Int. J. of Management, Entrepreneurship, Social Science and Humanities, Vol. 10 No. 1 (2026) https://doi.org/10.31098/ijmesh.v10i1.4598

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Research Paper

Institutional Best Practices at City College of Calamba: A Qualitative Single-Case Study for Framework Development

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Received: July 12, 2026	Revised : August 10, 2026	Accepted : September 04, 2026	Online : September 30, 2026

Abstract

Higher education institutions (HEIs) increasingly demonstrate institutional excellence through effective governance, quality assurance, innovation, and stakeholder-centered service. However, limited research has examined how governance, administrative, and academic practices operate as an integrated institutional system within Philippine Local Universities and Colleges (LUCs) from a Public Administration perspective. This study aimed to identify, document, and analyze the institutional best practices of the City College of Calamba (CCC), examine how these practices reflect selected Public Administration perspectives, and develop a theory-informed Best Practices Framework. Using a qualitative single-case study design, the study analyzed 916 institutional documents covering 2023–2025 and used non-participant observation as contextual corroboration of documented practices and processes. Data were analyzed through document analysis, thematic analysis, and theory-based pattern matching. Practices were assessed using documented indicators of effectiveness, innovativeness, sustainability, and replicability. The findings show three interconnected domains: governance, administrative systems, and academic excellence. These practices were documented alongside institutional patterns involving accountability, quality management, stakeholder-centered service, innovation, organizational learning, and continuous improvement. The practices also reflected complementary principles of Good Governance Theory, New Public Management, Total Quality Management, Institutional Theory, and Learning Organization Theory. The study contributes a contextual, practice-based framework that connects institutional evidence, governance, administrative systems, academic practices, documented outcomes, enabling conditions, and continuous improvement. Because the evidence is drawn from a single institutional case, the framework is presented as a conceptual model for interpretation and adaptation rather than as a causally validated model.

Keywords: *Public Administration Best Practices, Higher Education Governance, Local Universities and Colleges, Institutional Best Practices, Qualitative Single-Case Study, Public Administration Framework*

INTRODUCTION

Higher education institutions (HEIs) operate in an increasingly complex environment shaped by public accountability, technological advancement, globalization, and changing stakeholder expectations. Institutional excellence therefore extends beyond teaching to include effective governance, quality assurance, research, innovation, community engagement, and evidence-based public service. Documenting institutional best practices supports continuous improvement, evidence-based decision-making, organizational learning, and stakeholder satisfaction (Menon, 2024).

In the Philippines, these priorities are reinforced by the Commission on Higher Education's (CHED) outcomes-based quality assurance framework and the A.C.H.I.E.V.E. Agenda (2025–2030), which emphasize accountable governance, institutional capacity, innovation, and responsive public service (CHED, 2025). Local Universities and Colleges (LUCs) are consequently expected to strengthen governance, academic quality, administrative efficiency, and community engagement while aligning with national standards and local priorities.

The City College of Calamba (CCC) has implemented initiatives in quality assurance, strategic

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planning, digital transformation, research and innovation, extension, faculty development, and stakeholder-centered service. However, limited research has examined how governance,

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administrative, and academic practices operate as an interconnected institutional system. Although studies have addressed higher education governance, quality assurance, institutional performance, and research culture (Machado-Taylor & Matias, 2022; Serrano et al., 2026; Nadpurajah, 2025; Quitoras & Abuso, 2021), less attention has been given to integrating these dimensions within a Public Administration framework for Philippine LUCs. This gap provides the basis for examining CCC as a bounded case and developing a context-derived framework linking documented practices, outcomes, and continuous improvement.

The study draws on five complementary perspectives: New Public Management (NPM), which emphasizes performance and efficiency (Hood, 1991; Hughes, 2003); Good Governance Theory, which focuses on accountability, transparency, participation, and responsiveness (Islami, 2025; Machado-Taylor & Matias, 2022); Total Quality Management (TQM), which emphasizes systematic quality improvement (Jadhav, 2025; Serrano et al., 2026); Institutional Theory, which explains the formalization of organizational structures and practices (Eitrem et al., 2024); and Learning Organization Theory, which emphasizes knowledge sharing, organizational learning, and adaptability (Uvhagen et al., 2024). These perspectives serve as complementary analytical lenses.

Guided by these perspectives, the study employed a qualitative single-case design using document analysis and non-participant observation. Document analysis provided the primary evidence, while observation offered contextual corroboration of institutional processes and service delivery. The study identified and assessed governance, administrative, and academic practices and developed a Public Administration Best Practices Framework integrating institutional evidence, interconnected practice domains, documented outcomes, enabling conditions, and continuous improvement, without making causal claims beyond the case evidence.

Statement of the Problem

This study aimed to identify, document, and analyze the documented best practices of the CCC across governance, administrative systems, and academic excellence, examine how these practices reflect selected Public Administration theories, and develop a context-derived framework for interpretation and adaptation.

Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What governance, administrative, and academic best practices does the CCC implement?
2. What institutional outcomes are documented alongside the identified best practices?
3. How do the identified best practices reflect the principles of New Public Management, Good Governance Theory, Total Quality Management, Institutional Theory, and Learning Organization Theory?
4. What documented patterns associate the identified best practices with organizational effectiveness, innovation, accountability, stakeholder satisfaction, and service excellence in the institutional records?
5. What Public Administration Best Practices Framework may be developed to strengthen governance and institutional development among Local Universities and Colleges?

Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 illustrates the conceptual framework that guided the study. It depicts the relationships among institutional evidence, selected theoretical and management perspectives, identified best practices, documented institutional outcomes, and the resulting Public Administration Best Practices Framework. The framework treats institutional documents and contextual observations as the evidence base for identifying and interpreting practices. The five selected theoretical lenses then examine the three practice domains—governance, administrative systems, and academic excellence.

The identified practices were interpreted through New Public Management, Good Governance Theory, Total Quality Management, Institutional Theory, and Learning Organization Theory as complementary analytical lenses. The framework therefore represents an interpretive model of how documented practices and outcomes may be connected within an LUC; it does not assume that any single practice causes a particular outcome.

The framework incorporates continuous feedback loops to represent organizational learning and continuous improvement. Documented outcomes and stakeholder feedback may inform subsequent review of governance, administrative, and academic practices. This cyclical relationship is analytically consistent with Learning Organization Theory and Total Quality Management, but the arrows in the framework should be interpreted as conceptual feedback relationships rather than empirically established causal pathways.

