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The Study of Cross-border Myanmar Migrant Worker's Labor Market: Policy Implications for Labor Management in Chiang Rai City, Chiang Rai Province, Thailand

Natthida Jumpa



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**The Study of Cross – border Myanmar
Migrant Worker’s Labor Market:
Policy Implications for Labor Management
in Chiang Rai City, Chiang Rai Province,
Thailand**

Natthida Jumpa

December, 2012

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Abstract

The objective of this research aims to study the push and pull factors that are causing the mobility in the labor market towards Myanmar migrant workers situated in the Chiang Rai province of Thailand. It also aims to analyze the implementation of policies on the Mutual Agreement of Understanding on foreign labor employment. The recommended policy implementation will be proposed for labor management effectively.

This research employed mixed methodology using both quantitative and qualitative methods on two types of the sample population (1) 386 illegal Myanmar migrant workers by using Taro Yamane technique and Quota Sampling from the types of enterprises comprising 201 construction workers, 118 agriculture and livestock workers, 67 continuing agriculture workers, and (2) 10 representatives of the employer and the enterprise who hire the illegal migrant workers, 5 representatives of the government officers, through purposive selection. The methods of data collection consist of questionnaires and structured interview. The statistical tool used is frequency distribution and Pearson Product Moment Correlation for data analysis.

Research Findings

The research results revealed that the nationality and origin among the Myanmar migrant workers is Myanmar (73.3%), some other tribal groups are Shan people, Kachin, Karen, Tai Lue, Akha and Kayar. Most of the workers came from the Mandalay region.

The push factor from the sending country which motivates them to come to Chiang Rai is caused by low income and low wage, unstable occupation, unemployment and there is no job opportunity, inadequate income to sustain the cost of living, need to increase family asset such as land and house, and also the process for leaving the country is easy.

The pull factors from the receiving country particularly in the Chiang Rai province of Thailand were steady income, high opportunity to get job, easy to commute to Chiang Rai, ability to save money, high wage and the working environment is better than in the home country, good quality of life and basic needs such as food, clothing and housing had been fulfilled.

The findings had confirmed that the push factors from the sending country has shown relationship between the mobility of migrant workers to labor market in the Chiang Rai province correlates with low income, lack of amenities in life, and quality of life in the receiving country is much better.

The recommended policy implementation proposed to the government is that there should be improvement in the employment procedure and established measure for proving the nationality.

1. Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

Labor movement has long occurred as one of the phenomena in human society which the migrant workers seek for works and settlements in the destination areas. This movement has been caused by many factors, for example war, occupational search, and starving which are associated with people’s life cycle in the society. The societal people have struggled to seek for jobs and contacts among themselves, especially among those who live in the society with the dynamic of population proportion. If the population had a wider gap of ages and are more dynamic, the rotation of laborers will occur more often in the labor market. The new groups will replace the older ones while the latter becomes the new labor forces for the new worksites.

These situations commonly occur along with the societal and laboring phenomena in the country. However, the population structure becomes the interfering factor which affects the application of the policy into practice and management. The problem is the movement of cross-national border laborers which is known as irregular migration. This includes: the migration without legal documents, or the immigration by breaking the rules and laws of the destination countries. At the same time, the destination countries have to set up the controlling measures to provide welfare services for alien laborers and to secure any damage that might be caused by them. Thailand’s borders are connected with several neighboring countries. Since Thailand has been the central hub among the ASEAN countries and is a route to communicate with other neighboring countries, it is therefore a must for Thailand to have a strong measure of managing the laboring issues with legal dynamics to deal with the continual labor migration which naturally occur as a societal phenomenon. Nonetheless, it is unavoidable to accept that these alien laborers who are in the low level of labor market are the important factors supporting the industries, for example construction, productivity, services and agriculture, in Thailand.

The cross-border labor has supported the Thai economic system dynamic. These migrant workers are mostly from the 3 countries whose border to Thailand; namely: Myanmar, Cambodia and Lao PDR. These labor forces have become the unskilled laborers who play the

important supporters in the production sectors. They replace Thai workers who escape from the laboring jobs with 3 Ds: dirty, dangerous, and difficult. Instead, the laborers from these countries can function with these jobs and they accept the low wages. We can see these laborers working in different areas of Thailand both in urban and rural locations.

The crisis occurring in Myanmar in which the police had suppressed the sedition of the political protesters in 1988 forced and drove up the people to immigrate into Thailand in order to seek for security and work. At the same time, the expansion of Thai economy backup the country to need more labor force, especially the lower level and unskilled laborers (Thaothawin & Sartrakhom, 2011). Moreover, there are also many illegal laborers from Cambodia and Lao PDR that have migrated through the borders of Thailand. This phenomenon has occurred over 30 years since Thailand has become the main country for these illegal laborers. However, it appears that the legalized foreign workers working in Thailand are about 1.97 million (Office of Foreign Workers Administration, 2012). Among these laborers, most of the migrant workers are Myanmar with 79 percent of the total laborers who are legally permitted to work in Thailand. However, the assessment by the organizations and sectors related to the cross-border laborers expect that there are more many alien workers who are not legalized and registered with the government working in many workplaces of Thailand. This reflects that there might be over 3 million foreign workers existing in the Thai working system around the country (Sciortino & Punpuing, 2009). The Demographers have calculated that the figures of cross-border laborers stated in the population and housing survey in 2010 has greatly increased and it is possibly up to 4 million (The Research Institute for Population and Society, Mahidol University, 2011). This circumstance affects the economic, social, cultural and political situations among the nations. At the same time, the business section of Thailand: Thailand Commercial Association, Thailand Industrial Council, and Thailand Bank Association have worked together to negotiate with and pressure on the Thai government to allow the employment of foreign workers. With these pressures, it stipulates the government to make the policy flexible by allowing the employment of cross-border laborers from Myanmar, Laos, and Cambodia who are illegal and alien workers to work and live in Thailand while waiting for the sending-back home based on the consensus agreement of the ministry groups in order to exemplify the 2 important laws: the Immigration Act B.E. 2522 and the Alien Employment Act 2521.

In 2003, The Thai Government and Myanmar Government had signed the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on the alien workers agreement. In 2009, the Myanmar alien workers who worked in Thailand illegally were allowed to enter the national verification process in order to be legalized as workers in Thailand.

For the laboring situation in Chiang Rai, it was found that the area has experienced a continual growth in economy. This can be viewed from the statistics of the economic expansion in 2006 with the ratio 3:10. The work fields which are affected from this movement include: agriculture, service, immoveable property, hotels and restaurants, industry, retailing and wholesaling which appear at 2.83, 2.40, 0.53, 0.33, and 0.32 respectively. In 2010, the economic growth appeared at 4.3 and the need of employment was approximately 696,680 workers increasing from the previous year 10,053 people (Chiang Rai Treasure Office, 2011). The growth of economy causes the organizations to desire more employees coupled with the ways in which Chiang Rai is the important strategic hub for trading and borders with other neighboring countries: Lao PDR and Myanmar. The borders between Thailand and Myanmar at Chiang Rai Province start at Mae Sai District, Mae Chan District, Mae Fah Luang District, and Chiangsaen District with the length of 130 kilometers. This includes 100 kilometers of mountainous line and 10 kilometers of Sai River plus 20 kilometers of Ruak River. The Border Check Point at Mae Sai District connects Thailand with Thakilek of Myanmar with the length of 20 kilometers. These routes are convenient for transportation and the movement of capital, goods and products, services and the flow of laborers into Thailand both in a short term and long term. This can be evident from the statistics of the cross-border laborers working in Chiang Rai in November 2011 stating that there appears 18,884 alien workers working in the city (this include Myanmar, Laotian and Cambodian). Among these numbers, the Myanmar workers were 17,393 people which consisted of 16,251 illegal workers and 1,142 legalized and registered workers. However, it was no cross-border labor working in Chiang Rai in accordance with the MOU on the employment of alien workers between Thailand and Myanmar.

