

# AUTONOMOUS PUBLIC ORGANIZATION POLICY: A CASE STUDY FOR THE HEALTH SECTOR IN THAILAND

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**Abstract.** This paper describes factors affecting autonomous public organization (APO) policy agenda setting and policy formation through comparison of policy processes applied to one educational institute under the Ministry of Education and the other educational institute under the Ministry of Public Health in Thailand. This study employs mixed method including a qualitative approach through documentary research, in-depth interviews, and participant observation. Factors that facilitated the formulation of the APO policy were: (1) awareness of need; (2) clarity of strategies; (3) leadership, advocacy, and strategic partnerships, (4) clear organizational identity; (5) participatory approach to policy formulation, and (6) identification of a policy window. Factors that impeded the formulation of the APO policy were: (1) diverting political priorities; (2) ill-defined organizational identity; (3) fluctuating leadership direction, (4) inadequate participation of stakeholders; and (5) political instability. Although findings cannot be generalized, this case study does offer benchmarking for those in search of ways to enhance processes of policy formulation.

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