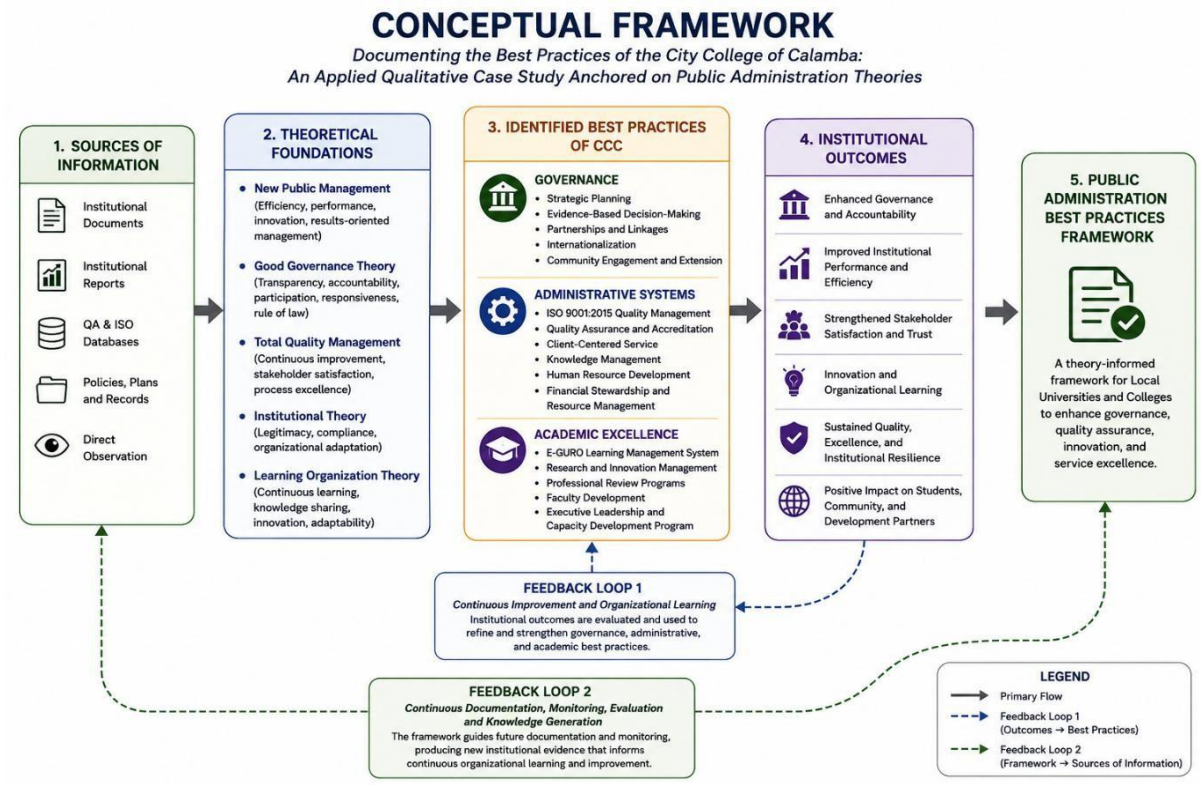

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

LITERATURE REVIEW

This review synthesizes theoretical, conceptual, and empirical literature on institutional best practices, governance, quality assurance, and organizational effectiveness in higher education. Rather than treating the literature as a series of independent findings, the review examines areas of convergence, tension, and unresolved issues that justify an integrated Public Administration perspective on institutional best practices among Philippine Local Universities and Colleges (LUCs).

Best Practices in Higher Education Institutions

Best practices in higher education encompass evidence-based approaches related to governance, instructional quality, organizational performance, stakeholder satisfaction, and continuous improvement. Aquino (2025) identified strategic leadership, quality assurance, faculty development, curriculum enhancement, research, extension, student support, and institutional

partnerships as features of high-performing Philippine HEIs. Menon (2024) emphasized

benchmarking and organizational learning, while Quitoras and Abuso (2021) highlighted leadership, supportive policies, resource allocation, and documentation in sustaining research culture.

These studies differ in how institutional excellence is conceptualized: some emphasize institution-wide systems, while others focus on specific practices such as research culture, benchmarking, or instructional leadership. The unresolved issue is whether "best practices" should be treated as isolated successful initiatives or as interconnected institutional capabilities. The present study addresses this issue by examining practices across governance, administrative, and academic domains and by interpreting their interrelationships through complementary Public Administration perspectives.

Governance and Institutional Effectiveness in Higher Education

Effective governance is associated with strategic leadership, accountability, transparency, stakeholder participation, and evidence-based decision-making. Machado-Taylor and Matias (2022) emphasized institutional autonomy, accountability, and collaboration, while Muftahu (2023) highlighted ethical leadership, quality assurance, and stakeholder participation. Similarly, Islami (2025), in a systematic review of 221 studies on university governance, found that Good University Governance and governance theories are widely used in higher education research, while other perspectives remain comparatively underutilized. However, the literature presents a continuing tension between institutional autonomy and increasing demands for accountability and stakeholder responsiveness. This tension is particularly relevant to LUCs, where institutional governance operates within both local government structures and higher education quality requirements.

Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement in HEIs

Quality assurance has increasingly been viewed as a strategic management process rather than solely a compliance mechanism. Serrano et al. (2026) linked quality assurance with governance, teaching, research, and organizational development, while Suleiman (2023), Barlan (2023), Sabban and Rahman (2022), and Dei (2019) emphasized continuous monitoring, leadership, stakeholder engagement, and institutional planning.

An important unresolved issue is the tension between quality assurance as accreditation compliance and quality assurance as an internal mechanism for organizational learning and improvement. Accreditation can formalize standards and accountability, but documentary compliance alone does not demonstrate how quality systems are embedded in routine governance or decision-making. This distinction supports the present study's treatment of quality assurance as one component of a broader institutional system and its emphasis on documented processes, feedback, and improvement rather than compliance alone.

Theoretical Perspectives on Institutional Best Practices

Public Administration has evolved toward strategic, collaborative, and performance-oriented governance. Hughes (2003) and Fiala and Sovova (2019) describe this development through perspectives including New Public Management, New Public Administration, Total Quality Management, New Public Service, and Good Governance. Denhardt and Denhardt (2015) further emphasize citizen-oriented public service, while Becker et al. (2023) highlights the interaction of organizational structures, collaborative decision-making, and feedback.

The theoretical perspectives are complementary but not identical in their assumptions: New Public Management emphasizes performance and managerial efficiency; Good Governance

emphasizes participation, accountability, and responsiveness; Total Quality Management emphasizes continuous quality improvement; Institutional Theory focuses on legitimacy, formalization, and institutionalization; and Learning Organization Theory emphasizes adaptation, knowledge creation, and learning. The analytical task is therefore not to determine which theory is superior, but to identify which theoretical concepts best illuminate particular documentary patterns and how those patterns may be integrated without treating the theories as interchangeable.

Empirical Studies on Institutional Best Practices and Research Gap

Recent studies associate institutional effectiveness with organizational learning, evidence-based management, strategic leadership, innovation, and collaboration. Grafström et al. (2025) emphasized collaborative knowledge creation; Nadpurajah (2025) examined evidence-based management and predictive analytics; Chowdhury et al. (2025) identified faculty development, technology, leadership, and organizational culture; Thiedig and Wegner (2024) emphasized evidence-informed decision-making; and Wu et al. (2023) identified effectiveness, innovativeness, sustainability, and replicability as characteristics of best practices.

However, these studies also reveal a fragmentation of emphasis: some prioritize governance and decision-making, others organizational learning and culture, and others technology, research, or quality improvement. What remains less developed is an integrated account of how these dimensions coexist within a single LUC and how their documented interrelationships can be interpreted through complementary Public Administration theories. This study addresses that gap by integrating the three institutional domains into a context-derived framework while retaining a clear distinction between documented association and causal effect.

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Design Used

This study employed a qualitative single-case study design, with the City College of Calamba (CCC) serving as the bounded case. CCC was purposively selected because its governance, administrative, and academic practices are documented through formal policies, plans, quality assurance records, institutional reports, and programs across the study period. The case therefore provides a suitable setting for examining how multiple institutional domains are documented and interpreted through complementary Public Administration perspectives. Document analysis served as the primary evidence source, while non-participant observation was used for contextual corroboration.

