

Socioeconomic Characterization of a Southern Philippine City, before 1898-2015: A Historical Perspective

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ABSTRACT

The socio-economic characteristics of a city unfolded from its past can help policymakers understand its socio-economic trend and devise plans for its development. This paper focused on documenting and characterizing the socio-economic status of Dapitan City, Philippines, briefly before 1898, during the American occupation until the present republic in 2015 by making use of archival methods. Furthermore, interviews with the seven key informants supported and strengthened the data. Over the years, Dapitan City in Zamboanga del Norte has become greatly dependent on the Internal Revenue Allotment (IRA), which is the fiscal transfer in the Philippines that serves as the biggest source of operating revenues for the local government units (LGUs) to perform their functions. In its history, the economic conditions of Dapitan improved, albeit slowly if compared to other progressive cities in the country. This rate of transition from a less progressive to a more progressive state can be explained by Dapitan's natural and historical aura, which is still being preserved and protected. Despite this advantage, the transition depicted in the history of Dapitan did not offer an abundance of economic opportunities that would have catered to the needs of its human resources and eventually helped disadvantaged groups move above the poverty line. Dapitan did not take advantage of becoming the center of a progressive economic structure due to the different paths it took to formulate its concept of progress and modernization. Life in Dapitan is simple as the city is not subject to the rapid process of industrialization. It only attracted a few big business investors that could create more and a variety of jobs.

Keywords: socioeconomic, Dapitan City, history, census, poverty, development, characterization, archival method

INTRODUCTION

The socioeconomic characteristics of a city unfolded from its past can help policymakers to understand its socioeconomic trend and devise plans for its development. Society is ultimately impacted by low socioeconomic status and its implications, including reduced educational success, poverty, and bad health (*Children, Youth, Families and Socioeconomic Status*, 2010).

Dapitan City, a Shrine City of the Philippines, is one of the third-class cities known for its historical value, a place where Dr. Jose P. Rizal, the national hero, was exiled. During the Spanish occupation, Dapitan became one of the capitals of the former Spanish comandancia (politico-military command), which formed part of the former provinces of Zamboanga and Misamis and continued to be identified as such in the 1903 Census of the Philippine Islands (Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, (n.d.); Sanger, J. P., 1905). Despite its former status, Dapitan remains a third-class city and ranks second among the urban centers in Region IX (Zamboanga Peninsula) in terms of poverty magnitude, at 62.6 percent. This is based on the *Listahanan* 3 household assessment conducted by the Department of Social Welfare and

Development (DSWD) in the Zamboanga Peninsula (Garcia, 2023). *Listahanan* is the National Household Targeting System for Poverty Reduction (DSWD, n.d.).

Over the years, Dapitan City in Zamboanga del Norte has been greatly dependent upon the Internal Revenue Allotment (IRA) which is the fiscal transfer in the Philippines serving the biggest source of operating revenues for the local government units (LGUs) to perform their functions (Senate of the Philippines, 2022). From 2017 to 2018, Dapitan had an average IRA dependency rate of 95% while in 2021 it had the highest dependency rate at 97% among the cities in Region IX (Philippine Statistics Authority(PSA), 2021; National Economic and Development Authority Regional Office IX (NEDA RO IX), 2022). Nevertheless, it can be noted that the first case of COVID-19 was reported on January 30, 2020, which made the Philippine Government impose travel restrictions that limited social and economic activities (Amit, et al., 2020). Its local source's percentage share of the total financial resources only reached 1.18% and 1.57% share in 2017 and 2018 respectively (NEDA RO IX, 2019). Even with, it has the potential for development as it has a land area of 215.03 sq. Km., a seaport that links Western Mindanao to Visayas and other regions, an airport in the nearby city and tourism industry due to its natural, man-made, and historical tourist spots (NEDA RO IX, 2022). It has also the lowest index crime (41) among the cities in 2020 in the Region (PSA, 2021). The direction that the city will take in the future given its potential is crucial to the socioeconomic development of its people.

To date, there is a vast volume of census data describing the socio-economic conditions of Dapitan City. Yet, literature utilizing and analyzing those data starting from the American colonization in the Philippines up to the present Republic is very scant. The farther one has to look back, the more answers to the problems can be discovered. Moreover, looking at the socio-economic conditions of Dapitan only within a limited period may not capture the complex reality of its current status. Stearns (1998) emphasized in an article titled, "Why Study History?" that history offers a storehouse of information as to how people and societies behave. He further stated that reliance on current data would handicap efforts. Therefore, this paper intends to document and characterize the socioeconomic status of the city during the American occupation until the present Republic by analyzing the socio-economic changes between the 1903 to 2015 censuses. It made use of the available primary data from the censuses conducted during the mentioned periods. Further, interviews with key informants supported and strengthened the data.

METHODS

The paper used both quantitative and qualitative approaches to characterize the socioeconomic conditions of Dapitan City, Zamboanga del Norte in Mindanao (the southernmost major island in the Philippines) using a historical perspective. The quantitative part used the archival method through the primary data available from the censuses conducted by the Philippine Commission in the year 1903 and the Philippine Legislature during the American occupation and by the Philippine Statistics Authority in the present republic. Particularly, the period mainly focused on the American occupation in 1898-1946, the Philippine Republic in 1946-1972, the Martial Law period in 1972-1981, and the present republic from 1982 onwards. Since censuses conducted from 1903 to 2015 have varying indicators which is difficult to consolidate, this study focused only on socio-economic indicators related to literacy, highest grade completed, employment or occupation, and the distribution of expenditures to total income. The qualitative part was supplied by the semi-structured interview conducted among the willing seven key informants whose ages ranged from 50 to 88 who gave their accounts and described the socio-economic conditions of the city to give more meaning to the quantitative data. The ages and experiences of the informants represented the periods during the American occupation until 2015. But to give an overview of Dapitan, a glimpse into its brief history before 1898 was also discussed. The key informants were retired public employees and politicians who spent their younger and middle-adult lives in the city. Before the interview, consent was sought among the participants, and they were assured that no personal identities directly linked to them would be revealed in the paper.

Hence, pseudonyms were used in this study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Results

Dapitan in the pre-Spanish period. Dapitan is currently one of the Twin Cities in Zamboanga del Norte, Philippines. Long before, Dapitan was considered one of the gateways to Mindanao from the Visayas. The idea of populating and founding the place Dapitan can be traced to two significant events. First, it was settled by timid Subanens (in some references Subanos or Subanons), a nomadic tribe. The term “Subanen” is derived from the Bisayan word *suba* which means river (Dapitan City Government, n.d.). It was applied to them as they usually settled at the mouths and banks of rivers. The second group of inhabitants who drove Subanens to the hinterlands was the barangay brought by Datu Pagbuaya from Panglao, Bohol.

Subanos, early settlers of Dapitan. The book of Colin, Combes, and San Agustin (2009) titled, *The Philippine Islands, 1493-1898*, presented four renowned nations in Mindanao Island, namely, the Caragas, Mindanaos, Lutaos, and Subanos. The Subanos were known as the first settlers in Dapitan and Zamboanga del Norte, in general. The Subanos were described as the least esteemed ethnic group because of their barbarousness and poverty. These barbarous people had little association with one another and built their houses distant from each other. They were contented with merely acquiring all their necessities. Seeing the river already satisfied them, and they did not feel the need to take risks and explore opportunities for a better life. They were in vassalage to the Lutaos.

Moreover, in an interview with Cad (personal communication, 2018, July 9), the curator of Rizal’s Shrine, he shared that the people mentioned above were nomadic because they practiced the *kaingin* system of farming, which made it difficult for them to form a single political government. He further stated that these Subanons abided by the patriarchal system of authority. The *timuays*, who were considered the arbitrators and ancestral leaders in their communities, established different reputations for families.

