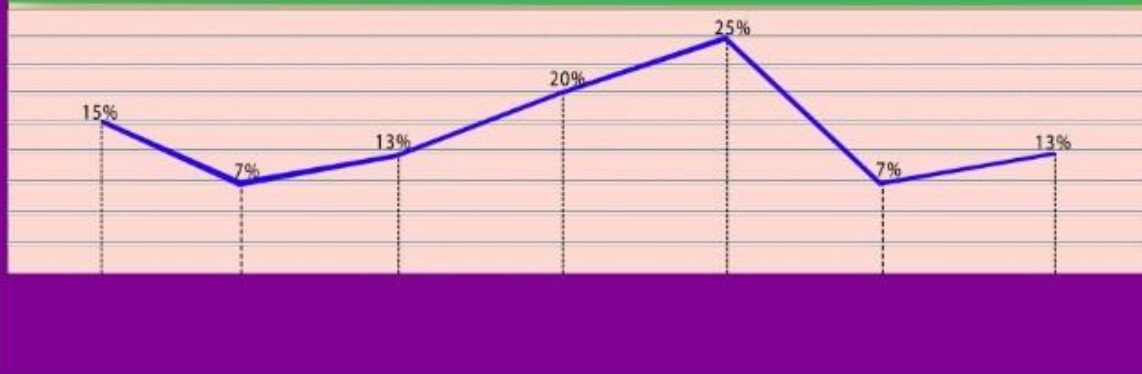


Understanding Political Representation and Participation in Chin State



**UNDERSTANDING POLITICAL REPRESENTATION AND THE LEVEL OF PEOPLE'S
PARTICIPATION IN CHIN STATE**

Chinbridge Institute
(Center for Research and Social Studies)

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Hakha, Chin State, Myanmar

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About Chinbridge Institute

Chinbridge Institute (Center for Research and Social Studies) is a research and learning center based in Hakha, capital city of Chin State. It was originally founded on June 6, 2017 with the aim to employ research and social sciences education as a transforming force in both societal and individual's life.

Since it was founded, Chinbridge Institute has run a series of workshop on political philosophy and current political issues, including religion and politics, secularization, corruption and good governances, and Myanmar peace process.

Chinbridge Institute has also successfully completed its own project on anti-corruption baseline survey, and served as partnering organization for data collection for some NGOs.

More about Chinbridge Institute and its work can be found at www.chinbridge.org .

Acknowledgements

The Chinbridge Institute (Center for Research and Social Studies) would like to express our heart-felt gratitude to Global Research Network on Parliaments and People for supporting our research work. The Chinbridge Institute research team also would like to thanks all respondents from nine townships in Chin State, and all participants at focus-group discussion events held in Buanlung village, Congthia village, Falam town and Hakha town. We also would like to thank you to all Chinbridge volunteers who served as enumerators during public's opinion survey. This report is the fruit of your hard work and perseverance that help us to complete this research with a thousand participants from across Chin State.

This work won't be as much informative as it is now without all our panelists for focus-group discussion and MPs who enthusiastically spoke to us during the interview. We really appreciate feedbacks from all participants from across different sectors including political parties, civil servants, civil society activists and invited individuals. Without such participation, the research would have been much more difficult.

As Lead Investigator, I would like to express my heart-felt thank to co-investigators Flavia Ngun Tha Par and Phun Za Tling for your commitment to the project and making work done on time. In addition, Elizabeth Van Tha Par has been a great assist to this research team and has took care of all financial management for the project, among others.

Van Cung Lian
(Executive Director)

Chinbridge Institute

1. Executive Summary

State Hluttaw (State Parliament) plays a critical role in serving people for the future of Chin State because they have a better chance of getting along with or discussing issues together with communities than Pythu Hluttaw and Amyotha Hluttaw. It is almost completely unreasonable to imagine having good relationship between Chin people and elected representatives who serve in Pythu Hluttaw and Amyotha Hluttaw if the relationship between regional/state parliament and people is not very well.

This report is the result of five months long research entitled “*Understanding Political Representation and the Level of People’s Participation in Chin State*.” The research primarily aimed to increase knowledge on the functioning of democratic representation and the level of people’s participation in political processes in Chin State of Myanmar. The research has two key objectives as follow:

- a. Understanding how people participate in the political processes in Chin State.
- b. People’s attitudes towards elected Members of Parliament.

Using a mixture of qualitative and quantitative research methods, the research tried to answer the following questions:

- a. How do citizens in the Chin State participate in political processes?
- b. What are citizens’ perceptions of representation in Chin State?
- c. What types of representative democracy would citizens in Chin State favour?
- d. How well do channels of communication work between representatives and citizens?
- e. What are the major challenges and opportunities to accelerate the involvement of citizens in democratic processes?

There are 9 townships in Chin State. Chin State Hluttaw is composed of 18 elected representatives, 2 representatives per township and 6 appointed military representatives. The Chin State Hluttaw has 8 parliamentary committees but none of them are related to public engagement or communication. Chin State Parliament doesn’t have constituency offices, and Members of Parliament don’t have personal assistant for constituency service.

Overall, this report highlighted the level of political interest and political participation among Chins, public’s attitude towards elected representatives, citizens’ perception of representation, and major challenges in building a stronger relationship between elected representatives (Members of Parliament) and constituents. The key findings of this research were briefed in the following.

Firstly, the study pointed out the majority of Chin people are not “very interested” in politics. Out of 1014 respondents from different townships in Chin State, 14% reported that they are “very interested in politics” which is 3% lower than the number of people who said “not at all interested.” However, one-third (33%) respondents were said to be “fairly interested in politics.” Nonetheless, only 26% of total respondents can name their local MP correctly.

Secondly, the most popular form of political participation in Chin State is through voting. Respondents were asked how often and how they participated in political activities in the last 8 years prior to November 2018.

Among total respondents, 75% voted in election in the last 8 years prior to September 2018, 22% of respondents tried to convince others to vote for a candidate or party and 14% (1 in 7 people) supported an election campaign in the last 8 years prior to September 2018. Although the level of political was quite high in the last 8 years, people rarely participated in activities which are more political. For instance, although 32% out of total respondents attended a public meeting dealing with community issues, only 5% donated to support a political cause and 6% contributed to a political discussion on the internet despite a rapid increase in mobile users in the last few years.

Thirdly, although a quarter of respondents “strongly agree” or “agree” with statements such as their local MPs understand and know the needs of local community, and they were responsive to the needs of local community, the majority of respondents (79%) suggested that MPs should visit constituencies more often than before. In addition, some of focus-group discussion participants and informant interviewees have indicated that many of MPs made a visit to their constituencies rarely. One of MPs said that he has never visited villages within his constituency because of his health since he was elected. A participant at focus-group discussion also highlighted his concern that “there is no meeting between people and elected representatives, we just saw them during election and we haven’t seen them again since.”

Fourth, however MPs also recognized the need to make frequent visit to their constituencies believing that people should know the activities of the parliament, and MPs are the key responsible people in letting people know about it. U Thawng Khu Mang, representative from Tonzang constituency (1) said that “*We need better relationship between elected representatives and constituents...MPs should prepare to visit their constituents at any time,*” adding that “*the major challenges we are facing is poor road infrastructure.*”

According to some MPs, key things to address in order to improve the relationship between elected representatives and constituents includes road, create Hluttaw bulletin, improve constituency services by having more staffs (including MP’s personal secretary), and getting more cars for Hluttaw. Hluttaw has only two cars for constituency service – one for northern part of Chin State and another one for Southern part of Chin State. However, Hluttaw should also consider a strong online presence through social media and creating Hluttaw’s website with up-to-date information about the activities of Hluttaw.

Finally, the research has found out that representation that doesn’t reflect the wills and wants of citizens should be replaced with alternative forms of representation system. Data generated through attitude survey suggested that representation without high level of public engagement is not satisfactory for the majority of Chins. In addition, former MP Robin rightly pointed out that “*politicians are not staff, there has to be a change. Better public engagement is necessary in order to meet the need of citizens.*” Democracy is widely understood as a government by the people and for the people. Research participants Zung Hmun Sang, for

instance, said that “*democracy means “zaukphung” (in Chin Language). Zaukphung means rules and laws that benefit the majority, and reflect the needs and wants of the people.*” Another participants also said that “*Democracy is about a government that works for the people according to the wills of the people, but elected by the people.*” In contrast, some participants have little trust, if not at all, in elected representatives. They observed that many MPs work for themselves only and most of them rarely visit constituents. One villager said that “*It seems that both MPs and Ministers work more for themselves and their relatives rather than for people and nation.*”

2. Research Method

The research primarily aimed to increase knowledge on the functioning of democratic representation and the level of people's participation in political processes in Chin State of Myanmar. This research used both qualitative and quantitative research designs. In term of qualitative, there were three key activities such as focus-group discussion, participatory short-video clip and focus-group interviews. Participants in focus-group discussions were asked for their ideas and experiences on representation and participation, and some MPs and politicians were also interviewed. The research is also backed by public's attitude survey on representation and participation in Chin State.

2.1. Research Background

In the aftermath of a historical general election in 2011, although some key events showcased the fact that democratic transition is taking place in Myanmar along with non-governmental organization growing in size and capacity, people participation has been pushed to the margins of setting up a strong democratic institution and development agenda. The case has been evidently showcased by misallocation of resources that comes along with high-level of corruption resulting in not meeting the needs of local people, public demonstrations and high level of Civil Society Organizations concern for the need of public consultation on local projects and strengthening citizens, CSO and government collaboration, including low level of women participation in decision-making. These evidences and practical experiences suggested that there is a strong and urgent need for carrying research in Chin State.

