

The Relationship Among Local Elites, Temples, and Public Schools: An NVivo-Assisted Qualitative Analysis of the Founding History of Kaohsiung Dingqiading Public School

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I. Research Overview

This study takes Dingqiading Public School in Kaohsiung as a case study, combining historical research and document analysis. Using NVivo 15, a Computer-Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software, it analyzes Japanese colonial period archives of Jiading Elementary School to examine local elites and temples' roles in the school's establishment.

II. Research Purpose

The Japanese colonial period (1895–1945) marks a critical beginning for the modernization of education in Taiwan, laying the legal and institutional foundation for the subsequent development of primary education. This study aims to clarify how local social forces shaped primary education during this period. The specific research objectives are as follows:

1. To chart Dingqiading Public School's establishment process and its transition from a branch school to an independent institution.
2. **To explore the roles and influence of local elites and temples in the school's establishment:** Starting from the foundational background and historical evolution of Dingqiading Public School, this objective analyzes how local elites and temples facilitated the promotion of local primary education.
3. To examine the evolution of local civic participation in promoting primary

education, focusing on the establishment and development phases.

III. Research Methods

1. **Historical Research Method:** The study's timeframe spans from 1906 to 1945 (from around the school's founding to the end of Japanese rule). By collecting and verifying relevant historical materials, this study reconstructs the chronological causality of Dingqiading Public School—from its establishment and expansion to its relocation—and interprets its underlying social context and power structures.
2. **Document Analysis Method:** The study categorizes and interprets 108 Japanese colonial-era administrative archives preserved at Jiading Elementary School. This study categorizes, codes, and conducts an in-depth hermeneutic interpretation of these official documents.
3. **Computer-Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis:** NVivo is a professional tool for organizing and analyzing unstructured data: text, audio, video, images, and social media. It helps researchers discover data patterns through coding, node management, and AI-assisted analysis. This study uses NVivo to analyze Japanese-era archives, historical photographs, and literature in the school's history room.
4. **Historical Data Triangulation:** To assess historical events accurately, this study cross-references official archives, school publications, and oral histories from local elders and alumni. Cross-validation and internal/external criticism are conducted to mitigate biases in official perspectives.

IV. Research Results and Discussion

1. **Local Elites and Temples Established Dingqiading Public School Through the "Integration of Temple and School"** Local Elites and Temples Established Dingqiading Public School Through the "Integration of Temple and School" At its founding, Dingqiading Public School adopted the "integration of temple and school" approach, using the Dingqiading Cifu Temple's courtyard and grounds as temporary teaching spaces. This practice resolved the severe shortage of school facilities and leveraged the temple's prestige to endorse modern colonial education.
2. **The "Mediator" Role of Local Elites and the Mobilization of Social Capital** Throughout the school's establishment and expansion, local elites played a crucial

"mediator" role, bridging colonial policies with local needs. Collaborating with the Baozheng system, the elites initiated fundraising and land donation campaigns, facilitating four major expansions of the school grounds. Through donations, they transformed private assets into public educational goods, bridging the gap in educational resources in peripheral areas. By spearheading these educational affairs, the elites successfully consolidated their symbolic capital and leadership status within the local society.

3. The Triple Collaborative Relationship Among "Religion, Elites, and the School" as the Core Driving Force of Educational Development Dingqiading Public School's success was built on a "trinity" collaborative network of "Religion, Elites, and the School." Under limited funding and capacity, local elites and temples drove educational advancement. The elites provided resources and mobilization, while the temples offered spatial support and religious mobilization. Their intertwined collaboration enabled the school's establishment and rapid advancement in education.