Type of Migrant Workers	Total	Male	Female
Illegal alien workers	16,251	9,545	6,706
Nationality verify (Legal Migrant Workers)	1,142	613	529
Imported laborers in accordance with the MOU on the alien employment between Thailand and its partners	0	0	0
Total	17,393	10,158	7,235

Source: Chiang Rai Employment Office, November 2012

It is obvious that even though Thailand and Myanmar had the MOU on foreign labor between Thailand and the Neighboring countries to reach the services and welfares without being taken advantaged by the employers and work places which could lead to the appropriate laboring management, there appears to only be a small number of workers who entered into the national proof process in order to legalize them as needed by the law and the MOU between Thailand and its partners when comparing with the illegal migrant workers. This encouraged the researcher to examine the labor market of the cross-border migrant workers from Myanmar in the Chiang Rai Province, analyzing the factors that influence the alien workers to work in Chiang Rai. And why the laborers and their employers or the entrepreneurs in the Chiang Rai Province have not cooperated with the MOU on alien workers between Thailand and its partners.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

- 1) To study the push and pull factors that causing the mobility in the labor market of Myanmar migrant worker in the Chiang Rai province;
- 2) To analyze the policy implementation on the MOU on foreign labor employment;
- 3) To provide the effective strategies for applying the policy into practices and management of the alien workers in accordance with the MOU on the employment of the cross-border migrant workers between the countries; which include:

- 3.1) What are the pushing factors and the pulling factors influencing the cross-border Myanmar migrant workers movement into the labor market in the Chiang Rai Province?
- 3.2) What are the problems and obstacles for the nationality verification in accordance with the MOU between Thailand and Myanmar?
- 3.3) What are the strategic proposals for applying the policy into practices in accordance with the MOU between Thailand and Myanmar?

1.3 Concepts, Theories and Related Researches

The Study of Cross – border Myanmar Migrant Worker’s Labor Market: Policy Implications for Labor Management in Chiang Rai City, Chiang Rai Province, Thailand, is based on the following theories and related literatures as follows.

1. International Migration Theory
2. Dual Labor Market Theory
3. Migration Theory
4. Pushing and Attracting Theories
5. International Cross-border Migrant Workers Movement Theory
6. Related Researches

2. Theories

2.1 International Migration Theory

Soonthornthada and Pattarawanit (2006, pp.25-56) stated that migration in the past few years appeared to have 3 paradigms which are counted important to the migration (Casles, 1994) which include:

1. The neo-classical economic equilibrium perspective. These economists view that the migration is caused by many pushing factors (poverty, lack of cultivated land, and over-population) in the original country coupled with the attractive factors in the destination country make the migrant workers decide to migrate to the country which provides the economic opportunity in the labor market.

2. The historical-structure approach. The individual's concept which is independent is not true since human beings can choose their own concept asymmetrically. The unequal selection on the concept is caused by the different of natural resources and powers of each country. Moreover, there are more differences, for example, the policy which can be the constraint for the migrant to choose their destination.
3. Migration approach system. This system was constructed by the countries with a high migration of the workers. The established system might be related to two countries but they might benefit more from this phenomenon if they can draw and connect themselves with more countries using the migration approach system of their countries to expand into the bigger regions. The migration approach conceptualize the ideas by monitoring the relationship parameter between the migration current and other factors which makes us understand the other factors better, for example, political, economic, social and population.

Moreover, the migration approach system also identifies the causes of labor migration between the two countries which might be caused by:

1. The principle factors are counted as the main factors for driving migration of the laborers. These factors include the rate of vacancies and the lower positions of work, the low wage and salary when comparing with other countries, the lack of work progress, and the lack of appropriate policy for man power development.
2. The attractive factors are caused by the laborers from one country to migrate to another country due to the following factors: the higher wage and salary are more than those in the original country, the lack of man power in some working fields, the promotion in profession, the permission for foreign students to study and training, while on the social and political factors which attract the laborers to immigrate into the destination country might be that any nationality and religious labor can be accepted.

2.2. Dual Labor Market Theory

Patcharawalai Wongboonsin (1999, pp.32-37, cited in Piore, 1979) has developed the theory to explain the migration in terms of the supply of the labor market. These main theories consist of the followings.

1. The migration is caused by the attractive factors in the destination which is counted as the developed country.
2. The attractive factors in the destination country influence the labor’s decision to move for two reasons: labor market and working recruitment policy.
3. The labor market in each country is hierarchical segmentation. This aspect can be classified into two parts:
 - 3.1. primary labor market or upper labor market which provides the capital intensiveness;
 - 3.2. secondary labor market or lower labor market which provides the production system focusing on labor intensiveness and there contains the low skilled laborers.
4. The situation in which the lower skilled laborers do not want to work causes the demand for importing more unskilled laborers. This demand can occur in the situation in which there is high level of vacancies.
5. The cross-national border migration occurs when the destination country has more demand in labor in the secondary labor market. This situation emphasizes the main unskilled laborers for industrial productivity. This demand is responded by most of the cross-national border migrant laborers.
6. The demand of foreign labors in the destination country with modern and industrial productivity. This type of country needs more labors to suit for lower level work positions and the country lacks the unskilled laborers.
7. The demand of cross-national border migrant laborers of the destination country is responded by the migrant workers from the original country due to not only the wage differentiation, but also the following factors:
 - 7.1. the migration which is based on the basic structure of society in the original country;
 - 7.2. the temporary work in which the migrant do not want to work for all their lives.
8. The main factors supporting the lower labor market are the employer and the policy in employment in the destination country.

It is to be concluded that the migration according to the above theory does not depend on the migrant themselves or their families but it depends upon the structure and condition of the industrial society. The explanation of the cross-border migration of the developing countries

to the lower market of the industrial countries and it also states about the migration is mainly based on the demand in unskilled labors to suit the undesired work by the people in the destination countries. The industrial countries provide the vacancies in the lower labor market in their economic structure and the social and cultural structures also set the lower rate of wages and salary. Since there are more migrant laborers fluxing into the labor market in these countries, it is difficult to raise the wages for them due to the increase of supplies in labors.

2.3. Migration Theory

The migration between the countries affects the society, culture, economy, and security of both the original countries and destination countries. There are a number of theorists who have been seeking for explanation for this phenomenon since the 19th century. In particular, Ravenstein, E.G. (1889, pp.241-301) explained the principle of migration as follows:

1. Most of the migrants will move not so far from their original homes heading to the central part of trading and industries.
2. The migration is made step-by-step through the ways in which the residents living near the urban will move to the city and they are replaced by those who live far away.
3. The more scattering migration is, the less attraction will be.
4. The differences between urban and rural are the factors to cause the migration into the city.
5. The migration is likely to increase due to the convenience of transportation and the development of trades and industries.
6. Whatever the reasons of migration are, the important factors causing the migration is the economic attraction which includes the desire in materials supporting a better life.

