# Cultural Diversity Management of Ethnic Minority Students in Yunnan Province's Universities

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## Abstract

This research aimed to 1) study the level of cultural diversity management for ethnic minority students in universities in Yunnan Province. 2) explore the components of cultural diversity management for ethnic minority students in universities in Yunnan Province. and 3) propose a model of cultural diversity management for ethnic minority students in universities in Yunnan Province. This research is Mixed Methods Research. The quantitative sample was 504 teachers and administrators from 40 universities in Yunnan Province. The statistics used in this research were percentage, frequency, mean, standard deviation, and multiple regression analysis. The qualitative research used in-depth interviews with 9 relevant people by purposive selection. The triangulation process was used to analyze the data by interpretation and inductive conclusion generation. The content analysis from documents and interviews was done by descriptive writing.

The research results showed that: 1. The overall level of cultural diversity management for ethnic minority students in universities in Yunnan Province was at a high level, with an average value between 3.44-4.00 and a standard deviation between 0.65- 0.89. This indicates that the informants had opinions on the importance level of each important factor, with each important factor at a high and highest level for distribution. Most of the informants had opinions on the importance of the factors in order. 2. The components of cultural diversity management for ethnic minority students can be divided into 5 factors: 1)educational equity and policy support, 2)multicultural education and teaching practices, 3)cultural identity and sense of belonging, 4) cross-cultural communication and interaction, 5) cultural

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competence and training of teachers, and 3.The cultural diversity management model for ethnic minority students should emphasize comprehensive policies, multicultural education, support for cultural identity, cross-cultural communication, and cultural competence of teachers to promote a supportive and inclusive academic environment for ethnic minority students. These factors are interrelated and important for the management model of cultural diversity for ethnic minority students, by designing the plan through the ethnographic futures research (EFR) technique, a model of cultural diversity management for ethnic minority students in universities in Yunnan Province can be built.

**Keywords**: Culture; Diversity Management; Minority Ethnic Groups

## Introduction

In the 21$^{st}$ century, the global governance system and international landscape are experiencing accelerated adjustments and profound evolution. The deepening of globalization has intensified the flow of people across countries and regions, making cultural exchanges more frequent and impactful. These interactions foster the continuous collision, integration, and coexistence of diverse cultural ideas, providing opportunities for mutual learning and inspiration. Cultural diversity is deeply intertwined with human well-being, emphasizing the need to respect cultural differences and promote coexistence as fundamental pillars for maintaining global peace, fostering development, and enhancing quality of life worldwide. Zhang (2024) observed that the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development has heightened the significance of cultural diversity on the global stage. Recognized as a critical area for sustainable development, cultural diversity not only bolsters global cultural governance but also inspires practical wisdom for addressing contemporary challenges. Culture, therefore, stands as the cornerstone of sustainable human development, playing a foundational role in societal transitions. As a key player on the global stage, China actively promotes governance in cultural fields, striving to collaborate with the international community to respect traditional cultures, embrace cultural plurality, and build a harmonious, inclusive world.

Despite its unified national framework, China places significant emphasis on preserving its ethnic cultural diversity. China's seventh national population census shows that the population of 55 ethnic minorities is 125.47 million, accounting for

8.89% of the national population. (Chen Liankai, 1998) pointed out that China's ethnic minorities are distributed in various regions of the country, each with their own unique language, customs, religion, and way of life, collectively constituting China's diverse ethnic culture. Policies and programs promote the languages, customs, and traditions of minority groups, ensuring their cultural preservation while fostering inclusivity. As Li and Zhou (2015) stated, cultural diversity involves integrating outstanding elements of foreign cultures into a nation's traditional heritage to create a harmonious coexistence of domestic and global cultures. However, historical and ideological influences show that China's interpretation of multiculturalism differs from Western perspectives. Xiao Gongqin (1996) highlighted that in the long historical process, foreign cultures were often assimilated into Confucian culture rather than maintaining distinct multicultural identities. Therefore, the concept of cultural diversity in China is primarily reflected in the diversity of ethnic cultures under a unified national identity, rather than the multicultural issues commonly faced by immigrant nations. (Li Yan and Zhou Liangshu, 2015)

This study aims to investigate the challenges and policies associated with managing cultural diversity among ethnic minority students in Yunnan's universities. Using interviews, surveys, and data analysis, it seeks to identify key influencing factors, evaluate their impacts, and provide actionable recommendations for optimizing university policies. The research questions guiding this study are: What are the main challenges faced by ethnic minority students in Yunnan's universities related to cultural diversity? How effective are current university policies in addressing these challenges? What policy improvements can be proposed to enhance the multicultural management of universities? The findings will contribute not only to improving multicultural management within China but also to addressing global challenges in cultural governance.