Spanish Period Before 1898. The writings of Dr. Jose Rizal served as one of the sources of information about Dapitan City’s economic conditions during the Spanish period. These primary sources proved the existence of poverty in a place where most people lived a simple life with subsistent livelihood. For instance, the prose written by Dr. Rizal titled *Dapitan*, published by the Jose Rizal National Centennial Commission (1962), described Dapitan as chaste, peaceful, and lonely. At the time of his exile, Dapitan was the capital of a politico-military province composed of towns and barrios like Dipolog, Ilaya, Libay, Libungan, Lindangan, and others. Even if Dapitan was depicted as isolated from the vulgar world, it was famous for the high demand for its locally produced red cotton blankets with stripes of bright colors. These blankets were given as gifts to foreigners and other people visiting Dapitan. Unfortunately, the product could not be directly sold by the weavers themselves as they were considered insignificant even though they were “dying of sleep under their houses” as weaving was virtually their only industry. The loneliness of the place was depicted by the “affectionate” houses inclined towards the streets that seemed to greet a solitary passerby. Dr. Rizal’s work described Dapitan as having a small population, and everyone knew each other.

Jalosjos (2009) in his *Rizal in Dapitan: 1892-1896*, wrote that there were no street lights when Dr. Rizal arrived in Dapitan. Thus, Dr. Rizal helped in the establishment of the lighting systems and in the construction of a makeshift factory of bricks, clay-pipes, and media-cana which supported the building of a waterway from Linao Hill. Moreover, Dr. Rizal noticed that, with their small *sakag*, the fishermen in Dapitan only caught small fishes that were the size of *talais*. Thus, with the help of his brother-in-law, Manuel Hidalgo, Dr. Rizal provided the fishers with fishnet or *pukutan* to increase fish catch and supply, and sufficiently provide for the whole town. The use of fishnet was also intended for the improvement of the fishers’ living conditions in the long haul. Furthermore, Dr. Rizal engaged in farming, particularly in

planting rice, corn, and abaca trees. In a letter that he wrote on December 31, 1894, to his friend Blumentritt, Dr. Rizal described his life as peaceful and monotonous. He also mentioned that, to pass the time and help the inhabitants a little, he became a merchant of abaca products that were sent to and sold in Manila. He even taught men better ways of earning. To educate the people of Dapitan, Dr. Rizal taught poor but intelligent boys subjects like reading, Spanish, English, mathematics, and geometry.

Moreover, like all other places in the Philippines during the Spanish era, Dapitan was not exempted from the political and economic structure created and imposed by the Spaniards. Sources that depict such structures during the Spanish era were the works of Salgado (1985) and Pido (1986/1992, p.39-63). When the Spaniards discovered the Philippines, it was ruled by independent *barangays*. The pueblos “became the centers of political, civil, military and ecclesiastical administration” (Pido, 1986/1992, p.40). Each *barangay* in a pueblo was headed by a *cabeza*, who was the leader in the old system of *barangay*. The *gobernadorcillo* as the head of the town was chosen from among the *cabezas*, collectively called the *principalia* or leading citizens (Corpus, n.d., as cited in Pido, 1986/1992).

The power of the friars was also apparent in the *encomienda* system of land ownership where they served as landlords. This system was patterned after the European feudal system. The *encomienda* became oppressive when the system changed from one that was based on trust to one that only privileged the economically and politically powerful *encomenderos* and their heirs as the lands could only be acquired through a title of ownership. Hence, through this system, Filipinos who formerly owned lands became mere tenants. This system later led to the existence of haciendas (Salgado, 1985; Pido, 1986/1992). The Spanish church and the *principalia* were among the *hacenderos*. The *principalia*, which included the descendants of the *datus*, acquired lands through donations from the Spanish Crown or through land grabbing of communal lands (Salgado, 1985).

American Period (1898-1946) to the Present Republic. There was also difficulty scanning for comprehensive information on the economic conditions of Dapitan during the American period since economic records in this period were no longer stored, preserved, or retrieved in certain government offices in Dapitan. Thus, the study relied primarily on the censuses of the Philippine Islands (i.e., the ones conducted by the Philippine Commission in the year 1903 and the Philippine Legislature in the year 1918) and on the experiences of the key informants.

From the censuses, two perspectives of Dapitan were considered: (1) Dapitan as a *comandancia* which was formerly composed of other towns aside from its present territory; and (2) Dapitan as a town.

Education. The percentage of literate and illiterate population in Dapitan from 1903 to 2015 is shown in Figure 1. Education was not accessible in the early years of Dapitan to the majority of the population. Educated people in both 1903 and 1918 were outnumbered by those who could neither read nor write and those who could read but could not write. The census data yielded results that were consistent with the experiences of the first key informant who recalled that during the American period, only primary schools existed in Dapitan. Secondary schools were located in Zamboanga City (a distance of 322.1 km). The third key informant, an 88-year-old retired government employee from Dapitan, also said “*before the Second World War, most schools offered only primary education and were located in the area where today’s Dapitan City Central School is found. One of these formerly primary schools is now the Roman Catholic Parochial School.*”

In 1970, the proportion of the literate population significantly improved, leaving less than one-third illiterate (26.21%), and sex disparity was most discernible. In the year 1990, the literate population in Dapitan constituted 94.13% of the 44,594 total population of individuals who were 10 years old and above. In 2010, this portion of the literate group slightly increased to 94.35% of the population of 51,080 individuals. The figures further improved in 2010 and 2015, reaching up to 98.05% and 98.47%, respectively. Figure 2

clearly shows a sex disparity in the literate population. The percentage of the literate male population is greater than their counterparts but the gap slowly narrows in the years 1980 to 2015. The figure portrays the significance of educating the population regardless of sex.

Figure 1. Percentage of Population 10 years old and Over Classified by Literacy

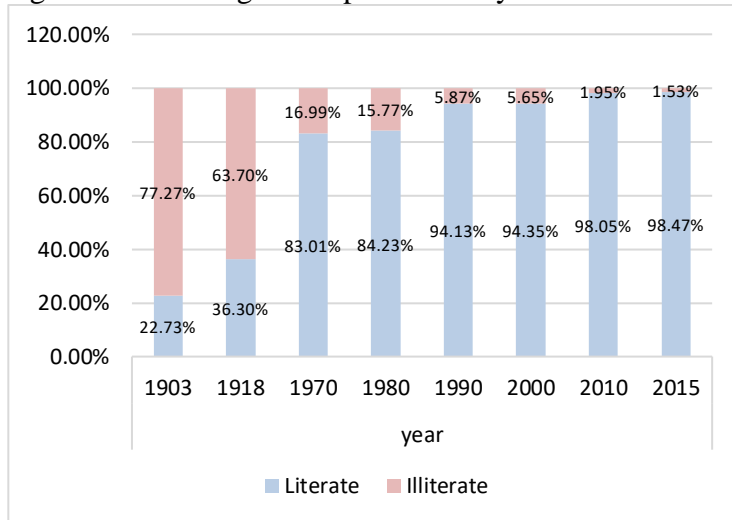
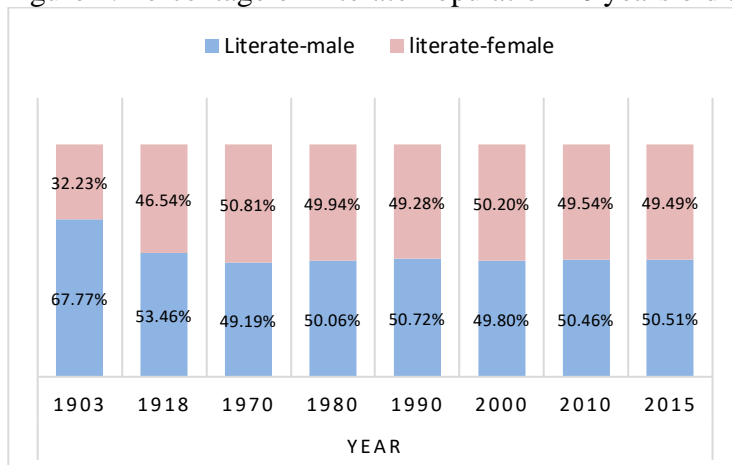


Figure 2. Percentage of Literate Population 10 years old and Over Classified by Sex



As previously contended, the educational attainment of members of the households in Dapitan could tell the strength of its human resources. The members of the population who were 21 years old and above were usually expected to finish college education. However, during the period, specifically in 1975 (Table 1), academic degree holders who were 21 years old and above only comprised 4.63% of the total population that belonged to this age bracket. The figures only increased slightly to 5.29% in 1980. Hence, only a few were capable of entering the professional field or land jobs that required higher education. Table 1 below presents the trend in the educational attainment of the residents that only covers the years 1975 – 2015 since the previous census data showed different age brackets lumped up some grade levels.