For the destination factors, there appear many important influences which attract the migrants to move into new places which are full of pull factors. At the same time, there might have some push factors – the differences of the original place and the destination place, the comparison of advantages and disadvantages of the two places – which depend on the prediction of the migrants to cause them to migrate.

2.4. Push Factor and Pull Factor Theories

Everett S. Lee has explained the factors causing people to migrate that the migration from one place to another place is basically caused by the adjustment of the people to the change of economy and society. The details are as follows.

Push factors

1. The decrease of natural resources, the increase of investment capital, or the difficulties in productivity, for example the lack of some essential factors are the important push factors.
2. The incapability in seeking for jobs in the area.
3. The workers are suppressed due to, for example, politics or religion.
4. The migrants feel unhappy in living in the communities due to the pressure caused by culture and tradition.
5. The impacts affected by the society which provides less opportunity to its people.

Pull factors

1. The opportunity in getting job is higher and the workers can choose the job they like.
2. The opportunity for securitize self and family.
3. The environmental attraction and the convenience in daily life facilities, for example, scenery, weather, community, public utility, and transportation system.
4. The movement is made due to spouses, parents, and children.

In 1976, Todaro (1970, pp.187- 188) developed the model for analyzing the decision in migrating of the people in the developing countries. He considered from the following factors:

Push factors at the origin in the original country. These include:

1. Economic factor – for example, without being the ownership in cultivated land, the decrease of productivity, draught, and flood.
2. The governmental policy – for instance, tax, law, and the developmental plan between the urban and the rural.

3. Social factor – for example, the decision maker at family level and community, level of education, and creditability given to the work done by the people in the community.

Pull factors at the destination.

These include: wage, remuneration from independent work, the expected working sources, and the relationship of the income which is different from one another. Before deciding to migrate, a person needs to compare the cost with the benefit they expected to receive, the capital in migration, the expense in the city, the benefit for their attitude or the satisfaction toward facilities and services which they will gain from the destination.

Moreover, the distance, understanding in education and Medias are also caused persons to perceive in the information about labor market in the destination area. These factors are used for the migrant's decision.

Therefore, it is crucial that if one needs to migrate somewhere, the decision is made based on his or her prediction and expectation that the income and their way of life will be better than the previous life. These evaluation characters cover both concrete and abstract aspects.

2.5. The Migration of Labors Across Nations

Natrichon (2006) states that the main causes of migration include push factors of the country where the workers move out and the pull factors in the destination country.

2.5.1 The Push Factors in the Origin Country Where the Workers Move Out

These include:

1. The high unemployment, lower skilled workers and labor plus caused the workers to lose job and be jobless. Even though they get jobs, but they do not suit their qualifications. However, there are some workers struggling to seek for jobs in their own country at some certain time, but they cannot find the jobs suitable for them. Consequently, these workers migrate to other countries.

2. The wage is pretty low when comparing with that in other countries in the same job. When comparing wages and salary, the workers prefer the work in other countries since the money paid to them is higher.
3. The lack of motivation in developing their careers. Even though there are many workers with high qualifications, they cannot get the jobs to suit their quality. This causes them to move and seek for better job with good progress and development in other countries.
4. There are many problems: the policy of man power movement is not appropriate and the man power planning is not suitable, the under developing countries has no man power planning. These problems cause the lack of balance between the work and people and it probably cause labor surplus.
5. The social and political factors. Some labors need to migrate to other countries because they are satisfied with the ways of life, social and political situations since there appear turmoil and discrimination among the political groups in the country.

2.5.2 The Pull Factors in the Destination Country

These include:

1. The higher wages and remuneration in the destination country attract the workers to migrate. They might see that the wage in the same job in other country is higher than that of the payment in the country; they prefer moving toward the new place.
2. The lack of man power in some fields in the foreign countries attracts the workers to seek for their opportunities since the wages and salary are also higher in the destination countries.
3. The opportunity in progressing their careers. The developed countries mostly facilitate the workers conveniently in working as well as the offer of career development for the workers. These factors attract the skilled workers to move out from their own countries and heading for the new jobs for developing and progressing their careers.
4. The opportunity is open for foreign students to be educated and trained in the countries whit higher education becomes the attraction for the foreign labors to settle down themselves and work in the destination countries.

5. Social and political factors, which include the freedom from being prevented by nationality, religion and complexity, the welcoming for migrant workers to work, the relationship of politics between the countries, and the high level of freedom provided.

3. Related Studies

The researcher has examined 16 research topics conducted from 1996 to 2010, it was discovered that the factors affecting the migration of the cross-border migrant workers consisted of the push factors in the original country and the pull factors in the destination country.

The migration is caused by the following main factors.

1. The difference of the economic growth in between two countries.
2. The difference of population structure.
3. The conflict in politics.
4. The conditions of environment and natural resources which are different in each country.
5. The governmental policy to support or not to support the cross-border migration.
6. The main factors stipulating the migration include: the information from mass medias and the convenience of transportation, and migrant networks, for example the relatives who have earlier moved to the destinations.
7. The cross-national human trafficking process which causes many crimes along with the drug smuggling.

The Migration Due to Push Factors and Pull Factors

3.1 Push Factors

On the economic aspect, the factors include: the high rate of unemployment, the inability to seek for jobs in the destination country, the low wage and remuneration, low income, the little opportunity in progressing and developing careers. On the social aspect, it consists of: the seek for health care alternative or a better health condition, the insecurity of life, and the boredom of society. On the political aspect, it includes: the dissatisfaction toward the national political and social situations, for example the turmoil of politics, conflicts, the force of

laboring, the force to pay tax to the government. On the environmental aspect, it includes: drought, flood, the deterioration of soil abundance which is not suitable for cultivation and the decrease of natural resources.

3.2 Pull Factors

On the economic aspect, these factors include: the higher level of wages and remuneration, consistent income, and the stability of career. On the social aspect, it comprises: the modernization of the country that welcomes the labors, the invitation of the relatives, cousins and friends, and the progress social services. On the political aspect, it includes: there is no barrier in national and religious discrimination, and the flexible policy toward the foreign workers. On the environmental aspect, it includes: scenery, weather, community condition, public utility, transportation, sharing a long border, and the convenient transportation which is fast for moving the labors.

4. Research Methodology

This study was based on the mixed methods drawing on both quantitative and qualitative. The populations included the illegal cross-border Myanmar migrant labors in the 3 sectors: 1) construction, 2) agriculture and livestock, and 3) the continual activities on agriculture. The total numbers were 10,460 migrant workers (Chiang Rai Employment Office, November 2012). The samples were divided into two groups: 1) cross border Myanmar Migrant workers in the three sectors with 386 people selected by Taro Yamane followed by Quota Sampling which included: 201 from constructional sites, 118 from agriculture and livestock works, and 67 from continual agricultural work, 2) The employers and the entrepreneurs where the cross border Myanmar Migrant workers worked with which included 10 organizations, and 5 governmental sectors that are related to the cross-national migrant labors and these samples were chosen by purposive random sampling.

