in the working committee level.

In summary, most respondents agreed that women should take more leadership position instead of ushering VIP or guest during events and occasions. Women already have a good relationship with their community as well as influence on the community to some extent.

8 Constraining Factors for women to become leader in the LCA

Female participants were asked on the main constraints for women to become a leader in the LCA. A total of 34.29 per cent expressed that there are no opportunities

for women in the leading position, even though there is a 30 per cent quota system in the constitution to allow women participation in the Association, while 28.57 per cent said the cultural barriers for women to participate in the leading roles. In addition, 22.86 per cent mentioned on the challenges in family issues, while 14.29 per cent on the lack of confidence to work in the leading position.

There are obstacles and challenges facing women from participating in the committee. During the interview, other challenges are also expressed such as child caring, their fear and less of interest, their full of schedule, their susceptibility to predominant patriarchy and tendency to be subjected by decision made by men. One of the female respondents said that from her experiences, women are usually denied from being elected in every election.

One woman shared,

“I believe they didn’t include women into the group as they (men) had no trust in women or didn’t think of us high. As a Kachin proverb says “Num chyaw chyaw gaw Hka” which literally means women interrupt very often and are in dept. To paraphrase it in Burmese, we have no work done when we have women interrupting and talking too much. Therefore, women are only positioned in such supporting roles as cooking, ushering and greeting, to achieve a plan. “

Table 4.9 Constraining Factors for women to become leader in the LCA

| Position (n=35) | Female | Total % |
|--|--------|---------|
| Cultural barriers of women candidates | 10 | 28.57 |
| Lack of confidence to work in the leading position | 5 | 14.29 |
| Challenges in family issues and do not have time | 8 | 22.86 |
| No opportunities for women in the leading position | 12 | 34.29 |
| Total | 35 | 100 |

Source: Own Survey (August 2019)

Another woman shared,

“I get nothing from the group in terms of support. But I have volunteered in the group with the aim of serving my ethnic people by contributing my knowledge and skills in such tasks as costuming traditional clothing, cooking

traditional foods, packing traditional meals etc. I experienced many difficulties and impediments throughout my service. In times, I have to bear the costs for the group's activities since no funds were provided by the group. I have to give times. For example, when there was a day a VIP's trip or a trip of senior authorities heading to us, I had to get up early morning and go to the designated place, ahead of senior people's arrival, to greet them. Despite the difficulties, I find it satisfied to have a chance for serving my people in this manner. Later these years, I can see many women groups formed to work on specific issues. I am pleased to see them. "

9 The improvement for women participation at the leading role in LCA

All the respondents were asked questions on how to improve women participation at the leading role in LCA. Since women are less accepted than men in leadership positions, while men are considered as rightful leaders and women are natural followers. Due to the rooted cultural norms and stereotypes towards women leadership, it is necessary to continue effort to improve women participation in the leading role.

A total of 60 per cent of the respondents agreed that there need policy changes in the Association to include meaningful participation of women in the leading role. A total of 42.86 per cent agreed that women should improve capacity and leadership ability to take the leading roles. Since women's personal strength of being delight, persistent and tolerant with mother-nature capacity, women has more experiences and knowledge to deal with many issues which would be advantages for them to raise and convince leadership role in the future. The rest also expressed to reinforce respect and trust from the society, and reduce extra barriers for women to taking leadership roles in the future.

Table 4.10 Improvement for women participation in the leading role

| Position (n=57) | Female | Total % |
|--|---------------|----------------|
| Reinforced respect and trust from the society | 13 | 37.14 |
| Policy changes to include more women participation | 21 | 60.00 |
| Reduce extra barriers for women to taking leadership roles | 8 | 22.86 |
| Improve women capacity and leadership ability | 15 | 42.86 |

| | | | |
|--|-------|----|-----|
| | Total | 57 | 100 |
|--|-------|----|-----|

Source: Own Survey (August 2019)

One woman shared,

“If women hold positions in the working committee, such women issues as gender based violence can be addressed more effectively because women can impartially think and decide over the case. Then literature and culture association will earn trust from the parties to the conflict, get more reports on the issues and have higher role in conflict resolution.”

