School Education and Cultural Inheritance of Yi Nationality: Educational Choices Based on Cultural Ecology in Yi Areas of Liangshan

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Abstract. Ethnic culture and ethnic education have always been interdependent and mutually dynamic. The transmission and inheritance of ethnic culture is the mission and responsibility of ethnic education, and ethnic education is an important way for the development and inheritance of ethnic culture. Although the school education of the Yi nationality in Liangshan of Sichuan Province has made a breakthrough in the inheritance of the Yi culture, there are contradictions and conflicts in the identification of the Yi students, the school curriculum, teacher training and evaluation mechanism. The paper holds that in order to achieve the coordination and unification of Yi traditional culture and education development in elementary education, we must solve the relationship between modern education and traditional culture in Yi areas, minimize the constraints of Yi traditional culture and expand its favorable factors, so as to make it a driving force for national social progress. In other words, on the one hand, we should carry forward the excellent traditions of the Yi culture so that it can be continuously inherited and developed; on the other hand, we should also pay attention to the adjustment of the traditional culture of the Yi nationality and the modern society.

Introduction

Ethnic culture and ethnic education have always been interdependent and mutually reinforcing. Zhang Shiyia believes that "the ethnic content of culture presented by ethnic character is relatively stable, which enables culture to form its own unique model. Nationality contains universal human behavior... It can be seen that the ethnic character of culture is the foundation of culture. (Zhang shiya, 2005) Therefore, the transmission of ethnic culture is the core, mission and responsibility of ethnic education, and ethnic education is an important way to preserve and inherit ethnic culture.

However, the research shows that the cultural adaptation in schools of ethnic areas in China is basically discontinuous or discontinuous. One of them is the cultural discontinuity caused by the conflict between national schools and their own cultures under the influence of foreign cultures. (Wu Xiaorong, Zhang Shiya, 2011) For the students of Yi nationality area, there are similar problems of "cultural shock" and "non-consistency" in the transformation from family education environment and social education environment to school education environment. As we know, School education is the most effective way to reproduce national culture. The process of popularization of school education is the process of strengthening contacts and realizing control among various grass-roots units. The process of expanding the formal knowledge education system is the process of changing the direction of the socialization of the Yi
nationality. The cultural inheritance of the Yi nationality is directed to the community itself, aiming at the maintenance and cultivation of people conforming to traditional ethics. In the stage of basic education, schools are always the official institutions to disseminate knowledge and inherit culture, and play a dominant role in the cultural reproduction of the whole society. Therefore, how to make effective use of the cultural ecology of Yi areas in Liangshan to make effective educational choices, while taking into account the mission and responsibility of Yi cultural heritage in school education, is the focus of this paper.

**Development and Achievements of School Education in Yi Areas of Liangshan**

Since the 1920s, Liangshan has set up modern school education, but it has been stopped immediately, because of financial, social and other reasons, it has not been able to form a scale. After the founding of the People’s Republic of China, the Party and the state have given important support policies to minority education.

From 1950 to 1952, Liangshan Prefecture focused on the development of a number of Ethnic Primary schools. By 1953, nine counties under its jurisdiction, except Puxiong, Butuo, Meigu and other counties, had set up primary schools in other counties.

From 1966 to 1976, the "Decade Cultural Revolution" had a serious impact on education in Yi areas of Liangshan. In the early days of the "Cultural Revolution", schools were completely paralyzed. Since 1972, due to ignoring the economic basis and the conditions of teachers’ school buildings, eager to popularize primary education, the number of students to stimulate the base of education funds to run schools, once reached 115 village-level primary schools, school-age children enrollment rate as high as 90%. The pace of secondary education is too fast. The school-running system, teaching plan and teaching content are all adapted to the model of the Han nationality. As a result, this vicious development has been affecting the subsequent education. (Qumu tiexi, 1999)

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, Liangshan Prefecture summed up the experience and lessons of Liangshan education for more than 20 years. It proceeded from reality, acted according to its capacity, adhered to the principle of unity and particularity, and, according to the characteristics of Yi region, guided by classification, adjusted the scale and speed of development by a large margin. Compressing the distribution of primary schools, gradually forming a pattern of "rural primary schools, District primary schools, County primary schools, high schools". It also holds various boarding classes and schools for the Yi students.