Documentary Sources and Selection Criteria

Document analysis was the primary method because institutional best practices are embedded in policies, procedures, reports, and organizational processes. A total of 916 institutional documents covering 2023–2025 were included in the documentary corpus (Table 1). These comprised strategic plans, quality assurance and accreditation reports, institutional policies, administrative issuances, accomplishment reports, ISO/QMS documents, research and extension reports, client satisfaction reports, and related institutional records. For this study, a document refers to an individual institutional record that was officially issued or maintained by CCC and included in the corpus. The corpus was organized by document type, source or office, date range, and analytical use.

Documents were included when they (a) were officially issued or maintained by CCC, (b) contained evidence relevant to governance, administrative, or academic practices, and (c) fell within the study's specified date range. Documents were excluded when they were duplicates,

incomplete, undated, unofficial, or unrelated to the study objectives.

Table 1. Documentary Corpus Analyzed

Document Type	No.	Source/Office	Main Use
Strategic plans	1	QAPDO	Governance/strategic planning
OPCR/IPCR	270	RMO/QAPDO	Performance monitoring
QA/accreditation documents	90	QAPDO	Quality assurance
ISO/QMS documents	63	QAPDO	Quality management
CSM reports	36	QAPDO	Stakeholder feedback
Board resolutions/policies	137	CCC/Board	Governance
Research documents	63	Research Office	Research management
Partnership/extension records	171	Relevant offices	Partnerships/community engagement
Academic program records	85	Academic offices	Academic practices
Total	916		

Research Instrument

The study utilized a researcher-developed Document Analysis Guide and Non-Participant Observation Guide to ensure systematic and theory-informed data collection. The Document Analysis Guide facilitated the systematic review of relevant institutional documents, while the Non-Participant Observation Guide was used to provide contextual corroboration of documented practices.

Before data collection, five experts with relevant academic and professional expertise in governance, Public Administration, and quality assurance reviewed the researcher-developed instruments for content validity. The validators assessed relevance, clarity, alignment with the research questions, comprehensiveness, and adequacy of the indicators. Their recommendations were reviewed and incorporated through appropriate revisions. The instruments were finalized after the recommended revisions had been addressed.

The expert-review process was used to strengthen the clarity, relevance, and content adequacy of the Document Analysis Guide and Non-Participant Observation Guide before their use in the study.

Data Collection and Analysis

Data were collected through document analysis and non-participant observation. Documentary sources included strategic plans, quality assurance manuals, accreditation reports, institutional policies, administrative issuances, annual accomplishment reports, ISO/QMS documents, research and extension reports, client satisfaction reports, and other organizational records. Non-participant observation focused on institutional processes and service-delivery activities relevant to the documented practices and was used only as contextual corroboration. Observation notes were compared with documentary evidence to identify convergence and clarify implementation context. The presence of a policy or program was not treated as equivalent to demonstrated effectiveness.

Data analysis proceeded through document familiarization, initial coding, thematic grouping,

theory-based pattern matching, and cross-domain synthesis. Document analysis was used to

systematically examine institutional records; thematic analysis was used to identify recurring practices and patterns; and theory-based pattern matching was used to compare the documented patterns with concepts from the five selected theoretical perspectives. The resulting matrices provided an audit trail from documentary evidence to codes, themes, theoretical interpretation, and framework components.

To distinguish documented best practices from routine organizational activities, identified practices were assessed using four criteria proposed by Wu et al. (2023): effectiveness, innovativeness, sustainability, and replicability. In this study, effectiveness referred to documented implementation, outputs, or evidence of intended results; innovativeness to the introduction or adaptation of an institutional approach; sustainability to formalization, repeated implementation, policy support, or resource provision; and replicability to documentation and procedural clarity sufficient to support contextual adaptation. These criteria were used as documentary assessment indicators, not as proof of superiority, impact, or causal effectiveness.

Table 2. Governance Best Practices Pattern Matching Matrix

Identified Best Practice	**Supporting Evidence**	**Public Administration Theory/Model**
Institutional Governance	Board Resolutions, Administrative Orders, Organizational Structure, Committee Reports	Good Governance Theory (GGT); Institutional Theory (IT)
Strategic Planning and Performance Management	Strategic Plan 2025–2035, OPCR, IPCR, Annual Accomplishment Reports	New Public Management (NPM)
Evidence- and Research-Based Decision-Making	Institutional Research Reports, Client Satisfaction Reports, QA Reports, Strategic Plans, Performance Reports, Needs Assessments, Board Resolutions	Learning Organization Theory (LOT); NPM
Local and National Strategic Partnerships	MOUs, MOAs, Partnership Reports, Collaborative Programs	GGT; IT
internationalization and Global Strategic Partnerships	Internationalization Plan, MOUs/MOAs, Benchmarking Reports, International Collaboration Reports, Faculty and Student Mobility Reports	IT; GGT; NPM
Community Extension and Stakeholder Engagement	Extension Program Reports, MOAs, Community Needs Assessments, Impact Evaluation Reports	GGT

Table 3. Administrative Best Practices Pattern Matching Matrix

Identified Best Practice	**Supporting Evidence**	**Public Administration Theory/Model**
Quality Management System (ISO 9001:2015 Certification)	Quality Manual, ISO Procedures, Internal Audit Reports, ISO Certification Documents	Total Quality Management (TQM); IT

Quality Assurance and Accreditation Excellence	ALCUCOA Reports, QA Manuals, Continuous Improvement Plans	TQM; IT
Client-Centered Service Excellence	Client Satisfaction Reports, Citizen's Charter, Service Improvement Plans	LOT; NPM
Knowledge Management for Continuous Improvement	Knowledge Management Team Documents, Accreditation Databases, ISO Records	LOT; IT
GAWAD LAMPARA: Institutional Recognition and Incentive System	Program Guidelines, Award Criteria, Administrative Orders, Awardee Lists	NPM; TQM

Table 4. Academic Best Practices Pattern Matching Matrix

Identified Best Practice	**Supporting Evidence**	**Public Administration Theory/Model**
Home-Grown Digital Learning and Academic Management System (E-GURO LMS)	E-GURO LMS Manual, System Documentation, Utilization Reports	LOT
Research and Innovation Management	Research Agenda, Research Policies, Research Outputs	LOT
Free Professional Licensure and Civil Service Review Programs (BLEPT, CPALE, and Civil Service Examination)	Program Proposals, Training Modules, Attendance Records, Accomplishment Reports, Participant Evaluation Forms, Licensure Performance Reports	LOT
Executive Leadership and Capacity Development Program	Executive Program Records, Graduation Reports, Enrollment Records	LOT; NPM

Table 5. Governance Best Practices Identified through Document Analysis and Best Practice Assessment

Best Practice	**Documents Reviewed**	**Evidence**	**Assessment Criteria**			
			Documented Effectiveness	**Innovativeness**	**Sustainability**	**Replicability**
Institutional Governance	Board Resolutions, Administrative Orders	Established governance structure	Board Resolutions and Administrative Orders document defined governance structures, roles, and decision-making	Administrative Orders document participatory governance through committee structures and shared decision-making mechanisms.	Governance policies are institutionalized through approved Board Resolutions and Administrative Orders.	Formal governance structures and policies may be adopted by other Local Universities and Colleges.

