

Top of the Document

APPENDIX C

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

A Descriptive Case Study

Why a Case Study?

Case Study as Biography

Personal Reality

Research Design

Embedded Case Study Design

Triangulation

Selection of Cases

Demographics

Women Informants

Analytic Strategies

Division of the Study

Specific Analytical Techniques

Coding Procedure

Open Coding

Questioning the Data

Clarifying

Labeling and Grouping

Connecting Categories

Validity and Reliability Issues

Internal Validity

Reliability

External Validity Concerns

External validity credibility

Construct validity

Summary

APPENDIX C

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This study reveals the long-term effects of the moral component of curriculum and schooling in the lives of two female informants. As a historical piece dependent on the retrospective interviews of informants, the combined methods of descriptive case study and life history were prevailed upon. The case study method was used to

build a descriptive theory of how the informants co-constructed their concept of schooling in order to preserve their moral identities. This theory is based on the researcher's analysis of the documents, narratives, and eyewitness accounts of those whose educational traditions and values were threatened by historical events. The goal is to depict how the relationship of schooling to character development is an ongoing process of co-constructing student values.

A Descriptive Case Study

Since much of the data gathering is dependent upon the recollections of the informants, a descriptive theory framework is best suited to answer the research questions. The goal of a descriptive case study is to present a detailed account of the phenomenon under study. A descriptive case study is used to give basic information about areas where little research has been done. Like Whyte's *Street Corner Society*, (1) the present study uses descriptive personal narratives to illuminate the interpersonal relationships and events experienced by the students. Though this topic is historical in nature, the retrospective interviews of the eyewitnesses add a contemporary component which keeps it from being a purely historical study and thus moves it into the realm of the case study.

Why a Case Study?

According to Robert Yin, a case study should be used when "a 'how' or 'why' question is being asked about a contemporary set of events over which the investigator has little or no control." (2) The event under investigation in this paper is not contemporary, nor is it one in which the researcher had any control. However, the interviews are a present day recounting of the past event which is why a case study method is being employed.

The case study is also being used because it provides the most flexible format for combining the research strategies of historical inquiry and life history so the data can be presented in a narrative structure. The case study's "unique strength is its ability to deal with a full variety of evidence — documents, artifacts, interviews, and observations." (3) All of this data will be triangulated. The only evidence that will not be used in this study is the researcher's observation of the event since it occurred before the researcher was born.

Case Study as Biography

The life-history strategies are presented as personal narratives of the informants. Personal narratives are a means for uncovering what the interviewee or narrator deems significant and of value. The narrator chooses a specific plot that "aptly expresses a covertly held value." (4) A biography is a personal story as interpreted and conveyed by the researcher who has gotten a glimpse inside the private and personal world of another human being. The biographer attempts to recreate the past as the informant understood it, consisting of both the past that is

documented and the mythical past, or what the informant believes happened. The life-history has the ability to "reveal the subjective realm of people's lives in ways that respect their uniqueness and that allow them to speak for themselves". (5) Although not completely representative of the whole group, a life-history captures an individual's perception of his or her past salient experiences; and thus we see the target group's cultural values and the patterns that shape the group's perception of the past. (6)

The weaknesses of life-history are that it is difficult to replicate, and that it is dependent on informant honesty and researcher resourcefulness. These can be circumvented by triangulation with official and other written records, and by having either contemporaries of the informant or field experts review the work. The study must be a probable account confirmed by other historical and scholarly accounts of the events. "The focus of the life history is clear: personal 'reality' and process. The life historian is initially only concerned with grasping personal truth ... [but] must constantly broaden the concern with personal truth to take account of wider socio-historical concerns even *if these are not part of the consciousness of the individual*." (7)

