

Governance Barriers to Inclusive Education Implementation in Thailand: A Rule of Law Analysis of Special Education Administration

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ABSTRACT:

Thailand ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) in 2008, yet governance failures in special education administration continue to undermine service delivery for children with disabilities. This qualitative document review examines how rule of law deficiencies - centralized placement authority, absent appeals mechanisms, weak oversight, and low governance capacity-create measurable barriers to inclusive education. Current data reveal critical gaps: 60–70% of students with disabilities lack Individualized Education Plans (IEPs), parent appeal mechanisms are absent or ineffective, and 68% of teachers lack CRPD Article 24-aligned training. Evidence-based innovations demonstrate clear governance-service linkages: decentralized IEP decision-making produces 40% faster decisions and 35% higher parent satisfaction; transparent appeals raise success rates from 0–5% to 30%; and teacher competency training yields 42% improvement in inclusive practices with 12–16% learning outcome gains. Systemic challenges include centralized bureaucratic structures, protracted administrative processes, entrenched negative values, and eroded societal morality that has long undermined the rule of law. Overcoming these obstacles requires government officials, civil servants, and citizens to recognize the rule of law's critical role across economic, political, social, and sustainability dimensions. This study recommends that government agencies, civil society, and relevant stakeholders: (1) reform public administrative structures and systems; (2) cultivate rule of law awareness among justice system personnel; (3) instill integrity, honesty, and legal compliance among civil servants; and (4) foster ethical values in society from an early age. Systemic governance reform coupled with evidence-based special education innovations can simultaneously strengthen the rule of law and improve educational outcomes for children with disabilities in Thailand.

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Introduction

Thailand transitioned from an absolute monarchy to a democratic system of governance in 1932, establishing itself as a constitutional state with the constitution as the supreme law limiting state power and adhering to the rule of law. This principle aims to create a society where all individuals are equally subject to just laws. The government of that era designed a system of governance based on the separation of powers, including an independent and impartial judiciary, respect for human rights, and citizen participation through electoral processes for national and local representatives. However, the rule of law in Thailand has faced persistent challenges, with certain groups, particularly some business elites and military factions, resistant to operating within its constraints. Successive governments, both military and civilian, have demonstrated a lack of maturity regarding rule of law principles. Power conflicts and vested interests have led to a cyclical pattern of coups d'état, constitution drafting, elections, and subsequent coups (Baker & Phongpaichit, 2005). Since the 1932 political revolution, Thailand has experienced 22 coup attempts, with 13 successful and 9 failed. Successful coups have resulted in power transfers to coup leaders and subsequent legal modifications to consolidate their authority, weakening the rule of law in public administration. The bureaucracy, as part of the executive branch of sovereign power, is responsible for implementing laws enacted by the legislative branch and producing public goods such as national defense, education, healthcare, and infrastructure. Civil servants and state employees, from the Prime Minister down to local officials, must operate within their legally defined roles and responsibilities, adhering to a hierarchy of laws from the constitution to ministerial regulations and local ordinances.

The strength of Thailand's rule of law can be assessed through administrative court case statistics. In 2021, there were 4,582 administrative cases where state agencies or officials were represented by the Office of the Attorney General (Office of the Attorney General, 2021). The Administrative Court

currently has over 100,000 pending cases (Office of the Administrative Courts, 2024). This trend suggests an increase in administrative acts by civil servants and state employees that may not fully align with the rule of law principles.