processes. The

			records support the presence of accountability mechanisms but do not independently measure their effects on organizational performance.			
Strategic Planning	Strategic Plan, OPCR, IPCR	Institutional planning cycle	The Strategic Plan 2025–2035, OPCR, and IPCR document alignment of institutional goals with measurable performance indicators.	Planning documents document the integration of evidence-based planning and performance management.	Strategic planning is institutionalized through the annual planning, monitoring, and evaluation cycle.	Other higher education institutions may adapt strategic planning processes.
Evidence-Based Decision-Making	QA Reports, Research Reports	Decisions supported by institutional evidence	Quality Assurance Reports and institutional research provide evidence supporting planning, policy formulation, and decision-making.	Institutional research and quality assurance reports demonstrate the systematic use of organizational evidence in governance.	Regular quality assurance assessments and institutional research activities sustain evidence-based decision-making.	Other public higher education institutions may adapt the documented client feedback mechanism to support service-delivery review.
Local and National Partnerships	MOAs, Partnership Reports	Active collaborations	Memoranda of Agreement and partnership accomplishment reports document collaborative activities, resource-sharing arrangements, and stakeholder engagement. The records do not consistently include independent measures of downstream institutional or community outcomes.	Partnership documents document collaborative governance through joint institutional initiatives with government agencies, higher education institutions, and industry partners.	Partnerships sustain themselves through formal agreements, continuing collaborations, and program implementation.	Institutions may adapt the documented knowledge-management model for organizational learning and knowledge preservation.

Internationalization	MOUs, Benchmarking Reports	International engagements	Memoranda of Understanding and benchmarking reports demonstrate expanded international engagement and institutional collaboration.	Internationalization documents document benchmarking, faculty and student mobility, and international collaborative initiatives.	Institutional plans, agreements, and ongoing collaborations sustain internationalization initiatives.	Internationalization strategies may be adapted by other Local Universities and Colleges.
Community Extension	Extension Reports	Community impact	Extension reports document implementation of community-responsive programs addressing identified needs. The available records provide stronger evidence of program delivery than of independently measured long-term community impact.	Extension documents demonstrate the integration of academic expertise with community development initiatives.	Community extension is sustained through institutional extension plans, policies, and continuing outreach programs.	Community extension models may be adapted by other Higher Education Institutions.

Table 6. Administrative Best Practices Identified through Document Analysis and Best Practice Assessment

Best Practice	**Documents Reviewed**	**Evidence**	**Assessment Criteria**			
			Documented Effectiveness	**Innovativeness**	**Sustainability**	**Replicability**
ISO 9001:2015 Quality Management System	Quality Manual	Certified Quality Management System (QMS)	The Quality Manual and ISO documentation document standardized institutional processes, documented procedures, and quality controls that support consistent service delivery.	ISO documents document the adoption of internationally recognized quality management standards across institutional operations.	Internal audit records and quality procedures document continuous implementation through regular audits and continual improvement mechanisms.	The documented ISO-based quality management system may be adopted by other Higher Education Institutions implementing quality management systems.

Quality Assurance and Accreditation	Accreditation Reports	Institutional quality assurance mechanisms	Accreditation reports document systematic quality assurance practices and monitoring activities. The records establish implementation and compliance evidence more directly than independent evidence of resulting performance changes.	Quality assurance documents doucment the integration of continuous quality improvement into institutional operations and program evaluation.	Accreditation reports and quality assurance policies show that regular accreditation cycles and institutional monitoring sustain quality management.	The documented quality assurance framework may be adapted by other Local Universities and Colleges.
Client-Centered Service	Client Satisfaction Measurement (CSM) Reports	High client satisfaction	CSM reports document systematic collection and use of stakeholder feedback. Reported satisfaction varied across available periods, indicating that service outcomes were not uniformly positive; the records document feedback and improvement activity rather than causal effects.	CSM reports demonstrate that the institution systematically analyzes and uses client feedback to support service improvement initiatives.	Regularly conducted Client Satisfaction Measurement reports demonstrate the institutionalization of continuous stakeholder assessment.	Other public higher education institutions may adapt the documented client feedback mechanism to support service-delivery review.
Knowledge Management	Knowledge Management Team (KMT) Documents	Institutional knowledge repositories	Knowledge Management Team documents demonstrate systematic documentation, preservation, and sharing of institutional knowledge that supports organizational learning.	KMT documents demonstrate the establishment of centralized knowledge repositories and structured knowledge-sharing processes.	Institutional policies, designated teams, and continuing documentation activities sustain knowledge management initiatives.	Institutions may adapt the documented knowledge-management model for organizational learning and knowledge preservation.

GAWAD LAMPARA Institutional Recognition System	Program Guidelines	Institutional recognition system	GAWAD LAMPARA program guidelines document a structured employee recognition system that provides a formal mechanism for recognition and performance support.	The program guidelines document the institutionalization of employee recognition as a performance-oriented management mechanism.	Institutional policies and annual implementation records demonstrate the continuity of the recognition program.	Other higher education institutions may adapt the recognition program to promote employee engagement and a culture of excellence.

Table 7. Academic Best Practices Identified through Document Analysis and Best Practice Assessment

Best Practice	Documents Reviewed	Evidence	Assessment Criteria			
			Documented Effectiveness	Innovativeness	Sustainability	Replicability
E-GURO Learning Management System (LMS)	LMS Manual, System Documentation, Utilization Reports	Home-grown digital learning and academic management system supporting online instruction, assessment, and academic administration	The LMS Manual, system documentation, and utilization reports document operation of a digital platform for instruction, assessment, and academic administration. The records do not independently establish changes in student learning outcomes.	System documentation documents the development of a home-grown LMS designed around institutional teaching and learning needs.	Utilization reports document continued operation, maintenance, and institutional support for the LMS.	The documented LMS model may be adapted by other Higher Education Institutions seeking contextualized digital learning solutions
Research Management	Research Agenda, Research Policies, Research Outputs	Institutional research agenda, policies, and documented faculty and student research outputs	Research documents document structured faculty and student engagement in research and the implementation of institutional research	The research agenda and policies document the integration of research priorities, capacity-building activities, and institutional support mechanisms.	Research policies and implementation records document continuing institutional support for research management.	Institutions may adapt the documented research management practices to their context.

priorities.

Free Professional Licensure and Civil Service Review Programs	Program Reports, Training Modules, Licensure Performance Reports	Institutional implementation of free review programs with documented participation and examination-related records	Program reports and performance records document implementation of free review programs and examination-related records. They do not independently establish that the programs caused higher passing rates or improved employability.	Training modules and program reports document free review opportunities intended to expand access to professional development.	Institutional reports document continuing implementation of the review programs through institutional support and partnerships	The review program model may be adapted by other LUCs as a mechanism for supporting access to professional review and continuing professional development.
Executive Leadership and Capacity Development Program	Executive Program Reports, Graduation Reports, Enrollment Records	Executive education program serving government employees, CCC personnel, and community professionals	Executive Program reports and graduation records demonstrate the development of leadership competencies and professional expertise among participants.	Program documents demonstrate the integration of graduate education with executive leadership and capacity development.	Enrollment records and continuing program offerings demonstrate the institutionalization of executive education as part of lifelong learning initiatives.	The Executive Leadership and Capacity Development Program may be adapted by other Higher Education Institutions seeking leadership development initiatives.