Personal Reality

From a postmodernist perspective, *reality* is seen "differently by each knowing self that encounters it." (8) The way truth is envisioned is dependent on the community in which an individual participates. "We do not simply encounter a world that is 'out there' but rather ... we construct the world using the concepts we bring to it." Part of these concepts that we bring to our reality constructions are the cultural myths of our community or society. These myths embody the central core of one's values and beliefs and bind the community together by sustaining the social relations within the society and forming the basis of its claim to legitimacy and truth. Through these myths the community mediates to its members a transcendent story that includes traditions of virtue, common good and ultimate meaning. (9)

Within these corporate myths are the individual stories that define personal identity and give purpose and shape to one's existence. A sense of personal identity develops through the telling of personal narratives embedded in the story of the community in which one participates. The informant's personal narratives provide the researcher with knowledge of the narrators' and of their communities' values and social structure. The informants' mythical pasts, or personal realities, are as valid as the written documents and texts used in this study as each source presents only partial and selective realities. This is why the resources need to be triangulated.

While this study began with a stated question to guide data collection and analysis, much of the investigation has been enhanced by what emerged from the grounded research. The research needed to be grounded as the on going informant interviews created an interactive relationship among the problem, the data, the

informants and the researcher. These issues will be taken up in the following sections, beginning with research design.

Research Design

The intent of any research design is to provide a logical sequence that "connects the empirical data to a study's initial research question and, ultimately, to its conclusions." A case study can be of either a single-case or multi-case design. A rationale for using the single-case design is that the study represents an extreme or unique case. The encompassing event of this study, schooling during the Second World War and internment, is unique. Another rationale for employing the case study method is that the study is about a revelatory case. In this instance, "the investigator has an opportunity to observe and analyze a phenomenon previously inaccessible to scientific investigation." (10) Although this event has not been inaccessible to investigation, it has not been previously researched from the perspective of children internees and the life-long impact of education while interned. The uniqueness and revelatory nature of this study topic make it a prime candidate for a single-case design.

Embedded Case Study Design

While this study maintains a holistic focus on how schooling transmits values, the information is being gathered through various informants and other research evidences. These various evidences are the sub-units or components from which the single-case theory is derived. Examining these components makes the study embedded rather than purely holistic because specific sub-units of the phenomenon that make up the whole are being explored. A disadvantage of an embedded study is that the focus of the case study may stay on the sub-unit level. The researcher needs to be wary of this and be sure to "return to the larger unit of analysis." (11) An advantage of the embedded design is in maintaining the focus of the case study inquiry and reducing the possibility of the focus shifting from the initial question to a different research orientation.

Triangulation

Part of the embedded sub-units are the personal narratives or biographies of the informants. It is through these biographies that the implicit means of transmitting moral values through schooling are revealed. The shadow study found in Chapter Two established the foundation for generating questions for further investigation not only of that particular informant, but of others as well. By focusing on each informant's perspective of her salient experiences, a detailed picture developed of what her group's cultural values were and how they were passed on. The recollections and the meanings each informant ascribed to that period in her life was authenticated by the testimonies of her peers, other internees, and by written resources.

All of this material was triangulated so as to distinguish between the documented event and the past as the informants recalled it. Much of the triangulation was accomplished during the grounding of the research. Four strategies were followed for grounding the study. First, a qualitative analysis of the informant interviews yielded description and interpretation of the informants' educational experiences. The second source of grounding synthesized the informants' stories to determine how they were related to each others'. The third strategy was to contrast the interviews with the technical and nontechnical literature pertaining to the subject matter.

Finally, the three strategies previously stated were combined to generate an abstract or theoretical explanation of what the informants experienced and how it relates to the moral components of curriculum and schooling. The goal is to present "a more or less honest rendering of how informants actually view themselves and their experiences." (12) The researcher's own perceptions, biases and relationship with each informant are also part of this research process and were considered when analyzing and interpreting the data. The manner in which this was all put together is discussed in the remainder of this section.