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

5.1 Findings

The Study aims to highlight women's participation in the leadership position by representing constraints and supporting factors they have encountered during their present in the association, and how they suggested for the improvement of women participation in the Kachin Culture and Literature Association of Lashio. This study is based on interviews with a total of the fifty-seven member of the association, 22 males and 35 females.

Most female respondents agreed that it is a custom to elect men by nominating a team comprised of men only. However, they underscored the importance of women's decision-making-role in the committee or not aware of 30 per cent quota for women participation in the executive committee. Another possible reason for women not to give time in the associations might be the nature of voluntariness in serving in the association with no incentive or personal benefits. However, all members and leaderships of Kachin women affairs that have been formed at the township, village and ward levels since 2011, are women, and most agreed that they have confident and ready to represent in the leading position.

In summary, most respondents agreed that women should take more leadership position instead of ushering VIP or guest during events and occasions. Women already have a good relationship with their community as well as influence on the community to some extent. When asked about the satisfaction of what they have done in last year, "sharing knowledge on culture and literature" and "taking care of social issues" has the most respondents, while the rest women expressed their satisfaction on other achievements such as learning achievements, taking part in social activities, and taking care of social issues such as divorce the settlement, family issues, etc. The finding shows that diverse background has different interest as taking part in the association.

There are obstacles and challenges facing women from participating in the committee. During the interview, other challenges are also expressed such as child caring, their fear and less of interest, they are full of schedule, their susceptibility to predominant patriarchy and tendency to be subjected by decision made by men. One of the male respondents said that from his experiences, women are usually denied from being elected in some election for the position of the associations.

In Myanmar, due to the traditional norms and stereotypes towards women leadership, women are less accepted than men in leadership positions. However, in this study most women agreed that they are confident and ready to represent in the leading roles, referring to improve women capacity and leadership ability, policy changes to have more women participation, reinforcing respect and trust from the society, and reduce extra barriers for women as key factors for their confidence. In fact, most male respondents agreed that anticipation of competent and qualified women with strong desire are welcome in the leadership position. They should be also empowered to increase their capacity. It is acceptable to have 30 or 20 or 10 percentage of women participation in the betterment and improvement of the team. If the team committee includes women, they should follow the head or chairman position. For example, if the Chairperson of the team is man, a woman should be vice-chairperson; if there are 3 secretaries, one out of them should be women and ensuring women participation through a quota system in the coming times. A plan has been in place to draw a policy on Kachin literature and culture in Lashio. In drawing the policy, specific provisions for women rights should be set out, and women themselves should also involve in the planning process. Only then, fairness can be achieved.

5.2 Suggestions

The growing of women representation around the world suggests that women have made an important gain in the political, and social sphere, but the roles of female in taking leadership roles are still limited. Similarly, women from the Kachin Culture and Literature Association (Lashio) are also concerned about women's participation in the leading role, while they all agreed that they have confidence and ready to represent the leading position. However, the nature of male dominate in the Association has been over the decades, and there need changes to make in order for women to take the leading role.

The association should be empowered as a whole by raising women's legal awareness and management knowledge and skills. Previously, there was no space for women to participate in making decision. However, later this year, men have shown recognition to women by asking for suggestion and advice from women. Before, the women working committee comprised elders but nowadays educated middle-aged people compose the committee. Therefore, it was hoped that women will be allowed space by these educated middle-aged people for participation. Gradually, the majority of men committee members have come to understand and accept the importance of women's role in the group and changes to be made in the next term. Still, what might be a challenge is the fact that elders must be convinced to change their mindset to accept changes, and interested, capable and qualified women should be carefully selected.

Women participation has been relatively getting higher. It doesn't mean they have a role in the decision-making process of women working committee. If women's access to full participation is relaxed, I believe, domestic violence, divorce, sexual and gender-based violence can be effectively eliminated. Because women can sympathize the grief or suffering faced by women, and open discussion can be freely held with the victims/survivors. I also think women can thoroughly undertake the group's activities as they have more or less the same experience in making thorough arrangement in their homes. I have trust that women participation can hasten the performance of the activities.

