

Rural vs Urban: How COVID-19 Pandemic Has Different Impacts on Students in Light of Educational Inequalities in Thailand

Lalin Duangphatra¹, Chollaphin Wilairatanarporn¹, Praeploy Amornsillaphachai²

¹ Triam Udom Suksa School, Thailand

² Kasetsart University, Thailand

Abstract

The educational inequality has been a major obstacle to the development of Thailand. It could be well seen between the urban and rural areas, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. The purpose of this study is to evaluate and recognize the disruptive impact that the pandemic poses upon the education system in Thailand which dramatically contributes to the worsening situation of inequality in the system. Particularly, the study investigates and compares the effects of the pandemic on students' life living and studying in urban and rural areas. In this context, the urban area refers to the area in Bangkok; the relatively less urban area is the central area excluding Bangkok; and the rural area refers to the areas in the other regions in the country. To acquire the data set, a survey is the primary research method being conducted. Respondents are asked about three sets of questions: the monthly income and the educational level of the parents, and the effects of the pandemic on the students' lives—their education, their mental health and their overall well-being. Moreover, the students are also asked about how they deal with the encountered struggles. Responses to the questions are analysed in three main groups: the rural, urban and central. The results show that the educational level of the parents strongly correlates with the income of the household as predicted. However, the impacts of the pandemic on the three aspects of the student's lives are affected similarly. Besides, the provided solutions to the problems are still vague.

Keywords: COVID-19, rural vs urban, education inequality