The instruments for data collections included a series of questionnaires used for collecting quantitative data and structured interview form used for collecting qualitative data from the employers and the entrepreneurs as well as those who worked for governmental sectors.

Data Analysis

Data analysis conducted the ready-made program analyzing the quantitative research for frequency, percentage, simple correlation using Pearson Product Moment Correlation. The analysis process also covers descriptive explanation for the qualitative data collected from interviews, and then the data was categorized using comparative tables to present the details.

5. Research Findings

The Study of Cross – Border Myanmar Migrant Worker’s Labor Market: Policy Implications for Labor Management in Chiang Rai City, Chiang Rai Province, Thailand was purposive to examine the push factors and the pull factors affecting labor movement into the labor market in the Chiang Rai Province, the application of the policy into practice in accordance with the MOU on the employment of alien labors between Thailand and its partners, and to propose the effective strategic suggestions for the management in the employment of foreign labors in accordance with the MOU between nations. The findings are presented as follows.

- Part I: General information of the cross-national border Myanmar labors.
- Part II: The testing of correlation between the push factors in the original country and the pull factors in the destination country affecting the migration of Myanmar labors in Chiang Rai Province.
- Part III: Problems, obstacles and limitations in the nationality verify process or the processing in MOU on the employment of foreign labors between the countries.
- Part IV: The strategic suggestions for practices on the management of labors between the countries in accordance with MOU on the employment of foreign labors between Thailand and its partners.

5.1 General Information of the Cross-national Border Myanmar Labors

There were 386 cross-border Myanmar laborers which included 250 males (64.8%) and 136 females (35.2 %). Most of them were married (78.8 %) and 283 of them were Myanmar

(73.3%), while the rests were Tai Yai, Kachin, Karen, Tai Lue, Akha, Yakhai and Khaya respectively.

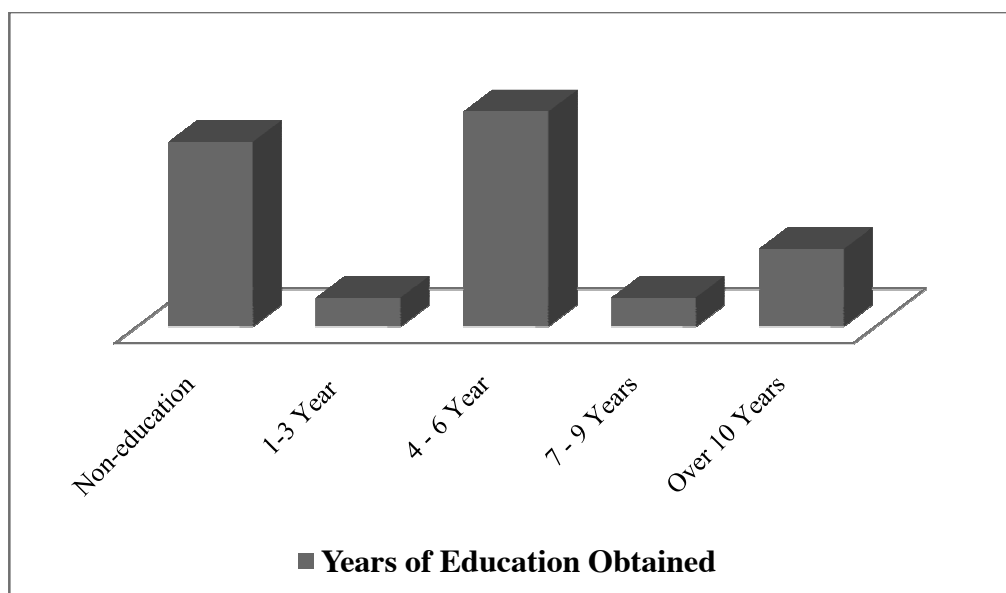


Figure 1. The educational level of the cross-border Myanmar migrant workers working in Chiang Rai Province

It shows that most of the samples or 155 labors had their schooling at level 4-6 years (or 40.2 %), while 133 people (34.5 %) had never studied, 56 people (14.5 %) had studied more than 10 years, 21 people (5.4%) studied during 7-9 years, and 21 people (5.4%) had studied 1-3 years respectively.

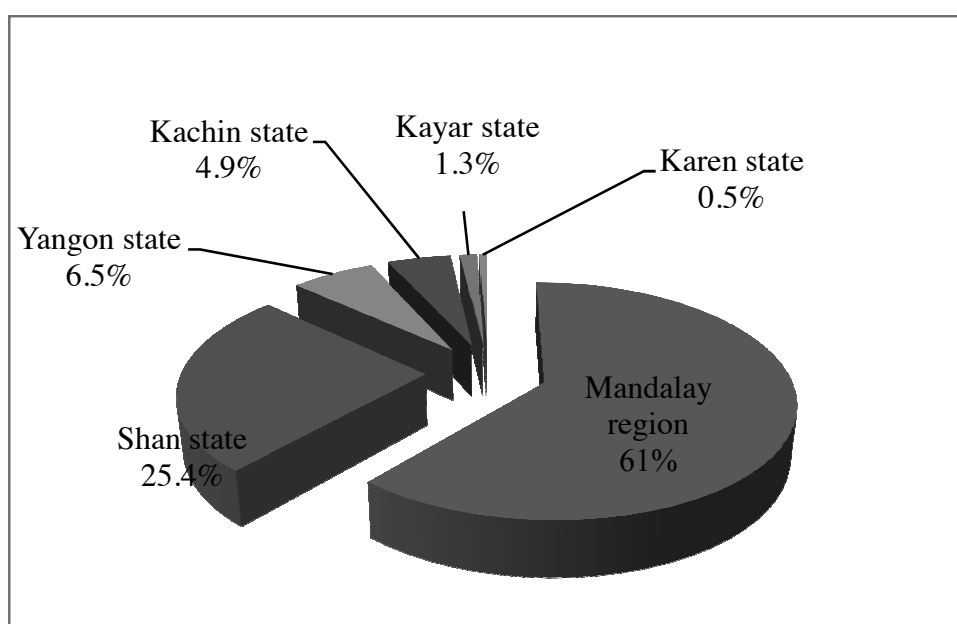


Figure 2. The hometown of the cross-border Myanmar migrant working in Chiang Rai Province

This indicates that most of the labors, 237 people (61.4 %) were originally from Mandalay Region, while 98 (25.4%) were from Shan State. 25 (6.5%) were from Yangon Division, 19 (4.9 %) were from Kachin State, 5 (1.3%) were from Kayar State, and 2 (0.5 %) were from Karen State respectively.