Selection of Cases

Initially, the system used for obtaining informants and entry into the field was *snowball sampling*, or the *big-net approach*, which "ensures a wide-angle of events before microscopic study of specific interactions begins." (13) Once entry was made, informants were located and selected by networking or word of mouth. Since beginning this endeavor, twenty-four former Chefoo students and staff and four former internees of Weih sien Camp have been interviewed. After being interviewed, an interviewee would often give names of others to be contacted, with permission to use his or her name as a reference. This form of personal introduction established contacts with those who later admitted they would not have responded to a survey, mail, or phone request for an interview. Twenty-seven of the people were interviewed for about two hours; one has been interviewed through correspondence.

The interview questions were of a general, fact-finding nature which allowed the person to relate the story of his/her formative years. The initial questions usually had to do with when and why his/her parents went to China. What he/she remembered about his/her early years in China before going to Chefoo for school. And then finally, what life was like at Chefoo. These three main questions guided the informants' progress from the beginning of their lives, through the Chefoo years and then into the internment years. As the informants shared their stories, more specific questions were asked to clarify the information being shared.

Demographics

Of the 28 people interviewed, 12 were men and 16 women. Six of the 28, four men and two women, were adults either at the school or in the camp. The remaining 22 were students under the age of 21 while at school or interned. Of these 22, two were not associated with the Chefoo School. Of the 20 Chefoo students, ten were separated from their parents for three to eight years during the war, five were interned with their parents, three were repatriated in 1943, and two had left China prior to Pearl Harbor Day. The current age range of the 28 is from 63 to 94 years old. The majority of the interviewees are in their mid to late sixties. During the course of researching and writing this study, three of the informants have passed away.

The location of the people is as follows: nine of the interviewees live in the United States; nine live in Canada; eight live in England; and two live in Asia. Personal interviews were conducted throughout the United States, England and Canada over a two year period. One of the interviews has been done solely by letter and phone contact. Missing from this pool of representatives are those Chefusians who live in Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, though potential contacts do exist. Of the 28 interviewees, five have written books related to their time of internment at Weih sien. Only one of the authors is a woman. Two of the male authors are considered by those interviewed to be authorities or gatekeepers of the group's experiences at Chefoo and Weih sien, as the informants often referred to them as being more knowledgeable on the subject and encouraged me to seek them out. To date there have been thirteen autobiographical books written about either the Chefoo or Weih sien experience. Nine were from a male perspective, four were from a female.

Women Informants

Out of this group of twenty-eight, two women were chosen for more in-depth interviewing. It is from their perspective that the majority of the story is told. Women were selected for two reasons: first, they seemed more at ease in relating their personal stories to a woman researcher than did the men; secondly, much of the previous recorded history of this event is from a male perspective, so this research is giving voice to the women's interpretation of events. The interviews of the selected informants consist of at least three long or personal narrative type interviews to increase the validity of the responses. They follow the format described by James Spradley of the interview process moving from descriptive to structural to contrast and reflective questions.[\(14\)](#) With informant consent, the interviews were audio-taped and transcribed.

Analytic Strategies

The analytical strategies used in this study are of two types, general and specific. The general strategy used is that of developing a descriptive framework for organizing the case study. Since this case study has a strong historical focus, it has been organized in two ways around a time-ordered theme. The first is a chronological accounting of what the Chefoo group experienced as related to the events of World War Two, such as Pearl Harbor Day, the beginning of internment, and the end of the war. This chronological framework is found in Chapter Three. The second has to do with how each informant perceived age-specific rites of passage such as beginning boarding school, or moving from the Prep School to the Girls' School. Though these events happened in different years for each informant, the situations were common to all of the informants and most of the students.

Division of the Study

The study was divided into interview generated themes that followed a chronological order starting with why the children were in China through to the liberation of the internees, and then, the aftermath of internment into their adult years. Connecting specific informant voices with the other sources is the researcher's voice giving an interpretation of the significance of particular narratives or of an event that was significant in the children's schooling process. In this study, the general interviews with the informants have been transcribed and organized into narrative accounts. The primary sources have also been organized either in chronological order or by subject matter.

