

Abstract

The Need for Another Revolution After the Reproductive Revolution in Thailand

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Ten years ago a book describing Thailand as being in the middle of a 'reproductive revolution' was published. That revolution has been now substantially completed. However, the very rapid social change that accompanied drastic fertility changes have thrown up new challenges that must be met by researchers and policy makers. A rapidly changing age structure, accompanied by low levels of human resources is related to several outcomes that are only now beginning to catch the attention of Thai policy makers. These outcomes may be real, such as the influx of foreign workers and the consequent rise in negative attitudes towards migrants, or perceived, such as a loss of Thai identity as a result of the low levels of fertility. But whether perceived or real these and other issues are receiving increasing attention in the media. In this paper I argue that with the end of the reproductive revolution there is a need to direct attention to these other changes that should be occurring in Thai society. In order to respond to the ongoing effects of reproductive change there is a need to promote forms of (social revolutions, including "human resource revolution") that are consistent with the goals of Thai society and the aspirations of the Thai people. The paper outlines several areas where such efforts are required, by comparing to the preceding reproductive revolution.