Concerning this, the census years in 1990, 2000, 2010, and 2015 revealed that the average number of individuals who acquired academic degrees was only 11.72%; however, an increasing pattern across these years was projected. Conversely, those who finished either elementary or high school education still comprised the majority of the population of individuals who were 20 years old and above.

Employment. The censuses conducted in the Philippines used different occupation categories. Hence, occupation categories for each census year are presented. However, it can still be identified which of these categories are considered low-paying occupations. Considering the proportion of the literate population in Dapitan, it was highly likely that the labor force was predominated by those who were employed in jobs that

did not require highly skilled employees. In the year 1903, more than half (57.03% or 5,825) of the population who had lived in Dapitan (as a town) for 10 years and over were economically inactive while only 42.97% were earning a living. Table 2 reveals that in 1918, agricultural pursuits were the primary means of living among the majority (79.22%) while very few (1.36%) were involved in professional services. Similarly, only a few were engaged in trade and transportation (1.56%).

These findings are consistent with the experiences shared by the first key informant who narrated that during the American period, as he could recall from the stories of his parents and older siblings, there were only a few vehicles in Dapitan, and they were mostly chariots or *kalesa* and bicycles. Moreover, trade was not a thriving enterprise since the amount of farm produce was not ideal for trading but was only sufficient for household consumption. One of the reasons for this insufficient production of farm products, as cited by the key informant, was the lack of irrigation facilities. Putting up an irrigation facility was not deemed practical since farms were not large enough. In terms of agricultural products, rice was sourced from Panay island while corn supply was sourced from Cebu. Furthermore, the fish catch was only enough for household consumption as the fishing gear and other equipment used were primitive like basing or lift nets.

Similarly, the third key informant could still remember that the main livelihood of the people during her younger years was farming and fishing. She said, “*People plowed fields, went to the mountains, fishing, working in rice fields.*” Moreover, she said that in the urban center, lands situated along the roads were used as rice fields which were owned only by a few people. Fishing was also a significant source of income.

Table 1. Population 6 Years Old and Over by Highest Grade Completed: 1975-2015

Year	Age					Elem Grades				HS		Post Secondary		College (No Degree)		ADH	PB	NS	T	
		NGC	PS	SE		1 st -3 rd	4 th	5 th	6 th &7 th	1 st -3 rd	4 th	UG	G	1 st -3 rd	4 th or Higher					
1975	16-17	31 (1.28)				249 (10.30)	218 (9.02)	240 (9.93)	651 (26.93)	614 (25.40)	248 (10.26)			126 (5.21)	0	0			40 (1.65)	2417 (100.00)
	20 & over	1206 (6.14)				3180 (16.20)	2649 (13.49)	1713 (8.73)	4694 (23.91)	2260 (11.51)	1204 (6.13)			970 (4.94)	236 (1.20)	866 (4.41)			654 (3.33)	19632 (100.00)
1980	16-17	6 (0.27)				152 (6.77)	112 (4.99)	159 (7.09)	594 (26.47)	810 (36.10)	262 (11.68)			149 (6.64)	0	0			0	2244 (100.00)
	20 & over	1448 (5.72)				3889 (15.36)	2981 (11.77)	1751 (6.91)	6480 (25.59)	3295 (13.01)	1760 (6.95)			1898 (7.49)	388 (1.53)	1341 (5.29)			95 (0.38)	25326 (100.00)
1990	20 & over	1362 (4.57)	18 (0.06)			5930 (19.90)	10058 (33.75)		4128 (13.85)	2832 (9.50)	91 (0.31)	361 (1.21)	2690 (9.03)	2219 (7.45)				109 (0.37)	29798 (100.00)	
2000	16-17	23 (0.81)	1 (0.04)			218 (7.66)	470 (16.51)		1267 (44.50)	560 (19.67)	5 (0.18)	4 (0.14)	284 (9.98)	0	0			15 (0.53)	2847 (100.00)	
	20 & over	659 (1.82)	21 (0.06)			5561 (15.34)	10321 (28.46)		6185 (17.06)	4063 (11.21)	511 (1.41)	882 (2.43)	4270 (11.78)	3070 (8.47)	370 (1.02)	346 (0.95)			36259 (100.00)	

2010	16-17	25 (0.78)	4 (0.12)		206 (6.43)	149 (4.65)	261 (8.14)	1143 (35.66)	1010 (31.51)	10 (0.31)	9 (0.28)	380 (11.86)	0	0	8 (0.25)	3205 (100.00)
	20 & over	564 (1.32)	4 (0.01)		4949 (11.60)	2787 (6.53)	7640 (17.91)	6662 (15.61)	7167 (16.80)	174 (0.41)	106 (2.50)	4816 (11.29)	6518 (15.28)	265 (0.62)	56 (0.13)	42667 (100.00)
2015	16-17	22 (0.62)	2 (0.06)	2 (0.06)	87 (2.46)	93 (2.63)	212 (5.99)	1299 (36.68)	1207 (34.09)	0	0	617 (17.42)	0	0	0	3541 (100.00)
	20 & over	452 (0.97)	8 (0.02)	1 (0.0021)	4292 (9.18)	2346 (5.02)	7958 (17.03)	6810 (14.57)	10030 (21.46)	90 (0.19)	163 (3.50)	5614 (12.01)	7321 (15.66)	98 (0.21)	86 (0.18)	46742 (100.00)

NGC – No Grade Completed

PS – Preschool

SE – special education

UG- undergraduate

G – Graduate

ADH- Academic Degree Holder

PB – Post-baccalaureate

NS – not stated

T – total

Table 2. Population Classified by Grand Groups of Occupation and Sex 1903

Occupation/ Employment	Sex				Total earners	% to the total population
	Male	%	Female	%		
Agricultural pursuits	1,491	87.35	492	61.81	1,983	79.22
Professional service	31	1.82	3	0.38	34	1.36
Domestic and personal service	55	3.22	73	9.17	128	5.11
Trade and transportation	38	2.23	1	0.12	39	1.56
Manufacturing and mechanical pursuits	92	5.39	227	28.52	319	12.74
Total	1,707	100.00	796	100.00	2,503	100.00

As shown in Table 3, 70% of these workers were engaged in agriculture, hunting, forestry, and fishing. Next in rank were those in the service industry (8.97%) who were usually self-employed and whose family members were considered unpaid workers.

Table 3. Experienced Workers 10 Years Old and Over by Major Industry and Sex: 1970

Major Industry	Male	%	Female	%	Total	%
Agriculture, hunting, forestry, and fishing	6,697	79.19	1,235	45.09	7,932	70.85
Manufacturing	66	0.78	746	27.24	812	7.25
Construction	300	3.55	0	0.00	300	2.68
Commerce	164	1.94	354	12.92	518	4.63
Transport, communication, and storage	583	6.89	0	0.00	583	5.21
Services	600	7.09	404	14.75	1,004	8.97

Industry not adequately described	47	0.56	0	0.00	47	0.42
Total	8,457	100.00	2,739	100.00	11,196	100.00

The usual occupation of the economically active population was consistent with the results shown in Table 4. People’s usual occupations were farming, fishing, hunting, logging, and other related work (70%).

Table 4. Population 10 Years Old and Over by Usual Occupation or Activity and Sex: 1970

Usual Occupation or Activity	Male	%	Female	%	Total	%
Professional, technical and related workers	213	46.51	245	53.49	458	4.09
Administrative, executive, managerial workers	47	66.20	24	33.80	71	0.63
Clerical workers	113	63.84	64	36.16	177	1.58
Sales workers	113	24.20	354	75.80	467	4.17
Farmers, fishermen, hunters, loggers, and related workers	6,602	84.24	1,235	15.76	7,837	70.00
Workers in transport and communication	351	100.00	0	0.00	351	3.14
Craftsmen, production process workers, and laborers	463	39.01	724	60.99	1,187	10.60
Service, sport and related workers	132	58.67	93	41.33	225	2.01
Stevedores, and related freight handlers and laborers	376	100.00	0	0.00	376	3.36
Members of Armed Forces	24	100.00	0	0.00	24	0.21
Not stated	23	100.00	0	0.00	23	0.21
Total	8,457	75.54	2,739	24.46	11,196	100.00

The educational attainment of the population still mattered in terms of securing employment. Based on the data presented in Table 1, college degree holders comprised only a small portion of the population while those who had elementary and high school education still outnumbered the rest of the population. Concerning the foregoing, in 1975, Table 5 reveals that about 50% of the households were engaged in farming and gardening as their main livelihood sources.

