

The History and Development of Monastic Education

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Abstract

The traditional Myanmar Monastic Education was based on Pāli Language and Literature. At the early beginning years, the students were taught Pāli primer. Basically, Pāli is the first medium for Myanmar monastic Education at Monasteries; almost all the students were many families with Pāli Literature especially on Buddhist culture and Teaching. The early Myanmar society has own education system and status. The education provided in Monasteries could be called monastic education. This tradition developed the monastic in Myanmar society.

Keywords: Monastic Education, Pāli Language

1. Introduction

The history of Myanmar education can be said to have derived from the monastic education. As Myanmar society is based on religious morality, education becomes the vital role. Therefore, the early Myanmar society has own education system and status. Monasteries at everywhere people live nearby are not only shelters for the monks but also place to teach Buddhist scriptures. The education provided in monasteries could be called monastic education. The monastic education is mainly concentrated on the study of sacred scriptures of the Buddhists. However the Myanmar Buddhist monks are concerning with their laities, so they always concentrate on the laities' welfare and social life. This makes the monks and monasteries become the school and teachers for the community. The monks take responsibilities to educate their laities' children. This tradition developed the monastic education in Myanmar society.

2. The History of Monastic Education in Myanmar

It is impossible to ascertain when monastic education began in Myanmar. It is an old education system with a very long history. During the reigns of Myanmar kings, since the introduction of Buddhism in Myanmar, monastic schools were the only centres of learning. In those days, the boys who had reached the age of six or seven had to stay in monasteries for at least two or three years. Education under the Myanmar monarchical rule was carried on almost entirely by the Buddhist monks. As the kings were the supporters of Buddhism, the monks in those days were influential. What was taught in the monasteries were: (1) Reading and writing Myanmar, (2) Arithmetic, (3) Buddhist moral lessons.[†] The lessons were meant not only to teach the pupils to be able to read and write, but also to nurture them to be well-behaved. Everybody including kings and ministers, generals and soldiers, authors and poets, astronomers and astrologers, and shamans and herbalists, had to study at monastic schools. Monastic schools produced monks well-versed in the three *Pitakas*. They were sent by the successive kings to all over the country for teaching the people, resulting in the development of education in early Myanmar. The history of Myanmar education can be said to derive from the monastic education. Thus the brief account of the history of monastic education in Myanmar will be presented.

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†. In this discourse, the Buddha preached 38 Blessings, which are guides to the benefit of present and after lives. The Sacred Books of the East, Vol.X, part II, 42-43.

Monastic education during the reign of ancient Myanmar Monarchies

Buddhism played a key role in the history of monastic education during the reign of the ancient Myanmar kings. In fact, Buddhism was like a flaming torch in the political, economic, social and educational activities of Myanmar people. Undoubtedly, Myanmar literature, language, culture and traditions have developed on the basis of Buddhist ways of life. In developing religion and Buddha's teachings as well as Buddhist culture, monasteries became the community learning centers or education centers where the religious belief was shared and propagated. The history of Myanmar education can be said to have derived from the monastic education.

2.1 Bagan Period (1044-1297)

In the history of Myanmar, Bagan period is very important. When Bagan was established, Buddha's doctrine and Buddhist literature was in the chief role. The Buddha's doctrine was very beneficial for Bagan people to be polite citizens and to have tamed mind. In other words, the culture of Myanmar, which is based Buddhism could be established.

In the Bagan period, which Buddha's *Sāsana* was bright like this, it is natural that everybody understood Buddhism rightly. For understanding, the work which Buddhist doctrines are learnt absolutely appears. Thus, not only the learning of *Pariyatti* is for the religion but also it is great momentum to reach as a path of education of Bagan period.

2.2 Pinya Period (1313-1364)

Following the death of King *Narathihapate* in 1287, the Bagan kingdom disintegrated. The Shan Myanmar kings succeeded in reuniting the country. Intellectuals and craftsmen came to Pinya, Sagaing and Innwa.*

The people of Pinya era continued to embrace the Theravada Buddhism. But there arose many sects in Buddhism such as Mahāyāna sect, Theravāda sect, Ceylon Theravāda Sect, Taw Kyaung sect (forest dweller) and Pwe Kyaung (or) a deviant sect of Buddhism etc.

2.3 Innwa Period (1364-1555)

Monastic education, which was introduced to public in Bagan era, had gradually developed and it accelerated in Innwa era. Monastic education became more and more popular and it could be compared with the brilliant light of a flaming torch. Monasteries proliferated both in urban and rural areas.