This article examines structural, institutional, and cultural factors inhibiting Thailand's public administration adherence to rule of law principles, with particular emphasis on how these governance deficiencies undermine children with disabilities' right to inclusive education guaranteed by CRPD Article 24 and the Education for Persons with Disabilities Act B.E. 2551 (2008). Special education administration in Thailand serves as a critical case study of rule of law failures in public governance. Methodologically, this qualitative document review examines governance barriers through systematic analysis of four document categories: (1) constitutional and statutory law (unit of analysis: policy provision and legal article); (2) government administrative documents and reform directives (unit: policy clause); (3) international governance monitoring reports (unit: assessment section); and (4) academic governance literature (unit: analytical claim). Thematic coding employed both deductive categories derived from Weber, Fuller, and UNDP rule of law frameworks and inductive themes emerging from Thai administrative evidence. Four primary analytical codes were applied: Institutional Structure Barriers, Oversight Mechanism Deficiencies, Rule of Law Consciousness Gaps, and Bureaucratic Culture Constraints. Single-coder analysis was conducted with quality verification through systematic cross-reference with independent governance indicators (World Bank WGI, CPI metrics, administrative court statistics) to ensure consistency and reduce analytical bias. Analytical saturation was confirmed when document analysis yielded no new thematic dimensions across all four source categories (document review completed June 2026).

The Concept of Rule of Law in Public Administration

The principle of the rule of law gained widespread recognition when the United Nations advocated for member states to adopt good governance as a framework for national development and administration. The rule of law is a key component of good governance, defined by the UN as "a principle under which all persons, institutions and entities, public and private, including the State itself, are accountable to laws that are publicly promulgated, equally enforced and independently adjudicated, and which are consistent with international human rights norms and standards. It requires measures to ensure adherence to the principles of supremacy of law, equality before the law, accountability to the law, fairness in the application of the law, separation of powers, participation in decision-making, legal certainty, avoidance of arbitrariness, and procedural and legal transparency" (United Nations Development Programme [UNDP], 1994). The rule of law within the good governance framework impacts all sectors of public administration. One indicator of a country's adherence to the rule of law in governance and development is the extent to which public officials and civil servants make decisions and take actions based on legal principles, applying laws equitably and respecting citizens' fundamental rights. By upholding the rule of law in their duties, public officials directly strengthen this principle. Moreover, adherence to the rule of law in public service aligns with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals, specifically Goal 16, which aims to "promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels" (United Nations, 2024a). Additionally, SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals) emphasizes international cooperation essential for strengthening governance capacity in Thailand's public administration reform efforts. While the rule of law concept appears to have gained prominence with the UN's promotion of good governance, its origins can be

traced back to the 17th-18th centuries. John Locke's "Two Treatises of Government" (1689) emphasized governmental adherence to laws respecting individual rights, though not explicitly using the term "rule of law." Montesquieu's concept of separation of powers (1748/1949) proposed governance under a system of checks and balances to prevent abuse of power. Fuller (1964) outlined eight principles for effective laws in public administration, including generality, publicity, prospectivity, clarity, consistency, feasibility, constancy, and congruence between official action and declared rules. The rule of law framework is particularly critical for vulnerable populations, including persons with disabilities. The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (United Nations, 2006) enshrines equality before the law (Article 12) and the right to inclusive education (Article 24), both dependent on transparent, non-discriminatory public administration. Thailand ratified the CRPD in 2008 and enacted the Education for Persons with Disabilities Act B.E. 2551 (2008), establishing the legal mandate for inclusive education. However, implementation evidence documents persistent gaps. The UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2016) issued concluding observations noting that Thailand's bureaucratic structures inadequately support IEP (Individualized Education Plan) implementation fidelity and that discretionary administrative practices create barriers to equal access in educational placement decisions. The Thailand National Disability Rights Committee (2023) National Report on CRPD Implementation confirms that while legal frameworks exist, administrative opacity in the Ministry of Education's Special Education Bureau decision-making processes undermines the practical realization of Article 24 rights. Recent Thai-language academic research (Ministry of Education Thailand, 2024; Office of the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education Thailand, 2024) documents that civil service capacity gaps-specifically the lack of transparent procedural guidelines for educational accessibility determinations-represent a critical rule of law governance challenge in special education administration. Public administration theories

have long incorporated rule of law principles. Weber, M. (1922) discussed the rule of law in the context of legal systems and administrative authority, particularly in bureaucracy and rational-legal authority. Wilson, W. (1887), considered the father of public administration, advocated for the separation of politics and administration, emphasizing the importance of fair and efficient law enforcement by public administrators. Wilson stressed the need for transparency, accountability, and good governance in bureaucratic systems, with civil servants operating within legal frameworks to prevent abuse of power. The rule of law in public administration ensures that governmental actions adhere to established legal frameworks. It guarantees that all state officials and institutions are subject to the law, with their powers exercised fairly and transparently within legal boundaries. This concept promotes accountability, protects citizens' rights, and prevents arbitrary decision-making.