Table 5. Households by Main Source of Livelihood, Population, and Income from All Sources: 1975

Activities	No. of Households	Population	Income per Household	Income All Sources (PhP. 1,000.00)
Own-Household-Operated Activities				
Farming/Gardening	3,551	22,129	11,560.97	41,053
Livestock/Poultry	884	3,763	16,688.91	14,753
Fishing	741	4,694	4,971.66	3,684
Manufacturing	49	271	2,387.76	117
Retail Trade	140	838	8,200.00	1,148
Others	58	423	4,862.07	282
Non-Own Household-Operated Activities				
Salaries and Wages	1,734	10,204	5,474.62	9,493
Pensions, Gifts, Winnings, and Other Sources	107	624	4,093.46	438

The data in Table 5 are consistent with the experiences of the fifth key informant who was in his 50’s and worked in a government agency. He recalled that in his younger years, copra was the primary source of

people’s income. In the 1970s to 1980s, income from copra was sufficient to send children to school. Parents who earned from copra would send their children to Cebu, Dumaguete, and Manila for their studies. However, after this period, the price of copra began to fluctuate. At the time, although there were rice fields and vegetable farms, these were only small-scale.

In connection to the previous data, the level of education of the population can determine its employment opportunities. In 1990, the labor force of Dapitan comprised individuals who were 15 years old and above and had a total population of 36,852 (56.24%). Out of 36, 852, 50.81% were employed, 5.44% were unemployed, and 43.76% were not in the labor force.

In 2007, the gainful workers who were 15 years old and above reached 23,446 while there were 25,018 in 2010 and 33,234 in 2015. Similarly, gainful workers flocked into major occupations related to farming, forestry, and fishing. These occupations were however outnumbered in 2015 by elementary occupations, followed in rank by laborers and unskilled workers. Professional workers took an increase in number over the census years (see Table 6).

Table 6. Gainful Workers Who Were 15 Years Old and Over Grouped by Major Occupation: 2007-2015

Major Occupation	2007		2010		2015	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Officials of gov’t & special-interest organizations, corp. executives, managers, managing proprietors, and supervisors	1,298	5.54	1,531	6.12	2,483	7.47
Professionals	1,210	5.16	1,270	5.08	1,890	5.69
Technicians and associate professionals	413	1.76	566	2.26	1,279	3.85
Clerks/Clerical support workers	596	2.54	1,086	4.34	1,389	4.18
Service workers and shop and market sales workers	1,277	5.45	1,635	6.54	5,203	15.66
Farmers, forestry workers, and fishermen/ Skilled agricultural, forestry, and fishery workers	7,225	30.82	7,978	31.89	7,201	21.67
Trade and related workers/ Craft and related trades workers	1,941	8.28	1,756	7.02	2,642	7.95
Plant and machine operators and assemblers	1,715	7.31	2,012	8.04	2,890	8.70
Laborers and unskilled workers	3,808	16.24	7,179	28.70		0.00
Special occupations (excluding non-gainful activities)	5	0.02				0.00
Other occupations not elsewhere classified	417	1.78				0.00
Occupation not stated	3,541	15.10				0.00
Elementary occupations					8,202	24.68
Armed forces			5	0.02	55	0.17
Not reported			213	0.85	52	0.16
Total	23,446	100	25,018	100	33,234	100

While most workers were engaged in agriculture-related occupations, the second key informant claimed that improvement in farming practices had been slow in the past. She explained that Dapitanons farmed on the rainfed and tilled lands manually. They also fished using hook and line, and small boats. These primitive methods only improved a little and their use continued until the American period. From 1946-1972, the irrigation system was introduced, albeit with a combination of primitive practices. The farm produce had been intended more for household consumption and less for commercialization until the Martial Law period.

During this period, the Margate system was already being applied, but there was a gradual mechanization of the farming system. In terms of fishing, pumped boats, and breeding tanks have been used until the present. Presently, homemade products are flourishing due to commercialization. The second key informant further expressed that tourism motivated the production of goods, such as banana chips, rice rolls, and other products. Nevertheless, she recalled that in the past, these homemade products did not thrive in Dapitan as neighbors or community members used to make products for household consumption only. As a practice of hospitality or as a way of giving tokens, these products were shared with neighbors in the community.

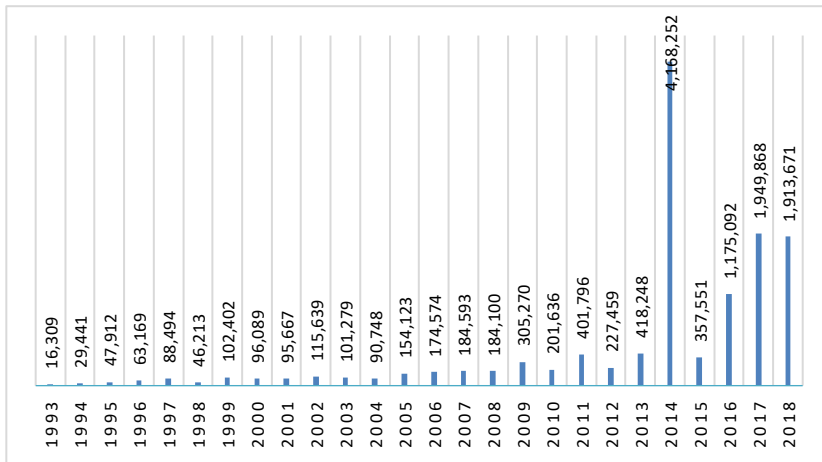
Business operations from 2010 – present. There were a variety of business operations within the *poblacion* (city center) or urban center that supported the simple living conditions of Dapitan's population. Based on the data provided by the City's Business and Licensing Office from 2010 until the present, there has been a slight increase in the number of businesses operating in the *poblacion* except for small-scale merchandise businesses like *sari-sari* stores. For instance, in 2010, there were eight service-type businesses, like engineering works, which has increased to 11 recently. Only one transportation service business has been in operation in the City since 2010, and there has been only one land tour service business. Moreover, there is also one movie house that has been operating since 2016. There is also an increase in the number of shipping service businesses from three in 2010 to four presently. Dapitan's accommodation capacity for tourists has been evident through the existence of one hotel and 13 pension houses since 2010. Food services were provided by 13 restaurants in 2010, but the number has decreased to 12 recently. In terms of financial services, Dapitan used to have four banks and 10 lending agencies in 2010, but the number of agencies has recently decreased to 8. However, since 2016, there has been one business process outsourcing (BPO) company. Five medical and dental service businesses have also existed since 2010.

The expansion of merchandise business operations in Dapitan has been most discernible in the existence of *sari-sari* stores. Specifically, there was a total of 248 *sari-sari stores* in 2010, and the number has recently increased to 475. Also, there were seven grocery stores in 2010, and the number has increased to 11 at present. Wholesale businesses have also multiplied to more than double, from 12 establishments in 2010 to 25 at present. However, there was only one department store operating presently. In 2010, two business establishments carried wine products and soft drinks while there are three businesses of this type presently. Moreover, businesses that supply electronic parts have almost doubled in number, from four establishments in 2010 to seven recently. Businesses that supply medicine and other medical products started with two establishments in 2010 and have increased significantly to seven. At present, there are 10 agricultural-related businesses in Dapitan city.

