**Abstract**

This thesis examines the history of education in Myanmar during the Revolutionary Council period (1962–1974), focusing on the policies, reforms, and their socio-economic impacts. The aim of this thesis is to analyze the government’s educational strategies, particularly its efforts to expand access to education, introduce socialist-oriented curricula, and centralize control over academic institutions. Additionally, the study explores the challenges and consequences of these reforms on students, teachers, and broader society. The research employs a historical methodology, utilizing primary sources such as government records, policy documents, and contemporary newspapers, alongside secondary sources including academic books and journal articles. Through qualitative analysis, the study reconstructs the educational landscape of the period, highlighting key policy shifts and their implications. The findings suggest that while the Revolutionary Council sought to promote mass education and align the curriculum with socialist principles, the system faced significant obstacles, including resource shortages, ideological constraints, and the suppression of academic freedom. These factors led to mixed outcomes—expanded literacy rates but also declining educational quality and restricted intellectual discourse. The study concludes that the policies implemented during this period laid the foundation for Myanmar’s socialist education system, shaping future educational reforms in the country.

**Introduction**

The Revolutionary Council (RC) government (1962-1974) marked a significant period in Myanmar's educational history, as it sought to reform the education system to align with socialist principles. The government aimed to make education accessible to all social classes, emphasizing state control over curricula and administration. During this period, significant transformations occurred in the basic education sector, higher education sector, and vocational education sector, each reflecting the broader ideological shifts in governance and policy.

**The basic education sector** witnessed a push towards universal primary education, curriculum standardization, and nationalistic content reinforcement. The government sought to reduce educational disparities by expanding school infrastructure, nationalizing private schools, and introducing a curriculum that emphasized socialist values, national identity, and vocational skills. However, challenges such as resource constraints, quality of education, and disparities in rural and urban areas persisted.

**The higher education sector** underwent restructuring to align with the Revolutionary Council’s emphasis on state-led economic planning and socialist governance. Universities were placed under strict government control, and academic freedoms were restricted. The government established institutions aimed at producing graduates equipped with skills relevant to national development needs, often prioritizing technical and applied sciences over humanities and social sciences.

**The vocational education sector** received renewed attention as the government sought to equip the workforce with practical skills necessary for industrial and agricultural development. Technical and vocational institutes were expanded, with an emphasis on training skilled labor to support state-driven economic projects. However, challenges such as outdated curricula, limited industry collaboration, and insufficient funding remained obstacles to achieving the desired outcomes.

**Research Objectives**

* To examine the policies and strategies implemented by the Revolutionary Council in the basic, higher, and vocational education sectors.
* To analyze the impact of these reforms on educational access, curriculum development, and institutional structures.
* To assess the effectiveness of vocational education reforms in addressing the labor market needs of the period.
* To evaluate the broader socio-political implications of the educational transformations under the Revolutionary Council.

**Research Method**

This thesis adopts a historical research approach, utilizing both primary and secondary sources. Archival materials, government reports, policy documents, and contemporary newspapers will be examined to understand the official perspectives on educational reforms. Additionally, secondary sources such as academic papers, books, and interviews with scholars on Myanmar’s educational history will be analyzed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the era’s educational changes. A comparative analysis of pre- and post-1962 educational policies will be conducted to assess the impact of the Revolutionary Council’s policies.

**Research Questions**

* What were the key educational policies implemented by the Revolutionary Council in basic, higher, and vocational education?
* How did the government restructure the education system to align with socialist principles?
* What were the major challenges faced in implementing these reforms, and how were they addressed?
* What was the impact of these reforms on student enrollment, curriculum content, and educational accessibility?
* How did the changes in vocational education influence labor market trends and economic development during the period?

This thesis aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of Myanmar’s educational history by analyzing the complex interplay between political ideology, state control, and educational development during the Revolutionary Council era.

**Conclusion**

The history of education during the Revolutionary Council period (1962-1974) represents a significant chapter in Myanmar's educational development. This era was characterized by sweeping reforms aimed at aligning the education system with socialist principles, increasing accessibility, and promoting national identity. However, despite ambitious policies, several challenges hindered their full realization. The impact of these reforms continues to shape Myanmar’s education system today.

Basic Education

The Revolutionary Council placed strong emphasis on basic education as a means of fostering socialist ideals and ensuring mass literacy. Efforts were made to expand primary and secondary education, with new schools established in rural areas to reduce the urban-rural educational divide. The curriculum was restructured to incorporate socialist ideology, civic education, and national history, aiming to instill patriotism and socialist values among young students. The government also introduced policies to make education more accessible, including the abolition of school fees and the provision of free textbooks.

Despite these efforts, several challenges emerged. The rapid expansion of schools strained resources, resulting in inadequate facilities, a shortage of trained teachers, and overcrowded classrooms. The emphasis on political indoctrination sometimes overshadowed the focus on critical thinking and academic rigor. Additionally, the centralized control over education limited pedagogical innovation and discouraged intellectual diversity. Although literacy rates improved, the overall quality of education remained a concern.

Higher Education

Higher education during the Revolutionary Council period underwent major transformations in structure and governance. Universities were nationalized, and their administration was centralized under the government’s direct control. The curriculum was modified to align with socialist ideology, with an emphasis on technical and applied sciences that would support national development. Political education became a mandatory component of higher education, and student activism was suppressed to maintain ideological conformity.

One of the key challenges faced by the higher education sector was the decline in academic freedom. Professors and scholars were restricted in their research, with limitations imposed on foreign collaborations and access to international academic resources. This led to a stagnation in intellectual development and scientific progress. Moreover, the lack of adequate funding and modernization efforts resulted in outdated facilities, further hindering the quality of higher education.

Vocational Education

Recognizing the need for a skilled workforce to support industrial and agricultural development, the Revolutionary Council promoted vocational education. Technical and vocational training institutions were established to equip students with practical skills in engineering, agriculture, and industrial trades. These institutions aimed to produce graduates who could contribute directly to national economic growth.

However, vocational education faced persistent challenges, including inadequate funding, outdated training equipment, and a lack of experienced instructors. Many students and parents also viewed vocational training as inferior to academic education, leading to lower enrollment rates. Additionally, the limited availability of employment opportunities for vocational graduates weakened the effectiveness of these programs.

Future Prospects

The legacy of the Revolutionary Council’s educational policies continues to influence Myanmar’s education system. While the period saw an expansion of educational access, the emphasis on political indoctrination and centralized control created long-term challenges in academic freedom and curriculum flexibility. In the future, Myanmar must focus on addressing these historical shortcomings to build a more robust and inclusive education system.

Reforms should prioritize the modernization of infrastructure, teacher training, and curriculum diversification to meet contemporary global standards. Greater investment in higher education and research is essential to revitalize academic excellence and encourage innovation. Additionally, vocational education must be strengthened by improving its perception, aligning training programs with market demands, and fostering stronger partnerships with industries.

Overall, while the Revolutionary Council period marked a transformative phase in Myanmar’s education system, its long-term impact reveals both progress and limitations. Future educational policies must build on past experiences, integrating lessons learned to create an education system that fosters critical thinking, economic development, and global competitiveness.