This research therefore held a series of focus-group meetings and carried out a quantitative survey to gather data about people's level of political participation and understanding of political representation in Chin State. A constructive research exercise of this kind is important to better understand the democratic institution's capacity, the nature of representation, the level of people's participation and people attitudes towards elected politicians. CSOs and Government coordination meeting used to organize for a few months but ceased before it goes long. It comes to our concern that without strengthening people participation in decision-making and setting development agenda, the gaps between citizens and elected politicians will be widen. Such thing can be an undermining issue for democratic representation in Chin State.

2.2. Objectives of Research

- a) Understanding how people participate in the political processes in Chin State.
- b) People's attitudes towards elected Members of Parliament.
- c) To capture further research direction for a better understanding of the culture of representation in Chin State. As a part of our long-term commitment to strengthen democratic institutions in Chin State, this solid research is crucial for us to provide a base line. This will pave a way for further research to contribute to strengthening the functioning of democracy.

One of the challenges to strengthening the relationship between people, particularly constituents, and elected politicians is communication (transportation). Villages are hard to

access for the elected politicians and the MPs hardly visit their constituents. This research, through public attitudes survey and organizing group discussion, explored what can be done to solve this problem for long-term and bridge the long-distance relationship between people and parliament. For instance, we presupposed that with the advance of information technology, poor transportation should no longer become a barrier to effective democratic representation.

2.3. Research Questions

We sum up questions covering issues around culture of representation. Survey and focus-group discussions were conducted to address the following research questions:

- a) How do citizens in the Chin State participate in political processes?
- b) What are citizens' perceptions of representation in Chin State?
- c) What types of representative democracy would citizens in Chin State favour?
- d) How well do channels of communication work between representatives and citizens?

Primary questions for focus-group (informant) interview are:

- a) What are the major challenges and opportunities to accelerate the involvement of citizens in democratic processes?
- b) What should be done to bring citizens closer to parliaments and its decision-making?

2.4. Mixing Qualitative and Quantitative Research Methods

Mixtures of qualitative and quantitative methods were used to address above questions. A series of focus-group discussions in both rural and urban locations were organized, supplemented by a survey by questionnaires.

There are number of reasons for employing these two research methods together. First, qualitative method can be used to identify what question should be included in questionnaire. Second, focus-group discussion participants' opinion can also be compared with quantitative data generated using structured questionnaires completed in face-to-face interviews. In addition, the collaborative nature of the focus-group discussion offers a way to better integrate art elements (e.g. short-video clip) through which information or the research finding can be passed to more audiences.

2.5. Qualitative Research

The primary aims of qualitative research are to disseminate the project finding, to inform and produce better quantitative research design, and allow a greater opportunity for participants to share and express their ideas on representation and participation. The key activities of qualitative research are participatory video clip, focus-group discussion and focus-group interview.

The aim of participatory video clip is to allow a greater freedom to focus-group discussion participants to express and share their ideas and experiences on representation and participation. It has many advantages. Firstly, it escalates the possibility of reaching out more people. Secondly, with an increasing number of peoples using social media, this approach can easily communicate people's idea, needs and wants to parliaments.

Focus-group (informant) interview: A number of selected MPs and political party leaders were interviewed. Questions ranging from their commitment towards their constituents, experiences and ideas on representation and people's participation were asked. With participants' consent, the interviews were recorded in audio format that were used in podcast production.

The Aim of Quantitative Method: Quantitative method was utilized to measure people's perceptions of how parliament performs, understanding of participation and representation. The design of the questionnaire was partly based on the result of the focus-group discussions. Questionnaire used in the research can be found in Annex I.

2.6. Choosing Survey Respondents

All survey respondents were the age of 18 and above. Respondents were selected based on constituency. There were 18 constituencies in Chin State. Among 18 constituencies, we were able to meet with respondents from 16 constituencies with approximately equal numbers of respondents in term of gender, constituencies and geographic location (rural and urban). Villages and wards in each constituency for survey were selected systematically.

3. Profile Respondents

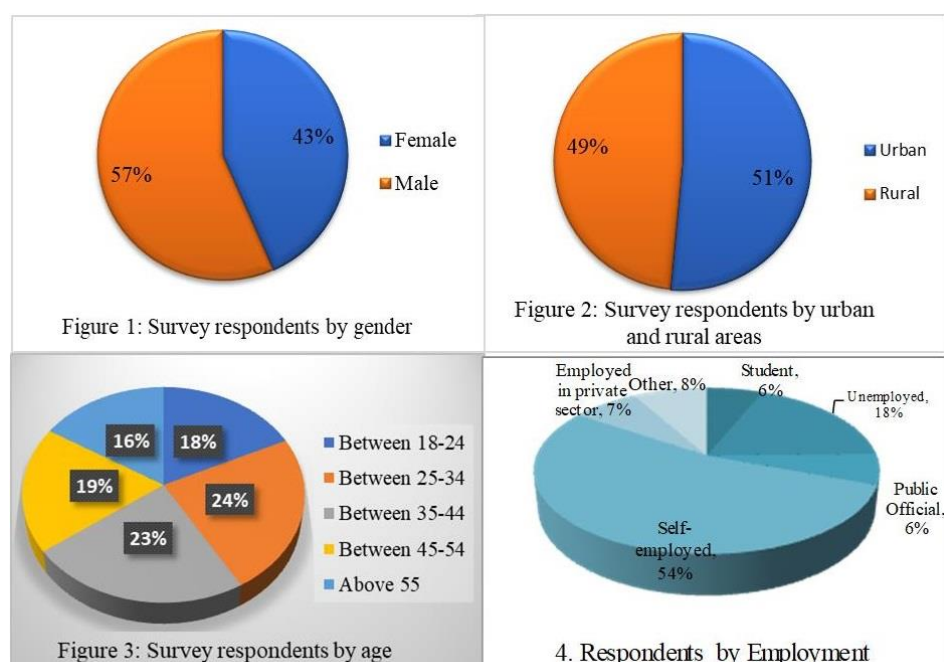
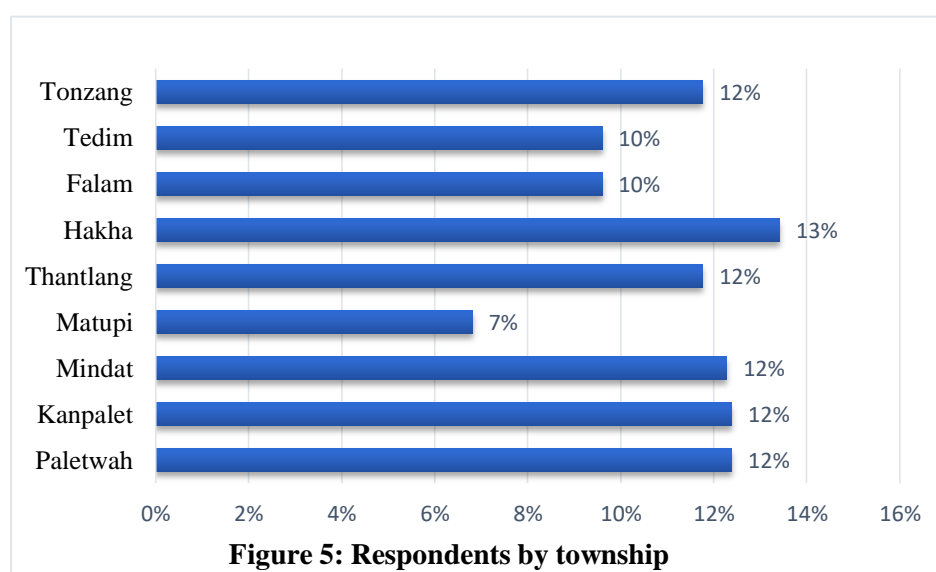


Figure 1 to 5 present the gender, age, occupation and geographic profiles of respondents. The survey covered all 9 townships in Chin State such as Paletwah (12% respondent out of total respondents), Kanpalet (12%), Mindat (12%), Matupi (7%), Thantlang (12%), Hakha (13%), Falam (10%), Tedim (10%), and Tonzang (12% respondent) respectively.

Out of total respondent, 43% were female and 57% were male (figure 1) with almost equal number of respondents from urban and rural areas with 51% from urban and 49% from rural area (figure 2).

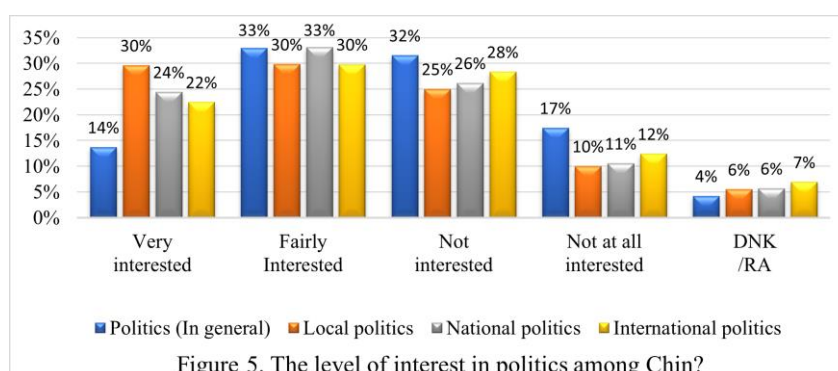
As in figure 4, the majority of respondents (54%) were self-employed. This is seemingly because a large proportion of respondents were from rural areas where most people work in their own farms. Public officials comprised of 6% out of total respondents.