2.4 Taungoo Period (1510-1752)

Haṃsāvātī (Bago) became the royal seat from King *Tabinshwehti's* reign onwards, and became Myanmar's administrative, political and economic centre as well as the centre of culture and education. The learned monks from Innwa, Taungoo, etc. moved to Haṃsāvātī, where education gradually flourished.

2.5 Nyaung Yan Period (1581-1597)

During the reign of King *Nyaung Yan*, large monasteries were built in Innwa, where monastic education was highly supported. Hence, many learned persons, skilled in both religious and secular matters, appeared during this period.

The foundation course for monastic education center can be found in the biography of Venerable *Shin Mahā Sīlavamōsa*.

* Ibid, 66.

The syllabuses for this course are: (1) Myanmar Primer (33 consonants and vowels), (2) *MañgalaSutta*, (3) Nmekara, (4) Ratanashwekhyint, (5) The Eight kinds of conquerors over enemies, (6) *Paritta*, (7) The ten *Jātakas* and (8) The 550 *Nipātas*.

2.6 Konbaung Period(1752-1885)

The long-lasting success of the monastic education continued to create a good image in KonBaung era. However, the role of those monastic education centers started to decline gradually in the earlier period under the rule of the British colonists. As a result of the British rule, the Buddha *Sāsana* started to gradually fade away. Before 1852, there was no village in our country that did not have a monastery. Consequently, these were at least one or many monasteries in large villages and large cities. Many monasteries existed as strongholds of Buddhism in many ancient capitals of Myanmar such as Bago, Pyay, Taungoo, Amarapura, Innwa and Shwe Bo etc. The large monasteries in Mandalay, the last capital of Myanmar Kings, must have performed the duties of the Buddha universities where Buddhist monks recited the Pāli texts, learning them by heart.

2.7 Colonial Period (1885-1948)

The British colonists had started to wage aggressive wars against Myanmar since 1824. They waged the first war in 1824, the second war in 1852 and the third war in 1885 respectively. During a relatively long period of 61 years from 1824 to 1885, the activities of missionaries gradually accelerated. In reality, the western (modern) education system was first introduced to Myanmar before 1824 where first Anglo-Burma war broke out. Numerous modernization activities in education sector were accomplished through the hard work and enthusiasm of the missions. Specific tasks such as Publication of books in Myanmar language, printing of newspaper by ABM press, and production of prescribed text books for Basic Education schools etc. were seen as the first step of educational reform that took place in the initial stage of modernization.

2.8 The Japanese occupation (1942-1945) and during the post war period(1945-1948)

The education sector of Myanmar experienced a great change as a result of a change in political conditions. During the Japanese occupation, Myanmar experienced the worst conditions in all sectors such as *Sāsana*, religion and socio-economic sectors etc.

When the Government of New Burma was formed under the Japanese Occupation, U Ba Win became the Minister for Education. In his speech broadcast on 25 November 1942, he said that there would be two types of schools, one directing towards primary to higher education and the other directing towards technical and vocational training. He went on to state his intention that students should be able to choose either type of schools, and should be able to earn a living after completing the higher standard and should be able to enter a university for further education.

In practice, however, apart from a few crafts, with regard to technology, medical science, performing arts, etc. education was in a state of despair.

A Committee for developing the new curriculum was formed. The curriculum for general education prescribed by the Education Department was as follows:

Primary Schools (First to Fourth Standard)	Middle Schools (Fifth to Seventh Standard)	High Schools (Eighth to Tenth Standard)
Myanmar Language Mathematics History Social Science General Science	Myanmar Language Mathematics Algebra and Geometry Geography History Social Relations General Science	Same subjects as in the Middle Schools

2.9 After independence period (1948-1962)

After the Colonial and Fascist Periods, Myanmar regained independence on 4th January 1948. The government declared its educational policy in the same year. The main features:

- (1) Education would be controlled by the government and would be one trail temporality.
- (2) Grants-in-aid system would be abolished and schools would be turned into State schools.
- (3) The educational plan for compulsory primary education would be introduced.
- (4) Schools would be regarded.
- (5) Technical and vocational education would be introduced.
- (6) The Myanmar language would be used as the medium of instruction.

3. The Development of Monastic Education in Myanmar

After independence, since Myanmar was restored to its own people and its own state, our national language, religion, literature, art and culture all got back their places which they had lost during the Colonial period and the Fascist regime. Together with religion, its concomitant monastic schools sprouted again, being encouraged by its propagations. Thus, monastic education, which once used to shine like the moon or the sun, was revived. However, from the practical point of view which considers the demands of the time and the demands of the country, the monastic education should have focused the religious matters only, with primary emphasis on the learning of Buddhist literature. On the other hand, monasteries cannot neglect modern education or worldly education either. The monastic leaders of that tie had to face this dilemma. The responsibility for primary education was taken by the monasteries from all over the country. The monks deservedly received the support of the government, including the contribution of texts and finances. Thus, the monasteries did not discard the traditional way of monastic instruction, and at the same time, involved themselves in mass education in accordance with the instructions laid down in the State Education Policy. They were no longer just ordinary centers of monastic learning but also centre for disseminating knowledge according to modern curricula.