This general organization of the abundant evidence collected and the descriptions provided by the informants gives rise to the descriptive framework. Much of the general analysis occurred along with the collection of the data. It helped to direct further data collection and to pull the data together for more specific analysis. The next level of analysis involved reducing and refining the data into specific categories and themes. These themes were then compared and contrasted among the informant data to look for overarching relationships and constructs related to the study question, or to other themes that emerge from the analysis.

Specific Analytical Techniques

Specific analysis is required if a study is going to have internal validity. As these students reflect on their years under hostile circumstances, how do they interpret the impact of those years on the rest of their lives? Questions such as this, and those raised later in this section, need to be pursued by a working outline that leads to a theory grounded in the collected data. This grounding process is accomplished by applying a systematic analysis of the collected data. The following paragraphs will discuss the coding procedure used by the researcher as part of that systematic analysis.

Coding Procedure

The coding procedure used is modeled after Strauss and Corbin's, which requires a questioning and re-questioning technique, and the making of comparisons of the collected data, in this case, the interview transcript. This inductive questioning leads to the uncovering and analysis of the data pertaining to the studied phenomenon, out of which a grounded theory emerges from the recurring regularities in the data. This process enhances the theoretical sensitivity by recognizing "what is important in data and [giving] it meaning. It also helps to formulate theory that is faithful to the reality of the phenomena under study," (15) thus helping to control for researcher bias.

Strauss and Corbin base their data analysis on three types of coding: open, axial, and selective. Open coding is used to create categories by comparing and then grouping together similar concepts, incidents and events that appear as phenomena in the data. Open coding is the "part of the analysis that pertains specifically to the naming and categorizing of phenomena through close examination of data.... Through this process, one's own and other's assumptions about phenomena are questioned, or explored, leading to new discoveries." (16) Axial coding is used to put data back together in new ways by making connections between categories and subcategories. Inductive and deductive questioning and thinking are used to develop a paradigm model to show how categories are discovered and related. With selective coding, a core category is chosen which systematically integrates the other categories, validating and refining them as needed.

Among the three coding types, there are no definitive dividing lines since they are often used interchangeably in the data collection and analysis processes. The following paragraphs will be a step by step description of how open coding was used with the shadow study so that categories emerged by grouping concepts together. Following the description of the open coding process, the identified categories will be given a grounded definition. And finally, the categories will be woven into a conceptual argument that foreshadowed questions for subsequent interviews.

Open Coding

The coding of the shadow study began by returning to the original interview transcript. As recommended by Strauss and Corbin, a paragraph of the transcript was selected for line by line analysis, or questioning, of what was being said by the informant. The transcript selection is a filler account than that given in the shadow study, but it is through this process that the shadow study was able to be organized. The transcript piece that follows has to do with the informant, Mary's, adjustment to being left at boarding school (Chefoo), upon her parents return to the mission field.

And then when they left us, I can remember the emotional shock of it because it is still one of the most ignominious periods of my life. When they finally left us, I was seven and a half. Every day for breakfast I threw up. They now put us in the boarding school. They went on to their missionary work in the interior of China. We would not see them again for five and a half years. And it was sissy to feel homesick. You just didn't feel homesick. You didn't cry, you didn't mope, you didn't pretend [act] like you wanted to be with your Daddy and Mommy because everybody else missed their Daddy and Mommy too, and no one would admit to it. Well my way was psychosomatic. (17)

Questioning the Data

The analysis of this section began by asking generally, "What was this paragraph about?" The word *homesickness* emerges. So, the issue of *homesickness* became the focus of such basic questions as: Who is homesick? When were they homesick? Why were they homesick? How long were they homesick? Where were they homesick? After obtaining the answers to these questions from the quotation, the next step was to broaden the scope by asking more questions based on these main questions. For example, the basic question of *why were they homesick* is followed up with, was it just due to the war? Were there other times of homesickness? Did this homesickness affect Mary's siblings, her parents, other school children? How does she feel now about the homesickness?