The figure 3 revealed that almost half of respondents (that is out of total respondent, 43% were female and 57% were male (figure 1) with almost equal number of respondents from urban and rural areas with 51% from urban and 49% from rural area (figure 42%) were between the age of 18 and 34. The rest of respondents were between the age of 35-44 (23%), between 45-54 (19%) and above 55 years old (16%) respectively.

4. Political Interest among Chins

This section presents a brief overview of the level of political interest among the Chins. This data can serve as a source for an analysis to identify a variety of possible connections between interests, participation and people's knowledge on representation.



As shown in the above figure (figure 6), people's interest sometimes varies across different areas of politics. Respondents were asked how interested are they in politics (in general), local politics, national politics and international politics.

From the graph above we can see that the majority of Chin public hasn't reported being very interested in politics. Only 14% reported that they were "very interested in politics. However, Chin public are more interested in local politics than politics (in general), national politics and international politics.

People who reported they were "very interested" in local politics is 6% higher than people who reported they were "very interested" in national politics, 8% higher than people who said they were "very interested" in international politics.

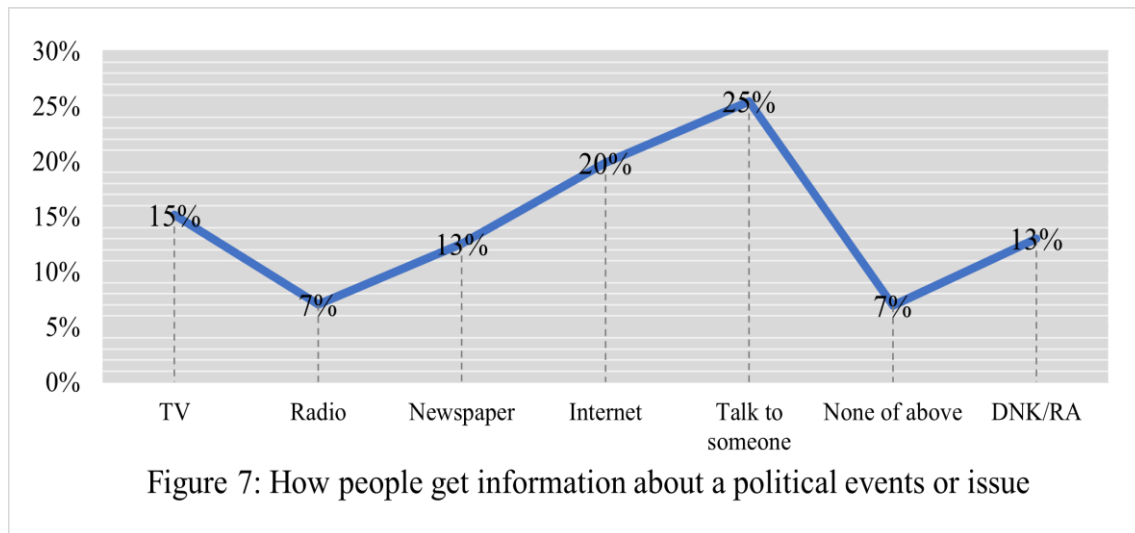
The data in figure 6 is reaffirmed by the fact that the majority of Chins don't know who their local MP (Member of Parliament) is. When asked, the majority named their MP wrongly or can't name their local MP at all.

It can be seen from the data in figure 7 that only 26% out of a total of 989 respondents can named their MP correctly.



5. Source of Information

In Chin State, it seems that channels of communication are as important as political representation itself. Respondents were asked to pick up one of the main sources of information they normally use to get information about political events or issues. Respondents can pick only one option in this case.



As in figure, it can be seen that technology is becoming a popular channel through which citizens gain information about political events and issues. However, a combination of the number of people, who relied on technology, who said they relied mostly on internet, newspaper, radio and TV reached a little more than half (55%) of total respondents only. Among technology tools, internet (e.g. Facebook, Viber, Twitter, etc.) becomes the most popular tools many of Chin people use as their main source of information about political events and issues.

Interestingly, a breakdown of different means of communication shows that traditional mode of communication (talking to someone: e.g. talking to friends and relatives) stills serve as the most popular source of information as a quarter of total respondent (25%) relies on it. This is possibly because many people in remote areas still lack better access to TV, newspaper and internet.

It is worth noting that traditional model of communication (talking to someone, discussing about political and community issues in small group, talking at tea and coffee table, in the room, in the classroom, etc.) would possibly continue to be the major source of information through which people acquire political knowledge, political events and community issues in the next few years. A shift to other modes of communication, especially technology tools, will depend mainly on infrastructure development such as telecommunication and transportation.

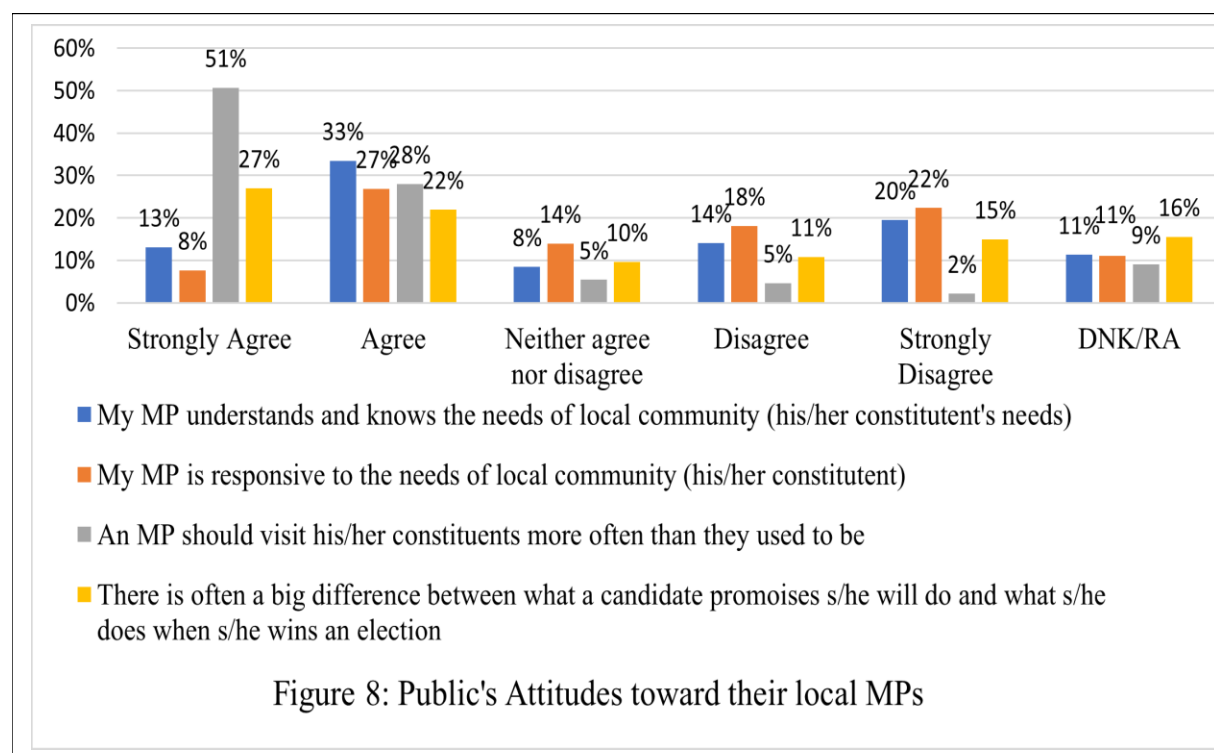
6. Political Representation and Participation in Chin State

This study aimed to improve understanding how people participate in the political processes in Chin State and people's attitudes towards elected parliament and Members of Parliament. In doing so, the study focused on relationship between Chin State Parliament and Chin people, and tried to answer questions such as (1) how do citizens in the Chin State participate into the political processes, (2) what are citizens' perceptions of representation in the Chin State, (3) what type of representative democracy would citizens in the Chin State favour, (4) how well do channels of communication work between representatives and citizens, (5) what are the major challenges and opportunities to accelerate the involvement of citizens in democratic processes, and (6) what should be done to bring citizens closer to parliaments and its decision-making?

6.1. Chin Public's Attitudes toward Parliaments

The study observed Chin public's attitudes toward MPs through two different methods. It employed both survey and focus-group discussion. The findings generated through these two methods revealed that Chins are not very satisfied with how their local MPs are doing. These findings are analyzed comparatively in the following.

The following chart (figure 9) presents the result of public attitudes survey on how people perceive about their MPs and their performances. Respondents were asked four different questions relating to an MP's knowledge about his/her constituents' needs, how often an MP visited to his/her constituency and the accountability of elected officials (MPs).