Ethical Considerations and Data Handling

The study involved institutional records rather than human-subject interviews or surveys. Permission to access and analyze institutional documents was obtained from the Office of the College President. Only records relevant to the research objectives were included, and documents containing confidential or personally identifiable information were excluded or appropriately redacted. The retrieved records were used solely for academic research, securely stored, and accessed only by the researcher. Findings were reported at the institutional or documentary level to minimize disclosure of sensitive information.

Researcher Positionality and Reflexivity

Given the researcher's institutional familiarity with CCC, reflexive safeguards were applied to reduce interpretive bias. Documentary claims were examined against inclusion criteria, cross-document convergence, observation notes, and the four assessment criteria. The researcher maintained an analytical record of coding decisions, interpretive judgments, and contradictory evidence. Where evidence was incomplete or predominantly positive, findings were reported descriptively, and causal claims were avoided.

Trustworthiness of the Study

The trustworthiness of the qualitative findings was assessed using Lincoln and Guba's (1985) criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Credibility was supported through triangulation of documentary evidence and non-participant observations,

complemented by theory-based pattern matching. Transferability was addressed through detailed descriptions of the institutional context, documentary sources, and identified practices to enable assessment of applicability to other LUC settings. Dependability was supported by a systematic record of document selection, coding, analytical decisions, and instrument revisions. Coding was reviewed against the documentary corpus and the four Wu et al. (2023) criteria to ensure consistent application across the three domains. Confirmability was strengthened through an audit trail linking interpretations and themes to the underlying documentary and observational evidence.

Thus, trustworthiness was established through criterion-specific procedures rather than a general claim of validity. Given the single-researcher design, the audit trail and reflexive documentation served as important safeguards against interpretive bias.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The best-practice assessment matrices in Tables 5–7 complement the theory-based pattern-matching matrices in Tables 2–4. The former establishes the documentary basis for assessing practices against four criteria; the latter establish their theoretical interpretation.

Document Corpus and Analytical Process

The findings were derived from the systematic analysis of institutional documents and non-participant observation shown in Table 8. The analysis proceeded through document familiarization, initial coding, thematic grouping, theory-based pattern matching, and assessment against four best-practice criteria adapted from Wu et al. (2023): effectiveness, innovativeness, sustainability, and replicability. Documentary evidence was retained for each major finding to establish an audit trail from source document to code, theme, theoretical interpretation, and reported finding. Where documentary evidence was incomplete or predominantly positive, the analysis treated the pattern descriptively and avoided inferring effectiveness beyond what the records supported.

Table 8. Analytical Process for Identifying Institutional Best Practices

Analytical stage	Procedure	Output
Document screening	Inclusion/exclusion criteria	916-document corpus
Initial coding	Practice-related codes	Initial code set
Thematic grouping	Similar codes clustered	Governance, administrative, and academic domains
Pattern matching	Codes compared with theories	Theory-practice matrix
Best-practice assessment	Wu et al. criteria	Identified best practices
Framework synthesis	Cross-domain integration	Proposed framework

Overarching Finding: Three Interconnected Domains

Finding 1: Institutional best practices were documented across three interconnected domains

Document analysis and non-participant observation identified three major domains of documented institutional best practices: governance, administrative systems, and academic excellence. The findings indicate that these practices operated as interconnected institutional mechanisms rather than isolated initiatives, consistent with literature linking governance, quality

assurance, organizational learning, and institutional performance (Machado-Taylor & Matias, 2022;

Serrano et al., 2026; Uvhagen et al., 2024). This convergence supports the use of complementary theoretical lenses to interpret the practices. However, as a single-case study, the evidence documents these interconnections but does not establish that they causally produced the observed institutional outcomes.

Domain 1 — Governance Best Practices

Strategic Planning and Institutional Alignment

The Strategic Plan 2025–2035, Operational Plans, OPCR, and IPCR documented a formal mechanism for translating institutional priorities into office- and individual-level performance commitments. The records link institutional goals with implementation activities, performance targets, and monitoring. The Strategic Plan describes the roadmap as the product of "extensive collaboration, strategic planning, and dedicated efforts from various stakeholders" (p. 11) and specifies "KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS" and "PERFORMANCE TARGETS" for 2028, 2032, and 2035 (p. 13). Together, these records provide evidence of institutionalized strategic planning and performance monitoring.

Documentary Evidence:

- *City College of Calamba. (2025). Strategic Plan 2025–2035.*
- *CCC. (2023–2025). OPCR Office Performance Commitment Review.*
- *CCC. (2023–2025). IPCR Individual Performance Commitment Review.*

The practice was coded as strategic planning and performance monitoring. Its integration across institutional, office-level, and individual performance documents indicates institutionalization and continuity. The pattern is consistent with Good Governance Theory, particularly accountability and transparency, and New Public Management, particularly performance orientation and results-based management (Hood, 1991; Bryson, 2018). However, the records establish the presence and use of these mechanisms rather than demonstrating that strategic planning independently caused improvements in organizational performance.

Evidence-Based Decision-Making

Institutional research, Client Satisfaction Measurement (CSM) reports, quality assurance and accreditation assessments, needs assessments, and performance reports documented the use of organizational evidence in decision-making. Key sources included the Client Satisfaction Measurement Report (CCC, 2023, pp. 1–16) and three published CCC-based studies: Montano et al. (2025a), Enhancing Institutional Quality: An Assessment of Accreditation Readiness and Stakeholder Experiences; Montano et al. (2025b), Profiling Student Satisfaction: Evaluating the Effectiveness of Student Affairs and Services Programs; and Gonzales et al. (2025), Enhancing Client Satisfaction: Utilizing Feedback for Ongoing Improvement Strategies.

The studies document how empirical findings informed proposed institutional responses. Montano et al. (2025a) reported findings that "highlight the need for early preparation, collaborative engagement, consistent documentation, and psychological readiness." Montano et al. (2025b) stated that the study "contributed a data-driven enhancement plan focused on student-centered improvements." Similarly, Gonzales et al. (2025) reported a proposed "Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP) for FY 2026 focusing on digitization, staff training, and stakeholder engagement." Collectively, these sources show a pattern of evidence generation, interpretation, and proposed action.

The practice was coded as evidence-based decision-making. The use of research findings, stakeholder feedback, assessment results, and performance information is consistent with Learning Organization Theory, particularly organizational learning through information and feedback, and with literature on evidence use in higher education decision-making (Thiedig &

Wegner, 2024). However, the records document the use of evidence and formulation of responses, rather than demonstrating that evidence-based decision-making independently caused subsequent institutional improvements.

Partnerships, Internationalization, and Community Engagement

Partnership agreements, international collaboration records, benchmarking documents, and internationalization accomplishment reports documented CCC's engagement with government agencies, higher education institutions, private organizations, and international institutions. The MOA/MOU Matrix records formal agreements with ICEPD–Thailand (January 10, 2024), TIIKM (March 21, 2024), and Al-Farab Kazakh University (Kazakhstan), the School of Journalism, Communication University of China (China), and Van Lang University (Vietnam) (September 25, 2024) (City College of Calamba, 2025, MOA/MOU Matrix, Sheet1).

The QAPD Report on Internationalization Accomplishment of HEIs (2025) further documents implementation. In its September 24, 2025 ICBAS entry, the report states that "The City College of Calamba (CCC) served as a co-host institution" and that the engagement "highlights CCC's active participation in global academic collaboration, research dissemination, and knowledge exchange" (p. 2). It also records CCC's co-organizing role in the 6th MESS and an October 10–11, 2025 international mobility program that "aimed to strengthen academic collaboration, cultural exchange, and institutional linkages among participating institutions" (pp. 2–3).