Tourism Industry. Dapitan City capitalizes on its endowed historical significance and natural beauty through the tourism industry. The tourism industry is one of the primary sources of living among the city's residents. The key informants, who were two government employees in their 50s, underscored that the heritage of Dapitan was being preserved for tourism. One of them stated, "*Tourism is the number one source of income in terms of place, products, heritage, etc. Rizal Shrine is one of the sites which boosts the economy in Dapitan. Tourism produces more employment in the City.*" Regarding the preservation of the heritage of Dapitan, the key informant also explained that Dapitanons were not in favor of commercialization as this could erode traditions, such as Holy Week, festivals, and other customary practices. As she recalled, this was one reason that Dapitanons refused the establishment of Silliman University in the City as it is not a Catholic school.

The City Tourism Office consolidated the annual tourist inflow from 1993 to 2018. The amount of tourist inflow also reveals the growing strength of tourism in Dapitan in which the year 2014 recorded the highest inflow but went down in 2015. However, tourist inflow gained momentum in the succeeding years. The trend of tourist inflow in the city is presented in the following table.

Figure 3. Dapitan City Annual Tourists' Inflow: 1993-2018



Source: Dapitan City Tourism Office

Old tourism spots and heritage sites in Dapitan, as identified by the Office of Tourism, included the City Plaza, Old Municipio, Relief Map of Mindanao, St. James Parish Church, Parochial School, Old Rizal Memorial Hospital, Casa Real, Rizal Shrine, Ilihan Hill, Our Lady of Lourdes Grotto, Aniano Adasa Heritage House, Tag-ulo Lighthouse, Aiguay Island, and Selinog Island. Added to these tourism spots and heritage sites were Punto del Desembarco, Gloria de Dapitan, Dakak Park, and Beach Resort, Guimputlan Cave, Banbanan Cave, Baylimango Cave, Sinonoc Waterfalls, River Cruise, Ba-ao Waterfalls, Dapitan Aqua Marine Park (DAMPA), Dapitan City Resort Hotel, and the new City Hall or the Government Center. The national and local sources of income of Dapitan and the way it utilizes these sources can also characterize the city's general economic strength.

Income: National and Local Sources. Dapitan is largely IRA-dependent. Covering the fiscal years of 1992-2018, IRA comprised 92.33% of Dapitan's total income while only an average of 6.78% was attributed to local sources.

The Bureau of Local Government Finance presented the data regarding the national and local sources of income of cities, municipalities, and provinces. The available data that reflect Dapitan City's national and local sources of income were from 1992 to 2018. The total local sources of income are generally composed of tax and non-tax revenues. Tax revenues of Dapitan included income from real property tax, business tax, and other taxes. On the other hand, the non-tax revenue of the city generally included receipts from regulatory fees (e.g., permits and licenses), service/user charges, income from economic enterprises (i.e., business income), and other receipts (i.e., other general income).

Dapitan had an income that ranged from 46.93 million pesos (i.e., the lowest) in 1992, to 672.94 million pesos (i.e., the highest) in 2018. For 27 years, since 1992, the average income of Dapitan was 301.12 million pesos. However, the income of the city was not always on a rising trend. For instance, from 231.06 million pesos as the total income in 2000, the figures dropped to 196.55 million pesos the following year. The figures recovered in 2002, increasing to 208.67 million pesos. This increase continued until 2011, reaching 436.79 million pesos (Table 7).

The expenditures of Dapitan and the financial allocation for certain services could be accessed from the same report of the Bureau of Local Government Finance. From 1992 to 2018, Dapitan had an average expenditure of 244.80 million pesos, or approximately 81.30% of spending within the average total income

of 301.12 million pesos. The highest expenditures were recorded in the last three years of coverage specifically, 408.67 million pesos in 2018, 523.26 million pesos in 2017, and 434.45 million pesos in 2016. Table 8 shows the details of this expenditure.

Table 7. National and Local Sources of Income by Year

Year	Total Local Sources	%to total income	Aids and Allotments					Total Aids and Allotments	%to total income	Total In- come (In Million Pesos)
			Internal Revenue Allotment	Other Shares	Inter-Local Transfers	Loans & Borrowings	Extraordi- nary Receipts/ Aids			
1992	2.34	4.98	44.59					44.59	95.02	46.93
1993	2.18	2.62	80.93					80.93	97.38	83.11
1994	3.55	2.84	121.68					121.68	97.16	125.23
1995	4.07	3.03	130.16					130.16	96.97	134.23
1996	5.92	4.07	139.57					139.57	95.93	145.49
1997	11.03	6.55	157.40					157.40	93.45	168.43
1998	20.23	10.76	167.84					167.84	89.24	188.07
1999	30.81	14.87	176.37					176.37	85.13	207.18
2000	18.59	8.05	212.47					212.47	91.95	231.06
2001	12.83	6.53	183.72	–	–	–	–	183.72	93.47	196.55
2002	13.91	6.67	194.76	–	–	–	–	194.76	93.33	208.67
2003	14.73	6.73	204.04	–	–	–	–	204.04	93.27	218.77
2004	15.80	7.07	207.61	–	–	–	–	207.61	92.93	223.41
2005	21.40	8.83	220.95	–	–	–	–	220.95	91.17	242.36
2006	20.53	7.45	243.06	–	–	11.95	–	243.06	88.21	275.54
2007	26.58	8.35	267.89	0.00	–	23.92	–	267.89	84.14	318.39
2008	22.76	6.93	265.79	–	–	39.87	–	305.66	80.93	328.43
2009	22.41	6.13	343.04	0.18				343.21	93.87	365.62
2010	27.94	6.86	379.46	0.12				379.57	93.14	407.52
2011	28.87	6.61	407.79	0.13				407.93	93.39	436.79
2012	31.43	8.34	344.95	0.30				345.26	91.66	376.68
2013	34.35	8.30	369.12	0.39	10.00		–	379.51	91.70	413.86
2014	27.58	6.22	415.31	0.24	–		–	415.55	93.78	443.13
2015	27.22	5.42	474.04	0.50	0.15		–	474.70	94.58	501.92
2016	32.68	5.95	515.61	0.59	–		–	516.19	94.05	548.88
2017	38.28	6.16	582.26	0.59	–		–	582.85	93.84	621.13
2018	46.11	6.85	625.36	1.27	–		0.20	626.83	93.15	672.94
Ave	20.89	6.78							92.33	301.12

