

A COMPARISON OF EDUCATIONAL INEQUALITY BETWEEN THE URBAN HIGH SCHOOL AND RURAL HIGH SCHOOL IN NAKHON SI THAMMARAT, THAILAND

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ABSTRACT

After a comparison of educational inequality between the urban high schools and rural high school in Nakhon Si Thammarat the results showed that the students in urban high schools, Nakhon Si Thammarat have good grades, warm families, enough income for living, live in a good environment, no financial problem. Their school administrators are well taking care of students. The teachers have knowledge and expertise. And the schools have a lot of learning activities for students. On the other sides, the students in rural high school have good grades too. They want to learn challenging subjects, have warm families. Their housing is convenient and safe. But they have limited incomes, therefore, most of them cannot study with well-known tutors and may have financial problems if studying at universities. The school administrators create new things for their schools and students and them close to students. The teachers have knowledge and expertise in their subjects and have good teaching methods for students. The schools have new buildings and complete equipment for learning as well as having good activities beyond education. When comparing the differences between urban high schools and Rural high school, it is found that Rural high school are inequalities from the urban ones in terms of student characteristics, income, housing, school management, school administrators, teachers, and learning activities.

Keywords: Educational Inequality, Urban High Schools, Rural High School, Nakhon Si Thammarat, Thailand

INTRODUCTION

Education is important to individuals, communities, and national development. Thai governments of all eras have clear policies on education, in which Thailand spends up to a quarter of the total national budget on education, which is higher than the education budget of the UK and Japan 2-2.5 times respectively. The Thai government spends more than 300 billion baht in the education budget per year, but when measuring the achievements Instead, it was found that Thai students were ranked last in every stage and almost every aspect. This can be seen in the results of the Academic Test of Thai students at an international level, which is held every three years by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) member countries, known as PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment) (Thai Publica, 2018). In which a total of 37 countries took the exam this year in 2018, Thai students had lower average scores in reading, math, and science than OECD member countries. When comparing the results of PISA 2015 with PISA 2018, there was a 16-point reduction in reading scores. Mathematics and Science scores increased by approximately 3 points and 4 points respectively, which statistically assumed no change in Mathematics and Science compared to the previous assessment cycle (Institute for the Promotion of Teaching Science and Technology (NSTDA, 2019).

However, when comparing the test scores of students according to the school's affiliation, they are

- 1) Schools under the Office of the Basic Education Commission.
- 2) Schools under the local administrative organization (local administration).
- 3) Schools under the Bangkok Office of Education (BKK).
- 4) Schools under the Office of the Private Education Commission (NSO)
- 5) The University Demonstration School. It was found that in 2018, students from schools that focused on science and math study plans had the highest scores, followed by Students in the University's Demonstration schools, and other schools continued to score lower than the national average of OECD members. (Institute for the Promotion of Teaching Science and Technology (NSTDA, 2019).

The above statement shows that students in different schools have different grades, which is mainly due to inequality in the economy. For example, a study by the Thailand Development Research Institute found that family status affects students' test scores. That is, only students from middle to wealthy families achieve high test scores. It can be seen that the students in the demonstration schools, most of them from affluent urban families than other affiliated schools, scored higher on standardized tests than students from general schools in all subjects and examination fields (Lathapipat, 2012). In addition, the Institute for the Promotion of Teaching Science and Technology (NSTDA, 2018) found that student's socioeconomic status background influences or affects a student's learning, where students from disadvantaged backgrounds, such as being poor or studying in rural schools, are more likely to have low test scores. However, data from PISA indicates that schools or students who are economically and socially disadvantaged, if provided with adequate and adequate learning resources, can reduce the influence of variables on the student's socioeconomic status, and thus students have higher exam results.

The Institute for the Promotion of Teaching Science and Technology (NSTDA, 2019) also sees school administration as a barrier to educational equality because it is a system that promotes students who are more or less advantaged and discourages disadvantaged students. Such practice is that the admission of students to schools through intensive academic selection means fewer opportunities for disadvantaged students. Grouping students according to their abilities will make them vulnerable to learning from their peers who are good at learning, and weak students tend not to have the opportunity to study with highly qualified teachers because those teachers always want to teach well students only. The allocation of resources in the Thai school system is unequal, large schools are allocated more educational resources than smaller schools, causing disadvantaged schools and students to remain disadvantaged and lacking. This is in the research of Oppedisano & Turati (2011) found that besides the student's background, the nature of the school also affects student inequality or creates inequality in education. If the school system can be improved, the gap in education inequality will be reduced. Research by Somta & Yeerong (2017) also supports that school differences include: policymakers, school administrators, and educators were more likely to affect educational disparities than students' personal and family backgrounds.