Clarifying

Some of the answers to these new questions were found in another part of the interview, in other primary sources, or in interviews with others. The unanswered questions were listed as *code notes* for future reference for the next interview with the person, or with another informant. Other questions for future interviews were also raised by scanning the transcript and listing the words or phrases used by the informant which were culture specific, such as "sent to Coventry," or those which piqued the researcher's interest. An example of this would be the informant's use of the word "ignominious." When she says, "I can remember the emotional shock of it because it is still one of the most ignominious periods of my life," does she mean that the fact that her parents left her was marked by shame? Or, does she mean that her vomiting at breakfast was marked by shame? It is important to clarify the meaning the informant has before the researcher places her own interpretation on the words in question.

Labeling and Grouping

After labeling the main idea of the quoted paragraph as *homesickness*, the rest of the interview was read to look for other instances or events that resembled *homesickness*. These events were then compared and re-questioned to determine

their relationship to each other. Eventually the events determined to involve *homesickness* were grouped together under the category named *separation*. The word *separation* was chosen because if there had been no separation, there would not have been any *homesickness*. Also, *separation* can be broken down into sub-categories such as *reasons for separation*, which were the war, mission work, or death. Next, the different types of emotional responses or homesickness that the separations created can also be identified and expanded upon.

Connecting Categories

The category of separation was then connected with other categories that might have overlapping sub-categories. This connection process was done by listing each category on a paper with its attributes, or sub-categories, underneath. Then, lines were drawn showing a connection from one category or sub-category to another in a "webbing" technique. This provided a visual representation of how the categories derived from the data were related. It also showed where other links could exist among categories that at present had not shown up in the data, or had not been uncovered by the researcher. Culture specific words and phrases were also fitted into the webbed categories where possible. Index cards containing phrases or sentences of interpretable data were also created and sorted into the themes and categories that arise from comparing the data.

Validity and Reliability Issues

Questions of the validity and reliability of this study were addressed by meeting the "tests" as outlined in the works of LeCompte and Preissle, McMillan, and Yin. (18) The nature of the historical data gathered for this study raises issues of *historical criticism*, or the historicity of the documents. It is up to the researcher to evaluate the collected sources to determine their worth and significance. Two types of evaluation are used: external and internal criticism. *External criticism* judges whether a document is genuine rather than forged. Thus far all of the documents used in this study were retrieved from various archive centers or from personal collections and are authentic documents as dated. Their authenticity has been validated by eyewitnesses from that time period, or by other experts in the field who have reviewed the documents in question.

Internal criticism judges how well the documents and oral accounts reflect what occurred and correspond with one another. Internal criticism raises concerns for whether different written and oral accounts of the same event agree. It also evaluates the competency and biases of the persons who wrote the documents or who contributed oral accounts. While one could debate whether currently recorded oral histories of an event witnessed over fifty years ago would give an accurate accounting, accuracy is not the prime objective of this study. Rather, it is the emotional impact that the historical events had on the informants and how they

interpret the long-term effects of such events on their lives that is the main issue of this study. The majority of the written documents are used only to provide the backdrop, time-line, and signposts of the external events while the informants' stories give the descriptive personal details of how they perceived and internalized the explicit and implicit messages from their schooling experience.

Another concern for this study is the question of the distance of the researcher from the time in which the accounts are set since one "inevitably interprets the past through the concepts and concerns of the present." It is therefore necessary for those doing historical research to "acknowledge that their 'histories' are conditioned by their own perspective." This acknowledgment makes for what Michael Foucault terms an "effective history" because our personal convictions not only bias our search for knowledge, but also facilitate it. (19) A fuller discussion is presented in Chapter Five.

Construct validity is the establishing of correct operational measures for the concepts being studied. The three tactics recommended for a case study are: use of multiple sources; established chain of evidence; and having key informants review drafts of the case study. Thus far in this study the multiple sources include key informant interviews, interviews with other participants, archival primary sources such as diaries, CIM council minutes, and U. S. government documents and secondary source information on internment camps. Artifacts from the school and the internment camp such as artwork, cooking utensils, clothing and photographs have also been used. More information has surfaced than was previously known by the researcher to have existed and all newly discovered sources were used to corroborate the study question.

