

Legislative Influence on Institutional Development in Dumaguete Public Secondary Schools (1967-2024)

Jojie C. Saycon

Dumaguete City High School, Schools Division of Dumaguete City

jojie.saycon@deped.gov.ph

Date Submitted:
March 19, 2026

Date Accepted:
April 21, 2026

Date Published:
May 31, 2026

DOI:
10.5281/zenodo.20480269

ABSTRACT

This study examined how legislation influenced the institutional development of public secondary schools in Dumaguete City from 1967 to 2024, focusing on governance, curriculum implementation, and administrative structures. It addressed how national and local policies shaped school growth within specific institutional contexts. A qualitative historical-institutional design was employed, using document analysis and semi-structured interviews with school administrators, teachers, and policymakers. Data were analyzed through thematic analysis guided by Talcott Parsons' AGIL framework, focusing on adaptation, goal attainment, integration, and latency. The results showed that legislation structured school

expansion and reform, but outcomes varied according to institutional capacity, resource availability, and leadership conditions. Persistent constraints, including infrastructure limitations, funding gaps, and coordination issues, affected the consistency of policy implementation. These findings indicate that policy implementation operated as a context-dependent process rather than a uniform application of national mandates. Based on these patterns, the study developed the Contextualized Legislative Adaptation in Public Secondary Education (CLAPSE) framework to explain how institutional conditions mediate policy outcomes. The study concludes that effective policy implementation depended on alignment between legislative intent and local institutional capacity, emphasizing the need for context-responsive strategies to achieve sustainable educational development.

Keywords: *decentralization, educational governance, historical institutionalism, legislative influence, public secondary schools*

INTRODUCTION

In the Philippine education system, public secondary schools developed within institutional environments shaped by legislation, governance structures, and policy reforms. These factors influenced how schools were managed, how the curriculum was delivered, and how resources were allocated. In the Philippine context, national laws played a central role in defining educational governance at both national and local levels. However, the effectiveness of these reforms depended on how policies were implemented within specific institutional settings. Recent studies showed that policy capacity and institutional conditions determined how reforms were translated into practice, resulting in varied outcomes across different contexts (Yan et al., 2023; Paglayan, 2022).

Decentralization was widely used to improve educational governance by transferring authority to local institutions while maintaining national direction. Empirical studies indicated that decentralization

improved student outcomes and teacher quality when supported by strong local capacity and governance structures (Elacqua et al., 2021; Beteille et al., 2020). However, these improvements were not uniform, as variations in local capacity influenced how effectively decentralized policies were implemented.

Major legislative reforms in the Philippines aimed to strengthen school governance, improve curriculum delivery, and promote stakeholder participation. Despite these efforts, implementation challenges remained. Studies highlighted persistent issues related to administrative capacity, policy coordination, and uneven resource distribution (Saguin & Ramesh, 2020). These challenges showed gaps between policy intent and local implementation. Infrastructure limitations and resource gaps continued to affect teaching conditions and learning outcomes (Yangambi, 2023; Azevedo et al., 2021). These patterns indicate that the effectiveness of policy reforms depended not only on design but on the institutional conditions under which they were implemented.

International research further showed that governance arrangements and institutional coordination influenced school effectiveness. Variations in governance structures and instructional quality explained differences in student performance across schools (Rowan et al., 2024), while long-term reform success depended on sustained collaboration among stakeholders and shared ownership of implementation (Balonier & Huber, 2025).

The public secondary education system in Dumaguete City reflected the interaction between national legislation and local governance. Schools in the city developed in response to policy reforms, demographic changes, and community needs. While national laws provided the framework for education, local implementation shaped outcomes across schools. Examining multiple schools within a single division allowed for a clearer understanding of how shared conditions produced varied institutional responses. Dumaguete City, as a local education center, provided a relevant setting for this analysis.

Institutional development was influenced not only by policy but also by historical practices, leadership decisions, and local conditions. Historical institutionalism explained this through path dependency, in which past structures continued to shape present outcomes (Thelen, 1999; Pierson, 2004). At the same time, Parsons' Social Systems Theory (1951) explained how institutions adapted, achieved goals, maintained integration, and sustained patterns over time. These perspectives helped explain how institutions maintained continuity while adapting to change.

Despite the growing body of literature on education governance and reform, existing studies have not sufficiently explained how the same national and local legislation produced different institutional outcomes across schools operating within a shared policy environment over time. Most studies focused either on national policy or individual school cases, leaving limited understanding of how institutions responded under shared policy conditions. There was also limited long-term, division-level analysis showing how the same laws led to different outcomes across schools.