In the ancient times, monastic education prevailed as a pillar of Myanmar education. But, when the country fell into the hands of the colonists, this pillar drooped, and the religion, culture, and moral values declined. Therefore a plan to foster monastic education was drawn up at the *Pyidawthar* Conference in 1952, and the Public Education Council was entrusted with the task to implement it. The plan was known as "Education Plan for Revitalizing the Prosperity of the State".

The objectives of this plan were as follows:

- (1) To make all the citizens to be able to read and write
- (2) To train and provide skilled workers and technicians to meet the demands of the building and development of the nation
- (3) To train and provide sufficient young men and women who would be able to give services demanded by the nation
- (4) To lower the illiteracy rate in the nation and to produce the citizens who were strong in five aspects
- (5) For the prevalence of the principles and practices of democracy in the nation. *

In accordance with the plan drawn up in the *Pyidawthar* Conference of 1952, the government arranged to open five thousand monastic schools from October 1952 onwards.[†]

The Public Education Council implemented the plan in three phases:

- (1) To list and register monastic schools
- (2) To support the registered schools, by donating educational equipment furniture, and
- (3) To give necessary help for the education of children

For these tasks, a branch for monastic education was established in the Public Education Council, and duties were also assigned to all the public education officers through the Divisional and District Education officers in the rural areas.[‡]

The monastic schools with twenty or more pupils in the localities with no State Primary Schools and these in which there were not enough teachers, were registered if the monks or the teachers had been entrusted the responsibility taught the curriculum prescribed for State Primary School.[§] The pupils in the registered monastic schools were taught from First to Fourth Standard. When the pupils reached the age of ten and passed the examination of reading, writing and arithmetic, they could go to the Fifth standard in a State School or to as State Vocational School (Primary Level). Text Books prescribed for Primary schools were donated so that monastic schools would have the same curriculum with the State Primary Schools. Handbooks on teaching methods were also donated to monks. The students from registered monastic schools were allowed to enter the Fourth Standard Examination held by the Education Department in various localities.

When the monastic education scheme was introduced, the monks were to teach only reading, writing, arithmetic and moral values, which they knew well. However, to contribute to the pupil's advancement in the future, coordinating with the Education Department, short-term discussions were made by public education officers in various district. Moreover, long-term seminars were held during summer holidays.^{**}

On October 1958, the Public Education Council was incorporated into the Department of Social Welfare in accordance with the act dissolving the Public Education Council. In this way, monastic education came under the control of the Education Department from 1 November 1962 onwards.^{††}

*. Than Htut, 267-8.

†. Ba Ka Report (1952-1954) 3.

‡. Ba Ka Mawkun, 1959 12-13.

§. Ibid.20

** . Ba Ka Mawkun, 1959.22-24.

††. Than Htut,U, 239.

Under the Department of Basic Education, a section for Monastic School Education was formed. Fifty monastic education officers were appointed to implement for the revival of the monastic school education system. But ten years later, this section was found to be abolished in 1972. Nevertheless, in the rural areas the monastic schools were still maintained and practiced their traditional way of giving secular education and Buddhist knowledge to the people in their respective villages.*

3.1 The monastic education system under the State Saṅgha Mahānāyaka Organization

Throughout the history of Education in Myanmar, the monastic school education was always found to form a part of the country's educational system. When the modern science subjects were included in the educational sphere, the monastic education, which paid little interest to the modern science subjects, came to lose its foothold and gradually lost its popularity among the Myanmar populace. As the monastic schools began to lose touch with the people, especially the younger generations in Myanmar society were found to be ignorant of Myanmar Buddhist Culture, less knowledge in teachings of the Buddha, and were weak in love and devotion in race, religion and creed.

The patron *Mahāthera* of the State *Saṅgha Mahā Nāyaka* Organization had noticed the situation of the country and they unanimously decided to urge the government to resume the monastic education system, at the Third State *Saṅgha Mahā Nāyaka* committee meeting held on 4-5 November 1990.

The Minister of the Religious affairs promised to implement the request made by the vice chairperson of the State *Saṅgha Mahā Nāyaka* committee to allow the pupils from the monastic schools to sit for the fourth standard examination held by the government, provided that these pupils had completed the lessons prescribed and the ten topics on Buddhist culture.