All of this data has been used to establish a chain of evidence by citing primary and secondary sources throughout this study. The rough drafts of Chapter One "Nature of the Problem," Chapter Two, "The Shadow Case Study," Chapter Three, "Historical Content" and Chapter Four, "Eyewitness History" were read by all of the key informants as recommended by Yin. Chapter Three and Appendix B, "Expanded Historical Background," were reviewed by David Michell and Norman Cliff, former Chefoo students, Weihsien interneers and authors of books about their experiences. Editing and informational corrections were made as needed without any compromises to the content of the work.

Internal Validity

Validity is a major strength of a qualitative study because data is collected and analyzed over a long period of time and uses the empirical categories of the study participants. In this case, the study was done over a period of four years. The empirical categories were derived from the informants which straightens the compatibility between researcher categories and participant realities. Throughout

the collecting, analyzing and writing of the study, the researcher incorporated continual questioning, reflection, reevaluation, and self-monitoring of personal biases with those of the informants in order to have credible representations of the informants reality constructs. (20)

Internal validity has to do with whether the investigator has captured the informants' constructions of reality, or how they understand their world. It is up to the researcher to demonstrate an "honest rendering of how informants actually view themselves and their experiences," and present a holistic interpretation of the events and informants' perceptions. Certain strategies can be employed to reduce threats to qualitative internal validity. How these threats relate specifically to this study and the strategies that were used to prevent them are discussed in the following paragraphs. (21)

By triangulating the study—using multiple sources of data, methods of collection and means of confirming the emerging findings, the threats of *observer effects* and *spurious conclusions* are confronted. The relationship that is established between the informant and the researcher affects the type of information disclosed and therefore the validity of the study. However, the information provided is valid within the contexts that it represents a single point of view or is shaped by special characteristics of, or relationships with, the researcher which need to be made explicit.

Because of the length of time spent interviewing and corresponding, and due to the personal nature of the stories, close relationships of mutual sharing were formed with some of the informants. The two main informants stories presented in this study do match the range of variation of opinions found in the population as suggested by LeCompte and Preissle. Other informants from the population were used as member checks to augment, corroborate or disconfirm the information that was generated. They also helped to establish the credibility of the key informants. The nature of the specific associations between the researcher and the two main informants has been discussed further under the area of subjectivity and researcher bias covered in Chapter Five (22) Participant reaction and confirmation conducted throughout the research were the most effective means for revealing researcher-induced distortions.

Five strategies recommended by Merriam were employed to ensure the internal validity of this study. The first strategy was the triangulation of multiple sources and data to confirm the emerging findings. Secondly, through member checks, the data and interpretations were continually taken back to the people from whom they were derived for their concurrence that the results were plausible. Third, the data was gathered over a period of time in order to increase the validity of the findings. Fourth, the informants were involved in all phases of research from conceptualizing the study to writing up the findings. And finally, the researcher's

biases, assumptions, worldview, and theoretical orientation were clarified within the study. (23)

Reliability

Reliability of a qualitative study is problematic as it is nearly impossible to replicate the results or findings of a unique event interpreted by eyewitnesses. However, after reviewing the same or similar data, the reader's or another researcher's interpretations should be consistent with the results presented in the original study. And, according to Guba and Lincoln, as cited by Merriam, "since it is impossible to have internal validity without reliability, a demonstration of internal validity amounts to a simultaneous demonstration of reliability." (24) Dependability and consistency of results in this study have been enhanced through the implementation of the internal validity checks previously described.

External Validity Concerns

Questions of the validity and reliability of this study will begin to be addressed by meeting the "tests" as outlined in the works of LeCompte and Preissle, McMillan, and Yin.²⁵ The nature of the historical data gathered for this study means that issues of *historical criticism*, or the historicity of the documents, must be addressed. It is up to the researcher to evaluate the collected sources to determine their worth and significance. Two types of evaluation are used: external and internal criticism. *External criticism* judges whether a document is genuine rather than forged. Thus far all of the documents used in this study were retrieved from various archive centers or from personal collections and are authentic documents as dated. Their authenticity has been validated by eyewitnesses from that time period, or by other experts in the field who have reviewed the documents in question.