This study addressed this gap by examining the institutional history of public secondary schools in Dumaguete City from 1967 to 2024. It analyzed how national and local laws influenced governance, curriculum implementation, and administrative structures. It also identified challenges in policy implementation and emerging opportunities for reform. By integrating historical institutionalism and Parsons' AGIL framework, the study explains how institutional capacity, leadership, and local conditions shaped policy outcomes across schools. Guided by these perspectives, the study also developed the Contextualized Legislative Adaptation in Public Secondary Education (CLAPSE) Framework to explain how local institutional conditions mediated policy outcomes.

METHODS

The study used a qualitative historical-institutional design. It involved document analysis and semi-structured interviews. The findings were guided by the AGIL Framework (Parsons, 1951), organized into adaptation, goal attainment, integration, and latency, and historical institutionalism (Pierson, 2004). Data were analyzed using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006),

This study was conducted in Dumaguete City, Negros Oriental, Philippines. The city is often referred to as a center of educational and cultural exchange in the region (Saycon, 2022). The city officially became a chartered city on July 15, 1948, which placed the supervision of the education system under the Director of Public Schools, while local schools were managed by the Division Superintendent of Negros Oriental (Republic Act No. 327, s. 1948). The Schools Division Office of Dumaguete was later established on January 6, 1975, marking the formal organization of local education governance (The Negros Chronicle, 1975). At present, the DepEd-Dumaguete City Division manages seven public secondary schools: Dumaguete City High School, Camanjac High School, Junob High School, Ramon Teves Pastor Memorial-Dumaguete Science High School, Taclobo High School, Piapi High School, and Hermenegilda F. Gloria Memorial High School

Purposive sampling was used in the study. The participants were selected based on their direct experience in education governance and policy implementation and had at least ten years of professional experience to ensure familiarity with long-term institutional and policy changes. Participants were drawn from three groups: school administrators, public secondary school teachers, and local education officials. A total of 32 participants were involved, consisting of 10 administrators, 15 teachers, and 7 education officials. The number of participants was guided by data saturation, where no new themes emerged (Guest et al., 2006). This sample size is appropriate for qualitative research using thematic analysis (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Hennink et al., 2017).

The study used two instruments: a document analysis guide and a semi-structured interview guide. The document guide covered legislative records, national and local policies, Department of Education documents, and school records, following Bowen (2009) and focusing on legislative intent, policy implementation, institutional impact, and related challenges. The interview guide gathered participants' experiences and views on the implementation of education policies, with questions organized using the AGIL framework while allowing open responses from the participants. The use of both instruments enables data triangulation, linking documentary evidence with participants' experiences, strengthening the credibility of the findings (Denzin, 1978).

Data were collected in two stages. The first stage involved document analysis of national laws, local ordinances, governance reports, and school records obtained from the Department of Education, the Schools Division Office, city legislative offices, and school archives. The second stage involved semi-structured interviews with selected participants, focusing on school governance, curriculum implementation, resource allocation, and stakeholder coordination. Using both document analysis and interviews enabled comparison between policy intent and actual practice. Data were collected from February to September 2025. The data were analyzed using thematic analysis, which involved familiarization, coding, theme development, and interpretation. Themes were organized using the AGIL framework to explain institutional adaptation, goal attainment, stakeholder integration, and continuity of practices. Coding was done step by step, beginning with open coding and followed by grouping into themes. Findings from documents and interviews were compared to identify patterns and differences. Data triangulation was applied to strengthen the credibility of the findings by comparing results across sources.

The study followed ethical standards to protect participants and ensure research integrity. Participants were informed about the purpose, procedures, risks, and benefits of the study and provided informed consent before participating. Participation was voluntary, and they were free to withdraw at any time. Confidentiality was maintained by using identification codes instead of names, and all data were stored in secure formats. Ethical approval was obtained from the Silliman University Research and Ethics Committee before data collection.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The findings showed clear differences in how public secondary schools in Dumaguete City adapted national laws and policies into actual school outcomes. These differences demonstrate that policy implementation operated as a context-dependent process shaped by institutional capacity and governance conditions at the school level. Dumaguete City High School and RTPM-Dumaguete Science High School demonstrated stronger and more consistent development. Their high institutional capacity enabled them to translate policy mandates into sustained improvements in access, program expansion, and governance stability. This indicates that policy effectiveness depended on enabling conditions such as leadership capacity, resource availability, and sustained local government support, rather than policy design alone. From a decentralization perspective, this suggests that local institutional readiness determined how national policies were realized in practice. In this context, policy functioned as a tool for institutional strengthening rather than mere compliance.