The bodies that were to implement the monastic school education scheme were the *Saṅgha Mahā Nāyaka* committee of every level of the State and Division throughout the whole country. Therefore the Department of the Religious Affairs drew a plan for the monastic school education with the guidelines and instructions of the *Saṅgha Mahā Nāyaka* Sayadaws and held seminars for the implementation of monastic school scheme.

The Sayadaws of the State *Saṅgha Mahā Nāyaka* committees had tried their utmost to promote the monastic school education that the number of the monastic schools increased to 1577 and the number of pupils amounted to 94392. Among them it was found that 28406 pupils were to be girls. As the number of the girls learning lesson in the monastic school increased the nunnery school for the girls came to be needed.†

The monastic school education, guided by the State *Saṅgha Mahā Nāyaka* Sayadaws and with the strenuous efforts of the respective Sayadaws of the monastic schools and help given by the government, can be said to be successful.

3.2 The Present situation of monastic education in Myanmar

Throughout the history of Education in Myanmar, the monastic school education was always found to form a part of the country's educational system. When the modern science subjects were included in the educational sphere, the monastic education, which paid little interest to the modern science subjects, came to lose its foothold and gradually lost its popularity among the Myanmar populace. As the monastic schools began to lose touch with

*. Monastic Education in Myanmar, 41.

†. Monastic Education in Myanmar, 42, 44.

the people, especially the younger generations in Myanmar Buddhist Culture, less knowledge in the teachings of Buddha, and were weak in loving-kindness and devotion in race, religion and creed.

The *Mahātheras* of the State *Samgha Mahā Nāyaka* Organization had noticed the situation of the country and they unanimously decided to urge the government to resume the monastic education system, at the Third State *Samgha Mahā Nāyaka* committee meeting held on the 3rd and 4th days of the waning moon of Tasaung mone 1352 ME (4-5 November 1990). At this meeting the Chairman of the State *Samgha Mahā Nāyaka* Committee the Venerable *Bhaddanta Sobhita (Aggamahāpaṇḍita)* requested the Minister of Religious Affairs to allow the pupils from the monastic schools to sit for the Fourth Standard examination held by the government. The Ministry of Religious Affairs, with due regard to request of the State *Samgha Mahā Nāyaka* Committee, requested the Ministry of Education to take the matter into action. The Ministry of Education responded the request of the Ministry of the Religious Affairs by letter dated 2-1-92, 4-Panna 2 (Nya) 91 (1357) and dated 27-1-92, section (19)/1473/2-cha (2-sa)/92.

The bodies that were to implement the monastic school education scheme were the *Samgha* from the *Samgha Mahā Nāyaka* Committee of every level of the state and division throughout the whole country. Therefore the Department of the Religious Affairs drew a plan for the monastic school education with the guidelines and instructions of the Venerable *Samgha Mahā Nāyaka* Sayadaws and held seminars for the implementation of monastic school scheme.

A seminar was held on the 5th and 6th days of the waxing moon of Thadingyut (1-2 October) at the *Vijaya Mangala Dhamma* Thabin Hall at Kabaaye hillock, Yangon. At the seminar, the Minister of the Ministry of Religious Affairs made some remarks in his speech as “The monastic schools will also be of a great help to implement the objectives of the Ministry of Education if these schools not only teach the young pupils but also teach them the subjects that could enable them to make their livelihoods and earn jobs.”

He also added that the Ministry of Education has issued orders and instructions to the Basic Primary Schools throughout the country to permit the pupil from the monastic schools to sit for the Fourth Standard examination held by the government for the State primary Schools and also to provide the monastic schools with teaching aids, text books and required stationeries.

Thus the monastic school gained momentum with the help of the government and the donations rendered by the enthusiastic donors. Moreover it was also found that intellect and educated monks were also able to adapt themselves with the changing and developing modern educational system.

However, the monastic education system still lacked sufficient planning and skill to fulfill the aims of the scheme. Therefore the State *Samgha Mahā Nāyaka* Committee formed “The Central Supervisory Committee” on 7 June 1995 at a meeting hall of the Department of Promulgation and Propagation of *Sāsana*.

The Sayadaws of the State *Samgha Mahā Nāyaka* Committees had tried their utmost to promote the monastic education that the number of the monastic schools increased to 1577 and the number of pupils amounted to 94392. Among them 28406 pupils were to be girls. As the number of the girls learning in the monastic school increased the nunnery school for the girls came to be needed.