Internal criticism judges how well the documents and oral accounts reflect what occurred and correspond with one another. Internal criticism raises concerns for whether different written and oral accounts of the same event agree. It also evaluates the competency and biases of the persons who wrote the documents or who contributed oral accounts. While one could debate whether currently recorded oral histories of an event witnessed over fifty years ago would give an accurate accounting, accuracy is not the prime objective of this study.

Rather, it is the emotional impact that the historical events had on the informants and how they interpret the long-term effects of such events on their lives that is the main issue of this study. The majority of the written documents are used only to provide the backdrop, time-line, and signposts of the external events while the informants' stories give the descriptive personal details of how they perceived and internalized the explicit and implicit messages from their schooling experience.

As the previous pages have recounted, the informants of this study had a unique historical experience. This uniqueness, however, poses a limitation to the study and a threat to its external validity. Validity concerns itself with two basic, interrelated parts. The first is an internal validity issue of whether the researcher really observed and measured what she thought she observed and measured. The second deals with external validity which means to what extent the abstracted constructs and postulates generated are applicable across groups. Issues of internal validity will be dealt with in Chapter Three. For now the focus is on external validity.

External validity depends on identifying and describing characteristics of a study's findings for comparison with other, similar situations. (26) However, the uniqueness of a case study makes it difficult to generalize the results to other situations. "One selects a case study approach because one wishes to understand the particular in depth, not because one wants to know what is generally true of the many." It is necessary, therefore, to "reconceptualize generalization to reflect the assumptions underlying qualitative inquiry." In essence, the general can be found in the particular. (27)

External validity credibility

Measures can be taken though to enhance a study's generalizability. Foremost, the researcher should use rich description to provide a base of information about the participants and setting. LeCompte and Preissle give four other factors that increase the credibility of external validity. The first, selection effects, deals with the ability of constructs to be compared across groups. It is the researcher's responsibility to determine how well designated categories match with the experiences of the group under study.

Selection effects may be controlled when the participants derive the categories instead of just the researcher. In this study, the participants did have critical input on the categories and constructs that were derived by the researcher. Both the researcher and the informants also agree that similar categories and responses would be identified by other adults from different groups and time periods who have experienced boarding or separation issues as children.

Setting effects is the second factor. This pertains to the effect that the researcher has on the group and their setting. These effects may prohibit comparisons of constructs generated in one context to others. Due to the historical nature of this study, there was no established group location for the researcher to influence as an observer. However, the potential exists for interviewer effects on the responses of the informants. This comes under the realm of internal validity and will be explored further in Chapter Three.

History effects is the extent of the unique historical experiences of the groups being compared. Threats to external validity occur when historical

differences between groups are not taken into consideration and the constructs and assumptions of one group are thought to apply equally to another group. However, not all group phenomena are completely unique prohibiting any comparison. Common features and patterns can be found when dealing with the human condition. [\(28\)](#)

Construct validity

The final factor is construct effects or construct validity. Construct validity is the extent to which abstract terms, generalizations, or meanings are shared across times, settings and populations. Three tactics are recommended for establishing case study construct validity. They are the use of multiple sources, an established chain of evidence, and having key informants review drafts of the study. [\(29\)](#) In this study the multiple sources included the key informants' as well as other participants' interviews, along with archival primary and secondary sources. Artifacts from the school and the internment camp such as artwork, cooking utensils, badges and photographs have also been used.

