

Title: Governance and policy-making in Thailand : a study of poverty alleviation policy since 1997
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Abstract:

One of the stimulating theoretical discussions of the last decade involves the concept of governance and its linkage to public policy. However, many substantive studies on governance transformation and how it has affected policymaking processes have drawn on the experience of western developed countries, with little has been done in the context of developing societies. This research, therefore, responds to the need for a greater understanding of the increasing complexity of contemporary governance and its nexus with policy-making in developing countries. It explores the nature of Thailand's governance configuration in the making and delivery of anti-poverty policy since the 1997 crisis. The research also investigates this nexus in the context of globalisation which the roles and influences of globalised agents are asserted. The research findings suggest some dynamic patterns in the relationship between various actors involved in the governance of anti-poverty policy since the crisis. Instead of the Thai state turning into a weak and less powerful actor in shaping policy and service delivery, the state was able to use different governing approaches and strategies to maintain its power to steer society, to influence other actors, and ultimately to align all other domestic and international non-state actors with its purposes. The governance configuration of Thailand's anti-poverty policy appeared to shift from *a society-guided, state-governed governance toward a state-guided, state-governed governance*. This case supports a position arguing that the power of states is not yet diminished as promoted in the western literature; on the contrary, the state has readjusted itself in response to the dynamic, growing complexity of the contemporary governing process. The Thai state seeks coherent strategies for maintaining its influence over domestic policy-making and engaging itself with new policy conditions.