It can be concluded that educational inequality originates from two main sources, namely

- 1) The socio-economic conditions that are interrelated cyclically are when parents are well educated. Able to pursue a high-income career, have a good economic status, are ready to fully support the education of their children coupled with the values of wanting their children to study in reputable schools for better future opportunities. Families in poverty are contrary to the aforementioned characteristics.
- 2) The management of education by governments and schools is also another factor causing disparities in education. Such as the allocation of educational budgets and manpower, the allocation of teacher and educational personnel rates, and the educational quality assessment system, etc. (Kitrattanaporn, 2012).

This research, therefore, aims to compare the urban high schools and non-the urban or Rural high school to find details of differences in various fields for enhancing students to achieve equality and equity, reduce the problems of education equality, reduce lack of resources, and help parents do not have to send their children to high schools in urban areas. This research was conducted in Nakhon Si Thammarat province, which was the 7th largest number of schools in Thailand in 2018,

with a total of 1,179 schools. The researcher, therefore, wanted to compare the high schools located in the urban area of Nakhon Si Thammarat province and the high schools outside the city to compare them for determining the differences factors to determine how to minimize the differences between students in the two types of schools. For all students have the opportunity to access quality education and not be limited by family conditions and the nature of the area.

OBJECTIVE

This research aimed to compare the educational inequality between the urban high schools and rural high school in Nakhon Si Thammarat, Thailand

LITERATURE REVIEW

Educational Inequality

This research defines educational inequality means;

- 1) Unequal education, that is, educational institutions access to educational resources unequally such as budget, quality, knowledge, and expertise of teachers and educational persons, the ability to provide or access books or textbooks, and technology for learning and students.
- 2) Unfair education is that disadvantaged schools, such as small schools or rural schools, do not have access to or receive the essential resources necessary for the implementation of student education successfully or effectively.

The Effects of Inequality in Education

When educational disparities arise in Thailand or any country, there are consequences for both the students themselves and the national economy. This is because economists agree that education is essential to economic growth. Developed countries such as the United States contribute more than 74% of their budgets to secondary education to provide enough wealth for their people and their country. Educational inequality affects the socio-economic level of individuals, namely, lack of work knowledge and skills, low pay rates, and lack of bargaining power in employment. At the same time, when the economic situation is poor, those people are deprived of social opportunities, such as less access to information from technology, lack of time to engage in other social activities, and lack of political interest. Thus, making less political participation. Therefore, if the disparities in education are reduced to a lesser extent, the above effects can be minimized. Educational inequality also affects the macro economy. That is, educational inequality is related to the economic growth of the country. This is because countries with less inequality have equal management of human capital in terms of labor, resulting in higher per capita incomes. Just as rich countries can provide education to their people more thoroughly than poor countries. However, there are still several poor countries that prioritize equality in education because equipping workers with education can increase average income per capita and grow the economy (Jacob and Holsinger, 2009).

Causes of Educational Disparities

Literature review on educational inequality from Pootrakul, et al., (2005); Oppedisano & Turati (2011); Kittrattanaporn (2012); Piungam, et al., (2015); Phisolyabutr (2016). The causes or factors of inequality in Thai education can be classified as follows:

The Socio-Economic Conditions of the Household are:

Family Income Levels: Income inequality is a major contributor to other inequalities in human life such as education, health, nutrition, property ownership, or even political participation. As for education, children from high-income families receive more education or higher quality schools than children from lower-income families.

Family occupation: It affects the children's education as well as family income, that is, families engaged in agriculture or construction work cannot send their children to higher education. In contrast to families who are professionals such as lawyers, engineers, doctors, and administrators tend to send their children to higher education.

Family characteristics: Families with only one father or mother are less likely to provide their children with higher education than families with both parents.

Residential area: A comparative study between residents in Bangkok, municipal, and non-municipal areas found that residents in Bangkok had the highest level of education, followed by residents in municipalities but living outside the municipality has the least level of education. This is because urban students have easier access to education in terms of distance and quality of schools. A large number of studies have found that students in Bangkok have a higher level of education than other areas, followed by higher education in urban areas than students in rural areas.

Students

The characteristics of the students inevitably affect the learning outcomes and learning needs of the students, such as cognitive abilities, which consist of thinking or problem-solving abilities, or IQ. In which the intelligence of students affects the ability to learn things because it comes from thinking, memory, intelligence, ingenuity, etc. In addition, student personality also affects students' academic performance such as knowledge, responsibility, discipline, diligence, patience, etc.

Schools

Phisolyabutr (2016) Study on educational disparity found that up to 47 percent were caused by schools, including.

- 1) Budget limitations in terms of amount and manpower for education.
- 2) The shortage of teachers and educators, especially in remote rural areas, but some schools have more teachers than students, which is a persistent problem in education management for a long time.
- 3) Teacher's workload and teaching are not enough to take care of students.
- 4) School leaders or administrators play an important role in the achievement of the school, which leaders should have vision, knowledge, and skills in technology, have management skills, have a good personality that is moral and ethical, develop a team, develop the community continuously, consistently.
- 5) Physical and environmental characteristics, large schools or urban schools are more physically equipped than rural schools.