A group of Yi and Han teachers and educational managers who have been teaching in Liangshan for decades have reflected on the historical process of large-scale school education in Liangshan and realized that the development of education in Liangshan has been promoted by the use of Chinese language teaching, but the achievements of development were difficult to consolidate and the quality of teaching was generally low, so they actively advised the government to implement bilingual teaching between Yi language and Chinese. So, in the autumn of 1978, the government of Liangshan Yi Autonomous Prefecture decided formally that Yi language was a major subject in the teaching curriculum of primary and secondary schools in Liangshan prefecture. In 1984, it was officially decided to change the form of education that used to be taught entirely in Chinese. According to the different linguistic environments of the Yi people living in Liangshan, two different bilingual education modes were implemented: the Yi language was used as the teaching language in the areas where only the Yi language
environment existed, and a Chinese language course was offered; there was a certain Chinese environment and the Chinese people lived together. In urban and rural areas, Chinese is used as the language of instruction, and Yi language courses are offered at the same time. Then, in 11 counties inhabited by the Yi nationality, 64 primary schools in 25 townships were selected to enroll 64 classes in the first grade. Among the 2,085 students, the Yi language was used as the teaching language and the Chinese language teaching mode was set up on a trial basis. In other areas, the Chinese language was temporarily used as the teaching language, while the Yi language teaching mode was set up. The principles plan and steps of bilingual teaching, as well as the construction of teaching materials, teacher training and teaching research are clearly stipulated. The Compiling institute of Yi textbooks in Liangshan, Sichuan Province have been set up. At the same time, the channels for teacher training have been opened.

Over the past decade, these two bilingual education models have made great progress. In 1990, junior high school was opened, and senior high school was set up in 1993. Now a bilingual teaching system from primary, secondary to university has been built. The compilation and publication of textbooks on Yi culture from primary school to senior high school has produced a large number of useful talents of Yi nationality, which has played an important role in the development of social economy and culture in Yi nationality areas. The development of bilingual education is pushing the elementary education in Liangshan to a healthy development track, and the scope of basic education of the whole Yi nationality is expanding.

In recent years, the government of Liangshan Prefecture has adhered to the principle of "centralization of primary schools to villages and towns, junior middle schools to districts and senior middle schools to urban areas", optimized the layout of schools in rural and urban areas, retained and managed necessary village primary schools and teaching sites, and strictly implemented the "the responsibility system for six kinds of people" for compulsory education enrollment (county mayor, education director, Township mayor). Principals, village principals and parents should strive to improve the popularization rate of compulsory education. By 2017, there are 792 primary schools in the prefecture, 594,050 students and 26,724 full-time teachers. The net enrollment rate of school-age population is 99.72%. There are 98 junior high schools and 48 nine-year consistent schools with 193,453 students and 11,868 full-time teachers. The net enrollment rate of the population of junior middle school age is 97.39%. General high school education. There are 40 high schools in the prefecture, including 35 complete middle schools and 5 senior middle schools. There are 71,244 students in ordinary high schools, 4,304 full-time teachers, 53,395 boarding students in ordinary high schools and 34,563 minority students in ordinary high schools.

<table>
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<td>98.0</td>
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Table 1. The Development of Elementary Education in Liangshan.
## Characteristics of Cultural Inheritance in School Education of Yi Area in Liangshan

In recent years, Party Committee and State government of Liangshan Prefecture, Education Bureau and teachers at all levels have become more and more aware of the importance of the function of inheriting national culture in school education. They have adopted various forms to gradually infiltrate Yi culture into school education, and gradually highlighted the following characteristics:

### Wide Ranges of Audiences

Whether the minority culture can be inherited or not depends largely on the recognition degree of the younger generation to the national culture. Judging from the current activities of traditional Yi culture entering the campus, from these school which enrolled the students from first bilingual education model, such as Zhaojue National Middle School, Meigu National Middle School and Xichang Middle School, to all Second bilingual education model schools, from the popularization of Yi students to the whole school, the number of students who voluntary to touch and learn traditional Yi culture is gradually increasing.

