

Swe Zin Linn Phyu (PhD) Faculty of Health & Environmental Sciences

In this research, I examine the lived experiences of Myanmar women incarcerated in Thailand through an intersectional feminist criminological lens. While women in patriarchal societies face gendered oppression, ethnic minority women—especially migrants affected by political instability, displaced persons, or refugees—experience compounded marginalisation shaped by ethnicity, migration, political status, and socioeconomic inequality. Despite growing global interest in intersectional criminology (Crenshaw, 1989), Southeast Asian contexts remain underexplored (Rao et al., 2022).

This study investigates how Myanmar women navigate the Thai criminal justice system, from the factors leading to their incarceration to their prison experiences and the challenges they face upon re-entry. It highlights how systemic issues such as poverty, lack of education, legal precarity, and gender-based violence intersect to shape their carceral journeys. Within Thai prisons, these women often encounter racial discrimination, language and cultural barriers, and limited access to healthcare, justice, and rehabilitation.

In this presentation, I will outline the research design, including the theoretical framework, research questions, and qualitative methodology, which involves in-depth interviews with up to 25 formerly incarcerated Myanmar women. Interviews will be conducted in Burmese, translated and transcribed into English, and thematically analyzed using NVivo. I will also discuss the practical and ethical challenges of conducting cross-border fieldwork and building collaborations with local organisations such as the Thailand Institute of Justice (TJI).

Audience members can expect to learn how applying an intersectional feminist criminological approach in Southeast Asia can reveal overlooked forms of structural violence and help inform more inclusive, culturally competent, and gender-sensitive justice policies.

Keywords

Myanmar women, feminist intersectional approach, criminalization, imprisonment, and reintegration

References

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