METHODOLOGY

Research design

This study uses ex - post facto research or causal - comparative study research, which is a research method that investigates the causes or independent variables that cause behavior or consequential phenomena. This research assumes that the Effect or dependent variable and the cause or the differential variable already existed and that it is a fact that exists today. The researcher would like to know what caused the effect by a retrospective study of current facts and traced to past causes or phenomena as shown in Figure 1.

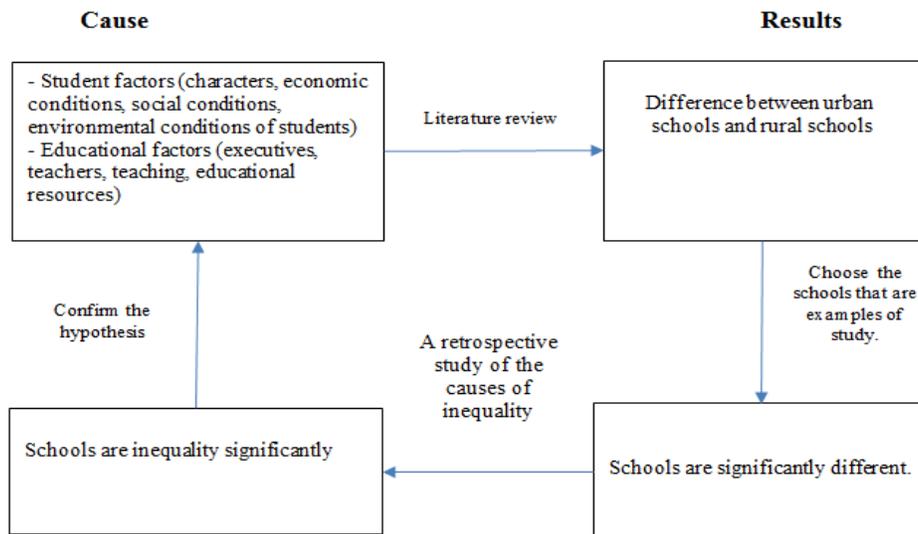


FIGURE 1
RESEARCH DESIGN

Research process

The researchers selected 3 the urban high schools and 3 rural urban high schools based on the nature of educational inequality as follows; (1) High schools in an urban with a consistent number of students in all three years of high school and schools with a high level of basic national educational test results in Nakhon Si Thammarat Province. And (2) Rural high school with a decrease in the number of students in three years and the school with low level of national educational test results in Nakhon Si Thammarat province located in various districts of province. The school selection was based on purposive sampling, to meet the research objectives, random sampling was used nonprobability Sampling.

The researcher then proceeded to collect data with quantitative research to find out if the two types of schools were significantly different, supported by statistical data. Data collection uses questionnaires to ask students in a sample school to obtain information about student characteristics, family, educational management in both types of schools whether they are different or not. The research results from questionnaires or analysis results are then presented in the form of tables and equations. Before distributing the questionnaire, the researcher tested for reliability with Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient by using the questionnaire to experiment with 30 samples, which found that the overall questionnaire had a Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient of 0.7, which was a high level of confidence as it is close to 1.00

Distribute questionnaires in schools that are sampling on the study. That is to say, the questionnaire was distributed to 3 high schools in Nakhon Si Thammarat province that were in the city and 3 high schools outside the city or rural. This allows students to answer the online questionnaire by asking for cooperation from the school's guidance teacher to forward the questionnaire to students as determined by the researchers so that students are free to answer according to their own feelings or opinions fully. The method for distributing the questionnaire is as follows:

Choose 3 the urban high schools and 3 the Rural high school. After that, the researchers randomized the Taro Yamane formula (1973) with a 90% confidence level with a minimum of 385 samples.

Sampling, in the first step, stratified random sampling was used to classify the population of each school into three grades: grade 4, grade 5, and grade 6. After that, randomization is made from each grade in proportion to the number of students in each grade, whichever grade has a large number of students, is randomly generated.

	Urban high schools			Rural high school		
	1 st place	2 nd place	3 rd place	1 st place	2 nd place	3 rd place
Grade 4	33	33	34	38	38	35
Grade 5	33	33	33	40	38	41
Grade 6	34	34	33	22	24	24
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

Once the researchers have calculated the samples in each grade, therefore, asked for a list of students from the school that studied for the sampling method by simple random sampling with the method of random the names of students in each grade where the researchers random the names of students in numbers greater than the predetermined sample size, for fear that some of the students in the sample group will not answer the questionnaire and thus obtain information from the questionnaire. The number is too small, so more questionnaires are sent than the specified number of samples. After randoming lots from the list of students in each grade, the researchers sent a questionnaire to the students according to the list of students who got the selection.

Data Analysis

After collecting data with questionnaires, the researchers analyzed two independent sample groups (t-tests) to find the difference of the mean from one sample group whether it is different from another group or not. The two sample groups were independent of each other, but the researchers did not know the population variance of the samples, so a t-test was used in cases where the variance of the variance was unknown based on significant differences statistical if the two types of schools had significant differences ($\text{sig} < 0.05$). However, if the two types were not significantly different ($\text{sig} > 0.05$), and data found that Rural high school differed from those in the urban high schools, it was suggested to relevant agencies to find ways to reduce inequality.