Table 8. Distribution of Expenditures to Total Income by Year

Year	Total Income	Total Expend	Gen. Gov't / Gen. Pub. Svcs	%	Pub. Welfare/ Ed, Cul, & Sports/ Man-power Dev't	%	Health, Nut. & Pop. Ctrl	%	Labor and Employment	%	Housing & Community Dev't	%	Soc. Security / Soc. Svcs & Welfare	%	Economic Dev't/ Economic Services	%	Debt Svcs	%	Operation of Economic Ent.	%	Other Charges	%	CO	Excess (deficit) of Income over Expnd
1992	46.93	31.05	15.24	32.48	1.69	3.61								7.87	16.77			0.49	1.05	5.75	12.25	-	15.88	
1993	83.11	58.95	25.56	30.76	8.75	10.52								23.92	28.78					0.72	0.87	-	24.16	
1994	125.23	103.44	36.89	29.46	7.88	6.29								25.61	20.45					20.23	16.15	12.82	21.79	
1995	134.23	118.21	43.74	32.58	26.51	19.75								2.23	1.66					45.74	34.07	-	16.02	
1996	145.49	144.70	75.06	51.59	8.30	5.70								34.88	23.98			19.49	13.39	6.97	4.79	-	0.79	
1997	168.43	186.12	79.35	47.11	16.01	9.50								51.08	30.33			21.47	12.75	18.22	10.81	-	(17.69)	
1998	188.07	184.29	69.91	37.17	16.66	8.86								60.60	32.22			9.10	4.84	25.50	13.56	2.52	3.78	
1999	207.18	197.82	77.79	37.55	27.61	13.33								39.11	18.88			9.22	4.45	31.45	15.18	12.65	9.35	
2000	231.06	207.41	97.52	42.21	28.60	12.38								48.39	20.94			8.77	3.80	21.96	9.50	2.16	23.65	
2001	196.55	172.26	97.53	49.62	2.33	1.18	13.77	7.00	0.70	0.36	0.98	0.50	4.20	2.14	36.09	18.36	5.71	2.90			10.95	5.57	24.29	
2002	208.67	195.15	107.45	51.49	4.20	2.01	15.79	7.57	0.31	0.15	1.03	0.49	7.57	3.63	56.59	27.12	-				2.21	1.06	13.51	
2003	218.77	183.20	87.90	40.18	0.97	0.45	10.84	4.95	0.38	0.18	0.75	0.34	16.05	7.33	35.31	16.14	-				31.00	14.17	35.57	
2004	223.41	165.90	65.06	29.12	1.88	0.84	6.44	2.88	0.03	0.01	18.91	8.46	5.84	2.61	30.96	13.86	-				36.78	16.46	57.51	
2005	242.36	247.99	99.23	40.95	4.00	1.65	10.21	4.21	0.19	0.08	2.95	1.22	5.55	2.29	37.41	15.44	-				88.45	36.49	(5.64)	
2006	275.54	166.89	84.75	30.76	3.07	1.11	7.50	2.72	0.34	0.12			12.50	4.54	25.70	9.33	2.24	0.81			30.78	11.17	108.64	
2007	318.39	255.75	141.55	44.46	2.90	0.91	14.74	4.63					6.36	2.00	49.37	15.51	3.13	0.98			37.66	11.83	62.67	
2008	328.43	252.73	140.08	42.65	1.81	0.55	15.04	4.58	0.20	0.06			6.93	2.11	47.75	14.54	34.80	10.60			6.13	1.87	75.70	
2009	365.62	275.33	184.51	50.47	3.82	1.05	17.06	4.66					7.19	1.97	60.44	16.53	2.31	0.63						90.30
2010	407.52	340.13	242.93	59.61	4.86	1.19	17.17	4.21					7.59	1.86	66.06	16.21	1.51	0.37						67.39
2011	436.79	333.28	232.58	53.25	6.43	1.47	20.11	4.60					8.91	2.04	59.21	13.56	6.04	1.38						103.52
2012	376.68	354.74	240.09	63.74	3.39	0.90	21.91	5.82					8.98	2.38	53.74	14.27	26.63	7.07						21.94
2013	413.86	321.70	212.93	51.45	2.19	0.53	22.44	5.42					9.61	2.32	66.22	16.00	8.31	2.01						92.15
2014	443.13	367.06	242.90	54.81	3.02	0.68	23.48	5.30					8.90	2.01	63.70	14.37	25.06	5.66						76.07
2015	501.92	379.16	272.08	54.21	3.70	0.74	20.61	4.11					7.96	1.59	60.42	12.04	14.39	2.87						122.76
2016	548.88	434.45	329.64	60.06	4.07	0.74	24.22	4.41					8.52	1.55	46.60	8.49	21.41	3.90						114.42
2017	621.13	523.26	380.00	61.18	2.94	0.47	26.23	4.22			0.36	0.06	13.09	2.11	83.98	13.52	16.66	2.68						97.87
2018	672.94	408.67	314.04	46.67	2.76	0.41	14.11	2.10	0.05	0.01	1.04	0.15	12.30	1.83	50.55	7.51	13.82	2.05						264.28
Ave	301.12	244.80	148.01	45.39	7.42	3.96	16.76	4.63	0.28	0.12	3.72	1.60	8.78	2.57	45.33	16.92	10.11	3.14	11.42	6.71	24.73	12.69	3.35	56.32

% represents the percentage of expenditure to total income.

DISCUSSIONS

According to the key informants, during the American period, Dapitan did not improve much. The presence of only a few vehicles in the place suggested three possible situations. First, the population was small at the time, and this did not encourage businesses to invest more in vehicles. Fewer people meant lesser passengers and demands; thus, the transportation industry could not flourish. Second, Dapitan at the time was not an economic crossroad or the center of economic activities. For a place to be a center of economic activities, it should hold diverse, productive activities entailing the movement of goods and services within and outside of the city. Accordingly, such a situation requires a faster means of transportation, which was not available in Dapitan. As can be recalled from the experiences of the key informants, carts were more commonly used at the time. The third situation depicted a situation where only a few could afford vehicles since, according to one of the key informants, most people at the time were relying on farming and fishing as the primary sources of income. These sources of income were not as lucrative since the fish catch and farm produce were usually limited.

Indeed, based on the testimonies of the key informants, the production of agricultural products was mostly intended for household consumption because the people were using primitive technology and traditional farming methods. Moreover, due to the limited number of rice and corn plantations in Dapitan, there was no sufficient reason to construct an irrigation system, especially since the projected returns of having one were too little compared to the cost of investment. This explains the lack of vehicles. That is, the production of agricultural products was not enough to necessitate more transport activities. Recording only 1.56% of the residents involved in trade and transportation, data from The Census of the Philippine Islands in 1903 corroborated the current findings.

When talking about the distribution of basic needs or social services such as education, two things can be inferred. First, better provision of basic needs or social services is a reflection of a good economy wherein the government is capable of offering such services. Second, better social service is an investment in more robust human resources that are competent in producing more goods and services for economic development. Tridico and Meloni (2018) argued that they saw the possibility of stimulated economic growth if expenditure for the welfare of people is increased, thereby also decreasing inequality.

The absence of secondary school entails that residents, most specifically the low-income families, had difficulty furthering their level of education. Although Rizal Memorial Institute of Dapitan City, Inc. founded in 1949 offered secondary education, it was established as a private school. The very few professional services available in Dapitan and the fact that only 15 residents at that time had high educational attainment suggest the inaccessibility of higher education among the majority. In short, Dapitan was not highly capable of providing the educational needs of its residents. Specifically, 77.27% of the population was illiterate which later decreased as public, sectarian, and private schools were established in the barrios and central schools. Moreover, the fact that there were more male students attending school compared to female students was a depiction of the traditional Filipino society. Since men were obliged to carry the economic burden of the family, they were given more opportunities to pursue a higher level of education to have better job opportunities. In traditional Filipino culture, fathers serve as the breadwinner of the family and are obliged to work. At the same time, female members of the family or mothers focused on running the household and taking care of children (Ethnic Groups Philippines, 2016).

Dapitan lacked the means of preparing its constituents for better-paying jobs, specifically by equipping them with the skills and technical expertise to produce complex economic outputs during the American period. Furthermore, considering that the majority had similar educational status, one can infer that higher education was not a dire need for economic survival. It appears that since finishing higher education did not assure one of having a lot of economic opportunities, only a few individuals were motivated to pursue professional development. This situation was worsened by the lack of educational institutions in the city. Even the industries, as the survey revealed, were only small-scale and limited as they mostly concentrated

on agricultural occupations dominated by men. Women, on the other hand, were mostly assigned to jobs related to domestic and personal services. These economic activities did not require highly technical training and a high level of education.

Rudolph (1962, as cited in Chan, 2016), explained that the founding of Harvard College in 1636 by the Puritans intended to produce “a learned clergy and a lettered people.” Similarly, Dewey, as cited by the same author, argued that knowledge gained from higher education equips ordinary citizens with the capacity to live normal lives and help themselves as well as their society. These contentions imply that the existence of educational institutions depends on the demands of society in a given period as well as on the goals of those who founded them. From a sociological lens, it can be said that the experiences of most people in society could exert a significant influence on the development of social reality. Hence, if one is exposed to simple living, he/she will also pursue such life without aiming for goals that may be too lofty to attain (Berger & Luckmann, 1966; Fiske & Taylor, 1991, as cited in McLeod, 2012). These views clearly explain the above economic scenarios in Dapitan during the given period.

Moreover, the experiences of the key informants showed that job opportunities in Dapitan between 1946-1972 were very few. Because of this, life was very challenging among those who did not own properties or did not have any means of production. The responses of the key informants supported this as most of the land properties were owned by a handful few elite families in Dapitan, and this situation signified unequal distribution of wealth. The dispossession of untitled land properties of educated individuals was possible since the 1918 census declared that 35.4% of farmlands still had no land titles. However, this declaration did not discredit those families who acquired properties in good faith. Whatever the means, the point of concern was that the acquisition of some properties was concentrated to a privileged few, leaving the majority at an economic disadvantage, especially in terms of the land distribution system which had been practiced since the Spanish occupation. Because the farm produce at the time was used only for household consumption, agricultural trade and export did not fully thrive. As Salgado (1985) pointed out, during this time, despite President Garcia’s Filipino First Policy, many common people remained to work as tenants who received low wages in haciendas.