The Sayadaws of the State *Saṅgha Mahā Nāyaka* Committee were of great concern in giving lessons to the girls also. During the meeting the president of the State *Saṅgha Mahā Nāyaka* Committee, Venerable *Sobhita* gave the instruction that “The girls who were learning the lessons in the monastic schools and those who had reached the age of eleven should give. The privilege to continue their leanings and the nuns should be given the responsibility to teach these girls. Accordingly the action was taken and at present *Dhamesaka* Nunnery School, *Visākhā* Nunnery School and Ratanapone Sankyaung Nunnery School were opened.

The Government of the Union of Myanmar has laid down its objective in education sector as “Education for All” and took step to enhance this objective. Even in those places where the government schools were opened, there were people who could not afford to send their children to the schools. Thus, it came to be apparent that such parents had to depend on the monastic schools for their children’s education and at the same time the monastic school needed to be improved and more qualified to give effective education to these people. With the advice of the State *Saṅgha Mahā Nāyaka* Committee, the Ministry of Religious Affairs has endeavored to improve the conditions of the monastic schools in cooperation with the Ministry of Education which was found to be effective and successful.

However, some monastic schools were found to be discontented to give only the primary education to their pupils. They were enthusiastic to take further steps and wanted to give the lower secondary level education to these pupils in their schools. Therefore they requested to upgrade their schools to be able to give middle level education and to let their pupils sit for the lower secondary level examination held by the government like other pupils from other schools.

After the discussion between the two Ministers, the Ministry of Education gave their consent to allow the pupils from the monastic school enter the middle level examination held in the Government State School. The Basic Education Department issued an announcement, dated 31-12-1997, No Htanasu (18) / 17345/ ka-44(921) 97 that the pupils from the monastic schools were allowed to sit for the middle level examination as outsiders commencing from the 1997-98 Academic year.

According to the statics given by the Ministry of Religious Affairs, the total number of monastic schools in the whole country in 2016-2107 is 1587, the total numbers of teachers is 7906 and the total numbers of students is 309792.

The number of monastic schools and that of teachers and students in the country’s states and divisions can be shown in the following table.

Table 1. The list of monastic schools, students and teachers in Myanmar (2016-2017 Academic Years)

Sr.	Name of State/ Division	Primary Level		Post Primary School		Middle School		High School		
		School	Student	Teacher	School	Student	Teacher	School	Student	Teacher
1	Kachin	16	3007	17	13	880	23	-	-	-
2	Kayah	4	788	20	4	412	11	-	-	-
3	Karin	25	5735	146	6	1042	26	-	-	-
4	Chin	10	675	18	4	210	6	-	-	-
5	Mon	29	6030	156	20	1270	32	5	672	17
6	Rakhine	56	12611	322	20	1564	38	9	2196	55
7	Shan (East)	14	1814	47	3	304	8	-	-	-
8	Shan (South)	16	4538	117	13	2498	63	-	-	-
9	Shan (North)	26	9032	228	14	1950	50	-	-	-
10	Sagaing	97	18305	478	82	5975	154	13	1461	37
11	Magwe	75	9790	254	38	2664	67	8	1364	34
12	Mandalay	178	44601	1158	125	11529	294	27	10045	256
13	Naypyidaw	17	4428	110	13	1269	33	2	244	6
14	Bago (East)	58	16340	408	31	2851	73	11	1776	46
15	Bago (West)	30	5436	140	15	1709	44	1	266	7
16	Yangon	131	50588	1286	88	15752	390	9	5693	143
17	Ayeyarwady	124	19237	491	42	2312	63	13	3058	76
18	Taninthayi	34	7324	186	10	1284	32	6	1119	27
		940	220279	5642	541	55475	1407	104	27894	704
								2	6144	153

3.3 Application of modern teaching method

Although the traditional methods of teaching were still practiced in the monastic schools, the techniques of modern teaching method such as child psychology and teaching methods that are agreeable with children's nature also introduced. The seminars or meetings held for training of teachers and the papers presented for methods of teaching made the teaching methods in monastic schools improved and developed.

As the pupils from the monastic schools were required to sit for the Fourth Standard examination held by the government, the monastic schools had also put effort to maintain their curriculum, syllabus and method of teaching in equal status with those of the state government schools in the primary level. With this implement the monastic schools took the responsibility to give the primary level education to their pupils.

While the monastic schools were helping the government in implementing the national government education policy, they also maintained their traditional Buddhist teaching to be firm and developed.¹

3.4A study of some monastic education schools

The monastic schools played an important role in improving Myanmar education. But the importance of monastic education had diminished since the advent of modern education into the education sector though it had been on the improving in the days of Myanmar kings.

