

## Abstract

The paper investigates the degree of inequality of distribution of formal schooling in Thailand and how it intensifies as we move up the schooling ladder. It applies a constrained capital optimization model to explain the degree and movement of inequality. It shows how financial constraints on education choices result in an unequal distribution of choice sets facing the school-age children coming from different socio-economic and location classes. Location, particularly rural-urban categories, is found to exert the strongest influence on schooling attainment. This is shown in cross-tabulations and tests of the model.

The model is tested by logit method using cross-sections of individual observations from the National Statistical Office 1976. The Children and Youth Survey from which we obtained values of probability of school attendance in lower elementary, upper elementary, high school and post high school. For "worst-off" children whose fathers had the lowest income, lowest education, the most number of brothers and sisters, living in the rural Northeastern region, the respective probabilities were .71, .53, .14 and .2. The corresponding figures for the "best-off" children whose fathers had B100,000 income and post-secondary education, who had only one brother/sister and who lived in Bangkok were .98, .99, .97 and .56. The paper also gives the inter-generational link in education capital from the coefficients of father's education and

income. The distribution of education may be predicted by the model for any given distribution of children by socio-economic and location variables.



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