As to the increase in the population, it could either be advantageous or detrimental to the economy of a place for a certain period. In the long run, the young adults who are part of the population can become productive individuals. Nevertheless, it cannot also be denied that population growth along with a high fertility rate reduces general well-being (Peterson, 2017). In Dapitan, despite its increasing population, less than half of its economically active residents were employed. This situation left many residents with no financial contribution to the economy of the city. This situation denotes limited job opportunities. Because of this limitation, it was common for non-earning or unemployed family members to stay home and do the housekeeping or help in the family’s livelihood or economic activities while other non-earning members pursued education. This was possible when the business was run or operated by the owners themselves. This situation makes job opportunities available only within the family circle. Furthermore, employment related to service, manufacturing, and transport industries was still very few since Dapitan remained largely agricultural. It is therefore undeniable that the economic activities of families have an impact on the economy. For instance, Constantine (2017) argued that economic structure is a fundamental factor that influences economic performance. According to him technically sophisticated commodities with high value-added yielded more increasing returns compared to those technologically simple commodities. Hence, the traditional practices of a predominantly agricultural sector yielded profit that was relatively too low to sustain a large-scale economic development.

The simple life in Dapitan can be further linked to the inaccessibility of electricity to the majority of its residents (1946-1972). It can be noted that Zamboanga del Norte Electric Cooperative, Inc. (ZANECO) was registered on August 23, 1972, and was pioneered by five people who consisted of the workforce in 1973. During this period, there was an increase in the literate population which can be attributed to the public school system that started during the American Period. The “Historical Perspective of the Philippine Educational System,” as presented on the website of the Department of Education, stated that it was in 1901 that a highly centralized public school system was established in the Philippines through the Philippines

Commission by Act No. 74. Nevertheless, within this literate population, very few were able to complete high school or college education. This shows that Dapitan's workforce was not well-equipped educationally. Thus, it was very likely that these people would land low-paying jobs that did not require a high level of education. This level of educational attainment of the residents of Dapitan could be traced to almost three-fourths of the school-age population who were not attending school. Several socioeconomic factors can explain school attendance. These factors are discussed in the study of Matage and Begi (2017), where they contended that socioeconomic factors such as the will to help in the family business, the distance from the school, lack of money for basic needs, and domestic problems caused children to be truant in school. Furthermore, the imposition of the Bell Trade Act brought about economic disasters in the country. At the time, the economy nearly fell into bankruptcy and Filipinos remained poor since there was no improvement in their income (Salgado, 1985). Dapitan was not exempted from the severe impact of such a disaster.

Additionally, the Martial Law Period (1972-1981) proved that Dapitan was highly dependent on the agricultural sector, which later became economically undependable for families who wanted to provide for their children's higher education (as claimed by the key informant), especially when the price of copra fluctuated in the 1980s. Since most people relied on agricultural pursuits for their livelihood, the fluctuating prices of crops heavily affected the economy of Dapitan.

Considering the significant turn of events during the period, the World Bank propelled the modernization of agriculture in the country by granting agricultural loans to the farming sector. This was part of the thrust towards capitalists' expansion. Consequently, this benefited foreign countries since Filipinos who owned farms in rural areas wanted to increase their production to gain a bigger profit. Due to the increase in profit, Filipino farmers demanded industrial products like fertilizers and pesticides produced by foreign countries. This resulted even further in inexpensive food supply as the agricultural sector became more productive. The decrease in the prices of food further benefited foreign companies since they offered lower wages to their workers, knowing that the latter could still survive due to the decrease in the price of food supply (Salgado, 1985).

The data also revealed that the most significant income contributors were own-household-operated activities such as farming and gardening. These were followed by income from livestock/poultry and fishing. Although farming and gardening were the highest income contributors to the city, this did not mean more profit to workers because the income was distributed to a large number of households. The city's household population that relied on farming and gardening was greater than any other earning household that had other various income sources. Thus, each household's income from farming and gardening was significantly lower compared to income from other sources. This kind of livelihood is also a seasonal work that would leave farm workers inactive in particular months of the year (Taylor & Charlton, 2019). As claimed by the key informants, these occupations, particularly farming and fishing, did not yield enough produce and catch to encourage trading; rather, the yields were used for household consumption. Later, the mechanization of farming gradually took place while fishing equipment also improved, as claimed by the key informants. With the improvement in fishing, commercialization started to strengthen. Moreover, Rosenzweig (as cited in Nolte & Ostermeier, 2017), explained that agriculture was the primary source of income in rural areas in low-and middle-income countries. Thus, agriculture served as the economic backbone of these countries, and it generated employment for a large portion of the population since secondary economic activities were limited to fewer households. Considering that the majority either only attended or completed grade school, very few were qualified for higher-paying or more technical jobs that required a higher level of education. In the present Republic (1982 onwards), agriculture continued to serve as a significant source of living among the residents of Dapitan. This is substantiated by the city's Comprehensive Land Use Plan (CLUP) 2015-2024, volume 1 which mentioned that 74.4% of the 39,053.1267 hectares of land in Dapitan was for agricultural purposes. For other purposes, Dapitan allocated less than 1% each of the total land area intended for industry (257.7506 ha), for commerce (124.97 ha), and for the institution (331.9516 ha). The zone for the institution is based on the City Ordinance No. 2016-324 "An Ordinance Revising the Zoning Regulations for the City of Dapitan and Providing for the Administration, Enforcement and Amendment

There of and for the Repeal of All Ordinances in Conflict Therewith and for Other Similar Purposes,” which refers to those areas devoted to government offices, structures, and facilities, cultural and social centers, and other compatible uses. The *poblacion* part of Dapitan is considered the designated area for residential, commercial, institutional, infrastructural, and recreational functions. The largest portion of land use for agriculture can be attributed to the provision of Presidential Decree No. 815 and Administrative Order No.

20. Series of 1992 as cited in the CLUP. Moreover, Dapitan has many coastal barangays that face Dapitan Bay which serves as a significant resource base for fisherfolks (“Government of Spain,” 2011). This shows that fishing has been one of the significant sources of income in Dapitan (Manasan, 2016, p. 21).

The increasing literacy rate in Dapitan from the years 1990-2015 indicates that the residents were becoming more concerned about being educated; however, there were only a few residents who finished a degree at the age they were supposed to. Although only a few were able to finish a degree, the figures showed an increasing trend as years passed. Furthermore, this could also mean that schools have become more accessible. This can be supported by and attributed to the increasing school attendance of students from 20,159 attendees in the 2000 census to 24,364 in the 2015 census. The accessibility of schools in Dapitan can be linked to the considerable number of students who were attending school. For instance, in 2000, 89.57% of these students were attending schools within Dapitan, and the figures further increased as the years passed, reaching 95.95% in 2010. The number of schools established in Dapitan also signifies the accessibility of basic education. From the record given by the DepEd Dapitan Division, in 2002, Dapitan had a total of 59 schools from kindergarten to secondary level, and the number increased to 63 schools in 2019. Nevertheless, in terms of the percentage of school-age residents attending schools, the trend showed a fluctuating pattern despite the general improvement in literacy rate in Dapitan.

Likewise, the increasing number of residents pursuing higher education can be well-reflected on the given trend and on the involvement of individuals in major occupations such as being officials in the government and interest organizations as well as being professionals, technicians, clerks, and service workers. The establishment of Jose Rizal Memorial State College (now Jose Rizal Memorial State University [JRMSU]) in 1996 gave access to higher education among the thousands of residents in the City and from neighboring cities and municipalities in Region IX. Moreover, it can be surmised that since income from farming and fishing—which were the primary occupations of the majority—fluctuated, these residents aimed for high-paying occupations through higher education.