RESULTS

The researchers distributed 300 questionnaires to students in urban high schools, 187 returned respondents, or 62.3 percent, and 300 questionnaires were also given to students in the Rural high school and received returned 209 sets, representing 69.7 percent. From the statistical analysis of the t-test, it was found that students in urban secondary schools and students in Rural high school had different personal characteristics as shown in Table 2.

Personal Characteristics	Number	Mean	S.D.	t	sig
Study results					
Urban high schools	187	3.16	0.502	0.031	0.861
Rural high school	209	3.06	0.522		
Interest in learning					
Urban high schools	187	0.91	0.288	1.562	0.212
Rural high school	209	0.92	0.265		

Need for difficult subjects					
Urban high schools	187	0.22	0.418	9.27	0.002*
Rural high school	209	0.28	0.45		
Tutoring or special classes					
Urban high schools	187	0.59	0.493	5.385	0.021*
Rural high school	209	0.36	0.48		
University study requirements					
Urban high schools	187	0.98	0.126	7.676	0.006*
Rural high school	209	0.96	0.188		

*P<0.05

In Table 1, it was found that the results of students from both types of schools were not significantly different ($\text{sig}=0.861$), *i.e.*, students in the urban high schools and students in Rural high school had educational results. There is no difference, that is, they have a grade point average of 3.00 – 3.49.

When comparing differences in interest in learning or the study preferences of students in the urban high schools and students in Rural high school showed that there was no statistically significant difference between students from both types of schools ($\text{sig}=0.212$). That is to say, students enjoy studying with the view that studying is important.

However, when comparing the differences in demand for difficult subjects between students in the urban high schools and students in the Rural high school, it was found that students from Rural high school had a greater demand for difficult subjects than students in urban high schools, which had a statistically significant difference ($\text{sig}=0.002$).

As for tutoring or extracurricular study beyond the classroom between students in the urban high schools and students in the Rural high school, there was a statistically significant difference between students from both types of schools in this respect ($\text{sig}=0.021$), that is, students from the Rural high school take less tutoring or extra-curricular classes than students from urban high schools. In higher education, there is a difference in the demand for university education among students at the urban high schools and students at the Rural high school, *i.e.*, students from the urban high schools want to study at the university more than students from the Rural high school where the needs of students from both types of schools differ statistically ($\text{sig}=0.006$).

The difference between the urban high schools and the Rural high school for students' families is shown in Table 3.

Table 3					
COMPARES THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE URBAN HIGH SCHOOLS AND THE RURAL HIGH SCHOOL, ON THE STUDENT'S FAMILY SIDE.					
Family characteristics	Number	Mean	S.D.	t	sig
Living style					
Urban high schools	187	1.55	.996	9.576	.002*
Rural high school	209	1.4	.858		
Father's occupation					
Urban high schools	187	3.75	2.186	0.528	0.468
Rural high school	209	3.59	2.115		
Mother's occupation					
Urban high schools	187	3.33	2.21	2.283	.131
Rural high school	209	2.84	2.08		
Family income					
Urban high schools	187	2.35	0.952	7.561	0.006*
Rural high school	209	2.05	0.887		
Student personal expenses					
Urban high schools	187	2.89	0.969	8.719	0.003*

Rural high school	209	2.71	1.062		
Family support work					
Urban high schools	187	0.52	0.501	0.684	0.41
Rural high school	209	0.46	0.499		
Financial problems when attending university					
Urban high schools	187	0.71	0.454	51.234	0.000*
Rural high school	209	0.57	0.495		

*P<0.05

From Table 2, comparing the differences between the urban high schools and the Rural high school in terms of family characteristics of students, it was found that students from both types of schools were statistically different in family living characteristics (sig=0.002), as students in urban high schools resided with their parents more than students in the Rural high school.

Comparing the differences between the urban high schools and the Rural high school in their father's occupations, it was found that fathers of students from both types of schools had no statistically significant difference in occupation (sig=0.468), It was found that the mothers' occupations were not significantly different from the mothers of the students from both types of schools (sig=0.131).

But when comparing the differences in family income between students in urban high schools and students in Rural high school, it was found that the family income of students in both schools was statistically different (sig=0.006), where families of students from urban high schools had more monthly income than families of students in the rural.

Consistent with student personal expenditure, it was found that students in urban high schools and students in the Rural high school received a statistically significant difference in personal expenses (sig=0.003), in other words, students from Urban high schools receive more personal expenses per month than students at Rural high school.

Although the income and expenditures of students from the two schools are different when comparing the differences between students in urban high schools and students in the Rural high school regarding working to support families, one finds that there were no statistically significant differences between students from both schools (sig=0.41), where students from urban high schools and students from the Rural high school have only one studying role, they do not need to do any other work to support their families.