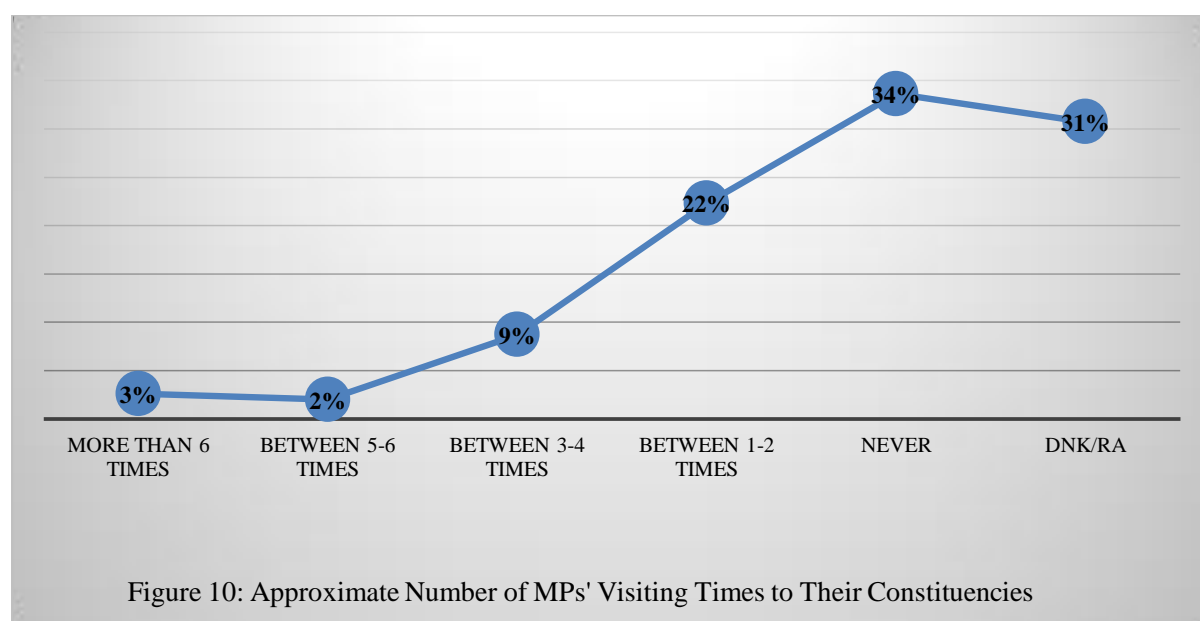


Interestingly, almost half of respondents (13% strongly agree and 33% agree) believed that their local MPs understand and know the needs of local community. Furthermore, more than one-third (35%) agreed that MPs were responsive to the needs of local community. However, the vast majority of respondents (79%) said that they want MPs to make more visits to their constituencies. The figure also revealed that the level of confidence in politicians is quite low. 49% out of total respondents either strongly agree or agree with the statement that ‘there is often a big difference between what a candidate promises she/he will do and what she/he does when she/he wins an election’.

The finding from informant interviews also suggested that MPs face a lot of challenges when it comes to meeting and visiting their constituents. Pu Huat Chum, a member of Chin Parliament Affair Committee, said that “representatives should visit their constituents after the end of every single parliamentary meeting.”

He added that “*representatives have the responsibility to let the people know what the parliament has decided.*”

However, the finding suggests the other way around. The following graph shows the number of approximate time MPs visited their constituencies based on people’s knowledge about their visits in the last 24 months prior to September, 2018.



As in the line graph, only a small number of participants said that MPs visited their village or town to meet with local community for more than five times in the last 24 months prior to September, 2018.

Only 3% of total respondents said MPs visited their community to meet with constituents for more than six times, and 2% said they have visited between 5-6 times while the other 9% said MPs have meet them between 3-4 times and 22% for between just 1-2 times. More than one-third (that is 34%) said that MPs have never visited their village or town to meet with

member of local community in the last 24 months whereas almost the same number, almost one-third (31%), expressed that they don't know about the issue.

The case that many MPs can't visit their constituents more often is also strongly supported by evidences generated through informant interviews. For instance, one interviewee, an MP, said that he has never visited his constituency since his was voted in. Likewise, one villager said *"MPs abandoned their constituencies after election period. They visited us during the election campaign period and after that it is over with the people."*

6.2. Transportation and Representation

"It is difficult to meet with people (constituents) and show what we do in the parliament because of poor road," said U Phe Minn, a Member of Parliament representing constituency 2 of Paletwah Township. He added *"transportation has to be good enough; there should be road to every village. If there is such, the relationship between parliament and people will be better."* In Chin State, many of villages are not accessible by car. This has become the major hindrance to effective representation.

When an MP can't visit his/her constituency, it means that he/she is not serving the people well, according to an MP who denied to mentioned his name. It is true that MPs have to visit their constituency and raise questions in the parliament based on his/her findings from his/her visit to constituency. When an MPs can't visit their constituencies, they can rarely ask questions concerning their constituencies.

An MP said *"many Chin MPs don't ask question concerning their constituencies. In addition, it seems that many of their questions are prepared for them by the party they belong to."*

In addition to poor transportation, MPs don't have their own cars. There are eight Parliamentary committees created by Chin State Parliament and they have only two cars – one car for northern and another for southern part of Chin State. During interview with MP Phy Minn, he commented that *"each parliamentary committee should have their own car...we can no longer get in touch with constituents on timely manner since we don't have enough cars."* It is worth noting that transportation becomes a hindrance to effective representation in Chin State. It is difficult for MPs to visit constituencies more often due to poor road and lack of enough cars for members of Parliament.

6.3. Constituency Services

U Aung Tan, Deputy Hluttaw Speaker, noted that constitution guarantee the right to established parliamentary office in each constituency. However, there is no constituency office so far. Moreover, MPs don't have their own personal assistants, although MPs recognize that having personal assistant would boost parliament's effort to reaching out constituents. In addition, the Chin State Hluttaw doesn't have special working team to engage with constituents. There is no constituency office in Chin State although the constitution allows Hluttaw to establish it. Chin State Hluttaw doesn't have enough funds to run constituency offices, hire more staff and buy cars, according to Deputy Speaker of Chin State Hluttaw.

Chin State Hluttaw has established 8 working committees but none of those eight committees are related to public engagement. The committees include:

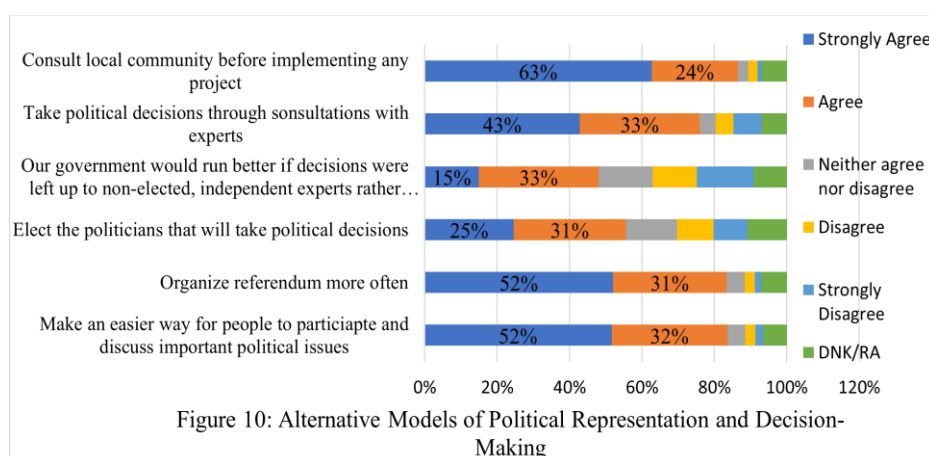
1. Representatives Overseeing Committee
2. Public Account Committee
3. Bill Committee
4. Environmental Conservation, Agriculture, Transportation and Electric Power Committee
5. Rural Development, Budget and Finance Committee
6. Ethnic Affair Committee
7. Government's Guarantees, Pledges and Complaint Undertaking Vetting Committee
8. Education and Health Committee

6.4. Deepening Representation through Higher Level of Civic Participation

The word democracy is widely known in Chin language as “*zaukphung*.” Rev. Dr. Van Bik in his “English to Chin Dictionary” translated it as “*a government by the people for common good*.” Likewise, one of interviewees, Zung Hmun Sang said that “*democracy means zaukphung. Zaukphung means rules and laws that benefit the majority, and reflect the needs and wants of the people*.” It implies the notion of “*rule by the people for the people*.” However, some Chin people question today democracy. One focus-group discussion participants, Buanlung villager, questioned, “*What benefit does democracy bring for poor people*.” It is reasonable to note here that people don’t feel satisfy with how decision is made, suggesting that relying only on elected representatives is not enough to effectively communicate the needs and wants of the people to the Parliament.

In other word, this study has found out that Chin people favor representation with various arrangements of direct citizens’ involvement that would also deepen the relationship between people and elected politician.

The following data shows citizens’ opinion on different models of political representation. It demonstrates that most citizens favour representation with higher Hluttaw and public engagement is vital in political decision-making.



As shown in above graph, when people were asked to rate different way of political decision-making, the majority of respondents (84%) strongly agreed or agreed with the statement that the Hluttaw should make an easier way for people to participate and discuss important political issues.” And the vast majority (76%) also agreed or strongly agreed to the statement that ‘our government would run better if decisions were left up to non-elected, independent experts rather than politicians or the people (general public).”

What should be noted here is that representative government without high level of public engagement is not satisfactory for the majority of the Chins. Alternative models of representation shown in the graph (figure 10), which prioritize to wider public engagement, are close to each other and distinct from representation model that relies only a small number of elected politicians. It can be said therefore that the majority of Chins prefer alternative representative models, and that they are not satisfy with current state of political representation. During focus-group discussion, former Member of Parliament U Robin also argued that *“politicians are not staff, there has to be a change. Better public engagement is necessary in order to meet the need of citizens.”* Robin also stressed the importance of having good communication between elected representatives and people. He argued that *“current Parliament is very weak. People will know the power of parliament only if representatives let people know it.”*

6.5. Reasons why People Didn’t Attend Meeting with Public Officials

When respondents were asked whether they attended a meeting with government representative or elected representative in the last 2 years prior to September 2018, the majority of them (67) said that they attended. However, the rest 28% said they didn’t attend for various reasons.

