

Different Economic Performances in Southeast Asian Countries: A Comparative Perspective

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This paper has attempted to investigate the two major issues in development economics through observing different economic performances in three countries, Thailand, Burma and the Philippines.

The first issue is to investigate whether the pattern of managing the domestic economy has influenced its growth performances. Comparison of Burma with Thailand has clearly shown the fact that the outward-looking and market-oriented pattern of organizing the domestic economy, adopted by Thailand, is more conducive in inducing economic growth than the inward-looking and state-commanding pattern adopted by Burma.

The second issue is to investigate whether the class structure of the society has had significant effects on the sustainability of economic growth in the market-oriented economy. Comparison of the Philippines with Thailand has also shown that the unequal distribution of income and assets has eroded the sustainability of economic growth in the Philippines, while more equal distribution of income and assets could sustain the long-run economic growth in Thailand.