However, if we compare the differences in financial problems when studying at university between students in urban high schools and students in Rural high school, it is found that students from both types of schools differed statistically (sig=0.000), students from urban high schools will not have financial problems when studying at university, but students from the Rural high school will have financial problems if studying at university.

There were no statistically significant differences in the environment of students from both types of schools as shown in Table 3.

Table 4					
COMPARES THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE URBAN HIGH SCHOOLS AND THE RURAL SCHOOLS, STUDENT ENVIRONMENT.					
Residential environment	Number	Mean	S.D.	t	sig
Located in a prosperous, convenient transportation					
Urban high schools	187	0.74	0.438	0.579	0.447
Rural high school	209	0.73	0.445		
Safety of the place of residence					
Urban high schools	187	0.82	0.387	0.268	0.605
Rural high school	209	0.81	0.393		

*P<0.05

From Table 3 comparing the differences between the urban high schools and the Rural high school, regarding the student's residential environment, it is found that there were no statistically significant differences between students from both types of schools ($\text{sig} > 0.05$).

There are several differences in the management of urban high schools and Rural high school as detailed in Table 4.

Table 4					
COMPARES THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN URBAN HIGH SCHOOLS AND NON-THE URBAN HIGH SCHOOLS, SCHOOL MANAGEMENT					
Nature/school	Number	Mean	S.D.	t	sig
School administrators					
Administrators devote their time to schools and students					
Urban high schools	187	0.82	0.387	6.884	0.009*
Rural high school	209	0.86	0.347		
The administrators have innovated the school					
Urban high schools	187	0.81	0.391	4.027	0.045*
Rural high school	209	0.78	0.416		
Administrators close to students					
Urban high schools	187	0.82	0.387	18.781	.000*
Rural high school	209	0.89	0.319		
Nature/school	Number	Mean	S.D.	t	sig
Teachers					
Teachers have knowledge of the subjects taught					
Urban high schools	187	0.89	0.317	17.373	.000*
Rural high school	209	0.82	0.381		
Teachers care about students					
Urban high schools	187	0.77	0.425	0.19	0.89
Rural high school	209	0.77	0.42		
Teachers have a way of teaching students to understand the content					
Urban high schools	187	0.79	0.411	4.843	.028*
Rural high school	209	0.75	0.436		
School Resources					
The new school building, not dilapidated					
Urban high schools	187	0.69	0.464	5.36	.000*
Rural high school	209	0.78	0.413		
School supplies					
Urban high schools	187	0.7	0.462	2.64	0.105
Rural high school	209	0.66	0.473		
Extracurricular Activities					
There are activities or clubs in addition to studying					
Urban high schools	187	0.94	0.246	0.028	0.866
Rural high school	209	0.93	0.249		
Organizing field trips and sporting events					
Urban high schools	187	0.86	0.352	5.779	.017*
Rural high school	209	0.82	0.387		

* $P < 0.05$

From Table 4, students from the rural high school saw that administrators devote more time to schools and students than students from urban high schools with a statistically significant difference ($\text{sig} = 0.009$). In addition, students from the rural high school saw school administrators as being closer to students than students from the urban high schools, whose opinions differed statistically ($\text{sig} = 0.000$). But students from both types of schools had statistically different opinions ($\text{sig} = 0.045$)

about the administrative school's modernization, which found that urban high schools administrators were innovating more than executives of the rural high school

In terms of teachers' knowledge, it was found that students from the rural high school saw that teachers had less direct knowledge of the subjects than students from urban high schools with a statistically significant difference ($\text{sig}=0.000$). The teachers' attention to students, students from both types of schools had no statistically significant difference ($\text{sig}=0.89$), but in terms of teaching students to understand the content of the subjects, students from both schools had a statistically significant difference in opinion ($\text{sig}=0.028$), which found that students from the rural high school felt that teachers were not as good at teaching to understand the content as those from urban high schools.

Students from the rural high school saw a statistically significant difference in their new and unleashed buildings than students from the urban high schools ($\text{sig}=0.000$). In terms of equipment that is up-to-date and complete enough to support students' learning, it was found that students from the rural high school saw that their schools had the same equipment as students of the urban high schools by statistically significant ($\text{sig}=0.105$).

In terms of extra-curricular activities, it was found that the two types of schools had no statistically significant difference in activities or clubs outside the classroom ($\text{sig}=0.866$). However, in organizing field trips and sporting events for students of both types, it was found that students from the rural high school and students from the urban high schools had a statistically significant difference in opinion ($\text{sig}=0.017$), in other words, students from the rural high school see that their schools offer fewer excursions and sporting events than urban high schools.

