

Gendered Expectations and Educational Pathways: Why Displaced Chin Girls Continue or Drop Out of University after the Myanmar Coup

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Abstract

This study explores how displaced Chin female university students navigate decisions to continue or discontinue higher education following Myanmar's 2021 military coup. Combining desk research with in-depth semi-structured interviews with displaced students in Yangon and Mandalay, the research examines how gendered expectations intersect with financial hardship, insecurity, caregiving responsibilities, and emotional strain. For many displaced Chin girls, higher education represents both aspiration and burden. Decisions to remain in or leave university are shaped by negotiations within families, cultural expectations about "appropriate" futures for women, and immediate survival needs. By centering displaced Chin female students as decision-makers and knowledge holders, the study contributes to debates on gender-responsive education policy in conflict-affected and displacement settings.