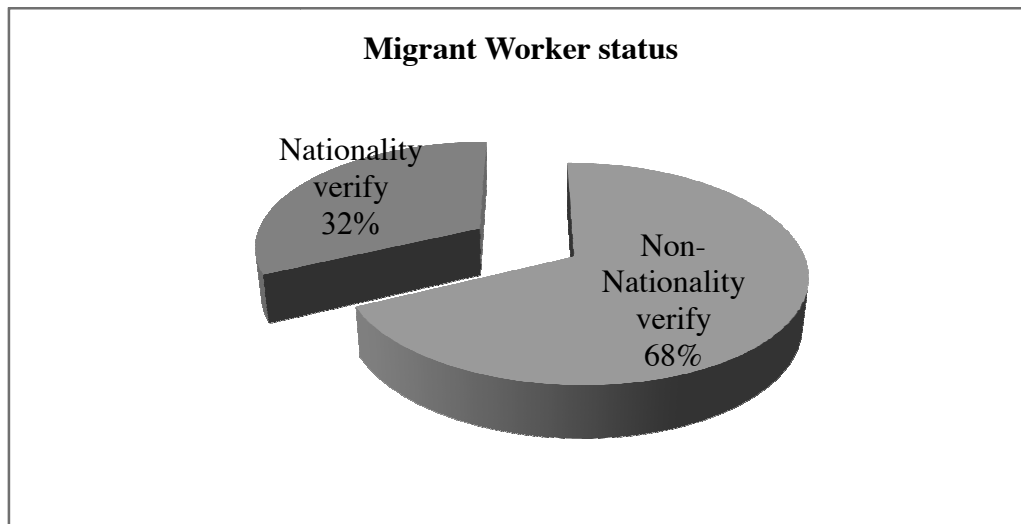


Figure 3. The status of the cross-border Myanmar migrant workers working in Chiang Rai Province

The figure above illustrates the proportion of the cross-border Myanmar labors with their nationality identification process. From 386 Myanmar workers, most of them, 262 people (or 68.0%) did not register for nationality identification, and 124 labors (32.0%) had registered in the process.

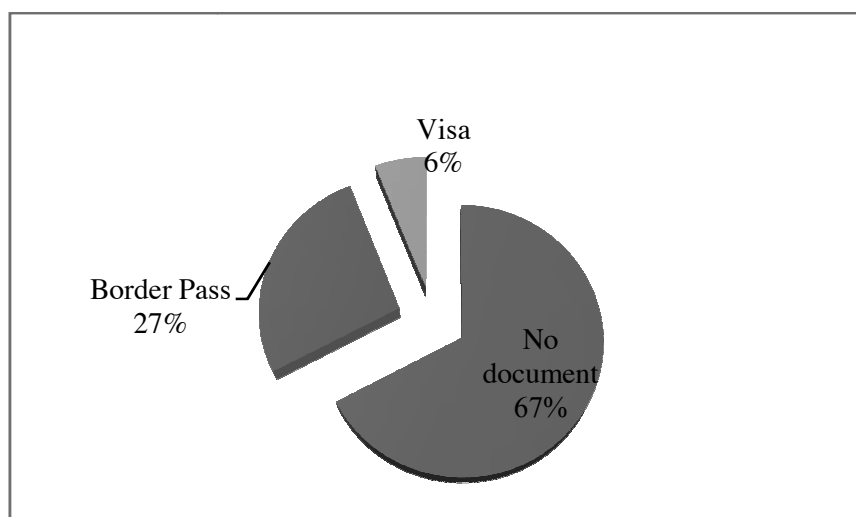


Figure 4. The documents used by the cross-border Myanmar migrant workers to get permission to work in Chiang Rai Province

This provides that most of the cross-border Myanmar labors entered to Thailand at Mae Sai Checking Point, Chiang Rai Province by illegal entry without any official entry document (260 labors or 67.0%), while 103 workers (27.0%) entered with border pass, and 23 labors (6.0%) entered with visa respectively.

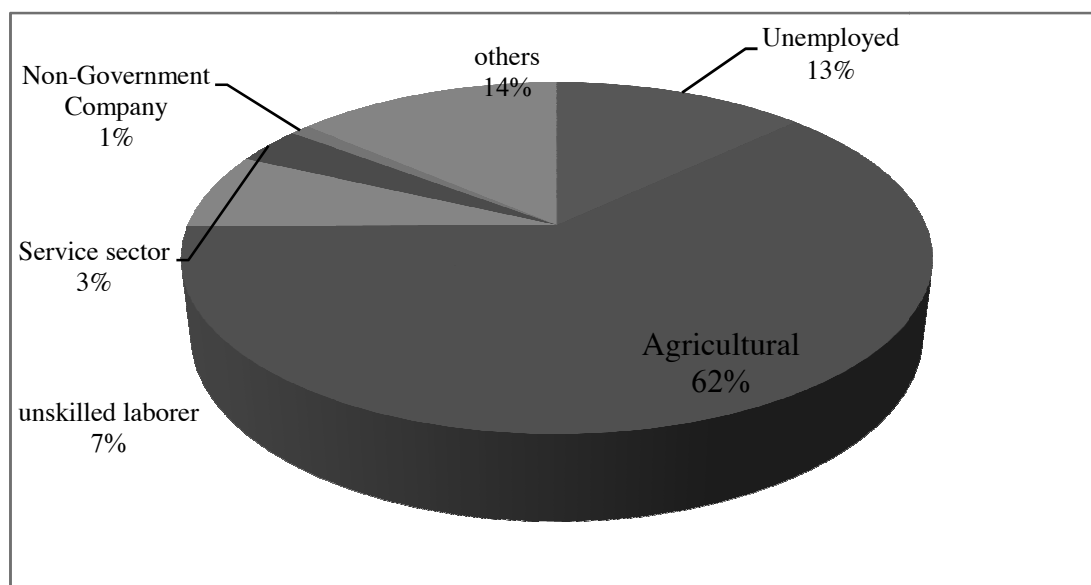


Figure 5. The occupations of the cross-border Myanmar migrant workers in Myanmar

Figure 5 shows that most of the samples, 239 labors (61.90%) were working on farms in the original country, while 4 workers (1.0%) were working for private company.

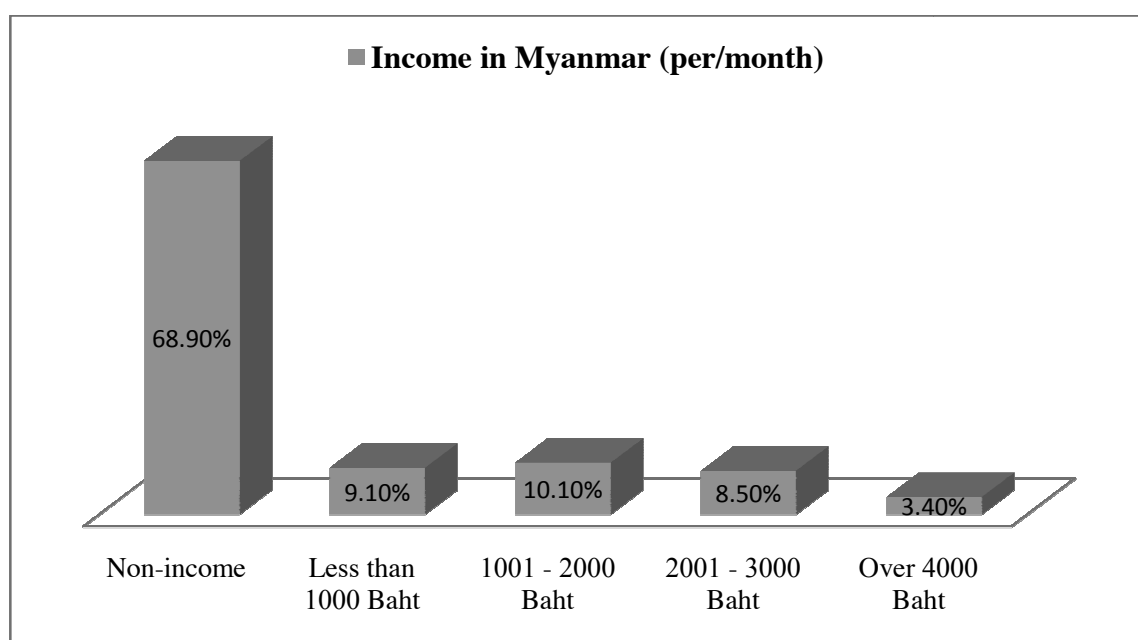


Figure 6. The income of the cross-border Myanmar migrant workers in Myanmar

The Figure represents the income per month of the cross-border Myanmar migrant workers in the original country before working in Chiang Rai Province. Most of the samples, 266 labors (68.9 %) had no income, 39 workers (10.10%) earned about 1,001 – 2,000 Baht, 35 labors (9.1%) earned lower than 1,000 Baht, 33 workers (8.5%) earned about 2,100 – 3,000 Baht, and 13 workers (3.4%) earned more than 4,000 Baht respectively.