Schools with moderate institutional capacity, including Camanjac High School, Junob High School, and Taclobo High School, demonstrated partial policy realization. While these schools improved access and student retention, limitations in infrastructure and teaching resources constrained the full achievement of policy goals. This pattern shows that policy compliance alone did not produce sustained institutional improvement when enabling conditions were insufficient. Consistent with institutional theory, implementation outcomes depended on the ability of schools to mobilize resources and sustain reform efforts beyond formal policy adoption. The findings highlight that implementation outcomes were shaped not only by policy adoption but by the capacity of schools to support and sustain reform efforts.

In contrast, schools operating under constrained institutional conditions, such as Hermenegilda F. Gloria Memorial High School and Piapi High School, exhibited limited policy translation. Although enrollment increased and community engagement was maintained, structural constraints, including limited facilities, insufficient staffing, and socio-economic challenges, restricted long-term institutional development. These constraints produced short-term and reactive implementation, where policy responses were driven by immediate needs rather than long-term planning. This reflects how structural limitations within institutions constrained the transformation of policy into sustained outcomes.

Taken together, these patterns showed that legislative provisions did not produce uniform outcomes across schools. Policy outcomes were shaped by institutional conditions, indicating that similar mandates generated different results depending on local capacity and governance. Schools with stronger leadership, resource access, and stakeholder support were more able to convert policy into sustained institutional gains, while those with limited capacity experienced slower and fragmented development. This pattern reflects the conditional nature of decentralization, where effectiveness depends on institutional readiness rather than formal policy adoption, consistent with the findings of Elacqua et al. (2021) and Rowan et al. (2024). This finding aligns with historical institutionalism, where past institutional capacity shapes present policy outcomes.

The findings also revealed that policy implementation followed a multi-level process rather than a single direction. National legislation provided the framework, but outcomes were shaped through the interaction of division support systems, local government involvement, and school-level decision making. At the school level, administrators and teachers interpreted policies and adjusted them based on available resources and local needs. This indicates that policy implementation functioned as an ongoing and multi-level process shaped by continuous interaction across governance levels. Such a pattern supports multi-level governance perspectives, where local actors actively shape policy outcomes rather than passively implement them (Parra, 2022; Chano et al., 2025).

Finally, recurring challenges such as resource shortages, capacity limitations, and gaps between policy expectations and actual conditions showed that implementation remained an ongoing process. These constraints functioned as feedback mechanisms that continuously influenced how schools adjusted their strategies over time. Policy implementation evolved through cycles of adjustment shaped by institutional

conditions and local responses, forming the basis of the Contextualized Legislative Adaptation in Public Secondary Education (CLAPSE) framework. The framework explains that policy outcomes emerge from the interaction of legislative intent, institutional capacity, and school-level practices, positioning implementation as an adaptive and context-driven process.

CONCLUSION

The development of public secondary schools in Dumaguete City from 1967 to 2024 demonstrated that educational reforms were shaped by the interaction between national legislation and local institutional conditions. While national laws provided the structural foundation for expansion, governance, and curriculum reform, their outcomes were determined by the capacity of schools and local actors to implement them within specific institutional contexts.

A consistent pattern of differentiated outcomes emerged across the seven schools. Variations in leadership, resource availability, and stakeholder support produced uneven levels of institutional development, while constraints in infrastructure, staffing, and coordination limited the full realization of policy goals. These findings confirm that similar legislative mandates generate different outcomes when implemented across unequal institutional conditions.

This study contributes to educational governance scholarship through the development of the Contextualized Legislative Adaptation in Public Secondary Education (CLAPSE) framework. The framework explains how institutional capacity, leadership, resource conditions, and stakeholder coordination mediate policy outcomes at the school level. It establishes that policy implementation operates as an adaptive and context-dependent process, thereby extending historical institutionalist perspective by showing how past and present institutional conditions shape policy realization.

The findings highlight the need for context-responsive implementation strategies. Strengthening school-level capacity, ensuring sustained local government support, and improving coordination across governance levels are essential to achieving more consistent educational outcomes. Aligning national reforms with institutional realities remains critical in improving access, equity, and educational quality. Future research may examine the applicability of the CLAPSE framework across different educational settings to further assess its explanatory and predictive value.