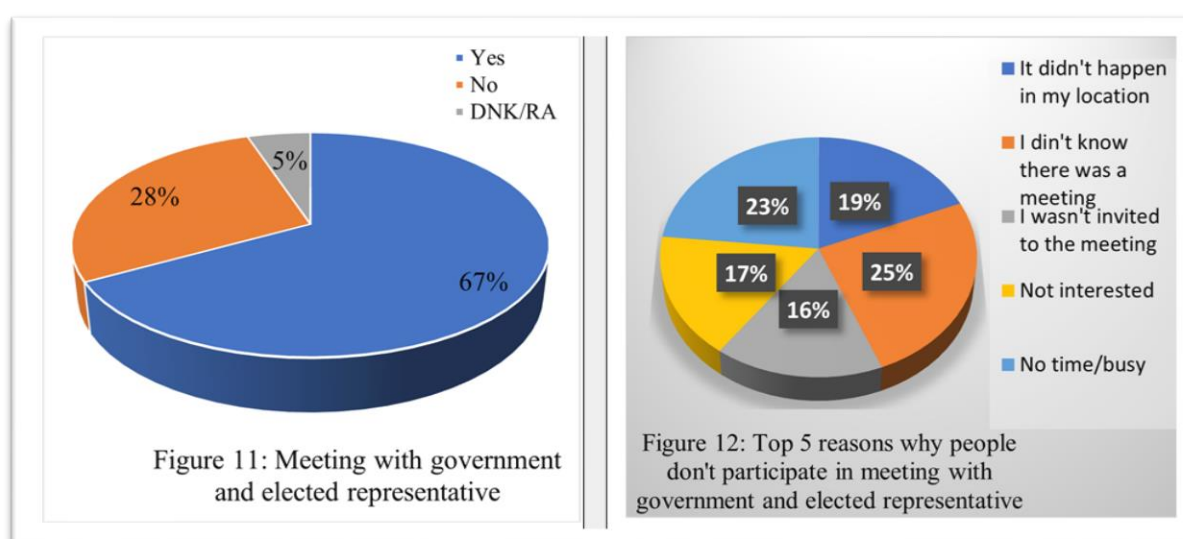


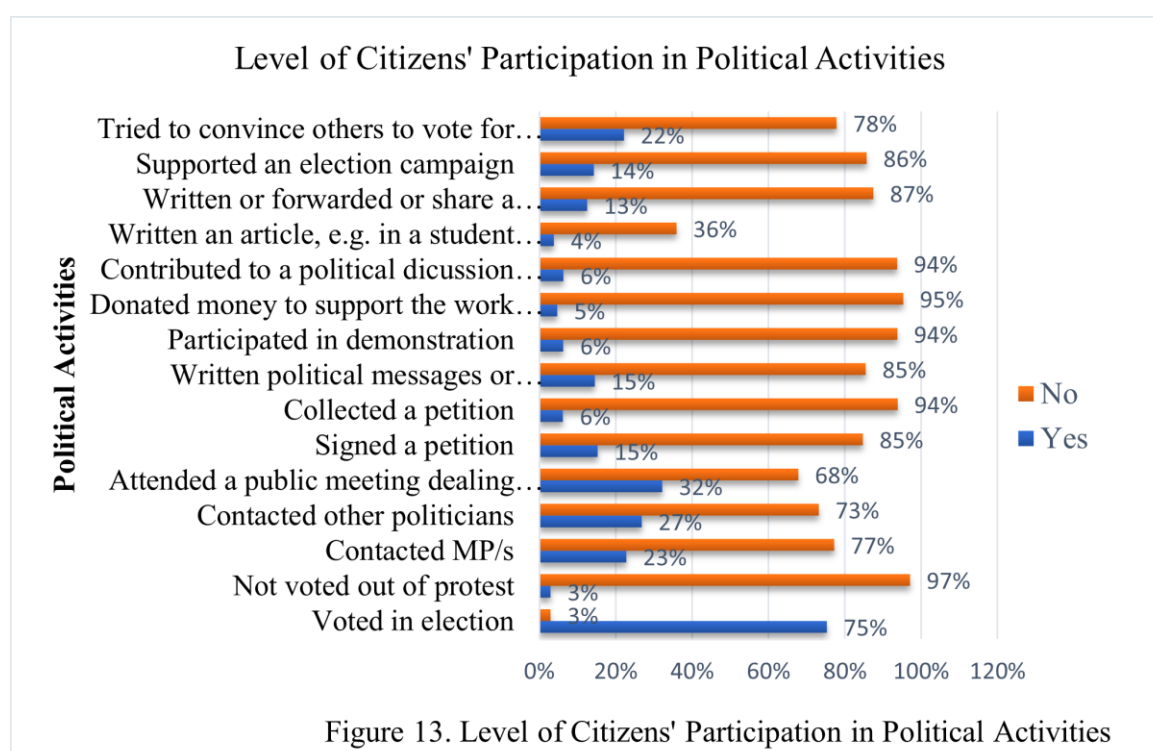
Figure 12 suggests there is relatively high level of motivation for civic participation in political meeting. The majority (67%) reported that they attended a meeting with government representatives or elected representative in the last two years prior to September 2018. However, as in figure 13, 28% reported that they didn’t attend any meeting in the last two

years. And when they were asked why they didn't attend. 19% reported a meeting didn't happen in their location, 25% said they didn't know there was a meeting, 16% said he/she wasn't invited to the meeting.

6.6. People's Participation in the Last 8 Years Seem to Be Low

Recent post-election research conducted by STEP Democracy suggested that participation in election is lowest in Chin State among 9 regions and states. When more than 90% percent of citizens participated in 2015-election in Kayah, Irrawaddy, Mon, Sagaing, Magwe and Rakhine whereas only 82% percent of people participated in Chin State. This current study also suggests political participation is very low in Chin State.

The following graph shows the level of people's participation in different political activities in the last 8 years prior to September 2018. More than 1000 people responded to the question whether or not they participated in the following political activities. It is apparent from the bar chart that voting is the only form of participation through which the majority of Chins participated in decision-making



In figure 14, it can be seen that the vast majority of respondents (more than 70% for each political activity except "voting in election") didn't participated in major political activities.

However, the most interesting aspect of the data is participation in voting. For instance, 75% of those who were interviewed indicated that they participated in voting. Moreover, 22% out of total respondents reported that they even tried convince others to vote for a candidate or a

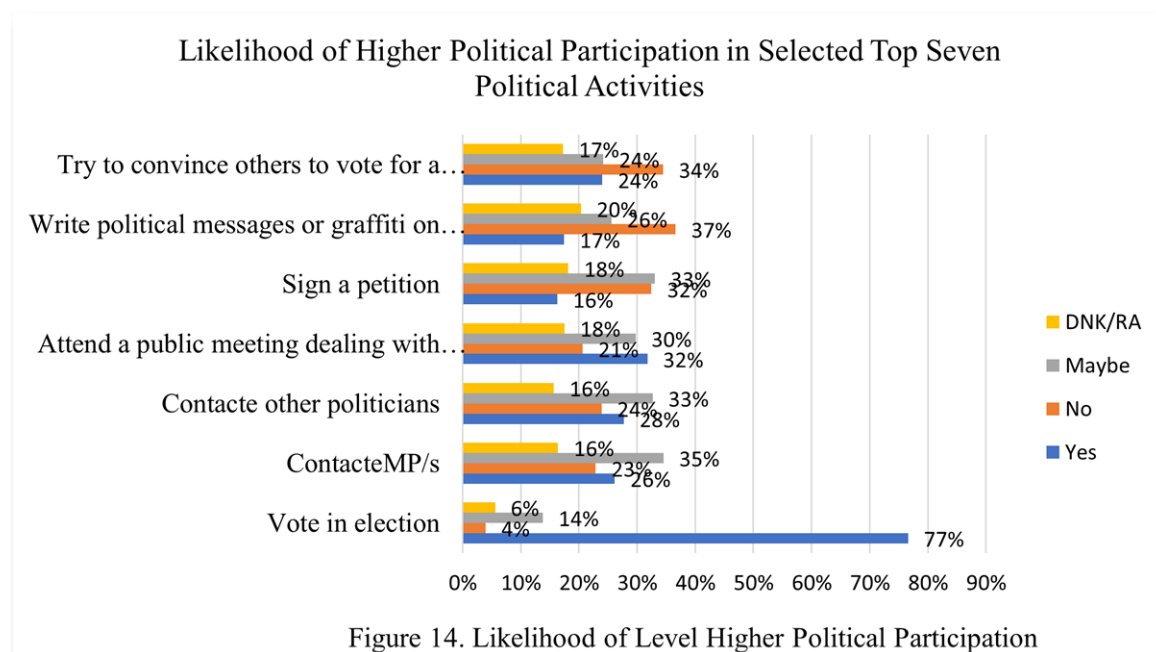
party, and 14% said they supported election campaign. Election, therefore, is the major form of political participation among Chin through which the majority of Chin participated in political decision-making.

In comparison, the level of participation in other political activities is relatively low in compare to election. For example, only 6% contributed to a political discussion on the internet (via, e.g., Facebook, Viber, Twitter, etc.) and only 13% written or forwarded or share a letter or an email or social media post with political contents. This indicates that social media is not the main platform of political participation in Chin yet.

Interestingly, relatively high number of people were contacted their MPs or other politicians. The data indicates that more than a quarter contacted MP/s and other politicians before interview was held in September, 2018.

In compare to data presented in figure 14 and 15, the number of people who will vote in 2020 election is unlikely to increase to a large extend. In figure 15, only 77%, more than 2% who said they participated in previous election said that they will vote in future election. So, according to the data, the number of voters is unlikely to increase by a large extent in the next general election.

