

Inequality Between Rural and Urban Areas in Thailand

As the many countries in the world develop and reduce the disparity, Thai people face difficulty to climb the ladder to the point that they open their eyes and live happily as elite people do. Bangkok, the capital city of Thailand, is center of everything. When people have to do some important businesses, they have to have hundreds of kilometers trip for just one business. That is even worse when education in suburban areas, basic need of people to develop the country, is not as equal as the urban area. Also, it sounds ridiculous that Bangkok is the place where people have to come when they have business, but transportation cost and convenience is not served to the citizens. Moreover, opportunities in workers' career are also different among the areas, most of the specific offices, such as financial institution, take place in Bangkok, how would you expect people to stay in rural area and develop their areas? These problems are the topic that we need to discuss that is there really inequality among the areas and what cause that problem to happen.

“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world”, said by Nelson Mandela. Education is the key to reduce poverty, gender inequality and sustainable to the area. However, does Thailand's actions on education system really believe in Mandela's quote? Ministry of Education has been working for a long time to improve the quality of education. The basic goal that every student should have is called 3R and 7C. 3R can be classified as Reading, (W)riting, (A)rithmethics. These are the skills that the ministry wants all the student to have from the course. For 7C, it can be classified as critical thinking and problem solving, creativity and innovation, cross-cultural understanding, collaboration, communication, computing and ICT literacy and career and learning skills. This policy looks like a good plan to improve the quality of Thailand's education. I cannot deny that there are people have been working hard for the future of Thai students. On the contrary, the result of the policy of the ministry is Thailand is 8th place is Asean from 10 countries. Our education

system is even worse than Cambodia, the country that Thai people like to insult. The problems seem to be caused many factors such as quality of school, teachers, parents. First, the quality of school is inequality. From the research, 9 out of top 10 high school in Thailand take place in Bangkok. This implies that the majority of talented students are in Bangkok, and quality teachers usually teach in those school. However, that does not mean there is no talented students in rural areas. There are many talented students who do not have opportunities to get good education from quality teachers just because they do not have money to live Bangkok, the most expensive living cost city in Thailand. Moreover, as they do not have a chance to learn from top tier teachers that means they might miss something which all students deserve to have. Me, as a former student who lives other province, I have a lot of friends who study in top tiers schools when I come to study in Thammasat University. I have been told from these friends that not all of students from top tier school are that good. Some of students can study in good school because of the quota of local students which means students can get accepted from good school if they live around school area. This clearly show the inequality, talented students in rural areas can't get knowledge from best teachers, but average students in Bangkok can get that, and most of quota students do not behave properly as a student of top 10 school. Next, teacher is one of the most important part of the school. Good teacher's properties are warm, accessible, enthusiastic and caring. I have many experiences from my school in other province. Some teachers should not even be allowed to be in school because of their behaviors. A male teacher of my school sexual harassed many female students. Also, some of them have to teach the subjects that they are not expert in. When I was in 6th grade, my English teacher graduated in teaching mathematic, but she had to teach English because there weren't enough English teachers in the school. Shortage of teachers in rural areas in a big problem that need to be fixed as soon as possible, if not, you will never be able to expect to have the same quality between two types of schools. I

understand the reasons why not many talented teachers want to work in rural areas. As those teachers are so skillful, they have a choice to teach in good school which they get more salary and face easier living standard in urban area. Also, transportation in Bangkok is more convenient than other provinces. Moreover, as they teach in famous school, they can get famous because their students get accepted from famous university so that make them proud of themselves. On the other hand, schools that take place very far away from Bangkok, they do not even have enough classrooms for students to study, the salary that each school can pay the teacher is also lower than school in Bangkok can pay, as a result, those schools are not attractive enough to make talented teacher become a part of their development. If the government cannot guarantee good living standard for the teachers, there will be a very small incentive for teachers to push the quality of education of their school up to be as good as school in the city. From these problems the government should use government spending to develop those schools. Using the concept of Keynesian, government should spend to attract good teachers to those school in rural areas, also, make the facilities of the schools good enough to support their teaching. Another factor that affect the learning of students is how they are taught at home. Parent is the main character to play that role. The problem is many parents in rural areas have to go to Bangkok to find the jobs and do not have time to parent their children. As a result, children have to stay with their grandparents who are old and may not understand the lessons that their children study at school. This affects directly to the understanding in lesson of children. In contrast, for parents in Bangkok, they at least can live in the same house with their children. If their children do not understand the lessons, they can teach them or send them to tutoring which is all around Bangkok. Moreover, their parents may not able to understand the lesson because the lessons that they studied when they were younger and the lessons at this time are different, and also the quality of school may not be good enough. So, these situations show disparity clearly between Bangkok and rural area's

education. If you say children are the future of the nation, how you treat them is how the nation will be in the future.

Next, Bangkok is the center of Thailand's economy. Many facilities, offices, shopping mall, school or even hospital take place in this city. It is good for people who live in Bangkok because they can do all business without having to drive far away from where they live.

Alternatively, Bangkok is not the only province in Thailand. People who live in rural area like Prachinburi cannot get these facilities equal to people who live in Bangkok. If a student who lives in Prachinburi wants to come to IELTS office to do the business, they have to spend like 10 hours to come to Bangkok to do a business and another 10 hours to go back home. But in developed country, every city has almost equally facilities. For example, in USA, you can take SAT test in every city, it is different here because you have to go to big city like Chiang Mai, Chonburi, Phuket which people who live far away from these cities have to spend a lot of money and time for the trip. This implies that most of technical jobs take place in Bangkok, and the types of jobs in rural areas would be different, such as agriculture, factory works. So, many workers who want to work in the office, financial institution have to come to Bangkok to work. As the world has developed, agriculture becomes less popular for workers, so many people have to come to Bangkok to work. As a result, Bangkok become crowded, economy developed very well but the living standard become worse because of pollution and concentration. As Bangkok is so crowded, the price of land become higher, and the rental price must be more expensive too. That causes an increase in living cost in Bangkok. In contrast, the different in job career of urban and rural workers cause in the different in development. We can realize that when go to other province, sky train seems to appear in almost every part of Bangkok, but for rural area, normal train can be barely seen. As Bangkok develops more, it seems like the level of inequality keeps increasing too.

Government focus on Bangkok mostly because it is the face of the country, and it is the

center of economy of the country. Also, the population density in Bangkok and rural areas is different so I understand that why government have to focus on Bangkok first. Moreover, rural area has been ignored, they cannot reach the development that Bangkok has. As a result, I do not think rural area will be able to develop as much as urban area unless the government is able to spread development to rural area. I think concept of specialization can be applied to this situation. If a province is famous at touring such as Chonburi, government can just put the ministry of tourism and sport in that Area so people who want to do business at that ministry can go away from Bangkok. Therefore, improving rural areas does not only benefit rural area, but also benefit urban area because there will be less crowded in Bangkok and living stand would be better.

In conclusion, disparity in Thailand can cause many problems for both people in rural and urban. If we can solve the education system first and make the students from Thai education system how to develop the country and know what all the parts of the country should be, this will make the equality for our country and people can have better life.