Women in today's Kachin Society are usually stuck in traffic of culture. Critically thinking, Culture is defined as "a way of life" that beautifies Kachin

society. However, to this day, it is found that women are still oppressed in culture. That means women are not yet in culture leader role in society. Kachin society is still male-dominated and women in it have less opportunity for leadership in society. As women are created equal to men, Kachin society needs to install more women leaders in Kachin culture area.

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Appendix A: Questions Guideline for Key Informant Interview

(KII-Male)

Date: ----- Place of Interview: -----

Duration: -----

Personal information:

| Sr. | Description | |
|-----|---|--|
| 1 | Name | |
| 2 | Age | |
| | Marital Status | |
| 3 | Education | |
| 5 | Current Position | |
| 6 | Years of experience in current position | |

1. How do you become this position? What are the main factors you to become it? How?
2. Describe your current role and responsibilities.
3. How do you perceive women participation in the LCA?
4. What are the current situations of women participation in the LCA?
5. What are the strengths of women to participate in the LCA?
6. What are the constraining factors and facilitating factors for women to become a leader?
7. What is the result of the effectiveness of women participation in the Association?
8. In your opinion, can women leaders able to influence Association agenda? In what ways and how?
9. Do you think women participation in decision-making roles in the Association benefit/contribute to gender equality? Why? Why not? How?
10. Does LCA have on gender equality like quota system or others?
11. What do you think about 30percent women participation in the Associations?
12. Do you want to see more women participation in the decision-making roles?

13. What should have done for the improvement of women participation in the LCA?

Appendix B: Questions Guideline for Key Informant Interview

(KII- Female)

Date: ----- Place of Interview: -----

Duration: -----

Personal information:

| Sr. | Description | |
|------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| 1 | Name | |
| 2 | Age | |
| 3 | Marital Status | |
| 4 | Education | |
| 5 | Occupation | |
| 6 | Position in LCA | |
| 7 | Years of experience in the position | |

Obstacles and Supporting Factors:

1. How do you become this position? What are the main factors you to become it?
2. Do you receive any support from your family to become this position? From whom? How?
3. How do you manage your time between family and Association?
4. For a woman, what are the main constraints and barriers to participate in the association? How did you overcome all the barriers?
5. What are the challenges you have for participating in the Association?
6. Do you receive any support to improve your role in your position?

Participation in the Association:

7. Do you have confidence enough to take this position? Why? Why not?
8. Do you feel satisfied on your current roles? Why? Why not?
9. Do you feel satisfied with what you have done last year? Why? Why not?
10. What are people attitudes towards you as a woman representative in the Association? How do you deal with it?

11. Does the LCA have any policy on gender equality like quota system or others?
Please describe?

Participation in Policy Development:

12. How do you participate in the LCA's policy changes?
13. As a woman representative, which policy area you are the most interested to change/participate?

Obstacles and Support from men:

14. Is there any other support you have received from men colleagues?
15. What type of support did you receive from your male colleagues? How?
16. Have your male colleagues discouraged to perform your capacity in the work?

Benefits of Women Participation:

17. How do you contribute the improvement of women participation in the LCA?
18. Do you think that you can contribute to the benefits of quality of women life for your community? How?
19. What will be the benefits for the Kachin community by women participation in LCA?
20. Do you believe that there will be contribution to gender equality by participation as a woman in the decision-making role? Why? Why not? How?
21. What should be done for the increase of women participation in the decision-making role in the LCA?

Appendix C: Questions Guideline for Focus Group Discussion

(FGD-Male and Female)

FGD No. :

Date :

Time :

Location :

Male _____ Female_____

Facilitator :

Note Taker :

1. Do men and women equally be able to perform at leading roles in the LCA?
How do you see about it?
2. What is the effectiveness or outcomes of women participation in the LCA?
3. How do you perceive women participation in the LCA?
4. What are the supporting factors and opportunities for women to participate in the decision-making role?
5. What are the obstacles for women to participate in the decision-making role?
6. Do you want to see more women Leader in the Association? Why? Why not?
7. Do you think women participation in decision-making roles in the Association will benefit/contribute to gender equality? Why? Why not? How?