### Diversification of Contents and Forms

The diversification of forms is manifested in many aspects, such as the diversification of curriculum setting, the increase of cooperation with the community, and the continuous enrichment of teaching methods. For example, bilingual education of Yi language and Chinese, the broadcast exercises “A Shi Qie”, the Da-ti dances competition of Yi people, the annual activities of the Yi Lunar New Year, the Yi’s Yueqin class, the series of “Tianguang Yueying” lectures on Yi culture held by the school of Yi Language and Culture of Xichang University, the training class of Yi inheritors for folk songs, the traditional skills training class of Yi silver ware, etc. More and more students can get in touch with the essence of traditional Yi culture and accept the baptism of national culture. At present, the activities of Yi culture entering the campus are moving from singleness to pluralism, and various forms are maturing in the continuous development, showing a trend of gradual integration and cross-cutting.

### Diversification of Participants

From the initial education managers, teachers, to the active participation of the elites, parents and students of the Yi people from all walks of life, all walks of life in Yi areas of Liangshan pay more and more attention to the function of cultural inheritance in school education. Scholars and Yi elites generally believe that the introduction of traditional Yi culture into the campus is not only a matter of cultural development, but also a matter of the overall development of the Yi people and the social development of Liangshan. In the process of social development in Liangshan, there is a problem of adaptation and integration between Yi culture and the real society. If its culture cannot adapt to the progress of society, or cannot keep up with the speed of social development, it will often drag back the progress of society. National culture is like a "double-edged sword". It has both excellent aspects, which are worthy of inheritance.
and development, and it is incompatible with its social and economic progress. It needs to be developed, discarded and improved. The influence of national culture on social progress is recessive and deep-seated. Therefore, how to adjust the relationship between Yi culture and modernization is not only a matter for the Yi people themselves, but also for the whole society.

**Contradictions between Cultural Inheritance and School Education in Liangshan**

Judging from the development process of modern education of the Yi people in Liangshan, school education in Yi areas has not played its deserved role of cultural inheritance. Most schools have reduced it to the position of auxiliary local curriculum or school-based curriculum, and the Yi culture has not been included in the scope of school examination. Under the restriction of "college entrance examination" and "rules of labor market", many parents and teachers hope that students can obtain universal cultural capital through school education and realize the purpose of flowing to modern society and mainstream culture. In this case, the Yi students will not take the initiative to choose courses that are not related to their examination, because it will affect their study scores, so some activity courses with special Yi features often become a mere formality. Moreover, the longer the Yi students receive modern school education, the longer they live in the highly modernized city, the more their history and culture are forgotten or lost.

**The Embarrassing Identity of "Familiar Strangers" of Yi Students**

School education in Liangshan, especially the value orientation of elementary education, completely copies the value orientation of the mainstream society, and the educational goal is to point to urban life. School education based on modern urban culture, on the one hand, brings modern scientific and technological and cultural knowledge to Yi students, which helps them to improve their ability to integrate into the mainstream urban society; on the other hand, it defines this ability and knowledge, that is, knowledge suitable for living in the city. When Yi students return to their hometown after receiving modern education for many years, they find that they are out of step with the development of the local situation. Years of mainstream cultural education have made this part of Yi students adapt to the social life dominated by mainstream culture. However, due to various complex factors, they cannot enter urban life. When they return to the local area, they are also faced with the embarrassment of "hopelessness for further education, lack of access to employment, and lack of work skills" in their study. As a result, these students who have received modern education are neither urban nor rural people, but become "familiar strangers" in Yi villages and fall into an isolated and hesitant situation of "cultural marginal people".