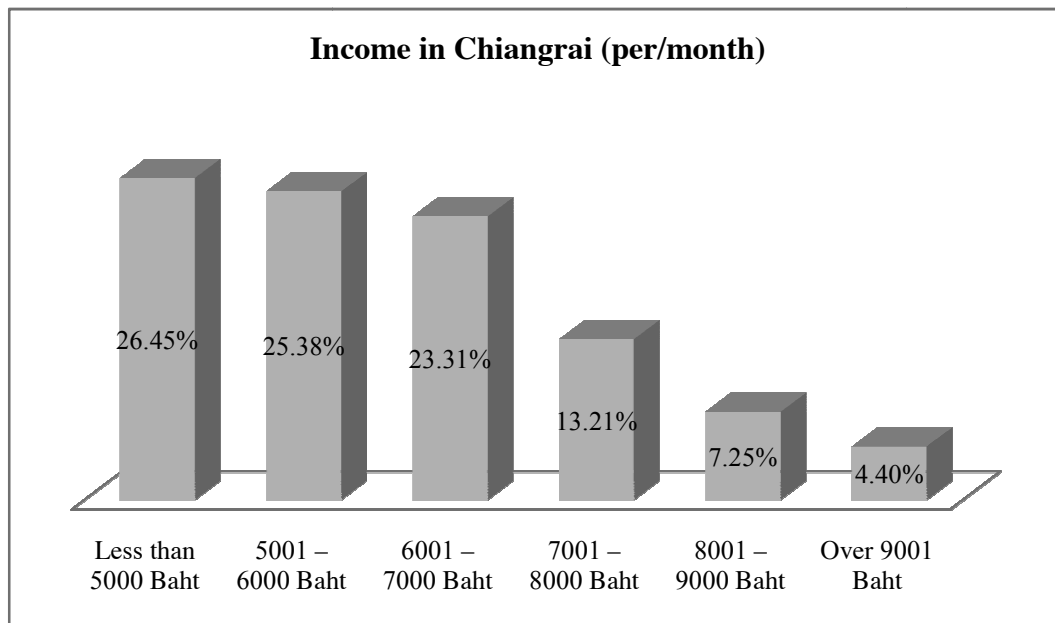


Figure 7. The incomes of the sample groups working in Chiang Rai Province

The Figure represents the income per month of the cross-border Myanmar migrant workers in the destination area – Chiang Rai Province. It presents that most of the labors, 102 persons (26.45%) had their income lower than 5,000 Baht, while 17 labors (4.40%) had earned more than 9,001 Baht per month.

5.2 The Push Factors and Pull Factors

The push factors and pull factors influencing the movement of cross-border Myanmar migrant workers into labor market in Chiang Rai Province.

The study on push factors and pull factors influencing the migration the cross-border Myanmar migrant workers into Chiang Rai area comprised of 4 aspects: economic, social, political, and environmental.

5.2.1 The Push Factors at the Original Country

Table 1. The Economic Push Factors

Economic factors	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
1. Low wage/ low income	317	82.1	1
2. Uncertain job	301	78.0	2
3. Unemployed / unable to find job	294	76.2	3
4. Low income and insufficient for a living	285	73.8	4
5. Requirement to increase property in family, for example house and land	207	53.6	5
6. Too much debt	45	11.7	6
7. Inequality of employment	45	11.7	7
8. The necessity to increase income in order to look after the family members	43	11.1	8
9. The need to change to a better job	26	6.7	9
10. Having no ownership in the agricultural land	10	2.6	10

It illustrates that the economic push factors in the original place influencing the migrant workers to move out from their country were ranked as follows: low wage or low income (82.1%), uncertain job (78.0%), unemployed (76.2%), low income insufficiently for a living (73.8%), and need to increase the property for family, for example land and house (53.6%).

Table 2. The Social Push Factors

Social Factors	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
1. There is no facility for life and family	209	54.1	1
2. It is difficult to reach public health care and hospital	22	5.7	2
3. There is no security for life and property	10	2.6	3
4. There is no place for children’s schooling	5	1.3	4

It was found that the social push factors at the original area that most of the samples (54.1%) responded which included: there was no facility for life and family, while 5.7 % of them ranked the reach to public health care and hospital the second.

Table 3. The Political Push Factors

Political Factors	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
1. The easy process to facilitate the labors to move out of the country	157	40.7	1
2. Escaping from political turmoil in Myanmar	15	3.9	2
3. Being forced to be labors from the Myanmar military	5	1.3	3

It illustrates that the political push factors at the original areas responded by the samples group appeared that most of them (40.7 %) stated the easy process to facilitate them to move out of Myanmar, and 3.9 % of them mentioned that they wanted to escape from the political turmoil in their country.

Table 4. The Environmental Push Factors

Environmental Factors	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
1. It is difficult to live in the environment	66	17.1	1

It illustrates that the environmental push factor at the original area responded by the sample group was that it was difficult to live in the environment in Myanmar, that was 17.1 %.

5.2.2 The Pull Factors at the Destination Country

Table 5. The economic pull factors

Economic Factors	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
1. Earning regular income	353	91.5	1
2. Having high opportunity to get job	340	88.1	2
3. Saving money or property	276	71.5	3
4. Having more offered job positions	247	64.0	4
5. Gaining high wage and high income	207	53.6	5
6. Having more choices of jobs to choose	160	41.5	6
7. Being facilitated by the employers or private companies in Chiang Rai Province	143	37.0	7
8. Being equal in being employed	64	16.6	8

It demonstrates that the economic pull factors at the destination area responded by the sample group in the 5 ranks are as follows: 1) having regular income (91.5%), 2) having high opportunity to get job (88.1%), saving money and property (71.5%), having more choices of job to choose (64.0%), and 5) getting high wage and high income (53.6%) respectively.

Table 6. The Social Pull Factors

Social Factors	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
1. Having a better quality of life, being provided with basic life factors: food, clothe, and housing	181	46.9	1
2. Being invited by friends or relatives to move	112	29.0	2
3. Having no obstruction for a cross-border migrant labors	45	11.7	3
4. Being able to reach public health care or nursing service easily and safely	39	10.1	4
5. Being secured for life and property with peaceful community, and having high freedom	31	8.0	5
6. Having opportunity for children’s schooling	28	7.3	6
7. Having opportunity to join the vocational training or self development from the employers or related organizations	5	1.3	7
8. Assuming that they have suitable qualifications for the jobs in Chiang Rai Province	5	1.3	8

It shows that the economic pull factors at the destination area responded by the sample groups were ranked as follows: most of them (46.9%) stated on a better quality of life, being provided with basic life factors: food, clothe, and housing, the second rank was on the invitation from friends and relatives to move (29.0%), and the third rank was on there was no obstruction for the cross-border migrant workers (11.7%) respectively.