DISCUSSION

There are many differences between high schools in the city and the high schools outside the city of Nakhon Si Thammarat. The researchers, therefore, discussed the results on issues with statistically significant differences as follows:

Personal Characteristics of Students

The results of the study, although the two types of schools were not statistically different. However, from the O-NET exam which measures the educational achievement of schools to a uniform standard across the country, which measures the knowledge and thinking of students in primary 6, high school 3, and high school 6. The exam consists of

- 1) Thai language
- 2) Social Studies, Religion and Culture
- 3) English
- 4) Mathematics
- 5) Science
- 6) Health and Physical Education
- 7) Occupational and Technological
- 8) Art

It appears that high schools in the urban areas of Nakhon Si Thammarat province have high O-NET scores and rank among the top in the country every academic year, while high schools outside the cities are not very high which is consistent with the research of Chiengkul (2016) That said, capital high schools or metropolitan high schools have higher average O-NET test scores than rural schools, indicating that when comparing the high grades or grades of high school students outside of urban areas, it may be substandard. Although students in rural high schools had the same

grades as students in urban high schools, they were less knowledgeable. This shows that both types of schools have unequal teaching and learning outcomes.

The need to study difficult subjects. Although most students currently do not want to study difficult or complex subjects, the results of this study have shown that students from rural high schools are more likely to study difficult subjects than students from urban high schools. This is because urban high schools focus on teaching and learning to develop achievements that are consistent with national test results and focus on implementing the SMART MODEL (S=Specific, M=Measurable, A=Accountable, R=Realistic, and T=Time Bound). The urban high schools offer courses for science talent learners to develop high potential in science, math, and technology at the high school level. It enables them to develop into a researcher, inventor, and inventor in mathematics, science, and technology with capabilities comparable to leading international researchers in the future. And has been distributed opportunities for development in mathematics and science according to the guidelines for creating equality in the education of the Ministry of Education 2018. As a result, the high school in the urban area has strong teaching, so students feel that the content of the study is difficult and therefore do not want to study more difficult subjects. As high schools outside the city do not have the above courses, they felt that their courses were not motivate enough and therefore required more difficult subjects.

Tutoring or special classes in which students of all grades have different tutoring classes or special classes. Students in urban high schools are mostly tutors or special education, but students in high schools outside the city have less opportunity to take tutoring or special education. Since tutoring schools or tutoring schools are located in urban areas, students have to travel long distances to attend tutoring or tutoring classes in the city. In addition, such education is expensive, with many tutoring schools having higher tuition than studying in a regular school. Therefore, students in rural high schools are less likely to be able to take tutoring or special education because of the high cost.

Demand for university studies, It was found that students in the urban high schools were more in demand for university studies than students in the rural high school. In addition to the economic readiness of the family, there is support from family members and teachers. There are also opportunities to access and exposure to information from various sources such as websites, information from tutoring schools, groups of friends, successful seniors. They are what inspire students in urban high schools to commit to university or higher education. Nearly 100 percent of students in urban high schools can apply for university admission each academic year, and some students have opportunities choose to study at more than one university.

University education aligns with The Market Signal View's concept, which sees that education can certify an individual as competent and trained to master and serve as a signal to the labor market about competence of the person needing educational evidence. Higher education is a guarantee for employers to believe that the person is very talented and pays high wages to employees who do not require much training or those who learn quickly. Education, therefore, determines the employee's status in the labor market, is an important tool for certifying that person to the labor market. Therefore, students in urban high schools want to pursue higher education to have the opportunity to enter the labor market and be highly paid.

Student's Family

Living style: It was found that students in the urban high schools lived with their parents more than students in the rural high school. Although most of the students in high schools outside the city live with their fathers and mothers, some students live with their mothers or fathers alone. Including some students living with relatives such as grandparents or uncles and aunts. This is because the father or mother has to work in a different area which makes the income more like Bangkok or major cities. However, when in the rural, besides rubber plantations, there is no additional occupation that will increase income. This is consistent with the research of Pootrakul, et al.,

(2005); Oppedisano & Turati (2011) has found that families with only one father or mother are less likely to provide their children with higher education than families with both parents. Because the father or mother has to take care of the family solely. As for living with relatives such as grandparents or uncles and aunts, the students have less high education because these people either lack the funds to support the education of the students or are unable to take care of the students as closely as their fathers or mothers.

Family Income: Families of students in urban high schools earn more than families of students in rural high schools. Although it was found that the fathers of most of the students in both types of schools were farmers and general laborers were second in the ranking, while the mothers were farmers, trading, and general labor respectively. But rural students, fathers and mothers do not have additional occupations that provide additional income for the family. The differences in family incomes therefore inevitably affect the lives of students. Consistent with the research of Pootrakul et al., (2005); Oppedisano & Turati (2011) that said, income inequality is a major contributor to other inequalities. For example, education, health, or nutrition, where students from high-income families are more educated or in better quality schools than students from lower-income families.

Student's personal expenditures, which are the result of family income, when the family earns less, the student's personal expenses for education are less. Consequently, students in rural high schools receive less monthly personal expenses than students in urban high schools.

Financial problems when attending university. When families of students in rural high schools have less monthly income than families of students in high schools in urban areas. When students in the rural ones go on to study at university, they will have the financial problems exactly.