## Research Objectives

1. To study the level of cultural diversity management for ethnic minority students in universities in Yunnan Province.

2. To explore the components of cultural diversity management for ethnic minority students in universities in Yunnan Province.

3. To propose a model of cultural diversity management for ethnic minority students in universities in Yunnan Province.

## Research Methodology

This research article is a Mixed Methods Research consisting of Quantitative Research by collecting data using Questionnaire distribution method and Qualitative Research by collecting data from interviews. The researcher has the following processes and steps:

### 1. Quantitative research

The population and sample the population used in this study was 504 teachers and administrators of universities in Yunnan Province from 40 universities in Yunnan Province. The research instrument used a questionnaire divided into 3 parts: Part 1 was a questionnaire on general information of the respondents; Part 2 was a questionnaire on the level of cultural diversity management for ethnic minority students in universities in Yunnan Province; and Part 3 was a questionnaire on the components of cultural diversity management for ethnic minority students in universities in Yunnan Province. Data collection the researcher collected data from questionnaires. The researcher used statistics for data analysis: percentage, frequency, mean, standard deviation, and multiple regression analysis.

### 2. Qualitative research

Informants in this qualitative research, the researcher chose to focus on the informants by conducting in-depth interviews with 9 informants, including 1. President of Yunnan Open University, 2. Secretary of the Party Committee of Honghe University, 3. Vice President of Yunnan University of Arts, 4. Vice President of Yunnan University of Finance and Economics, 5. Dean of the School of Humanities, Yunnan University, 6. Dean of the School of Music, North China University, 7. Dean of the School of Art at Zhaotong University, 8. Pu'er College, and 9. Yuxi Normal University. Research Instruments The researcher used the interview method. Data Analysis The researcher used the triangulation process to analyze the data by interpreting and inductively drawing conclusions. The content analysis from documents and interviews was done by writing descriptive text.

## Research Results

From the study on Cultural Diversity Management of Ethnic Minority Students in Yunnan Province's Universities, the researcher can conclude the results of the study according to the objectives as follows:

**Part 1:** Overall Findings on the Management of Cultural Diversity for Ethnic Minority Students in Universities in Yunnan Province

The study revealed that the overall level of cultural diversity management for ethnic minority students in universities across Yunnan Province is at a high level, indicating strong institutional commitment to promoting inclusivity and educational equity. The analysis of 72 items related to various dimensions of cultural diversity management — encompassing policy implementation, pedagogical practices, campus activities, institutional culture, and administrative strategies — consistently yielded high mean scores, reflecting widespread support for multicultural principles.

The mean scores across the items largely ranged from 3.44 to 4.00, with standard deviations indicating moderate variability in perception among respondents. Most items surpassed the threshold of 3.50, which categorizes the response level as "high" on the 5-point Likert scale. This affirms that both administrators and teachers perceive cultural diversity management efforts as being effectively implemented.

Notably, the highest-scoring items included:

*Q17*: Teachers believe that curriculum design should reflect the concept of combining local culture with global culture. (Mean=4.00, SD=.765)

*Q33*: Teachers point out that cultural understanding promotes students' confident expression in diverse environments. (Mean=4.00, SD=.745)

*Q12*: Teachers implement cross-cultural collaboration projects to cultivate students' cross-cultural communication and collaboration skills. (Mean=3.93, SD=.701)

*Q26*: Administrators pointed out that establishing a multicultural exchange day promotes cultural interaction and understanding among students. (Mean=3.93, SD=.728)

*Q69*: Administrators believe that establishing cultural diversity awards encourages sudents to participate in cultural innovation. (Mean=3.95, SD=.658)

*Q23*: Teachers emphasize reducing cultural barriers through collaborative learning and cultural sharing activities. (Mean=3.95, SD=.771)

These items highlight a strong emphasis on integrating multicultural content into the curriculum, facilitating intercultural interaction, and fostering students' cultural pride and innovation.

Conversely, a few items such as:

*Q13*: Teachers emphasize that diverse educational strategies can achieve equal respect for students. (Mean=3.44, SD=.788)

*Q42*: Administrators point out that teachers should respect and integrate students' cultural backgrounds in their teaching. (Mean=3.48, SD=.889)

*Q54*: Administrators pointed out that establishing multicultural student dormitories promotes the exchange and integration of students from all ethnic groups. (Mean=3.50, SD=.825)were rated at a moderate level, suggesting areas where further support, training, or policy reinforcement may be needed to elevate performance and perception.

