

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION



1. Conclusion

As a result of Thailand is destination country for unskilled workers—most of them are Burmese and there is unclear policy about migrant workers thus, in each year, there is an increase of migrant workers and migrant children in Thailand. Most of them work for fishery industries, construction, mining etc. At the beginning in 1992 Thai cabinet resolution allowed those to register for the border provinces later the cabinet resolution allowed an expansion of the sectors and areas thus, now a day there are about million migrant workers in Thailand. Most of them face some problems such as less wage labor, poor condition of work and living, labor abuse and trafficking. To consider their poor living and work condition based on Human Rights, there are many International Conventions on Human Rights that ratified by Royal Thai Government. The core of these conventions addresses the basic rights of migrant workers and their children. Consequently, International Convention is important to protect their life and prevent labor abuse. Additionally, most migrants have children who were born inside and outside Thailand are gradually increased in each year and some of them are stateless because their parents are undocumented. However, from their basic rights, they have rights to get access to basic services such as medical care and basic education addressed in the International Conventions especially in the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

One of the most important services for every one is basic education that can improve and development one's mentality, behavior and skills. According to the International Conventions about educational opportunities that ratified by Royal Thai Government, the Thai Ministry of Education has launched the first obvious regulation in 1992; migrant and stateless children are permitted to enroll in state primary schools. This policy, however, is not practically effective. Only few children attend the schools due to ignorance of the local authorities, schools being ill-prepared, lacking of public relations, and limitation of government's budget for education support. Currently, the cabinet resolution in 2005; the migrant children have more educational opportunities and practically, it tends to be effective because it mentioned the subsidiary for children and undocumented children could access to formal school.

In 2004, 517 of non Thai students attend formal school in Samut Sakhon province. At present, there are 60 Burmese students study in formal schools.

Currently, in Samut Sakhon, there are approximately 4,000 Burmese migrant children, there are about 60 children (1.5%) studying in formal school, 180 children (4.5%) studying in informal school and 2,760 children (69%) who out of school. From this proportion, there are 240 children (6%) access school. Consequently, a few children have educational opportunities. However, in 2005, there was a strategic plan that will be practiced in 2006 for 1,000 migrant children and this plan also tends to be effective.

Not only the policy and official practice are the obstacles of school access but also their parents and themselves. As a result of natural fear of the illegal workers, their economic and the lifestyle of the displaced children, in addition to the barriers of language and culture. Moreover, parents consider their children are main power in the family. They are important for creating extra income. If their parents encourage them to study, they will have educational opportunities. Additionally, most parents still do not realize an importance of education, thus they would like their children to work for earning. Consequently, public relations about importance of education should be done toward Burmese migrant workers.

However, the formal education is not influence on their educational expectation; the children studying in formal school have their educational expectation until P.6, M.3 or M.6. In contrast, the children studying in other kinds of school do not understand about educational level thus, their expectation is access to formal school. Additionally, Most of them have the same career expectation as their parents but three children studying in Thai school would like to be teacher, doctor and soldier that are different career expectation from others because they study in formal school. A few children who have their own educational and career expectation may not get their expectation in the future. Thailand has reservation occupation for Thai citizen thus their jobs will like their parents' work.

Informal education that operated by NGOs may be a better choice for Burmese children now because there is no school regulation; this kind of school is emphasized on skill's development rather than systematic instruction. Most parents are very interested in informal education operated by NGOs since their children are able to study and work at the same time. They will understand about culture, moral and social rule of Thais to adapt themselves for living together with Thai people.

At policy level, all have the educational opportunities in formal school but in practice, a few get this opportunity because of many factors; schools, migrant children and their parents. Each Thai school has a different regulation of migrant acceptance therefore; practically, the condition of acceptance is also different. Some students access free education and lunch, some access free only education, some have to pay for both tuition and lunch fee. The tuition fee of Thai school causes lack of educational opportunity for Burmese migrant children. The parents allow their children to study in informal school operated by NGOs instead of informal school operated by ethnic Mon community because it is free.

Although, attending basic education has a few influences on Burmese children's life style and future career expectation, they will know about Thai culture and social regulations, and their basic rights for peaceful living with Thai people. As a result, it will reduce social problems and prevent them from illegal act such as crime, drug addition. Additionally, the education will develop their skill and being skilled labor for Thailand in the future. In case they are out of school, they spend their days working to help support their families with little or supervision. In Samut Sakhon province, most of boys always play game after finish working. They waste their time on playing games that owned by Thai instead of attending schools. They spend all of their daily income for playing game; most of them will get 10-20 baht from their parents if they help their parents work. Without education, most of them do not progress beyond the status of their parents; poor, illiterate, and unskilled labor.