Residential it was found that students in rural high schools saw their place of residence as secure and convenient as students in urban high schools. Although the area outside the city is prosperous, convenient transportation, complete public utilities, there are still security problems. For example, there are sources of mischief, gambling, drug use, causing insecurity in life and property, as well as inconvenient transportation during the rainy season. However, the study of Oppedisano & Turati (2011) considers that in municipal and non-municipal or rural areas, people have a chance of receiving a lower education, which causes a poorer quality of life than people in urban areas who have a better economic condition. It also found that the urban high schools care about students who attend their schools to provide students with a good quality of life. Although the schools do not provide dormitories for students from outside the city, students have to live in private dormitories near the schools and they also takes care of drug prevention, until the school awards and be the role model for anti-drugs.

School administrator the study found that administrators of rural urban high schools devoted more time to schools and students and cared for students more closely than administrators of urban high schools. Since the rural high schools are small schools, each with a small number of about 200 – 350 students, students have the opportunity to meet with administrators often. While urban high schools are large schools with a large number of students ranging from 1,000 to 3,000, it is difficult for students to meet with administrators often or administrators are unable to take care of the students thoroughly.

However, administrators of urban high schools innovate more schools than administrators of the rural high school. This is because urban secondary schools are budgeted more than the rural high school, which are smaller and have fewer students. That is to say, the allocation that the school receives is as follows: (1) The subsidy for the head of each student is 3,800 baht/person/academic year. (2) Student development activities 475 baht/person/semester. (3) The money for school uniforms is 500 baht/person/academic year. (4) money for school supplies 230 baht/person/semester. And (5) other funds allocated by the school district. As a result, larger schools with more students are allocated more budgets and can be used to innovate more schools. For example, the development of a modern curriculum that meets the standards of high schools in the capital organizes various activities to enhance knowledge skills, promote special abilities of

students, etc. This is consistent with the research of Phisolyabutr (2016) A study of educational disparities found that 47% of the inequality was caused by schools. In particular, budget constraints in terms of amount, wherein schools or small schools in poor or rural areas receive less budget than large and medium-sized schools in urban areas, thus hindering school development.

In addition, the personality of school administrators is important for educational inequality. The administrators of urban high schools will be persons who have been selected with knowledge, abilities, and experience to be school administrators. From research from outstanding schools in the northeastern region (Piungam et al., 2015) It was found that school leaders or administrators influence school success, requiring creativity and transformational leadership, combining knowledge and skills, especially skills in information technology, information management, and social media can be used for educational purposes. The data collected from the websites of both the urban high schools and rural high schools showed significant differences. The urban high schools websites provide up-to-date and consistent school information that are useful for education. But the website of the rural high school does not have much current information about the school.

Teachers it was found that teachers in urban high schools had more knowledge of the subjects and had more methods of teaching to understand the content than teachers in rural high schools. This is because urban high schools encourage teachers to develop themselves in terms of academic performance development at both the regional and country levels to develop higher academic potentials. Including sending teachers to train various courses to develop teaching and learning according to their skills and knowledge, both in schools and outside schools. It also encourages teachers to create plans for learning management and student-centered classroom activities using a variety of active learning processes, such as cooperative learning, debating, games, mapping thinking, teaching students to think critically, teaching them to practice until they can synthesize their knowledge, and enhance the use of technology in learning management. This is consistent with the research of Phisolyabutr (2016) found that schools in poor districts lacked teachers in terms of quality and quantity, so schools had to use teachers who did not meet the qualifications to teach instead, causing the problem of educational inequality.

School resources High schools in rural have more new, less dilapidated buildings than urban high schools. This is because rural high schools have a small number of students and therefore fewer occupants of the school buildings, so there is no chance of them being damaged. Unlike a school with a large number of students, the buildings are occupied a lot, and it often leads to rapid deterioration.

However, rural high schools lack more teaching materials than urban high schools. It was found that rural high schools have fewer teaching materials than urban high schools, especially desktop and portable computers, which are essential to learning today. In addition, some rural high schools do not have enough tables and chairs for the number of students, as well as have a lot of damage. Consistent with research, large schools or urban high schools are physically more readily available than rural schools such as technology, teaching facilities, and learning tools. These things, in addition to receiving from the government's budget and also receives donations from parents' associations and alumni associations, most of whom are pursuing stable, high-paying careers (Phisolyabutr, 2016).

Extracurricular Activities Rural high schools host fewer excursions and sporting events than urban high schools. Because they have limited budgets, if organizing excursions or sporting events, students may have to pay part of their own expenses. Most of the poor students had difficulty finding money to spend on field trips or sporting events. Therefore, the school organizes such activities not so much, but it can harm the students by causing the students to be group and behave inappropriately.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Guidelines to reduce the inequality between high schools in urban areas and rural high schools in Nakhon Si Thammarat Province. From the research results, the researchers would like to suggest ways to reduce the inequality between high schools in urban and high schools in rural as follows:

1. Rural high schools need to improve their course content to meet national standards. Students from rural high schools want to study hard subjects to have the knowledge, skills, and abilities to be on par with students in urban high schools. Therefore, teachers need to develop teaching methods and develop curriculum content to be as rigorous or standardized as in urban high schools.