Key benefits of applying the rule of law in public administration include:

- 1) **Legality:** All actions of public officials must be grounded in law, preventing arbitrary or ultra vires actions.
- 2) **Equality under the law:** Ensures non-discriminatory treatment in administrative processes.
- 3) **Accountability:** Public officials are responsible for their actions, with systems in place for oversight and sanctions.
- 4) **Transparency:** Allows public scrutiny of governmental decision-making processes.
- 5) **Fairness and justice in decision-making.**
- 6) **Proportionality in administrative actions.**
- 7) **Judicial role in maintaining the rule of law in administration.**
- 8) **Protection of individual rights within administrative processes.**

The rule of law in public administration positions the government and civil servants as public servants rather than authorities over citizens. It

ensures that governmental operations occur within a legal framework, promoting justice and equality in society.

3. The Significance of the Rule of Law for Civil Servants and State Employees

The comprehension and adherence to the rule of law by civil servants and state employees not only enhances their operational efficiency but also mitigates the risk of malfeasance and dereliction of duty. Non-compliance may result in administrative, disciplinary, criminal, and/or civil liabilities. For instance, in the criminal domain, Article 157 of the Criminal Code stipulates: "Any official who wrongfully exercises or does not exercise any of his functions to the injury of any person, or dishonestly exercises or omits to exercise any of his functions, shall be punished with imprisonment of one to ten years or fined two thousand to twenty thousand Baht, or both."

In the realm of administrative actions, civil servants and state employees are obligated to perform their duties in accordance with rules and regulations. The Administrative Procedure Act B.E. 2539 (1996) and its amendments delineate the procedural requirements for issuing orders or regulations (Office of the Council of State, 2015). Negligence or improper execution of legal procedures that causes or may cause unavoidable damage or distress to others (Section 42 of the Act on Establishment of Administrative Courts and Administrative Court Procedure B.E. 2542 (1999)) may result in administrative sanctions (Section 72 of the same Act), such as revocation of orders or regulations, monetary penalties, suspension or revocation of licenses, injunctions, professional or business restrictions, and asset seizure or confiscation.

The Act on Establishment of Administrative Courts and Administrative Court Procedure B.E. 2542 (1999), Section 9, outlines the categories of unlawful administrative actions subject to Administrative Court jurisdiction (Office of the Council of State, 2014), including:

- 1) Disputes concerning administrative orders or actions of state agencies, officials, or local administrative organizations that cause damage to individuals.

- 2) Disputes related to administrative regulations.
- 3) Disputes involving administrative contracts.
- 4) Disputes regarding state agency liability.
- 5) Disputes concerning the exercise of administrative power over property.
- 6) Other cases as prescribed by law, such as environmental cases or compliance with international obligations.

Administrative procedural laws serve to reinforce the rule of law and prevent discriminatory practices or arbitrary use of executive power by civil servants and state employees. The rule of law plays a crucial role in public administration by:

- 1) Supporting sustainable social development.
- 2) Establishing a transparent and equitable operational framework.
- 3) Fostering public confidence in state management systems.
- 4) Ensuring accountability of civil servants and state employees.
- 5) Promoting impartiality in decision-making processes.
- 6) Enhancing transparency in governmental operations.
- 7) Constraining the exercise of power within legal boundaries.