For proposed solution to the problems, every sector that related to this topic should cooperate with each other. The policy maker should have clear policy about the way of practice—provide the budget for migrant children and inform policy to every school. All teachers should be informed and understand the policy. Thai employers, NGOs and government officials should cooperate and announce the educational opportunities of migrant children to all migrant workers. Additionally, these organizations should inform the advantage of education to migrant workers because the parent is an important factor of school access. For informal school, NGOs which relevant to this topic should have more informal schools for migrant children in their communities.

2. Discussion

Do Burmese migrant children have educational opportunity? This question can be answer in many ways depending on Thai government policies, school practice and the definition of educational opportunity etc.

1.) According to the International Conventions particularly in the Convention of the Rights of the Child that addresses about educational opportunities. The children in this convention refer to all children who live in one country. In Article 28, it mentions many points about educational rights for all children on basis of equal opportunity as follow. (a.) Make primary education compulsory and available free to all. All children in Samut Sakhon province do not get access to primary education, a few Burmese children study in primary school. Although, they get access to school, some have to pay for tuition fee. (b.) “Encourage the development of different forms of secondary education, including general and vocational education, make them available and accessible to every child, and take appropriate measures such as the introduction of free education and offering financial assistance in case of need. In case of Samut Sakhon province, none of Burmese children studies in secondary school. Although, since 1992, Thai government policy allowed them to study in formal school, all Burmese children study in primary school. Additionally, general education is operated in form of informal school to which all Burmese children could get access. Informal school in this province seems to be the skill development center for their formal school access. For financial aid, some Burmese students have this assistance but some of them have to pay school’s tuition fee. (c.) Make higher education accessible to all on the basic of capacity by every appropriate means. According to this statement, Thai government has not encouraged higher education yet because some children such as Burmese children living in Thailand still have no basic education. The higher education will be the next step after all children could get access to basic education. (d.) Make educational and vocational information and guidance available and accessible to all children. Some obstacles of school access of Burmese migrant children in Samut Sakhon province are from lacking of information. Some parents and children do not know that the children are eligible to study in formal school. (e.) Take measures to encourage regular attendance at schools and reduction of drop-rates.” The Ministry of Education launched policy in 2005 that encourage all children to attend the schools. This regulation allowed all children with

undocumented to study basic education in formal schools. Actually, since 2004, the Ministry of Education allowed all children to study in formal school without school certificate. But, in reality, a few Burmese children access to formal schools.

In Article 28, No.2, mentions that State Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that school discipline is administered in manner consistent with the child's human dignity and in conformity with the present Convention. There are some misunderstand of teachers in some schools about student acceptance in Samut Sakhon province. By the first policy of the Ministry of Education in 1992 and following policies in 2004 and 2005, all children have their educational opportunities but reality, a few has this opportunity. In Samut Sakhon province, there are around 4,000 Burmese children but there are only 60 students in Thai schools. Consequently, the policies are not effective. Some problems are from school practices although the policies addressed that all children--whoever lives in Thai territory could access to school. Practically, some schools refuse to accept non-Thai nationality because some teachers do not understand and do not know the policy. They ask for children's household registration document and birth certificate.

2.) Regarding to the Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families clearly mentions educational rights of children. Even though, Thailand has not ratified this convention, migrant children in Thailand should have educational rights in line with this convention. In Article 30, this Convention addresses "Each child of migrant workers shall have the basic right of access to education on the basis of equality of treatment with nationals of the State concerned. Access to public pre-school educational institutions or schools shall not be refused or limited by reason of irregular situation with respect to stay or employment of either parent or by reason of the irregularity of child's stay in the State of employment." Practically, in Thailand, each child of migrant workers have no the educational right of access on the basis of equality of treatment with nationals of the State. Samut Sakhon, for example, some Burmese children have right to access to formal school but they have to pay tuition fee. Controversy, Thai children get access to the same school with out tuition fee. The school charges the tuition fee because of an inadequate subsidiary.

3.) Until The World Conference on Education For All in 1990 cause the Dakar Framework for Action declared that by 2015, all children of primary-school age would participate in free school, the Ministry of Education launched the policies

that aim to give educational opportunities for all children reality, there are some obstacles and problems of school access. However, the migrant children trend to have more educational opportunities than the past because now a day, this topic is concerned by many organizations such as government officials and NGOs etc. Although it takes long time to provide education for all, it may possibly that by 2015; all children in Thailand could get access to free primary school.

3. Recommendations for further studies

- 1.) Since the Ministry of Education launched policy in 2005, all children in Thailand have more chance to access to basic education. The further research should stress on the development of educational opportunities of non-Thai nationality children and the problems of school access. It should survey the number of migrant children especially, Burmese children in Samut Sakhon province.
- 2.) After Samut Sakhon Educational Service Area launched the educational strategic plan in 2005 for 1,000 non-Thai nationality children in this area and it will be done in 2006. The further research should examine the outcome of this plan. Whether 1,000 non- Thai children get access to basic education.
- 3.) According to this research, it found a lot of hill-tribe students--Lua in formal school. The next research should study the route and reasons of coming to Samut Sakhon province.