

**Ame Khin May-Kyawt**  
**York University**

**Motherhood and Gender Role: A Study of Employed Myanmar Diasporic Mothers in  
The Greater Toronto Area**

My paper focuses on motherhood and gender role in relation to first-generation migrant women from Myanmar (Burma) who have relocated to Canada. Specifically, I explore to what extent the women of the Myanmar diaspora challenge or still maintain their gender norms and relations that are embedded in the sending country's cultural context while simultaneously juggling the responsibilities amongst their multiple identities as mothers, wives, and employees through the lens of feminist mothering theory. My investigation is based on a review of relevant works of maternal theorists and feminist migration scholars who explore the lived complexities of migrant mothers within the context of Southeast Asian migration to Western countries, as well as conducting a qualitative survey interview with eight employed Myanmar Diasporic mothers in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) in 2020. Based on the findings, I argue that feminist mothering should be discussed as a combination of both structural conditions (e.g., cultural beliefs, and material and economic demands) and subjective feelings about paid and unpaid work (e.g., domestic and child responsibilities). I acknowledge that my research participants cannot be representative of the experiences of all migrant Myanmar women residing in Canada, however, my study contributes to the existing literature on motherhood studies by providing an overall caregiving narrative that focuses on the minority of employed Myanmar diasporic mothers who have been under-researched in mothering and migration scholarship. Moreover, the findings from my work outline how the culture and values of the sending country play an overall determinant role in shaping the sense of self processed by various migrant mothers when it comes to their relationships with their spouses and families.

Ame Khin May-Kyawt is a PhD (Year 3) student at York University, Social and Political Thought Department. Her dissertation project focuses on the process of dislocation/relocation, its adversities, and resilience in the resettlement process of Karen refugee women in Canada via a gender and developmental approach, which seeks to analyze the causes of gender inequality within the context of relations between women and men. She is working on her dissertation project with Dr Andrea O'Reilly (Professor, School of Gender, Sexuality, and Women's Studies, York University, Toronto), who is one of the Keynote Speakers of the CFP-Motherhood Conference (Chapman University- California) April 2023.