Administrative law significantly contributes to the promotion of the rule of law by defining the scope of state authority, establishing checks and balances, advancing principles of equality, transparency, and accountability, and protecting citizens' rights and freedoms. Consequently, this framework facilitates just, transparent, and efficient public administration.

The Significance of the Rule of Law in Public Administration

The provision of public goods and services necessitates the involvement of state agencies. These agencies should operate in accordance with fair and equitable laws that are universally applicable, without exception, regardless of an individual's social status. Such laws must mandate

that government entities, civil servants, and public employees protect human rights, establish conditions for justice, ensure peace and security of life and property, and deliver efficient public services. This includes expeditious processes for approvals, permits, and civil registration, such as issuing birth certificates, death certificates, marriage licenses, citizenship certifications, and business operation authorizations.

The concept of the rule of law in public administration requires government officials to consistently adhere to legal frameworks and treat citizens with fairness and equality, safeguarding their rights and freedoms. Crucially, laws must be clear, transparent, and subject to checks and balances. This adherence to the rule of law is fundamental to democratic governance and plays a vital role in fostering social stability, economic prosperity, political democracy, and everyday justice for citizens.

Numerous organizations and scholars have evaluated the quality of public services in the Thai bureaucratic system, identifying areas for improvement. In response, the Office of the Public Sector Development Commission has established the Public Sector Management Quality Award (PMQA) framework (Office of the Public Sector Development Commission, 2016). This framework encompasses seven key areas: organizational leadership, strategic planning, focus on service recipients and stakeholders, measurement and knowledge management, human resource emphasis, process management, and results-oriented operations. It aims to enhance effectiveness, service quality, efficiency, and organizational development across public sector entities.

Despite efforts to improve public service quality, challenges persist. The concept of "New Public Management," attempts at bureaucratic reform, and the establishment of public service standards all reflect ongoing concerns about administrative quality. These initiatives underscore the difficulties faced by civil servants in implementing economic and social development policies effectively.

Moreover, broader issues reflecting a lack of rule of law in public administration include systemic human rights violations and prevalent corruption within the bureaucracy (Ampai, 2009). Thailand's Rule of Law Index scores on the World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicators have remained broadly stagnant from 2010–2023. Specifically, Thailand's Rule of Law percentile rank averaged 18.3 (range: 16.5–20.1), with scores on the underlying Rule of Law component ranging from –0.48 to –0.52 on a scale of approximately –2.5 to +2.5, indicating persistent governance challenges despite multiple reform initiatives (World Bank, 2024). Concurrently, Thailand's score of 35 on the 2023 Corruption Perceptions Index, ranking 108th globally, indicates persistent challenges in addressing corruption (Office of the National Anti-Corruption Commission, 2024).

In light of these challenges, the government has justification to prioritize strengthening the rule of law in public administration as a preventive measure. This approach aims to enhance the system's capacity to resolve issues, recognizing that the lack of adherence to the rule of law principles contributes significantly to administrative shortcomings. The government and public agencies must identify the specific rule of law challenges they face and determine strategies to improve accessibility and accountability. Similarly, citizens must be aware of their legal rights and the legitimate demands they can make of government and public sector entities.

The challenges to the rule of law in Thailand's public administration system can be analyzed through the lens of political science as follows:

Institutional Deficiencies and Structural Constraints

The centralized administrative structure in Thailand poses a significant challenge to the effective implementation of the rule of law. This centralization of power inhibits local autonomy and contextual decision-making, with particular consequences for special education administration. Special education placement

decisions and Individualized Education Plan (IEP) implementation authority remain concentrated at the Ministry of Education's national Special Education Bureau, rather than delegated to schools or local education authorities. This centralization prevents contextual responses to children with diverse disabilities and undermines school-based inclusive education implementation. Current data illustrate the scale of this governance failure: an estimated 60–70% of Thai students with disabilities lack Individualized Education Plans (IEPs), 68% of special education teachers report insufficient CRPD Article 24-aligned training, and parent appeal mechanisms operate at 0–5% success rates (Ministry of Education Thailand, 2024; Thailand National Disability Rights Committee, 2023). Potential consequences include:

- 1) Inefficient policy implementation that fails to address local needs and contexts, resulting in delayed educational access, inappropriate placements, and failure to customize IEPs to individual student needs, directly reducing educational effectiveness for children with disabilities
- 2) Increased risk of abuse of power due to limited checks and balances, permitting discriminatory special education placement decisions, arbitrary denials of educational services, and exclusion of children with disabilities without due process protections
- 3) Reduced accountability and transparency in governmental operations, creating opacity in special education decision-making, preventing parents from understanding or appealing placement decisions, and enabling systematic denial of educational access without explanation or recourse
- 4) Potential for discriminatory practices in law enforcement due to a lack of local understanding

Weak Oversight Mechanisms

The concentration of power within the bureaucratic system, coupled with inadequate oversight mechanisms, creates an environment

particularly conducive to governance failures in special education administration. Limited administrative review of special education placement decisions, absence of transparent appeal mechanisms for parents challenging IEP rejections, and minimal judicial oversight of special education administrative acts produce systemic exclusion of children with disabilities. Parent appeal success rates currently sit at 0–5% under existing procedures, compared with approximately 30% under transparent appeals regimes documented in comparable jurisdictions (Office of the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education Thailand, 2024). These oversight gaps create conditions for:

- 1) Arbitrary exercise of authority
- 2) Lack of transparency in decision-making processes, specifically in special education placement decisions, preventing informed parental participation, obstructing identification of discriminatory practices, and enabling systematic exclusion of children with disabilities without documented justification
- 3) Potential for corruption and misuse of public resources, diverting special education funding away from services for children with disabilities, resulting in inadequate resource allocation, insufficient teacher training, and degraded service quality
- 4) Inconsistent application of laws and regulations, resulting in disparate special education placement decisions based on school location or administrator discretion rather than student needs, unequal access to services, and discriminatory outcomes for children with disabilities

Erosion of Rule of Law Consciousness

There appears to be a diminishing awareness and commitment to rule of law principles among key actors in the justice system, including judges, prosecutors, law enforcement officers, and legal professionals. This erosion manifests in:

- 1) Compromised impartiality in judicial proceedings

- 2) Vulnerability to external influences and pressures

- 3) Insufficient protection of human rights and individual dignity

- 4) Potential loss of international credibility and economic repercussions

Entrenched Bureaucratic Culture

The persistence of problematic values and norms within the bureaucracy undermines the rule of law. These include:

- 1) Patron-client relationships that prioritize personal connections over merit

- 2) Abuse of power for personal gain

- 3) Lack of professionalism and ethical conduct

- 4) Resistance to reform and accountability measures

Societal Factors

Broader societal issues contribute to the challenges facing the rule of law, including:

- 1) Weak civic consciousness regarding integrity, justice, and accountability

- 2) Limited public understanding of legal rights and processes

- 3) Insufficient mechanisms for public participation in governance

- 4) Cultural norms that may conflict with certain aspects of rule of law principles

Systemic Challenges

The Thai public administration system faces multiple systemic issues that hinder the full realization of the rule of law:

- 1) Political interference in bureaucratic and judicial processes

- 2) Corruption at various levels of government

- 3) Unequal application of laws and regulations

- 4) Inefficiencies in the justice system leading to delays and denial of justice

- 5) Outdated legal frameworks are ill-equipped to address contemporary challenges

- 6) Influence of extra-legal power structures on governance

Post-1997 Reform Efforts

While Thailand has made efforts to implement good governance principles following the 1997 economic crisis, the emphasis on the rule of law has been insufficient (Office of the Public Sector Development Commission, 2022). Challenges include:

- 1) Limited understanding of international rule of law standards among policymakers
- 2) Ambiguous directives and objectives in reform initiatives
- 3) Cultural differences among stakeholders leading to inconsistent implementation
- 4) Lack of a coherent conceptual framework for integrating rule of law principles into governance structures

In conclusion, strengthening the rule of law in Thailand's public administration requires a multifaceted approach addressing institutional, cultural, and systemic factors. This necessitates sustained efforts in legal reform, capacity building, cultural change, and enhanced accountability mechanisms to create a more robust foundation for good governance and democratic development.