Since 1993, the Ministry of Religious Affairs, together with the Ministry of Education, has carried out the monastic education programmes in accordance with the instructions given by the state *Saṅgha Mahā Nāyaka* Committee and with the policies laid down by the Myanmar Education Committee. On 18 and 19 March 1994, the State *Saṅgha Mahā Nāyaka Committee* adopted the rules and regulations for Monastic Education unanimously. On 7 June 1995, the Supervising Committee for monastic education was formed and they reintroduced the integrated monastic education schools in some areas recently. Since 1993 when monastic schools were first built, the number of students has increased. According to the statistics in 2016-2017 academic years, there are 940 monastic schools and 309792 students all over the countries which is the manifestation of the success of monastic education. Among them, some monastic schools are mentioned as example.

3.4.1 Phaung Daw Oo monastic Education High School.

Phaung Daw Oo was founded on May 5, 1993 with 10 teachers and 394 students. Principal U *Nāyaka's* main focus was to provide students from poor families who would not normally be able to attend school. Students of all religions and ethnicities are welcomed at PDO. Although it is a "monastic" school run by Theravada monks, it offers a complete secular curricula as well as special classes in Buddhism and Pali for novices, monks and any secular students who opt to take them. The school's guiding vision is to promote outstanding students who can become future leaders in society and to provide all students so that they can pursue their studies absolutely free of charge (except preschool). In addition to its primary education mission, the school now partners with MEDG (Monastic Education Development Group) /and donor organizations to offer many training workshops for teachers and school administrators. Now, Phaung Daw Oo Monastic High School is well-known both in Myanmar and abroad.

The Objectives of the Phaung Daw Oo are:

¹ . Monastic Education in Myanmar, 62-63.

1. To give free education to disadvantage children, specifically targeting children from poor rural families, orphans and other under privileged children, who otherwise would not be able to attend government schools.
2. To enhance the status morale and professionalism of teachers.
3. To create a safe and supportive environment with all aspects of HIV/AIDS/ STI care and support for children and youth.
4. To provide ethnic minority and orphan children with basic shelter, food, clothing and education.
5. To promote school hostel for street children to provide their living education meals and health condition.
6. To offer school lunches to attract poor children to school providing with nutritious meals.
7. To create and provide initial vocational orientation programs for school.

It was named Phaung Daw Oo, Integrated Education School by Mr Karl Dorning, Program Coordinator, World Vision Myanmar, after his spouse, Mrs Sue Dorning's sentimental trip to Project Site in February 1996, together with UNICEF delegation led by Mrs. Chenxiaoyu, project officer, child welfare services. They were the first benefactors who promised to undertake to look for the charitable funds and later assured access for the estimated (9,959.67) US\$ dollars for income generation.

They opened to offer poor children denied access to even the most basic education services as a model of grass roots development, a non-government self-reliance by specifically targeting children from poor either rural or urban family, orphans, ethnic, abuse, neglect, abandon and poverty-stricken children and for those who could not attend the government schools for various reasons. It provides access to education for the children from kindergarten up to high school courses that of state curriculum which is accredited by the government. Both girls and boys attend classes and enrollment is not based towards any specific religion and any fees are not charged.

Presently (412) teachers are employed to teach the (7849) enrolled children. In order to pay these teachers a basic salary, total funding is obliged to be raised through income generation and occasional donations.

3.4.2 Monastic education in Pantanaw, Ayeyarwady Region

There are five monastic schools in Pantanaw, Ayeyarwady Division. They are: (1) Thukhityayone Nyaungbin, (2) Tharthanawdaya, (3) Tharthana Alinyaung, (4) Shwezinyay and (5) Maniyadanar

Among these monastic schools, Shwezinyay and Maniyadanar will be mentioned as example.

3.4.2.1 *Shwe Zin Aye monastic education school*

It is situated in *Phayargyidaunt Village*, Pantanaw, Ayeyarwady Region. It is founded by Venerable Paṇḍita. The majorities of the people in this region are poor and lack of knowledge. So the head abbot taught reading, writing and arithmetic to poor children since 1997. Then he set up this monastic education at the monastery, starting the academic years of 2001-2002.

3.4.2.2 Maniyadanar monastic education school

Maniyadanar Monastic Education School is located in Myo Kwet Thit (2), Pantanaw, Ayeyarwady Region. That was founded by Venerable *Ādiccavaṃsa*. Sayadaw's main concern for his school is to bring forth educated good citizens out of the poor or financially handicapped children in its surrounding. He established this monastic school to educate the poor children.