As reiterated in the previous discussions, the development of human resources through education can be an avenue for future economic growth. Gumus and Kayhan (2012) said that many economists and educators believed that education creates the necessary human resources for the improvement of earnings and economic growth. They further explained that based on the study of Ozsoy (2010), there was a bi-directional relationship between economic growth and school enrollment, particularly on the primary level. The Human Capital Theory also supports this explanation. According to Schultz (1961), Becker (1993), and Mincer (1974, as cited in Maringe, 2015), the theory posits that higher education can either be a public or private investment. Investing in education is an avenue for increased productivity, healthier lifestyle, and social stability. More earnings and better-paying jobs can be accessible among those who have spent more time on schooling. Similarly, Wolla and Sullivan (2017) found that there was a strong relationship between income and education. They argued that education is an investment in human capital similar to an investment in financial assets. Generally, they argued that the more educated a person is, the higher his/her income will be. Likewise, having more skills also means better employability and an edge over others. Thus, it should be noted that through education, more skills can be acquired. This is true in the future scenarios discussed by Jacinto (2018) on the connection between education and income among poor households in Dapitan. Two scenarios were presented to be most likely to happen: low income-low education scenario; and high income-low education and low income-higher education scenario. In the first scenario, more households with low education would remain in their circumstance while having low-paying jobs. This is

true when the lack of education can lead to limited access to high-paying jobs that require higher skills and education. In the second scenario, a small portion of poor households who accessed higher levels of education would pursue better-paying jobs as they looked into improving the quality of their lives.

Tourism also became a driver that promoted the commercialization of products in Dapitan while showing its historical and natural potential. Even Manasan (2016), in her study, discussed that tourism had the biggest potential to contribute to the growth of the Dapitan. This was in response to the CLUP which envisioned Dapitan as the eco-tourism destination and heritage center of Mindanao. With this, the historical significance of Dapitan was preserved and promoted while the quality of its natural environment was enhanced. Making this vision achievable is the presence of facilities such as wharves, road networks, water systems, communication, cable televisions, hospitals, and others. Nevertheless, a faster rate of development leading to the establishment of significant commercial buildings and industries could defeat such a vision. Modernization due to rapid urbanization may destroy valuable historical treasures and lead to environmental degradation. As Kiruthiga and Thirumaran (2019) discussed in their study on the effects of urbanization on historical heritage buildings in Kumbakonam, Tamilnadu, India, due to rapid urbanization, historical areas were altered. However, urbanization nonetheless brought benefits to many people and businesses. Nevertheless, rapid urbanization could lead to the loss of these historical areas. In other words, the heritage character of a place slowly decayed as the built heritage was changed.

In terms of business operations, the data from the City Business and Licensing Office revealed an improvement in the business operations from years 2010-2016 which increased job opportunities in the City. A significant increase was seen in small-scale merchandising like sari-sari stores. The existence of these business operations entailed that the residents resorted to better and other means of earning a living. The improvement in business operations can generally be observed among those establishments intended for the distribution of goods. The increasing population of Dapitan and the establishment of JRMSU which drew thousands of students can partly explain the creation of opportunities for the expansion of these retail stores. This can be affirmed in the study conducted by Mordor Intelligence (2019) on “Retail Industry in the Philippines – Major trends, Growth and Opportunities (2020 – 2025).” The results found that the momentum in the retail industry in the Philippines was driven by economic and social developments aside from population growth. Furthermore, there is also a rise in the purchasing power of consumers, especially since they would prefer cheaper goods.

Wholesale businesses have also improved since 2010. The improvement, however, was not much in the manufacturing sector or large-scale business operations which could also offer more job opportunities. Based on the report of the licensing office, the manufacturing sector did not thrive in Dapitan. This can be corroborated by the findings in the study of Su and Yao (2016) who argued that the decline in the manufacturing sector harmed the growth of the services sector. Thus, an increase in the manufacturing sector in middle-income economies can utilize more human capital and economic institutions. They further stated that the manufacturing sector drove economic growth, particularly in middle-income economies. In the Philippines, despite the enormous contributions of workers in industries such as wood processing, mining and quarrying, field work, tailoring, freight handling, and aqua-farm and forestry they were still categorized among the lowest monthly paid workers (Atim, 2017). In terms of the average daily wage, the lowest daily-paid workers, despite the high demand for their services, included those who were in transport and storage, manufacturing, construction, mining and quarry, accommodation and food service, wholesale and retail trade, repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles, fishing and aquaculture, services, agriculture, hunting and forestry and informal sectors (Testa, 2017).

In terms of local revenue, it could be of minimal contribution to Dapitan’s total revenue, making the city an IRA dependent. This can be attributed to the economic conditions in which there were few commercial establishments and industries that could generate more revenues and invite investments. However, it is notable that only a very small portion of the active labor force was unemployed. Having a small local

revenue did not hinder many constituents from securing a job as manifested by a lower local unemployment rate compared to the national rate. The establishment of the Livelihood Promotions and Development Center contributed as well to the economic conditions in Dapitan.

As shown in the report of the Bureau of Local Government Finance, the biggest portion of the income of Dapitan was from the IRA which comprised more than 90% on average from 1992 to 2018. Both the national and local sources of income in Dapitan had a fluctuating trend. The decrease in IRA greatly affected the total income of Dapitan for certain periods from 1992 to 2018. This status means that depending on local income, Dapitan could not stand alone or become self-reliant without external sources of income. As discussed above, the income from local businesses in Dapitan was not dependable as far as the provision of better social services was concerned. In terms of spending, Dapitan showed features of thriftiness in the use of its income in particular, in 2006 and 2018. However, in terms of its spending for public welfare, education, culture and sports, and manpower development, Dapitan showed a decreasing trend, from having the highest spending at 19.75% of its income in 1995 down to the lowest in 2018 at 0.41%. Further, the city's spending on health, nutrition, and population control, was the highest in 2002 (7.57%), but this was followed by a fluctuating trend with the lowest in 2018. It can be argued, as discussed in the previous paragraphs, that economic growth can also be attributed to how healthy and educated or skillful the manpower or workers were. Hence, budget allocation and spending on priority areas of the local government can greatly affect its economy. Van Hilten (2015) reported that researchers considered geography, sectors, education systems, available skills, and network companies as other significant factors that result in higher income, leading to economic development. Further, Dr. McGrath (as cited in van Hilten, 2015), had foreseen that "higher education will continue to play a key role in economic development." Likewise, Grant (2017) explained that the World Economic Forum 2016 suggested ways in which education can influence a country's productivity. Education influences productivity as it increases the ability of the workforce to carry out tasks efficiently. It also facilitates the integration of existing knowledge with new information, products, and technologies. Furthermore, education also increases creativity which can result in the emergence of knowledge, products, and technologies.

CONCLUSIONS

In the history of Dapitan, its economic conditions improved, albeit slowly if compared to other progressive cities in the country. This rate of transition from a less progressive to a more progressive state can be explained by Dapitan's natural and historical aura, which is still being preserved and protected. Despite this advantage, this transition depicted in the history of Dapitan did not offer an abundance of economic opportunities that would have catered to the needs of its human resources and eventually helped disadvantaged groups to move above the poverty line. Although business operations had remained similar for the past decades while having an increasing population, economic opportunities were a scarce resource amid inciting competition. Government offices offered the residents better and more stable sources of income, but they only provided limited positions for qualified residents. The existence of a state university in the city motivated families to send their children to college to acquire a competitive edge in the labor market. However, given the limited economic opportunities, the skilled graduates could not be assured of employment if all of them stayed in the area. It can be deduced that if the existing economic opportunities do not increase, then many of these graduates would be compelled to find job opportunities elsewhere. The fluctuating or unstable income from farming and fishing had placed many residents who were dependent on these sources of livelihood in a vulnerable situation. Moreover, laborers in Dapitan who were employed on a seasonal basis were at risk of suffering from poverty. These were contractual workers and drivers who mainly relied on the influx of students and employees during class openings.

Dapitan did not take advantage of becoming the center of a progressive economic structure due to the different paths it took to formulate its concept of progress and modernization. Life in Dapitan is simple as

the city is not subject to the rapid process of industrialization. It only attracted a few big business investors that could create more and a variety of jobs.

It is recommended that further studies be conducted to characterize Dapitan from the year 2015 to the present and involve residents in coastal, upland, and island barangays to offer other insights into the socioeconomic conditions of the place.

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