Enhancing the Rule of Law in Public Administration

Thailand must prioritize the implementation of the rule of law due to its increasing international interactions and global concerns regarding public administration that lacks adherence to this principle. This necessity arises partly from the insufficient awareness among civil servants about the rule of law's significance in national development. Traditional public administration concepts imported and adapted to Thailand's bureaucratic system have proven inadequate in fostering social stability and economic prosperity.

It is imperative to expand the scope beyond efficiency and effectiveness, which have been the primary focus of public administration studies since the separation of administrative and

political functions (Wilson, W., 1887: 197-222). A 1995 United Nations General Assembly report on legal and regulatory frameworks for public administration emphasized that administrative efficiency is futile and potentially dangerous without an appropriate rule of law framework. Recent statements by the UN Secretary-General and others have reiterated the importance of the rule of law in peacekeeping practices (United Nations, 2024b).

As Thailand progresses economically and politically, efforts to elevate rule of law standards in public administration are crucial, recognizing it as a foundational element of democratic governance and a prerequisite for attracting foreign investment. To enhance the rule of law in public administration, the following reforms and developments are proposed:

Restructure administrative systems to decentralize authority, empowering local entities in public affairs decision-making. Evidence from pilot programs indicates that decentralized IEP decision-making produces 40% faster placement decisions and 35% higher parent satisfaction relative to centralized procedures (Ministry of Education Thailand, 2024). Improve legislation regarding public information access through e-Government systems and artificial intelligence (AI) to enhance transparency and reduce procedural complexities.

- 1) Develop an administrative system that promotes a just and stable society through the rule of law, emphasizing equal and transparent law enforcement. This includes: a) enhancing transparency through public dissemination of government operations data; b) preventing abuse of power by limiting discretionary authority; c) facilitating public participation in policy-making processes; d) utilizing technology for transparency and efficiency; and e) ensuring legislation and enforcement respect human rights.
- 2) Instill awareness among justice system personnel about the rule of law in a global context, promoting acceptance and adherence to laws as frameworks governing interpersonal and international relations.

3) Foster values among civil servants that emphasize integrity, legal compliance, ethical courage, and good governance principles (Wiratchaniphawan, 2006). Encourage transparency, efficiency, and fairness in administration, while supporting multi-stakeholder participation in oversight and development processes.

4) Develop moral foundations in society, recognizing the interdependence between the bureaucratic system and social resources. This involves moral education initiatives from early ages, coordinated by relevant ministries, social agencies, and religious institutions. Evidence-based innovations in special education governance demonstrate concrete pathways for translating these rule-of-law reforms into measurable educational outcomes: (1) decentralized IEP decision-making produces 40% faster decisions and 35% higher parent satisfaction; (2) transparent appeals mechanisms raise success rates from 0–5% to approximately 30%; (3) CRPD Article 24-aligned teacher training yields a 42% improvement in inclusive classroom practices; and (4) these governance and capacity reforms together translate into 12–16% gains in student learning outcomes for children with disabilities (Ministry of Education Thailand, 2024; Office of the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education Thailand, 2024).

The rule of law in public administration is as crucial as efficiency and effectiveness principles that have guided administrative practices for over a century. Critically, these governance reforms directly enhance inclusive education implementation. Transparent, decentralized special education placement procedures ensure that children with disabilities receive non-discriminatory educational access consistent with CRPD Article 24. Rights literacy programs for parents of children with disabilities operationalize rule of law principles in special education administration by enabling informed participation in IEP development and appeal processes. Accountability mechanisms for civil servants protect the practical realization of children's educational rights. The Thai government should implement measures to

strengthen rule of law-based public administration by applying the five developmental measures outlined above and incorporating the rule of law as a key performance indicator for governmental agencies, with explicit metrics for special education governance compliance.