Teachers may go on a field trip to study teaching methods and develop course content from high schools in urban areas. This is for students to be proud of their own school and it removes the stamp of being or perceived as unskilled or lacking teaching standards by students and others.

2. Rural high schools provide tutoring or special classes for students outside the city who wish to study tutoring. This is because students in rural schools have fewer tutoring opportunities than students in urban high schools. Teachers should encourage students to take tutoring from various online mediums which students can access free of charge such as the program “Tutor Channel” on TV channels, and various websites on the internet. This may allow students to tutor in small groups so that resources can be shared together, such as computers or televisions. And the local governments, response rural areas, allocate local tax to support these students by hiring quality teachers to tutor students on the weekend.

3. Rural high schools must encourage students to receive education until the end of grade 6 because education will help them have the better quality of life. Therefore, the schools must ensure that students have both of knowledge and skills by teaching additional occupations such as agriculture, handicraft, or mechanic along with academic content so that students who do not have enough money to pursue higher education can have a career. Including teaching morality, civic duty, and quality of life so that students can protect their lives from gambling, drug abuse, premature pregnancy, etc. which lead to social problems, health problems, poverty, and other imperfections in an endless cycle.

Teachers should also recommend that students who wish to pursue higher education have several options, such as vocational education or vocational school, where they can only study for 1-2 years and earn money. Once they have enough income, they can either go on to study at a university or study in an open university which is cheaper than studying in a closed university and they can work and study together.

But if a student wants to study in a closed university where universities currently offer a large number of scholarships for students, including free tuition and partial grants, but not all students who wish to receive scholarships can be funded. Therefore, the university should have the scholarship to hire students to work both inside and outside the university by agreeing with an establishment to help recruit students to work and pay according to working hours such as convenience stores, department stores, restaurants, etc. This is to ensure that students have enough income to study at the university level.

4. School administrators or leaders of rural high schools must have leadership that can motivate teachers to improve the quality and efficiency of teaching and student learning. School administrators must be selected from teachers who have great teaching success, good role models, and be able to properly recommend and support good teaching and learning to teachers in their schools. Including being the one who initiates new things for the school, concrete things such as curriculum development, initiating new projects, changing teaching methods of teachers. Including creating abstract things such as student discipline, creating public awareness among students,

training students to have a good quality of life. The Ministry of Education must clearly assess the performance of school administrators in terms of innovation or creativity.

5. Rural high schools need teachers who are competent in knowledge and teaching skills in order to provide students with clear and accurate knowledge. Rotation may be used for teachers from schools with more teachers than students to help teach subjects with shortage schools. Or ask a person who high knowledge and skills to teach the subjects do not need to graduate from the teaching profession, such as a nurse or a health worker to teach health education.

Schools need teachers to match the number of students in order to be able to take care of the students thoroughly. The promotion of teachers' academic standards should also require higher teaching and learning achievements. Therefore, the assessment criteria for a teacher's selection or promotion must be measured primarily on the teaching and learning performance of the teacher and on the knowledge and learning outcomes of the students. Getting the high academic positions, teachers must be assessed with the high performance evaluation criteria, that is, teachers need to have more teaching and learning outcomes and measure higher student achievement too.

Teachers need to adapt their teaching methods to meet different learners. Therefore, there must be a variety of teaching methods, such as learning management and student-centered classroom activities using the process of Active Learning, which can be of various forms, such as cooperative learning, debating, using games, mind maps. Teach students to think critically and learn from real practice, being able to synthesize their knowledge into pieces and activities, etc.

6. Rural high schools lack or less equipment to teach and organize field trips or sporting events than urban high schools. Therefore, they should build networks with other educational institutions in Nakhon Si Thammarat to provide students with the opportunity to use the equipment for teaching and learning. For example, using science laboratories and using computers from university. Organize other activities to replace expensive excursions, such as visits to community sufficiency economy projects, organizing activities with schools for the elderly, organizing volunteer activities in the community such as cleaning or managing waste in the community, etc. As for sporting events, the local government has always organized activities to promote sports for youth, the students can also involve in such activities. The good local activities help students to spend their free time productively rather than mixing together.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Thank you very one who have a part to finish this paper. However, Dr. Somjintana Koopai, the lecturer of Walailak University, Nakhon Si Thmmarat, Thailand, she is the corresponding, her e-mail: ksomjint@wu.ac.th

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Received: 30-Nov-2021, Manuscript No. JMIDS-21-10263; **Editor assigned:** 02- Dec -2021, PreQC No. JMIDS-21-10263 (PQ); **Reviewed:** 11- Dec -2021, QC No. JMIDS-21-10263; **Revised:** 17-Dec-2021, Manuscript No. JMIDS-21-10263 (R); **Published:** 05-Jan-2022.