These primary and secondary resources have been used to establish a chain of evidence as displayed in the Historical Context section of this chapter. Eventually this chain of evidence will link the final outcomes to the initial study questions. The rough drafts of each chapter of this study have been read by all of the main informants. Chapter One, Historical Context, has been reviewed by two former Chefoo students, David Michell and Norman Cliff, who were also Weihsien internees and authors of books about their experiences. Though a case study does not readily lend itself to generalizing findings from one study or setting to another, "what one learns from a particular situation is indeed transferable to situations subsequently encountered. This is, in fact, how people cope with the world every day." [\(30\)](#)

Summary

This last appendix has been an explanation as to why a descriptive case study method combined with life history has been used. It has also discussed how the population of Chefoo students were selected and reviewed and how the collected data was analyzed, coded, triangulated, and tested for validity and reliability. Through the employment of the life histories, resources, methods and analytical strategies previously explained, a formal theory of the moral component of curriculum as experienced in the lives of students emerged.

#

1 William F. Whyte, *Street Corner Society: The Social Structure of an Italian Slum*, 2nd. ed., (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1955). [↑](#)

- 2 Robert K. Yin, *Case Study Research: design and methods* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1994), 9. [↑](#)
- 3 *Ibid.*, 8. [↑](#)
- 4 Sandra Dolby Stahl, *Literary Folkloristics and the Personal Narrative* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1989), 19. [↑](#)
- 5 A.C. Sparkes, P.G. Schempp, & T.J. Templin, "Exploring dimensions of marginality: Reflecting on the life histories of physical education teachers." *Journal of Teaching in Physical Education* 12 (1993): 386-398; Jack Campbell, "Inside lives: The quality of biography" in *Qualitative Research in Education: Focus and Methods*, Robert R. Sherman & Rodman B. Webb (London: The Falmer Press, 1988); C. H. Edson, "Our past and present: Historical inquiry in education" in *Qualitative Research in Education: Focus and Methods*, Robert R. Sherman & Rodman B. Webb (London: The Falmer Press, 1988). [↑](#)
- 6 Fetterman; Catherine Marshall & Gretchen B. Rossman, *Designing Qualitative Research* (Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, 1989); S. J. Taylor & P. Bogdan, *Introduction to Qualitative Research Methods* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1984). [↑](#)
- 7 Goodson, (1988), 80; Marshall & Rossman. [↑](#)
- 8 Stanley J. Grenz, *A Primer on Postmodernism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1996), 6. [↑](#)
- 9 Grenz, 41, 44-46. [↑](#)
- 10 Yin, 19, 40. [↑](#)
- 11 Yin, 44. [↑](#)
- 12 Taylor & Bogdan, 98. [↑](#)
- 13 Fetterman, 43. [↑](#)
- 14 Spradley. [↑](#)
- 15 Anselm Strauss & Juliet Corbin, *Basics of Qualitative Research* (Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1990), 46. [↑](#)
- 16 *Ibid.*, 62. [↑](#)
- 17 Mary Taylor Previte interview July 25, 1995. [↑](#)
- 18 Margaret D. LeCompte & Judith Preissle, *Ethnography & Qualitative Design in Educational Research*, 2nd ed. (San Diego, CA: Academic Press, 1993); James H. McMillan, *Educational Research: Fundamentals for the Consumer*, (New York: HarperCollins, 1992); Yin, *Ibid.*. [↑](#)
- 19 Grenz, 101, 134, & 166. [↑](#)
- 20 LeCompte & Preissle, (1993), 342. [↑](#)
- 21 Merriam, 168. [↑](#)
- 22 LeCompte and Preissle (1993), 345-346. [↑](#)
- 23 Merriam, 169. [↑](#)
- 24 Merriam, 171. [↑](#)
- 25 Margaret D. LeCompte & Judith Preissle, *Ethnography & Qualitative Design in Educational Research*, 2nd ed. (San Diego, CA: Academic Press, 1993); James H. McMillan, *Educational Research: Fundamentals for the Consumer*, (New York: HarperCollins, 1992); Yin. [↑](#)
- 26 LeCompte & Preissle, (1993). [↑](#)
- 27 Sharan B. Merriam, 173. [↑](#)
- 28 LeCompte & Preissle, (1993). [↑](#)

29 yin. [↑](#)

30 Merriam, 176. [↑](#)