Table 7. The Political Pull Factors

Political Factors	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
1. It is easy to enter the labor market in Chiang Rai Province	317	82.1	1
2. Having freedom and right in living	75	19.4	2
3. The politics in Chiang Rai is peaceful	17	4.4	3
4. Getting information about the shortage of labors or the vacancies in Chiang Rai Province	10	2.6	4
5. The policy of sending back the alien labors of the Thai government is not strick	8	2.1	5

It illustrates that the political pull factors at the destination area responded by the sample group ranked as follows: 1) it is easy to enter into the labor market in Chiang Rai Province (82.10%), 2) having freedom and right in living (19.4 %), and the politics in Chiang Rai is peaceful (4.4%) respectively.

Table 8. The Environmental Pull Factors

Environmental Factors	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
1. The geographic features attract the labors to work in Chiang Rai Province	238	61.7	1
2. Having a better environment for living, for example housing and food	207	53.6	2
3. The location is close to hometown	117	30.3	3

It demonstrates that the environment at the original area responded by the sample group were ranked as follows: 1) the geographic features attract them to work in Chaingrai (61.7%), 2) having a better environmental for living, for example housing and food (53.6%), and 3) it is located close to their hometown (30.3%) respectively.

5.3 The Testing of Correlation

The testing of correlation between the push factors at the original area and the pull factors in the destination area influencing the migration of the cross-border Myanmar migrant workers into Chiang Rai Province.

Table 9. The testing of correlation between the push factors at the original country and the pull factors in the destination country influencing the migration of the cross-border Myanmar migrant workers into Chiang Rai Province

The economic factors	Low wage/low income	Uncertain job	Unemployed/ unable to seek for jobs	Lower income insufficiently for a living	Need more property for family	Having regular income	Having more jobs offered	High wage/ high income	Having high opportunity to get jobs
Low wage/Low income	1								
Uncertain job	.046	1							
Unemployed/ unable to seek for jobs	-.150(**)	-.033	1						
Lower income insufficiently for a living	.168(**)	.011	-.043	1					
Need more property for family	.122(*)	.246(**)	.065	.049	1				

The economic factors	Low wage/low income	Uncertain job	Unemployed/ unable to seek for jobs	Lower income insufficiently for a living	Need more property for family	Having regular income	Having more jobs offered	High wage/ high income	Having high opportunity to get jobs
	.016	.000	.202	.335	.				
Having regular income	-.046	.128(*)	.003	-.056	.180(**)	1			
Having high opportunity to get jobs	.368	.012	.954	.276	.000	.			
	-.067	.326(**)	.095	-.073	.123(*)	.174(**)	1		
Saving money or property	.187	.000	.064	.150	.016	.001	.		
	-.100	.011	.024	.120(*)	-.127(*)	-.049	.016	1	
	.050	.833	.638	.018	.013	.334	.757	.	
Having more jobs offered	.115(*)	.135(**)	-.052	.388(**)	.168(**)	.118(*)	.141(**)	.112(*)	1
	.024	.008	.305	.000	.001	.020	.006	.027	.
	.149(**)	-.156(**)	-.167(**)	.439(**)	-.052	.143(**)	-.246(**)	.080	.201(**)
High wage/ high income	.003	.002	.001	.000	.307	.005	.000	.115	.000

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

From Table 9, It shows that the testing of correlation on the push factors at the original area and the pull factors at the destination area appears related at a statistical significant level 0.05 and 0.01 respectively. The factor on the uncertain job at the original area is related to the high opportunity to get jobs, the high opportunity to get jobs, high wage and high income, and regular income at the destination area at the statistically significant level at 0.01 and 0.05 respectively. The employment factor due to the inability to seek for the job is related to high wage and high income at the destination area at a statistically significant level at 0.01.

Table 10. The Social Factors

		No facilities and convenience in life and family	A better quality of life with a services of basic factors: food, clothe, and housing	Being invited from friends and relatives to move
No facilities and convenience in life and family	Pearson Correlation	1	.438(**)	-.065
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.205
	N	386	386	386
A better quality of life with a services of basic factors: food, clothe, and housing	Pearson Correlation	.438(**)	1	.040
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.435
	N	386	386	386
Being invited from friends and relatives to move	Pearson Correlation	-.065	.040	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.205	.435	.
	N	386	386	386

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

The low income insufficiently for a living at the original area is related to more job offered, high wage and high income, and saving money and property at the destination area at the statistically significant level 0.01 and 0.05 respectively. The need to increase property in family at the original area is related to regular income, more jobs offered, high opportunity to get jobs and saving money and property at the destination area at the statistically significant level 0.01 and 0.05 respectively.

From Table 10, the testing of the push factors in the original country and the social pull factors in the destination country influencing the migration of the cross-border Myanmar migrant workers in Chiang Rai Province appeared that without facilities and convenience in life and family in the original area are responsive to a better quality of life, the service of basic factors, food, clothes and housing in the destination country at the statistically significant level 0.01.

Table 11. The political factors

		The simple process of moving out from the original country	The entry into labor market in Chiang Rai is easy
The simple process of moving out from the original country	Pearson Correlation	1	-.082
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.109
	N	386	386
The entry into labor market in Chiang Rai is easy	Pearson Correlation	-.082	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.109	.
	N	386	386

From Table 11, the testing of correlation between the push factors at the original country and the political pull factors influencing the migration of the cross-border Myanmar migrant workers in Chiang Rai Province appeared that the process of moving out the country is made

easy are related to the entry into labor market in the destination country is made easy at the statistically significant level 0.01.

Table 12. The Environmental Factors

		Having difficult environme nt for a living	The geographical features attract to move into Chiang Rai	Having a better environment for a living for example, food and housing
Having difficult environment for a living	Pearson Correlation	1	-.010	.243(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.847	.000
	N	386	386	386
The geographical features attract to move into Chiang Rai	Pearson Correlation	-.010	1	.324(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.847	.	.000
	N	386	386	386
Having a better environment for a living for example, food and housing	Pearson Correlation	.243(**)	.324(**)	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.
	N	386	386	386

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

From Table 12, the testing of the correlation between the push factors at the original country and the environmental pull factors at the destination country of the cross-border Myanmar migrant workers in Chiang Rai Province appeared that the difficult environment in the original country are related to the factor on a better environment for a living for example, housing and food at the destination country at a statistically significant level 0.01.

The findings show that the push factors at the original country of the cross-border Myanmar migrant workers are related to the migration of the cross-border Myanmar migrant workers into the labor market in Chiang Rai Province, Thailand. These factors include: low income insufficiently for a living, the shortage of facilities and convenience in life and family at the original country which caused them to migrate into the neighboring countries. Moreover, other factors, such as the vacancies, high wage, a better quality of life in economic, social, and environmental features also responded to the basic factors for a living. With these, it is to accept the set hypothesis.