**Neglecting the Course Setting of Yi Culture in School Education**

According to the new curriculum reform policy in China, the proportion of national curriculum reflecting Han culture in the total curriculum is 88%-90%, while the proportion of local curriculum and school-based curriculum reflecting ethnic and local cultural knowledge is 10%-12%. In fact, many kindergartens and elementary schools in Yi area of Liangshan have not set up courses on the inheritance of Yi culture, and middle schools offer fewer such courses than primary schools. Due to the neglect of the education of the cultural inheritance of the Yi people, some schools have offered the cultural courses of the Yi people, but the cultural courses of the Yi people are often replaced by other courses or offset by some important activities. Even if
local courses or school-based courses related to Yi culture are added in the stage of elementary education, before local culture and local knowledge are incorporated into the educational evaluation system, the entrance examination, the traditional national culture cannot get the institutionalized cultural capital, then it still cannot get rid of the marginalized situation. Considering their own practical interests, in order to obtain institutionalized cultural capital in the form of diploma, educatees must "take the initiative" to accept evaluation criteria based on examination results and choose official knowledge and mainstream culture. In recent years, the attempt of "Taking Yi culture into the classroom" has been hindered at the stage of education above junior high school, which just proves this point. In fact, the loss of educational functions of the Yi culture and the neglect of traditional cultural functions of school education are double wastes of education.

**Ignoring the Training of Teachers in the Course of Yi Culture**

The teacher training here refers to two aspects: pre-vocational training and post-vocational training. On the one hand, the pre-vocational training of teachers is still not paid attention to. Generally speaking, the teaching of Yi's cultural courses is usually undertaken by Chinese teachers or headteachers. Although these teachers have been educated in normal subjects, it does not mean that they know the relevant knowledge, teaching methods and teaching characteristics of the Yi culture curriculum. On the other hand, teachers' post-vocational training has not received deserved attention. Teachers' post-vocational education is mainly a supplementary and perfect means for teaching various problems in the course of Yi culture, and also a means to improve teachers' own cultural accomplishment of the Yi nationality. However, due to the shortage of teachers, the shortage of funds, the pressure of entrance examination and other objective reasons, the teachers of Yi culture course seldom have the opportunity to go to relevant universities or institutions for further study, and it is difficult to communicate with teachers in other areas.

**Lack of Pertinence and Flexibility in Evaluation Mechanism**

The evaluation system in many schools in Liangshan Yi areas has nothing to do with the cultural transmission of the Yi nationality. Many teachers are not enthusiastic about it because of the "reality" of performance. For various reasons, "the evaluation system of school education in ethnic minority areas in China is not different from that in the mainland of Han nationality, but also the “Rule all the land” based on the mainstream culture of Chinese culture. (Jing Xianggui, 2011) The same problem also exists in schools in Yi areas of Liangshan. Under such a single evaluation standard, for many teachers and students, especially those in middle school, it is difficult to really attach importance to the ethnic culture of entering the campus and classroom.

**Conclusion and Reflection**

For school education in Yi areas, we should not only let Yi students accept universal basic knowledge of science and culture to lay a foundation for their later socialization and even internationalization, but also let Yi students master their own national culture and become the inheritors of Yi culture. In order to truly realize the cultural inheritance function of school education in Yi areas, to realize and improve the inheritance of school education to national culture and to ensure education fairness, we should give proper weight to the excellent
traditional culture of ethnic minorities in the evaluation and selection stage of the national education system, and give it institutionalized cultural capital; at the same time, we should increase the school-based curriculum. Development efforts should be given space for its inheritance in educational content.

Therefore, in order to achieve the coordination and unification of Yi culture and education development in school education, we must solve the relationship between modern education and Yi traditional culture, minimize the constraints of traditional culture and expand its favorable factors, so as to make it a driving force for the progress of national society. In other words, on the one hand, we should carry forward the excellent traditions of the Yi culture so that it can be continuously inherited and developed; on the other hand, we should also pay attention to the adjustment of the traditional culture of the Yi nationality and the modern society.

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