

Thesis Title	The Roles of Social Capital in the Emergence of Local Governance in Fragile Environment: Case of Chin State in Myanmar
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ABSTRACT

The 2021 military coup in Myanmar triggered profound political turmoil, severely weakening state administrative capacity and depriving citizens of essential public services and political representation. Chin State, one of the regions most actively resisting the military regime, has witnessed the rapid emergence of localized governance structures. This research explores how social capitals contribute to the formation and functioning of local governance amid fragility. Using qualitative interviews and literature review, the study investigates the mechanisms of grassroots governance and the impact of the fragile environment on the social capital–governance relationship. Findings reveal that township- and tribe-based administrative bodies have taken on governance functions, such as justice, public service delivery, and defense, grounded in principles of self-determination. Social trust enhances civic engagement and legitimacy, while norms of reciprocity and diaspora support mobilize vital resources. Social networks enable coordination and resilience. However, the study also highlights risks of exclusion and internal power struggles that challenge social cohesion. Overall, the research underscores the critical yet complex role of social capital in shaping inclusive, community-led governance in conflict-affected and institutionally fragile contexts.

Keywords: Social Capital, Local Governance, Fragility, Chin State, Myanmar