The practice was coded as partnership and internationalization. The combination of formal agreements and implemented activities provides evidence of institutionalized collaboration and continuity. The pattern is consistent with Good Governance Theory, particularly collaboration and stakeholder participation, and Learning Organization Theory, through knowledge exchange and shared learning. It also aligns with literature on partnerships as mechanisms for institutional development (Aquino, 2025; Quitoras & Abuso, 2021).

However, the records document formal agreements, participation, and implementation more clearly than downstream outcomes. Because independent measures of institutional, student, or community effects were not consistently available, the findings do not establish the magnitude or causal effects of these activities.

Domain 2 — Administrative Systems

Integrated Quality Management

The CIVIC Framework, ISO 9001:2015 records, quality assurance documents, and accreditation records documented an integrated approach to institutional quality management. The CIVIC Framework connects Total Quality Management, Quality Assurance, Quality Control, Quality Analysis, and Quality Inspection through the Plan–Do–Check–Act (PDCA) cycle and aligns quality processes with CHED, ALCUCOA, and ISO requirements.

The CIVIC Framework describes this approach as "The integration of the PDCA cycle with the core values to create a dynamic, self-improving system" (p. 5) and explains that it "Moves beyond creating a passive procedural document to actively engineering a cultural shift" (p. 5).

Complementing this, the ISO Journey records the October 22–23, 2025 opening and internal audit as reaffirming CCC's "commitment to continuous improvement and compliance with established standards" (p. 54). Together, these records document the formalization and operationalization of quality management through quality systems, audit processes, and continuous-improvement activities.

Documentary Evidence:

- CCC. (2025). CIVIC Framework/Quality Manual.
- CCC. (2025). CCC ISO 9001:2015 Journey.

- CCC. (2023). Accreditation Report, Areas 1 to 10.

The practice was coded as integrated quality management and institutional quality assurance. The integration of quality procedures into audit, accreditation, and improvement processes provides evidence of institutionalization and continuity. The finding is consistent with Total Quality Management, particularly its emphasis on continuous improvement and stakeholder-oriented quality, and Institutional Theory, which explains how practices become embedded through formal structures, rules, and routines (Eitrem et al., 2024; Jadhav, 2025; Serrano et al., 2026).

The findings indicate that CCC had documented and operationalized quality-management mechanisms, but the available records do not establish that these mechanisms independently caused improvements in institutional performance.

Client-Centered Service and Continuous Improvement

CSM records documented the regular collection and review of stakeholder feedback, including service concerns and corresponding corrective or improvement initiatives. Reported overall satisfaction scores varied across the available periods—from 97.59% in 2023 to 78.85% in January 2025 and 81.74% in March 2025—indicating a non-uniform pattern of decline and partial recovery rather than continuous improvement.

Specific Documentary Records:

- CCC. (2023). Client Satisfaction Measurement Report — Overall Client Satisfaction/Overall Score, p. 1 of 16.
- CCC. (January 2025). Client Satisfaction Measurement Report — Overall Score, p. 1 of 14.
- CCC. (March 2025). Client Satisfaction Measurement Report — Overall Score, p. 1 of 16.
- CCC. (2025). Service Improvement Plan — Corrective/Improvement Actions, p. 9 of 14.

The repeated use of CSM establishes a formalized feedback mechanism, while variations in satisfaction scores and documented improvement initiatives provide partial and improvement-related evidence that supports a descriptive rather than uniformly positive interpretation. This pattern is consistent with Total Quality Management, particularly measurement, feedback, and process review, and with New Public Management, particularly stakeholder orientation (Hood, 1991; Sabban & Rahman, 2022).

The records therefore demonstrate feedback collection and corresponding improvement activity, but do not establish that the CSM mechanism itself caused changes in satisfaction. The observed variation is consequently treated as a documentary pattern requiring further outcome-based investigation.

Knowledge Management and Human Resource Development

KMT documents, institutional repositories, quality assurance and accreditation records, institutional reports, and research outputs documented mechanisms for capturing, preserving, and sharing institutional knowledge. The June 10, 2025 KMT proposal states that the team would "serve as the central coordinating body responsible for managing, organizing, preserving, and disseminating institutional knowledge and documentary evidence relevant to accreditation and ISO compliance." It also identifies objectives to "strengthen institutional memory, promote a culture of evidence-based management, improve accessibility of documents, and ensure sustainability of quality assurance initiatives" (pp. 1–2).

The June 15, 2025 request further documents the operationalization of this mechanism through designated Program and Area Focal Persons, who "will work closely with the Knowledge Management Team and the Quality Assurance Office in coordinating, consolidating, validating,

organizing, and maintaining documentary evidence and compliance requirements." Their designation also aims to "promote accountability, streamline communication and document management, ensure continuity of accreditation efforts, and strengthen institutional readiness for accreditation visits and evaluations" (p. 1).

Complementing knowledge management, the GAWAD LAMPARA Implementing Rules and Regulations formalize employee recognition by emphasizing "transparency, fairness, and efficiency in recognizing excellence" and seeking to "promote a culture of excellence and innovation within CCC" and "encourage continuous professional growth among faculty and staff" (p. 1). Award categories are further based on "performance, impact, innovation, and alignment with CCC's institutional goals," with document review and performance validation incorporated into the selection process (pp. 5, 7).

Specific Documentary Records:

- CCC. (2025). Knowledge Management Team Document — Approval of KMT composition and functions, June 15, 2025.
- CCC. (2025). Institutional Knowledge Repository Guidelines — Approval of KMT and guidelines, June 10, 2025.
- CCC. (2025). GAWAD LAMPARA Updated Guidelines — as of December 31, 2025.

The practice was coded as knowledge management and human resource development. The formalization of knowledge-sharing, document-management, and recognition mechanisms is consistent with Learning Organization Theory, particularly knowledge sharing and organizational learning, and Institutional Theory, through the formalization of organizational practices (Eitrem et al., 2024; Uvhagen et al., 2024). However, the records establish the existence and institutionalization of these mechanisms, not their effects on employee motivation or performance. The findings are therefore interpreted as documented institutional mechanisms rather than verified employee outcomes.

Domain 3 — Academic Excellence

Digital Learning and Academic Innovation

E-GURO LMS records documented the use of a home-grown digital learning platform for flexible and blended instruction, supporting learning-resource delivery, student-progress monitoring, and faculty–student communication. The CCC e-Guro Student Manual states that the LMS provides "a central location for students to access learning resources and their assessments" and "a streamlined process for assessment submissions" (p. 2). It also specifies user competencies such as the ability to "access the resources for your course," "upload your completed assessment," and "submit your assessment documents for marking" (p. 2).

The ICT Plan further identifies a systems-development approach that includes a "Learning Management System," "Grading System," "eClearance," and "Student Evaluation System," with "IT Governance" identified as an in-house system requirement (p. 11). Together, these records indicate that digital systems were positioned as part of CCC's institutional infrastructure, extending beyond instructional delivery to information and process management.

Specific Documentary Records:

- CCC. (2025). E-GURO LMS Report — MISD Accomplishment Report 2025.
- CCC. (2025). Digital Learning/ICT Report — MISD Accomplishment Report 2025.