References

- Azevedo, J. P., Hasan, A., Goldemberg, D., Iqbal, S. A., & Geven, K. (2021). Simulating the potential impacts of COVID-19 school closures on schooling and learning outcomes: A set of global estimates. *World Bank Research Observer*, 36(1), 1–40. <https://doi.org/10.1093/wbro/lkab003>
- Balonier, S., & Huber, S. G. (2025). Governance of the implementation of education for sustainable development (ESD) in schools—Perceptions of key stakeholders in education. *Sustainability*, 17(21), Article 9734. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su17219734>
- Beteille, T., Kalogrides, D., & Loeb, S. (2020). Effective schools: Managing the recruitment, development, and retention of high-quality teachers. *Educational Researcher*, 49(6), 1–13. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X20948579>
- Bowen, G. A. (2009). Document analysis as a qualitative research method. *Qualitative Research Journal*, 9(2), 27–40. <https://doi.org/10.1102/14439880910015513>
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77–101. <https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa>
- Chano, J., Mohamad, B., Prabjandee, D., Singporn, R., & Tuaypar, M. (2025). Lessons learned in transition: A bibliometric analysis of educational management in school transfer to provincial administrative organizations during decentralization. *Frontiers in Education*, 10, Article 1435928. <https://doi.org/10.3389/educ.2025.1435928>

- Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2018). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Denzin, N. K. (1978). *The research act: A theoretical introduction to sociological methods* (2nd ed.). McGraw-Hill.
- Elacqua, G., Hincapié, D., Vegas, E., & Alfonso, M. (2021). The impact of decentralized decision-making on student outcomes and teacher quality: Evidence from Colombia. *Journal of Development Economics*, 152, Article 102682. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jdeveco.2020.102682>
- Guest, G., Bunce, A., & Johnson, L. (2006). How many interviews are enough? Experimenting with data saturation and variability. *Field Methods*, 18(1), 59–82. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1525822X05279903>
- Hennink, M. M., Kaiser, B. N., & Marconi, V. C. (2017). Code saturation versus meaning saturation. *Qualitative Health Research*, 27(4), 591–608. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1049732316665344>
- Marigomen is first city division supt. of schools. (1975, January 19). *The Negros Chronicle*, p. 1.
- Paglayan, A. S. (2022). Education or indoctrination? The violent origins of public school systems in an era of state-building. *American Political Science Review*, 116(4), 1242–1257. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055422000247>
- Parra, J. D. (2022). Systems thinking and decentralization in education governance. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 91, Article 102594. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2022.102594>
- Parsons, T. (1951). *The social system*. Free Press.
- Pierson, P. (2004). *Politics in time: History, institutions, and social analysis*. Princeton University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9781400841080>
- Republic Act No. 327. (1948). *An act creating the city of Dumaguete (Charter of Dumaguete City)*. LawPhil Project. https://lawphil.net/statutes/repacts/ra1948/ra_327_1948.html
- Republic Act No. 6655. (1988). *An act establishing and providing for a free public secondary education and for other purposes*. LawPhil Project. https://lawphil.net/statutes/repacts/ra1988/ra_6655_1988.html
- Republic Act No. 9155. (2001). *An act instituting a framework of governance for basic education, establishing authority and accountability, renaming the Department of Education, Culture, and Sports as the Department of Education, and for other purposes*. LawPhil Project. https://lawphil.net/statutes/repacts/ra2001/ra_9155_2001.html
- Republic Act No. 10533. (2013). *An act enhancing the Philippine basic education system by strengthening its curriculum and increasing the number of years for basic education, appropriating funds therefor and for other purposes*. LawPhil Project. https://lawphil.net/statutes/repacts/ra2013/ra_10533_2013.html
- Rowan, B., Ghimire, D. J., Schulz, P., & Sharma, U. (2024). The relevance of governance, external monitoring, and instructional quality to public-private school differences in student achievement in the Western Chitwan Valley of Nepal: An exploratory analysis. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 109, Article 103076. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2024.103076>
- Saguin, K., & Ramesh, M. (2020). Policy capacity and education reform. *Policy and Society*, 39(3), 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14494035.2020.1725763>
- Saycon, J. C. (2022). *Dumaguete City High School: An institutional history, 1967–2019* [Unpublished master's thesis]. Negros Oriental State University.
- Thelen, K. (1999). Historical institutionalism in comparative politics. *Annual Review of Political Science*, 2(1), 369–404. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.polisci.2.1.369>
- Yan, Y., Sano, H., & Sumiya, L. A. (2023). Policy capacity matters for education system reforms: A comparative study of two Brazilian states. *Journal of Comparative Policy Analysis: Research and Practice*, 25(2), 253–281. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13876988.2022.2110472>
- Yangambi, K. (2023). Infrastructure and learning conditions in developing education systems. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 95, Article 102687. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2022.102687>