5.4 Problems, Obstacles and Limitations

Problems, obstacles and limitations in the process of nationality identification or the process in accordance with the MOU on the employment of foreign workers between the countries.

The strong point – the problems, obstacles and limitations in the nationality identification in accordance with the MOU on the employment of foreign workers between the countries.

Strengths		
Labors	Employers	Governmental Sectors
Receive standard employment contact as mentioned in the labor protection law	Being confident that the Myanmar labors are the Myanmar nationality people. In case of any damage, the employers can pursue the case and coordinate with the Myanmar government.	Making the agencies responsible for alien labors to follow the mission of the organizations effectively and it can enforce the law as expected.
Having obvious Myanmar nationality as legal foreign labors	Employ the labors legally, safely from being inspections from the officials	
Being secure in work, not being laid off by the employers or stop hiring when being pregnant		
Being safe from the inspections of the police		
Being protected in case of sickness, unemployment, old age		

Strengths		
Labors	Employers	Governmental Sectors
<p>and death</p> <p>The government has a policy to look after the labors since proposing their needs to join the nationality identification process</p> <p>Not being captive in only the housing area and having right to travel to other provinces</p> <p>Be able to ask for driving license of both car and motorcycle</p> <p>Be the owner of the car</p>		

Problems, obstacles and limitations		
Labors	Employers	Governmental Organizations
<p>The fee and expense for labor registration and national identification process is higher when comparing to the wage.</p> <p>The process of labor registration and nationality identification takes time. The labors who receive wage per day may be impacted from the working process.</p>	<p>The labor registration and national identification affect the employment process of the employers, that is the labors can change their employers freely and this affects the entrepreneurial sectors and it is open the gap for the Myanmar labors to move around the country easily.</p> <p>The process of labor registration is complex with many steps.</p>	<p>A large number of Myanmar labors affect the delay of working process</p> <p>The working implementation according to the MOU on the employment of foreign labors of Thailand and its partners is integrative process which is needed the cooperation from</p>

Problems, obstacles and limitations		
Labors	Employers	Governmental Organizations
When being registered and identified the nationality, some working places would keep the passport and this limits the labors' freedom in a living.	Unable to register and identify the nationality in the working place as scheduled due to a large number of Myanmar labors.	many sections. Some sectors can wait, but not every sector.

5.5 Strategic Policy

Strategic policy for the implementation on the labor management between the countries with MOU on the employment of foreign labors (Thailand and its partners).

6. Recommendations

6.1 Recommendations for the Thai Government

1. The governmental sectors are suggested to develop a working system by reducing the process of labor registration and nationality identification in order to support the labors, employers and working places.
2. It is suggested to expand more time for labor registration and nationality identification in order to allow the laborers, employers and working places to be able to complete their processes.
3. It is advised to do more public relations for labor registration and nationality identification covering all the areas both in urban area and rural area.
4. The government needs to set up a clear measure and policy to make the employers confident in the case of being identified the by nationality. The laborers will not change their employers in order to seek for better economic, social and environmental opportunities.
5. The government needs to have a clear policy on the duration of stay of the laborers who register and join in the nationality identification.

6. It is to suggest in setting up the policy to ask the employers and entrepreneurs to be responsible for the fee on labor registration and national identification to reduce their employees’ burden.

6.2 Recommendations for the Myanmar Government

1. The government of Myanmar should establish economic equality and income distribution opportunity to the ethnic groups in the viability of an access to production factors. This is the foundation of the economic stability in enhancing the people to earn stable income and permanent livelihood. And in turn the people will not make an attempt to seek other sources of income by way of leaving their home country.
2. The government of Myanmar needs to provide basic welfare services to the people for the establishment of security in life.

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- Publication of reports as MI working paper series.

The Mekong Institute (MI) is an intergovernmental organization with a residential learning facility located on the campus of Khon Kaen University in the northeastern Thailand. It serves the countries of the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS), namely, Cambodia, Lao P.D.R., Myanmar, Thailand, Vietnam, Yunnan Province and Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region of PR. China.

MI is the only GMS-based development learning institute, chartered by the six GMS Governments, offering standard and on-demand capacity development programs focusing on regional cooperation and integration issues.

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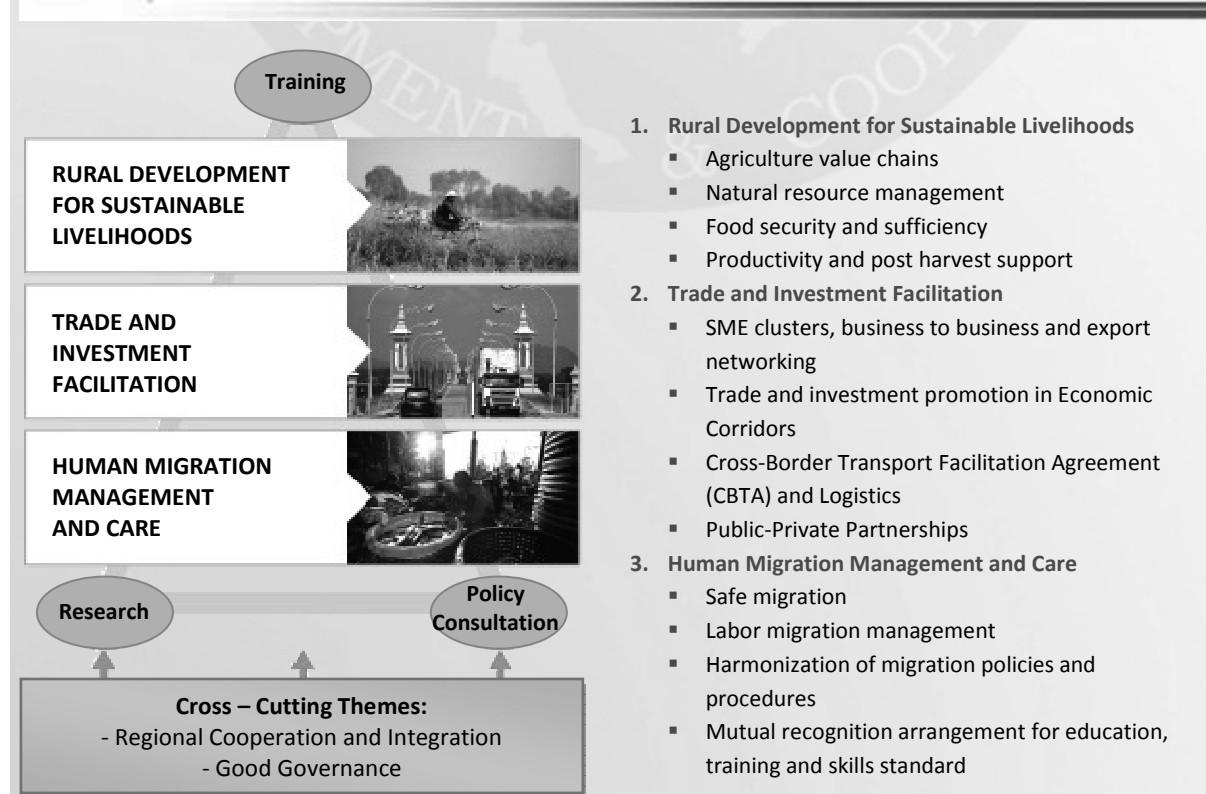
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