The practice was coded as digital learning and academic innovation. Its institution-specific development and continued implementation provide documentary evidence of innovation and sustainability. However, the available LMS records do not establish corresponding changes in student learning outcomes. The finding is therefore interpreted descriptively and is consistent with Learning Organization Theory, particularly organizational adaptability and knowledge

development.

Research Management and Professional Review Programs

Research management records documented a formal research agenda, policies, outputs, and professional review programs for BLEPT, CPA, Psychometrician, and Civil Service examinations. Key records included the Research Agenda (CCC, 2023, Research Manual, p. 9), Research Accomplishment Report (CCC, 2025), and Professional Review Program Report (CCC, 2025).

The CCC Research Manual establishes a research-management structure, stating that the "Office of the Vice President for Research and Innovation (OVPRI) is mandated to lead research and innovation activities" and serves as the presiding office and secretariat of the CCC Research and Innovation Council (CCCRIC) (CCC, 2023, p. 11). It also assigns the VPRI responsibility to "create innovative systems for R and I planning, implementation, performance evaluation, and reporting within the CCC" (p. 11).

Research implementation is supported by defined monitoring responsibilities. Academic Department Deans are tasked to "conduct periodic monitoring of research projects" and maintain a project database to avoid duplication, while Program Research Facilitators must "strictly monitor and evaluate the research progress" (CCC, 2023, pp. 12–13). The Manual also provides for financial and technical monitoring and annual in-house evaluation, where projects may be recommended for "renewal or extension or even termination" (pp. 29–30).

Institutional research support is further documented through Core Funding for Research and Innovation, described as a "Grants-in-Aid for Faculty and Staff" for research and innovation activities (p. 23). The funding covers research projects, publication incentives, conference participation, and student theses and supports the generation of "international refereed, Web of Science and SCOPUS-indexed publications" (p. 23). These provisions document a formal research-support mechanism but do not establish that funding caused higher publication performance.

Research recognition is also documented in BOT Resolution No. 48, Series of 2023, which cites CCC's "long-standing commitment to excellence in education and research" and establishes an Institutional Research Award for individuals and teams demonstrating exceptional research dedication (p. 1).

The Malacañang Free Civil Service Examination Review Narrative Report provides complementary evidence of professional knowledge dissemination. It documents an "official written agreement or contract" between CCC and the Office of the President and a review session intended to "prepare these employees for the Civil Service Examination" (pp. 2–3). This supports the implementation of professional-development activities but does not establish effects on examination outcomes.

Overall, the records document the formalization, monitoring, resourcing, and implementation of research and professional-development activities. The practice is consistent with Learning Organization Theory, particularly knowledge creation and continuous learning, and with literature on research culture in Philippine HEIs (Quitoras & Abuso, 2021). However, independent evidence linking professional review participation to licensure passing rates or employability was not established; the findings are therefore interpreted as documented institutional mechanisms rather than verified outcome effects.

Cross-Domain Finding: Institutional Outcomes

The documentary evidence indicates that the reported outcomes occurred alongside interconnected governance, administrative, and academic practices rather than being attributable to any single initiative. The pattern is consistent with literature emphasizing integrated quality

management, organizational learning, governance, and institutional performance (Machado-Taylor & Matias, 2022; Serrano et al., 2026; Uvhagen et al., 2024). Accordingly, the outcomes are interpreted as documented institutional patterns and associations, not as independently verified causal effects.

Table 9. Documented Institutional Outcomes of the Best Practices

Documented outcome	Documentary evidence	Theoretical interpretation
Governance and accountability mechanisms	Strategic Plan, OPCR/IPCR, Board Resolutions, QA/accreditation reports	GGT; NPM
Quality and evidence-based management	ISO, QA, CSM, research/needs assessments	TQM; LOT
Stakeholder-centered service	CSM, extension, partnerships	NPM; GGT
Innovation and organizational learning	E-GURO, research, KMT	LOT
Human capital and institutional development	Faculty development, GAWAD LAMPARA, Executive Program	LOT; IT

Theoretical Integration

The theory mapping in Table 10 indicated that the documented practices were consistent with principles from all five selected theoretical perspectives, although the strength and type of documentary support varied across practices. Good Governance Theory was particularly relevant to accountability, participation, stakeholder engagement, and partnerships; New Public Management to performance monitoring and client-centered service; Total Quality Management to quality systems and continuous improvement; Institutional Theory to formalization and institutionalization; and Learning Organization Theory to knowledge sharing, research, feedback, digital learning, and adaptation. No single perspective adequately captured the full range of documentary patterns.

Table 10. Theoretical Reflection of the Identified Best Practices

Theory	Documentary pattern
Good Governance Theory	Accountability, transparency, participation, partnerships
New Public Management	Performance monitoring, client-centered service, efficiency orientation
Total Quality Management	ISO, QA, PDCA, CSM, continuous improvement
Institutional Theory	Formal policies, structures, accreditation, institutionalization
Learning Organization Theory	Knowledge management, research, feedback, digital learning

The theoretical contribution is therefore best understood as a provisional contextual proposition rather than a tested theoretical refinement. Within the CCC case, the documentary pattern suggests that institutionalization may involve a structure–feedback–learning cycle in which formalized practices generate records and feedback that may inform subsequent policy refinement and organizational learning. This proposition extends the interpretive application of Institutional

Theory to the LUC context, but it requires comparative and longitudinal testing before any broader theoretical generalization can be made.

Proposed Public Administration Best Practices Framework for Local Universities and Colleges

Table 11 and Figure 2 present the Public Administration Best Practices Framework developed from the document analysis. The framework maps the governance, administrative, and academic practices identified at CCC alongside documented institutional outcomes, enabling conditions, and continuous improvement processes. Anchored in Good Governance Theory, New Public Management, Total Quality Management, Institutional Theory, and Learning Organization Theory, the framework conceptualizes institutional development as a continuous cycle of governance, implementation, evaluation, organizational learning, and improvement. It is a theory-informed conceptual model derived from a single-case documentary and observational evidence base and has not been empirically tested as a causal or predictive model.

Table 11. Proposed Public Administration Best Practices Framework for Local Universities and Colleges

Framework Component	Core Elements	Theoretical Foundation	Contribution to Institutional Development
Evidence Base	Document Analysis, Non-Participant Observation, Institutional Reports, Policies, Plans, Records, QA and ISO Databases	Evidence-informed public administration principle	Provides documentary and observational evidence for identifying institutional practices and informing governance analysis.
Governance	Strategic Planning, Policy Development, Evidence-Based Decision-Making, Stakeholder Engagement, Partnerships, Internationalization, Community Extension	Good Governance Theory; Institutional Theory	Provides strategic direction, legitimacy, accountability, and responsive governance.
Administrative Systems	ISO 9001:2015, Quality Assurance, Accreditation, Client-Centered Service, Knowledge Management, Human Resource Development, Financial Stewardship	Total Quality Management; New Public Management; Institutional Theory	Documents mechanisms intended to support operational efficiency, quality management, accountability, and resource stewardship.
Academic Excellence	E-GURO LMS, Research and Innovation Management, Faculty Development, Professional Review Programs, Executive Leadership Program	Learning Organization Theory; New Public Management	Provides institutional mechanisms associated with digital transformation, innovation, lifelong learning, leadership, and human capital development.