For teaching purposes, a two- storey building and a one - storey building are used. The school starts at 8:00 a.m. and ends at 3:30 p.m., the recess for lunch being between 11:00 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. There is one library where Buddhist literature and periodicals get more space.

The head-abbot Venerable *Ādiccavaṃsa* has been fulfilling the Perfection of Wisdom to his best ability giving voluntary free education to the children in the neighborhood of his monastery, building schools for teaching them, providing necessary school furniture and prescribed textbooks and fulfilling the requirements of each student.

3.4.3 Monastic Education Schools in Nyaungdon, Ayeyarwady Region

In Nyaungdon, Ayeyarwady Division, there are six monastic schools. They are:

No	Name of Monastic School	Date of Establishment Primary Level	Date of Establishment Post Primary Level
1	Yadabar Thiri	2001-2002	2006-2007
2	Kyaunggyi Kyaung	1995-1996	2011-2012
3	Ywar Lei Kyaung	2005-2006	2012-2013
4	Myayadanar	2002-2003	
5	Tharthanawaypunla	2005-2006	
6	Aung Pan Myaing	2012-2013	

In these schools, Yadanar Thiri, Kyaunggyi Kyaung and Ywar Lei Kyaung can give all the undergraduate level of education from kindergarten to post primary level. The Sayadaws of these monastic schools educate the poor children as if they were their own children. It is because of their goodwill that the number of the students has increased year by year.

3.4.4 Monastic education in Pyay, Bago Region

One report released from the Department of Basic Education states that there are fifteen monastic schools where 3388 students are learning. One of these monasteries is Myat Lay Yone. That monastic education centre is situated in Shwehintha Quarter, Ywar bei, Pyay. It was founded by Venerable *Su Jana*. It was established in 1996 under the guidance of the State *Samgha Mahā Nāyaka* Committee. Sayadaw passed away in 2007 and Syadaw U *Sumana*, who became the head abbot, did his best to improve the monastic education in a new way. In 2010, the Ministry of Religious Affairs admitted to set up the Post Primary School level.

Now in this 2016-2017 academic Year, (12) teachers are employed to teach the (458) enrolled children.

3.4.5 Monastic education in Nyaung U, Mandalay Region

There are eight monastic education schools in Nyaung U, Mandalay Division. They are: (1) Zaytawun, (2) Shwegukyaung, (3) Shweumin, (4) Sandawmhi, (5) Thayettaw, (6) Thabei-ai, (7) Katlankan and (8) Kangyigone.

Among these monasteries, Shwegukyaung monastic education school was established by Venerable Kheminda in 2010. The total numbers of students in 2016-2017 academic years are 95. As to the school curricula, they are the same as those prescribe by the Department of Basic Education, Ministry of Education.

Zayetawun monastic education school was founded by Venerable Ādicca. The classes there are from kindergarten to Grade Eight. The total numbers of students is 340.

Shwe-u-min monastic education was founded by Venerable *Jobhisāra*. The total number of students is 157 including novices. The financial aids are given by the Ministry of Religious Affairs. The school starts at 8:00 a.m. and ends at 3; 30 p.m. The curricula are the same as those prescribe by the Ministry of Education, Myanmar. In summer, Paritta, Paṭṭhāna and Buddhist Culture are taught to children.

3.4.6 Monastic Education in Mawlamyine, Mon State

There are nine monastic education schools in Mawlamyine, Mon State. They are: (1) Kin Village, (2) Tharthanayaungchi, (3) Tharthanavepulla, (4) Myodawoo, (5) Dhammathukha, (6) Abhayathukha, (7) Zeyyarthiri, (8) Pylonchantha and (9) Tharthanazawtika.

Among these monasteries, Dhammathukha monastic education school is situated in Shwemyaing Thiri quarter, Mawlamyine. It was established by *Aggamahā Saddhamma Jotikadhaja Venerable Nārada* in 1992-1993 Academic year. The classes there are from kindergarten to Grade Eight. According to the statics in the 2016-2017 academic year, 186 students at the primary level, 86 students at secondary level attended. The school starts at 10:45 a.m. and ends at 4; 30 p.m., the recess for lunch being between 1:40 a.m. and 2:15 p.m. As to the school curricula, they are the same as those prescribe by the Department of Basic Education, Ministry of Education. Moreover, the course on Buddhist Culture is taught to the students. The head abbot Sayadaw provides the teaching staff with 50000 kyats as monthly honorariums.

Abhayathukha monastic education school is situated in Wartan Quarter, Mawlamyine. It was founded by *Aggamahāsaddhamma Jotikadhaja Venerable Sumaṅgalasāmi* in 1993-1994 academic years under the supervision of Township *Samgha* Committee. It started from primary level with 30 students. After the opening of 15 years, the classes there are from kindergarten to Grade 8. The school starts at 12:00 a.m. and ends at 4:00 p.m.