The following data show a comparison of the number of people likely to participate in political activities in the future with the number of people who said “they won’t and may participate” in the future.



The data demonstrates that the level of political participation is unlikely to increase in the next few years. A combination of the number of people who said “yes” and “maybe” when asked whether or not they are likely to participate in above political activities in the future ranges between 43% to 90%.

Interestingly, it is highly likely that the number of political participations will be increased in double in the future. A comparison of data from figure 15 and 16 would reveal more apparent result for this case.

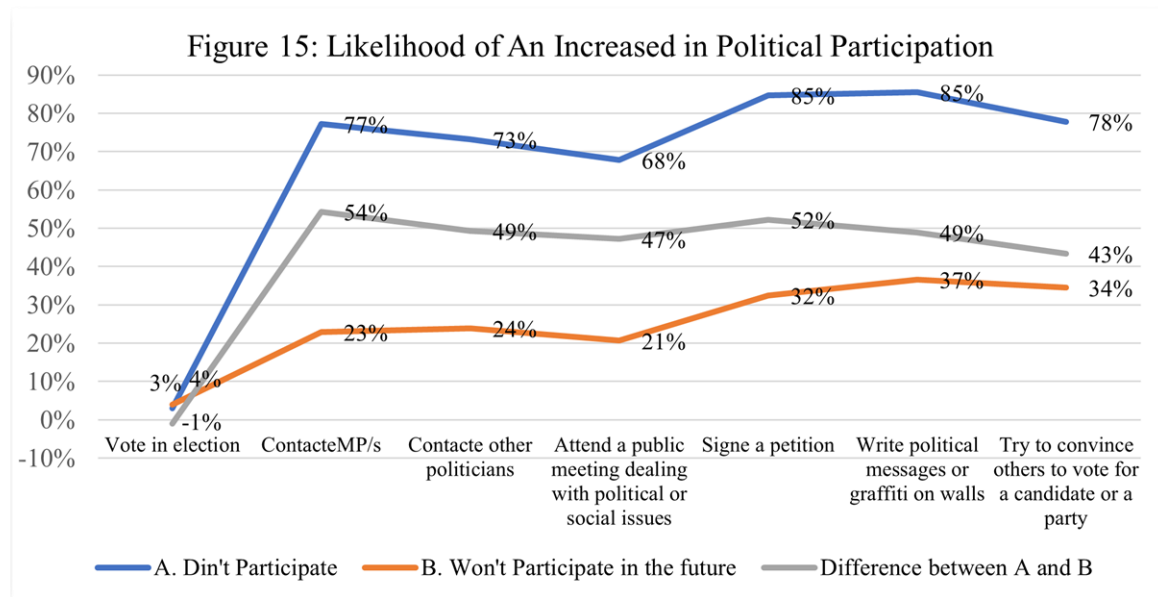
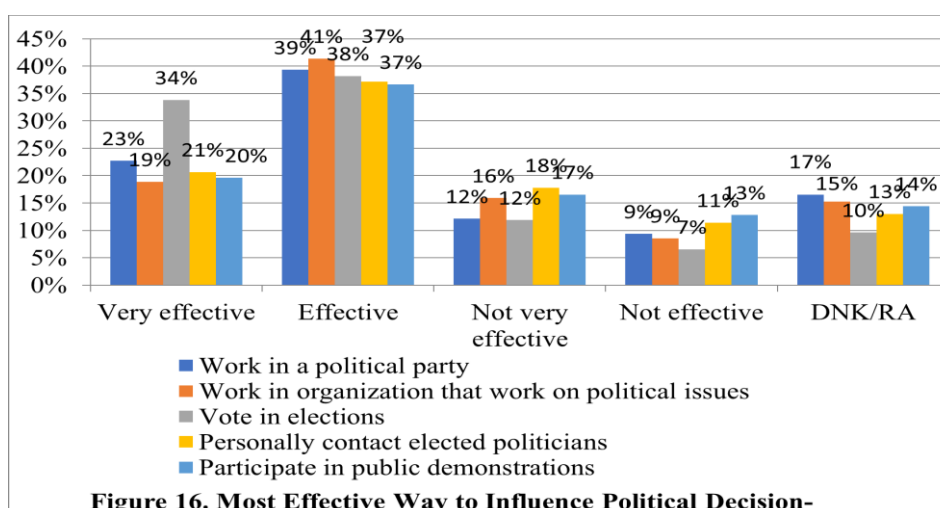


Figure 16 presents the number of people who said they haven't participated in mentioned political activities in previous 8 years prior to the interview in September 2018 and the number of people who said they won't participate in the future either. According to the data, it can be noted that the level of political participation in selected political activities will be doubled in the future except for voting in election. For example, the number of people who said they didn't contact MP/s previously is higher by 54% than the number of people who said they won't do in the future. This data suggests that the level of political participation in Chin State will be increased except in voting in election.

6.7. Effective Form of Political Participation

The following graph shows top five forms of political participation selected by survey respondents as most effective form of political participation



Interesting point to note from data presented in figure 17 is the fact that citizens can make change or influence political decision through political participation. For instance, the vast majority (72%) said that voting in elections is the best form of political participation. Indeed, voting changes decision-making by holding elected officials accountable and responsible for responsibility given to them by citizens through voting. Moreover, the majority of respondents also believed that other forms of political participation such as working in a political party, working in organization that work on political issues, personally contacting elected politicians, and participating in public demonstration are another form of effective political participation.

6.8. Bringing Citizens Closer to Parliament and Its Decision-Makings

Representing constituents includes submitting motions and asking questions to the Hluttaw that reflects the needs and wants or the voice of constituents. In addition, representative's main responsibility includes informing citizens about his/her actions or other actions in the Hluttaw. Representation, in both cases, requires MPs' frequent meeting with constituents.

U Thawng Khu Mang, representative of Tonzang township constituency (1), suggested that *"in order to let people know the actions of Hluttaw, we need newspaper and Hluttaw bulletin."* Decision made in the Hluttaw shouldn't be kept secret. It is not a decision by one person, such decision rather is made by a group of representatives. Therefore, U Thawng Khu Mang commented that every decision made in the Hluttaw should be made known to the public. One way for an MP to let the people know about what happen in the Hluttaw is to have a frequent visit to their constituency. In other word, better constituency service is essential. A large number of respondents, 79%, agree or strongly agree that MPs should visit their constituency more often (see figure 8). U Thawng Khu Mang brings out his concerns to address in order to strengthen the relationship between representatives and constituents, and keeping both parties get informed about issues they most care about. U Thawng Khu Mang believes that the following three things need to be improved to have better way to communicate the activities of Hluttaw to the constituents. They are:

1. Improving transportation system
2. Better media – Newspaper and Journal
3. Frequent visits to constituencies by MPs

As noted earlier, many villages in Chin State are not accessible by car. In addition, a number of villages are even not accessible through motor-bike. If the Hluttaw create a bulletin or brochure, the activities and actions of the Hluttaw could be more easily communicated to citizens. Likewise, another alternative is to allow media agencies to enter into the Hluttaw meeting and letting them observe the discussion at Hluttaw so that the activities of Hluttaw could be communicated to the people. As in figure 18, the vast majority agreed with the statement that *"Chin Parliament should allow media agencies to enter into parliament to take news during parliamentary meeting."*

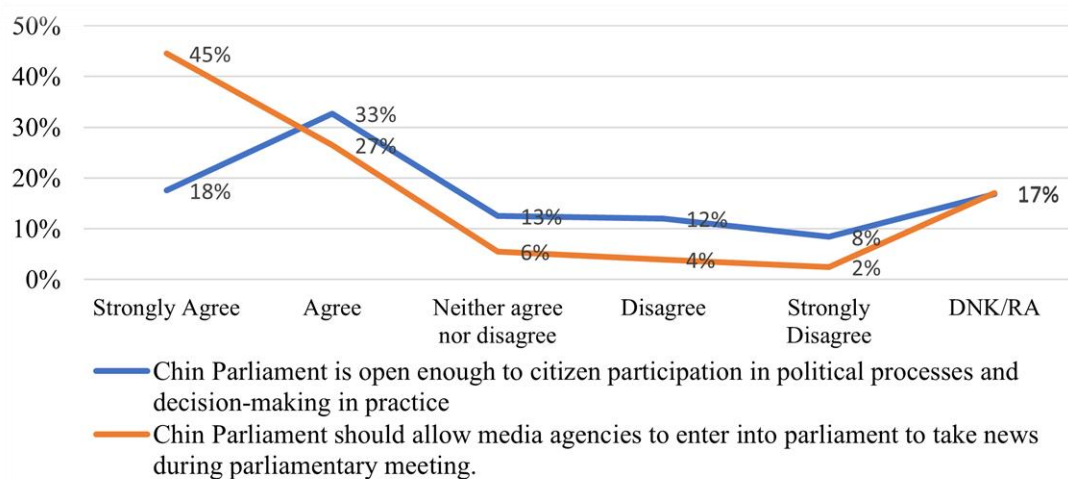


Figure 17: Chin Public's Attitudes to toward Chin Parliament

Above data, in figure 18, shows citizens' perception on how open the Chin State Parliament is. The data indicates the parliament have to improve transparency within the parliament yet. Although 18% of respondents and 33% of respondent strongly agreed or agreed that Chin State Parliament is open enough, some media agencies reported that Chin State Parliament didn't allow them to enter to observe parliamentary procedure.

This might be the reason why the vast majority said they strongly agree or agree (45% for strongly agree and 27% for agree) with the statement that Chin State Parliament should allow media agencies to enter into parliament to take news during parliamentary meeting.