Framework Component	Core Elements	Theoretical Foundation	Contribution to Institutional Development
Institutional Outcomes	Governance and Accountability, Quality and Compliance, Evidence-Based Decision-Making, Stakeholder-Centered Service, Digital Transformation, Research and Innovation, Leadership Development	Integration of the Five Primary Theoretical Lenses	Documents institutional outcomes alongside the integrated practices; causal interpretation requires independent outcome evidence.
Continuous Improvement	Monitoring and Evaluation, Knowledge Sharing, Innovation, Organizational Learning, Process Improvement, Capacity Building	Learning Organization Theory; Total Quality Management	Provides a structure for adaptive learning, feedback, process review, and continuous improvement.
Enabling Foundations	Leadership Commitment, Ethical Governance, Stakeholder Collaboration, Data Systems, Policy Support, Resource Optimization, Culture of Quality	Good Governance Theory; Institutional Theory	Provides the institutional environment necessary for sustaining best practices.
Documented Institutional Implications	Organizational Effectiveness, Innovation, Accountability, Stakeholder Satisfaction, Service Excellence, Sustainable Institutional Development, Potential Public Value Implications	Integration of the Five Primary Theoretical Lenses	The integration of the five primary theoretical lenses provides a basis for interpreting documented patterns of institutional development and public value, although broader effects and transferability require further empirical testing.



Figure 2. Public Administration Best Practices Framework

Evidence Base

The framework begins with an evidence base derived from document analysis, non-participant observation, institutional reports, policies, plans, quality assurance records, and ISO documentation. These sources provide the empirical foundation for evidence-informed governance and decision-making. Because the evidence is primarily institutional and documentary, the framework treats documented outcomes as inputs for interpretation and possible feedback rather than as verified measures of impact.

Governance

Governance serves as a strategic driver of the framework through strategic planning, evidence-based decision-making, stakeholder engagement, partnerships, internationalization, and community extension. Consistent with Good Governance Theory and Institutional Theory, these practices serve as mechanisms that support accountability, legitimacy, and institutional responsiveness.

Administrative Systems

Administrative systems—including ISO 9001:2015, quality assurance, accreditation, client-centered service, and knowledge management—provide operational mechanisms for documenting quality, accountability, and organizational processes. Rather than functioning independently, these systems are conceptualized as connected with governance and as supporting institutional monitoring, evaluation, and improvement.

Academic Excellence

Academic excellence provides mechanisms for digital learning, research, and innovation management, faculty development, professional review programs, and executive leadership

education. Guided by Learning Organization Theory and New Public Management, these initiatives are interpreted as institutional capabilities associated with knowledge creation, lifelong learning, leadership development, and organizational adaptability.

Institutional Outcomes and Continuous Improvement

The interaction of governance, administrative systems, and academic excellence was documented alongside outcomes in governance and accountability, evidence-based management, stakeholder-centered service, digital transformation, research and innovation, and leadership development. These documented outcomes may provide feedback for governance decisions, policy refinement, process review, and organizational learning. The framework therefore represents a plausible improvement cycle grounded in the case evidence, while not establishing that the cycle caused the observed outcomes.

Enabling Foundations

The framework recognizes that successful implementation depends on enabling conditions, including leadership commitment, ethical governance, stakeholder collaboration, robust information systems, policy support, resource optimization, and a culture of quality and continuous learning. These foundations create the institutional environment necessary to sustain governance reforms and organizational improvement.

Overall Implications

The proposed Public Administration Best Practices Framework presents governance, administrative systems, academic excellence, and continuous improvement as interconnected institutional capabilities rather than separate organizational domains. Its dynamic structure represents documented outcomes as potential feedback inputs to governance decisions, administrative review, academic practice, and evidence-informed policy refinement. This recursive representation is theoretically consistent with organizational learning and continuous improvement, but the relationships require empirical testing beyond the present case.

By integrating the complementary principles of Good Governance Theory, New Public Management, Total Quality Management, Institutional Theory, and Learning Organization Theory, the framework provides a systematic model for interpreting institutional practices in LUCs. It may guide documentation, quality assurance, organizational learning, and institutional development, but it should be treated as a context-derived conceptual framework rather than a causally validated or universally transferable model.

CONCLUSIONS

This study documented and analyzed the governance, administrative, and academic best practices of the City College of Calamba through a qualitative single-case study informed by five complementary theoretical perspectives. The findings indicate that institutional practices were documented across three interconnected domains—governance, administrative systems, and academic excellence—and were accompanied by records of quality assurance, stakeholder engagement, digital learning, research, leadership development, and continuous improvement.

For RQ1, the study identified best practices documented across governance, administrative systems, and academic excellence. For RQ2, it identified institutional outcomes and patterns documented alongside these practices, including accountability, quality management, stakeholder-centered service, innovation, and organizational learning. For RQ3, the practices reflected principles of Good Governance Theory, New Public Management, Total Quality Management, Institutional Theory, and Learning Organization Theory. For RQ4, the analysis identified

documented patterns associating the practices with organizational effectiveness, innovation, accountability, stakeholder satisfaction, and service excellence; these patterns were interpreted descriptively rather than causally. For RQ5, the study developed a Public Administration Best Practices Framework connecting institutional evidence, practices, documented outcomes, enabling conditions, and continuous improvement.

The study's theoretical contribution is a provisional contextual interpretation of institutionalization in the CCC case. The findings suggest that researchers can examine formal policies, feedback mechanisms, and organizational learning as connected elements of institutional development. This interpretation remains specific to the case and should be examined through comparative and longitudinal research before broader theoretical claims are advanced.

As a practical implication, LUC administrators may consider a quarterly Best Practices and Continuous Improvement Review through the Quality Assurance or Planning Office. A common monitoring template may record each practice, supporting evidence, documented results, identified gaps, improvement actions, responsible individuals, timelines, and follow-up results. Consolidated findings may then inform strategic planning, quality assurance, resource decisions, and policy review.

Overall, the study indicates that institutional development in an LUC can be interpreted through the continuing connection of governance, administrative systems, academic practices, evidence, feedback, and organizational learning. The framework provides a structured basis for documenting and interpreting these connections, while its effectiveness, transferability, and causal validity remain matters for future empirical testing.

LIMITATIONS & FURTHER RESEARCH

This study has four key limitations. First, reliance on institution-authored documents may introduce self-report or self-promotion bias, particularly because the documentary corpus was predominantly positive and may underrepresent challenges, unsuccessful practices, or implementation gaps. Second, the documented presence of policies and practices does not establish their actual effectiveness or causal impact on institutional outcomes; the findings therefore remain descriptive. Third, the single-case focus on CCC limits direct generalization to other LUCs. Although CSM records contained service concerns and corrective or improvement initiatives, the corpus did not provide a sufficiently independent basis for determining the magnitude or effectiveness of those responses. Fourth, the observation component was used for contextual corroboration, but its duration and coverage were not quantified, limiting assessment of the breadth of that evidence.

Future studies should incorporate independent stakeholder perspectives, external or outcome-based data, and more explicit observation protocols to address self-report bias and assess actual implementation and effectiveness. Longitudinal, mixed-methods, and comparative studies involving other LUCs are recommended to test, refine, and assess the transferability of the proposed framework. Future research should also deliberately examine contradictory, partial, or unsuccessful implementation evidence to determine whether the proposed structure–feedback–learning cycle is observable across different LUC contexts. The present study should also retain an explicit negative-case or disconfirming-evidence log in future iterations so that successful and unsuccessful implementation patterns are analyzed with comparable attention.

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