Designed to provide education of last resort to parentless children, the school also provides accommodation. Those youths from the regions that have little access to education or whose parents can afford the school fees. Disseminating formal education as well as religious teachings, the monastery has given orphans both a safe heaven and much needed avenue to self-development. In 2016-2017 academic year, 55 students at Primary level, 47 students at Middle school level are enrolled. These students are mentored by eight teaching staff which consists of 5 female teachers and 3 monks.

A distinctive feature of this monastic school is that it teaches Buddhist Cultural aspects as one subject for the purpose of improving the children's conduct of behaviour. In summer holidays, the course on Buddhist Culture is given at the monastery. Up to now; this monastic school programme has produced 5 graduates, and 10 matriculates.

Zeyyarthiri monastic education is located in Dyanewinkwin Quarter, Mawlamyine. It was established by Venerable Visesa. Sayadaw set up monastic education school in 1997. There are seven teachers and 191 students. The classes there are from kindergarten to Grade 7. The financial aids are given by the Ministry of Religious Affairs. The school starts at 12:00 a.m. and ends at 5:00 p.m. Like other monastic schools, the compulsory course on Buddhist Culture is given at the monastery.

4. Conclusion

The monastic schools played an important role in improving Myanmar education. But the importance of monastic education had diminished since the advent of modern education into the education sector though it had been improving in the days of Myanmar kings. The monastic education in the days of Myanmar monarchies was wide-ranging in the sense that it educated not only the court family but also the commoners, rich or poor. The instructions given by the monastic teacher, i.e. the abbot of the monastery, commanded the due respect of all the classes. Now, too, all people regardless of their status can go to the monasteries for learning. Since when monastic schools were first built, the number of students has increased, which is the manifestation of the success of monastic education.

According to the statistics in 2016-2017 academic year, there are 1587 monastic schools all over the country. There are evidences that monastic education helped to bring forth good citizens with high moral and cultural values because there was high accessibility to it for all the inhabitants of the country ranging from the general public to the royal family.

As the Myanmar language is the official language of the country, Myanmar language and literature gained respect and honour, and the monastic school education had played the role of the State Education System which was complete and sufficient for the whole country.

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- စင်မောင်ကြည်ဦး (၁၉၉၅)၊ ပညာမင်းကြီးဦးကောင်း၏ ဗြိတိသျှတို့မသိမ်းပိုက်မီနှင့်သိမ်းပိုက်ပြီးစေတံ
မြန်မာနိုင်ငံပညာရေးသမိုင်း၊ မြသီတာစာပေ၊ ရန်ကုန်။
- တည်ကြည်ဦး (၁၉၆၈)၊ ကျောင်းဆရာအဘိဓာန်၊ ဂန္ထဝင်စာပေပုံနှိပ်တိုက်၊ ရန်ကုန်။
- ဘုန်းတော်ကြီးကျောင်းပညာသင်ကြားမှုစည်းမျဉ်း (၂၀၁၄)၊ သာသနာရေးဝန်ကြီးဌာန၊ ရန်ကုန်။ရွှေစင်အေး
ဘုန်းတော်ကြီးကျောင်းပညာရေးကျောင်းသမိုင်းအကျဉ်း၊ ပုံနှိပ်နေ့စွဲမပါ။
- သံဗျင်ဦး (၁၉၇၂)၊ ပဒေသရာဇ်စေတီဦးမြန်မာနိုင်ငံပညာရေးသမိုင်း၊ ရန်အေးပုံနှိပ်တိုက်၊ ရန်ကုန်။
- သန်းဦး၊ ဦး (၁၉၉၉) ၊ မြန်မာနိုင်ငံပညာရေးဌာနသမိုင်း၊ ရန်ကုန်။
- သန်းထွတ်၊ ဦး (၁၉၈၀)၊ မြန်မာနိုင်ငံဘုန်းတော်ကြီးကျောင်းပညာရေးသမိုင်း၊ အုန်းပင်၊ ပုံနှိပ်တိုက်၊ ရန်ကုန်။
- သောင်းထွတ်ဦး (၂၀၀၀) မြန်မာ့ပညာရေးရှုခင်း၊ ပညာတန်ဆောင်အထူးအစီအစဉ်၊ ရန်ကုန်။
- အေးကျော်ဦး (၁၉၇၀)မြန်မာနိုင်ငံအမျိုးသားပညာရေးသမိုင်း၊ နယူးပုံနှိပ်တိုက်၊ ရန်ကုန်။