Salai Ngun San Aung, during focus-group discussion, stressed the importance of media in building good governance and establishing deeper relationship between parliament, government and people. Salai Ngun San Aung said "media bridges gaps in governance in order to have good governance and good relations with people." It is true to say that if media agencies exercise their power with freedom, the parliament would understand and know better about their constituencies. Likewise, the constituents would also have better chance of knowing what happen in the parliament. A stronger media or free press is important to deepening the relationship between people and parliament.

However, there is another important step as well. It is not enough to rely only on media in order to have a strong democracy. For instance, Thawng Bik, a panelist for during focus-group discussion on parliament and people held in Falam, suggested that "parliaments and people should work together with unity." Bik added that "we need a lot of CSOs and citizens' support to deepen the relationship between parliament and people." From this line of thought, it can be said that civic engagement is essential for building the relationship between parliament and people. However, how open the Parliament itself can limit the level of civic engagement.

6.9. Election Fraud and Representation

Many people think that the nature of representation depends on whom and how people vote. As the result, majority of presenters for focus-group discussion stressed the importance of voting in election. Thawng Bik said “people have to be very careful when they vote for candidates. It is important that we vote candidates who don’t look for personal gain over public’s benefits.”

In addition, Chin villages are small enough for politicians to be publicly known and offer a promise to help them develop their village with small sum of money. This paves a way for politicians to mislead people to vote them. Former MP Robin has noticed this challenge and warned that it can have serious negative affects how elected representative’s attitudes toward constituents, and affects representation itself. Robin, therefore, suggested that how good the relationship between representatives and constituents depends mainly on how they get elected, noting that *“if a candidate comes up with a contract with villager, it is very easy to get elected.”*

People think that if they vote for certain candidate, elected representative will favour them in return. Additional, some MPs often attempted to prioritize the development of villages where majority of villagers voted them in election. However, it is against democratic norm. A representative is responsible to represent the whole constituency from where he/she get elected, not just villages he/she gets majority votes.

Annex 1: Questionnaire

Chinbridge Institute

(Center for Research and Social Studies)
P4P Project Survey Questionnaire
2018

Data Clerk		Data Entry Date								

Office Used Only					
Form Number					

To be completed by Interviewer					
Interviewer's Name		Interview Date	____ Sept 2018		
Township		Respondent No.			
Ward/Village Tract					
City/Village's Name		Rural or Urban	Rural (1)	Urban (2)	
Constituency No		Interview Location ID	1	2	3 4

Information and General Guideline for Interviewer

Interview Location ID	
North	1
East	2
South	3
West	4

1. It is your job to select random participant
2. Please make sure that participant's age is 18 or over 18
3. Make sure that you explained about the objectives of the survey
4. Make sure that you introduce yourself. Consider the following points in the box when introducing yourself

My name is _____. I am from Chinbridge Institute. It is a research center based in Hakha. Chinbridge Institute is non-partisan research organization. I do not represent the government or any political party. We are doing a survey of people's attitude towards parliaments and their political inspiration in order to improve our knowledge on political representation and participation in Chin State. I would like to ask a few questions to you. All information will be kept confidential. Would you possibly be able spare a few minute for us?

Respondent Profile

Gender	Female (1)	Male (2)
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Age Group	18-24 (1)	25-34 (2)	35-44 (3)	45-54 (4)	Above 55 (5)
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Occupation	Student (1)	Unemployed (2)	Public Official (3)
	Self-employed (4)	Employed in Private Sector (5)	Other [specify..] (6)

General Question

Q1. How interested are you in politics: Are you very interested, fairly interested, not very interested or not at all interested? (Circle appropriately)

1	2	3	4	9
Very interested	Fairly interested	Not very interested	Not at all interested	DNK/RA

Q2. Could you please tell us who is your local MP? (Don't show the answer, code them *the answer in space provided below*)

MP's Name	Township	Constituent	Know	Don't Know
MP U Thawng Khaw Mang	Tonzang	Contituency 1	1	9
MP U Pau Lun Min Thang	Tonzang	Contituency 2	1	9
MP UThang Deih Khup	Tedim	Contituency 1	1	9
MP U Suan Doh Cinh	Tedim	Contituency 2	1	9
MP U Ral Hnin	Falam	Contituency 1	1	9
MP U Salai Lian Luai	Falam	Contituency 2	1	9
MP U Zo Bawi	Hakha	Contituency 1	1	9
MP U Sui Thio	Hakha	Contituency 2	1	9
MP U Van Thawng	Thantlang	Contituency 1	1	9
MP U Dr. Hmuh Thang	Thantlang	Contituency 2	1	9
Vacant (<i>at the time of survey</i>)	Matupi	Contituency 1	1	9
MP U Vui Kaw	Matupi	Contituency 2	1	9
MP U Aung Tan	Mindat	Contituency 1	1	9
MP U Tike Thang	Mindat	Contituency 2	1	9
MP U KweThang	Kanpalet	Contituency 1	1	9
MP U Puai Aa	Kanpalet	Contituency 2	1	9
MP U Kan Tinh	Paletwah	Contituency 1	1	9
MP U Pye Minn	Paletwah	Contituency 2	1	9

Q3. People's interest sometimes varies across different areas of politics. Are you personally very interested, fairly interested, not very interested or not at all interested in ...(local politics)...?

And how about...	Very interested	Fairly interested	Not interested	Not at all interested	DNK/RA
Local politics	1	2	3	4	9
National politic	1	2	3	4	9
International Politics	1	2	3	4	9

Q4. If you want information about a political event or any other political issues*, which of the following do you use mainly? Television, radio, newspaper or internet? (INT: Only one answer)

Television	Radio	Newspaper (Print)	Internet	Talk to someone	None of these	DNK/RA
1	2	3	4	5	6	9

Political Representation

Q5. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? [Circle appropriate answer. 1=Strongly agree; 2=Fairly Agree; 3=Neither agree nor disagree; 4=Fairly disagree; 5=strongly disagree; 9=DNK/RA]

A	My MP understands and knows the needs of local community (his/her constituent's needs).	1	2	3	4	5	9
B	My MP is responsive to the needs of local community (his/her constituent).	1	2	3	4	5	9
C	An MP should visit his/her constituents more often than they used to be.	1	2	3	4	5	9
D	There is often a big difference between what a candidate promises s/he will do and what s/he does when s/he wins an election.	1	2	3	4	5	9
E	Chin State Parliament is open enough to citizen participation in political processes and decision-making in practice	1	2	3	4	5	9
F	Chin State Parliament should allow media agencies to observe parliamentary procedure.						

Q6. As per your knowledge, how many times have any Members of Parliament or their personal secretary/ representative visited your village/town/city to meet with villagers/local community in the last 24 months. [Circle appropriately]

1	2	3	4	5	9
More than 6 times	5-6 times	3-4 times	1-2 times	Never	DNK/RA

Q7. We would like you to rate the following ways of making political decisions. Circle appropriate answer. 1=Strongly agree; 2=Fairly Agree; 3=Neither agree nor disagree; 4=Fairly disagree; 5=strongly disagree; 9=DNK/RA

A	Make it easy that people participate and discuss the most important political decisions.	1	2	3	4	5	9
B	Organize referenda frequently.	1	2	3	4	5	9
C	Elect the politicians that will take political decisions.	1	2	3	4	5	9
D	Let the government take the decisions.	1	2	3	4	5	9
E	Our government would run better if decisions were left up to successful business people	1	2	3	4	5	9
F	Our government would run better if decisions were left up to non-elected, independent experts rather than politicians or the people.	1	2	3	4	5	9
G	Take political decisions through consultations with experts.	1	2	3	4	5	9
H	Consult local community before implementing any project	1	2	3	4	5	9

Q8. In your opinion, how could your MP improve his or her work to fulfill your expectation? You can mention more than one answer. (Interviewer: Do not read response. Try to match response to one of these categories. Otherwise, use "other")

Seek to better understand the issues of the community	1
Seek to better understand national issues	2
Better understanding of lawmaking process	3
Better use of social media	4
Communicate more with constituents	5
Visiting the constituency more often	6
Open field office in the constituency	7
Other [Specify: _____]	8
DNK/RA	9

Political Participation

Q9. There are many opinions on how one can effectively influence decisions in society. I will read you some of the ways that are used. Please tell me how effective do you think it is. (1 = very effective; 2= fairly effective; 3=not effective; 4=not at all effective; 5=DNK/RA)

A.	Work in a political party	1	2	3	4	5
B.	Work in organization that work on political issues	1	2	3	4	5
C.	Vote in elections	1	2	3	4	5
D.	Personally contact elected politicians	1	2	3	4	5
E.	Participate in public demonstrations	1	2	3	4	5
F.	Sign petitions	1	2	3	4	5
G.	Participate in public consultation meeting with public officials	1	2	3	4	5
H.	Writing in print media	1	2	3	4	5
I.	Writing in social media (e.g. facebook, website, etc).	1	2	3	4	5

Q10A. In the last 24 months, did you attend a meeting with government representative/MPs? [If the answer is "No", continue to ask Q10B. If the answer is "Yes", skip question Q10B]	Yes (1)	No (2)	DNK/RA (9)
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Q10B. What was the main reason? You can mention more than one answer. Interviewer: Do not read response. Try to match response to **one** of these categories. Otherwise, use "other")

1) It didn't happen in my location	1
2) Too far	2
3) I didn't know there was a meeting	3
4) I didn't know enough about the meeting	4
5) I wasn't invited to the meeting	5
6) Not interested	6
7) No time/busy	7
8) This type of activity doesn't make a difference	8
9) Our opinions are not taken into consideration	9
10) The meeting was conducted in a language I don't know	10
11) It's not safe to attend this kind of event	13
12) Other., [specify: _____]	12
13) Don't Know or Refused to Answer (DNK/RA)	13

Understanding Political Representation and Participation in Chin State

Q11

A) There are many different ways of participating in political processes (politically active). Have you ever done any of the following activities? *[READ options - if the answer is "YES" ask immediately B and C. If the answer is "NO" skip B and ask C]*

B) [If "YES"] During the last 8 years, how often have you done this? Never, once, twice, 3-4 times or more than 5 times?