Conclusion

The administration of a nation constitutes one of the three branches of sovereign power operating within the framework of democratic governance. Thailand adopted this conceptualization in 1932, establishing itself as a constitutional state where the rule of law prevails, with the constitution serving as the supreme law in national administration. This system limits state power through legal mechanisms and adheres to the principle of the rule of law, which aims to create a society where all individuals are subject to the law equally, and the law itself must be just.

Currently, the United Nations has called upon member states to implement good governance as a guiding framework for national development and administration. One significant method of assessing a country's adherence to good governance principles is by evaluating the extent to which the rule of law is upheld in the execution of duties by the government, civil servants, and state employees. An assessment of Thailand's public administration reveals that while there is adherence to the rule of law, it is insufficient. Civil servants and state employees possess knowledge and understanding of the rule of law, but this is inadequate for fulfilling their duties in a manner that would strengthen the rule of law in an international context. This insufficiency is attributed to various challenges, including a centralized bureaucratic structure, protracted administrative processes lacking effective oversight, negative values within the bureaucratic system, and a societal weakness in moral integrity that has long eroded the rule of law in public administration. In the special education domain, these governance failures translate directly into denial of educational rights for children with disabilities—manifesting as the IEP, teacher-capacity, and appeals deficits documented in

Section 5-while the evidence-based innovations summarized in Section 6 demonstrate that targeted governance reform can yield 12–16% gains in student learning outcomes. To overcome these challenges, the government, civil servants, state employees, and citizens must first recognize that the rule of law plays a crucial role in national development across multiple dimensions, including economic, political, social, scientific, and sustainability aspects. The findings presented in Section 4, when evaluated against the institutional theory frameworks deployed (Weber's rational-legal authority model, Fuller's inner morality of law, UNDP governance principles), reveal that Thailand's governance deficits are not merely technical or capacity-based problems amenable to short-term training interventions. Rather, they reflect deeper institutional path dependencies and value-system incongruence. The persistent centralization of administrative power (documented through WGI stagnation from 2010-2023), the institutional insularity of the bureaucratic hierarchy, and the cultural entrenchment of patron-client relationships all suggest that reform efforts must target structural incentive systems and institutional norms, not only individual civil servant competencies. The proposed four-pillar reform strategy-administrative restructuring, awareness cultivation, value inculcation, and societal moral development-acknowledges this complexity, though full implementation would require coordination across government, civil society, and educational institutions over sustained periods. A critical limitation of this analysis is that the governance barriers identified operate within broader political economy constraints: without top-level political

commitment to decentralization and accountability mechanisms, even well-designed reforms face structural resistance from entrenched power-holders benefiting from bureaucratic opacity. To strengthen the rule of law in public administration and maintain a steadfast commitment to justice, the government, public sector agencies, civil society, and relevant personnel should undertake reforms and develop the structure and systems of public administration. This includes cultivating awareness of the rule of law in an international context among personnel in the justice system, instilling values of moral integrity, honesty, responsibility, and adherence to empowering laws among civil servants and state employees, as well as inculcating moral values in society from an early age. The fourth pillar-civic and moral education-has particular relevance to special education governance. Rights literacy programs targeting parents of children with disabilities represent an institutional mechanism for operationalizing the rule of law in special education administration. The Thai Ministry of Education's existing outreach frameworks (parent advisory committees, IEP conferences, advocacy programs) could be systematically integrated with rights-based training curricula addressing: (1) procedural transparency in special education placement decisions, (2) appeals mechanisms for parents challenging educational placement determinations, and (3) accountability mechanisms for civil servants violating CRPD Article 24 protections. Such institutionalized rights literacy programs would strengthen both the cultural norms and the structural incentives supporting rule of law compliance in special education policy implementation.

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