C) Now, I'm going to read out some forms of political action that people can take, and I'd like you to tell me whether you might do it in the future if there is a chance. *(Read out and code one answer for each action for participation potential).*

A) Have you ever.....?			B) Only if "YES": How often in the last 8 years?						C) Read out and code one answer for each action:			
GIVEN ACTIVITIES (Read out for the interviewee)	Yes	No							Yes	No	Maybe	DNK/RA
			Once	Twice	Three to four times	More than 5 times	DNK/RA					
1) Voted in election	1	0	3	4	5	6	9		10	11	12	19
2) Not voted out of protest	1	0	3	4	5	6	9		10	11	12	19
3) Contacted MP/s	1	0	3	4	5	6	9		10	11	12	19
4) Contacted other politician	1	0	3	4	5	6	9		10	11	12	19
5) Attended a public meeting dealing with political or social issues	1	0	3	4	5	6	9		10	11	12	19
6) Signed a petition	1	0	3	4	5	6	9		10	11	12	19
7) Collected signatures	1	0	3	4	5	6	9		10	11	12	19
8) held a political speech	1	0	3	4	5	6	9		10	11	12	19
9) Participated in demonstration	1	0	3	4	5	6	9		10	11	12	19
10) donated money to support the work of a political group or organization	1	0	3	4	5	6	9		10	11	12	19
11) contributed to a political discussion on the internet	1	0	3	4	5	6	9		10	11	12	19
12) written an article, e.g. in a student newspaper or other newspaper or online news	1	0	3	4	5	6	9		10	11	12	19
13) written or forwarded or share a letter/an email/social media post with a political content	1	0	3	4	5	6	9		10	11	12	19
14) Supported an election campaign	1	0	3	4	5	6	9		10	11	12	19
15) tried to convince others to vote for a candidate or a party	1	0	3	4	5	6	9		10	11	12	19

Annex II: Chin State Parliamentary Committees

No.	Committee/Commission	Chairperson
1.	Representatives Overseeing Committee	Thawng Khaw Mang
2.	Public's Accounts Committee	Ral Hnin
3.	Bill Committee	Suan Do Cin
4.	Environmental Conservation, Agriculture, Transportation and Power Committee	Van Thawng
5.	Rural Development, Budget and Finance Committee	Dr. Hmuh Thang
6.	Ethnic Affair Committee	Tike Thang
7.	Government's Guarantees, Pledges Complaint Undertaking Vetting Committee	Pwe Aa
8.	Education and Health Committee	Pye Min

Annex III: Members of Chin State Parliament (2015-2020)

No.	Name and (Party Affiliation)	Constituency (Con)	Party Affiliation
1.	Ral Hnin	Falam Con 1	NLD
2.	Lian Luai	Falam Con 2	NLD
3.	Zo Bawi	Hakha Con 1	NLD
4.	Sui Thio	Hakha Con 2	NLD
5.	Kwe Thang	Kanpalet Con 1	NLD
6.	Phuai Aa	Kanpalet Con 2	NLD
7.	Aung Lian	Matupi Con 1	CLD
8.	Vui Kaw	Matupi Con 2	NLD
9.	Aung Tan	Mindat Con 1	NLD
10.	Tike Thang	Mindat Con 2	NLD
11.	Kan Tint	Paletwah Con 1	NLD
12.	Pye Min	Paletwah Con 2	NLD
13.	Thang Deih Khup	Tedim Con 1	ZCD
14.	Suan Do Cin	Tedim Con 2	USDP
15.	Van Thawng	Thantlang Con2	USDP
16.	Dr. Hmuh Thang	Thantlang Con 1	USDP
17.	Thawng Khaw Mang	Tonzang Con 1	NLD
18.	Pau Lun Min Thang	Tonzang Con 2	ZCD
19.	Col. Han Win Aung	-	Tatmadaw
20.	Aaka Kyaw Moe	-	Tatmadaw
21.	Soe Yan Aung Htye	-	Tatmadaw
22.	Pyi Hing	-	Tatmadaw
23.	Phyo Phyo	-	Tatmadaw
24.	Aung Kyaw Tet	-	Tatmadaw

* Two representatives from Tatmadaw, Phyo Phyo and Pyi Hing will be replaced by others soon.

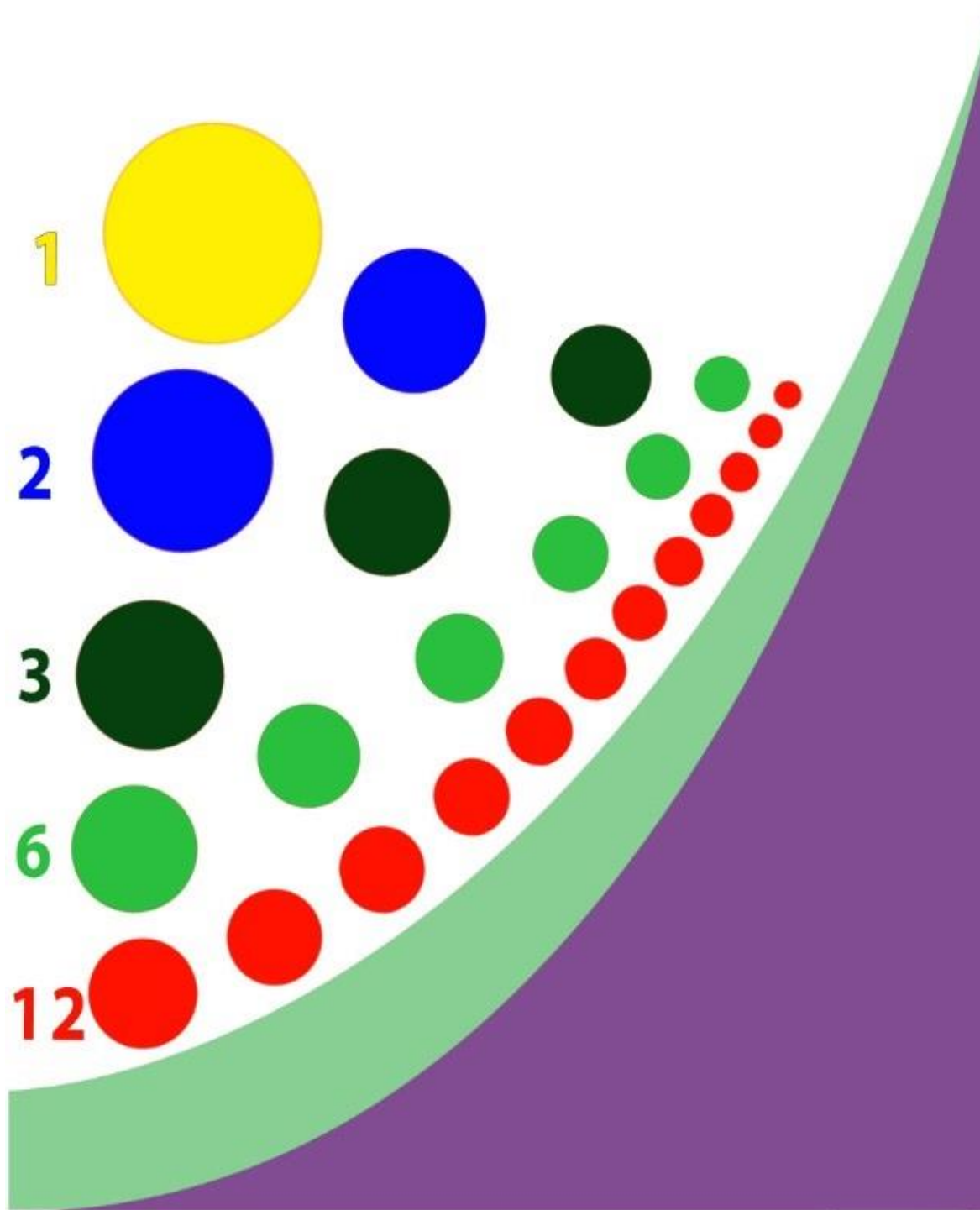
* See Annex V for name of political parties mentioned here.

Annex IV: Chin State Ministers (2015-2020)

No.	Name of Minister	Description
1.	Lian Luai	Chief Minister
2.	Col. Han Win Aung	Minister of Security and Boarder Affairs
3.	Pau Lun Min Thang	Minister of Social Affairs
4.	Vui Kaw	Minister of Planning and Finance
5.	Mang Hen Dal	Minister of Agriculture, Livestock, Forestry and Mines
6.	Soe Htet	Minister of Municipal Affairs, Electricity and Industry
7.	Sui Thio	Minister of Telecommunication and Transport

Annex V: Acronym

1. NLD = National League for Democracy
2. CLD = Chin League for Democracy
3. ZCD = Zomi Congress for Democracy
4. USDP = Union Development and Solidarity Party
5. Tatmadaw = Military (Defense)
6. Hluttaw = Parliament
7. Con = Constituency



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