Overall, the findings suggest that universities in Yunnan Province have established a strong foundation for multicultural education. The high level of support among both educators and administrators underscores a proactive institutional culture that values diversity, fosters equity, and encourages cultural expression. The results also point to opportunities for continuous improvement, particularly in areas that involve the structural integration of multiculturalism into residential life and teaching practices.These insights are valuable for policy formulation, institutional planning, and strategic development aimed at enhancing the educational experience and cultural well-being of ethnic minority students.

From Part 1, it was found that the overall level of cultural diversity management for ethnic minority students in universities in Yunnan Province was at a high level, with an average value between 3.44-4.00 and a standard deviation between 0.65-0.89, indicating that the informants had opinions about the level of importance of each important factor, with each important factor being at a high level and the highest for the distribution. As for the opinions of the majority of the informants, they had opinions about the level of importance of the various factors in order.

**Part 2** explores the components of cultural diversity management for ethnic minority students in universities in Yunnan Province as follows.
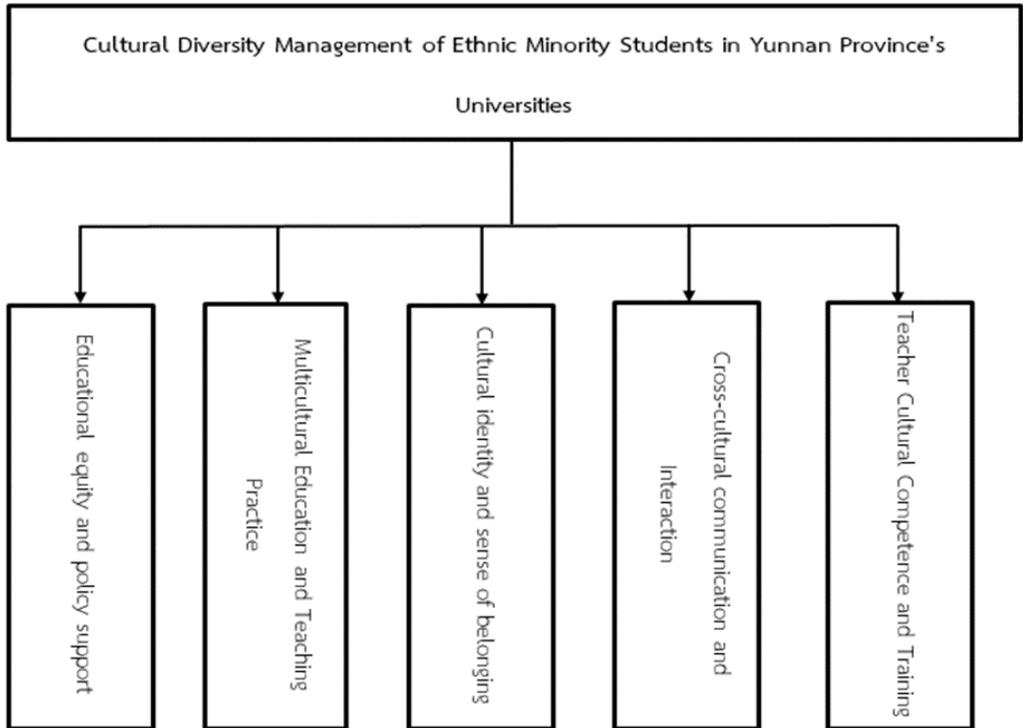
From Part 2, it was found that the components of managing cultural diversity of ethnic students can be divided into 5 factors: 1) educational equity and policy support, 2) multicultural education and teaching practices, 3) cultural identity and sense of belonging, 4) cross-cultural communication and interaction, and 5) teachers' cultural competence and training.

**Part 3** The management model of cultural diversity for ethnic minority students in universities in Yunnan Province is as follows:

The cultural diversity management model for ethnic minority students should focus on inclusive policies, multicultural education, cultural identity support, intercultural communication, and teachers' cultural competence to promote a supportive and inclusive academic environment for ethnic minority students. These factors are interconnected and important to the cultural diversity management model for ethnic minority students. By designing the future plan through the ethnographic futures research (EFR) technique, a cultural diversity management model for ethnic minority students in universities in Yunnan Province can be built.

## Discussion

1. The results of the research objective 1 found that the overall level of cultural diversity management for ethnic minority students in universities in Yunnan Province was at a high level, which was consistent with the research of Zhenkun Liu and Prasit Leepreecha (2023) on Ethnic Social and Cultural Background to Transmitted Through Identity on Wenshan Hmong Embroidery Products. The research results found that learning from ethnic communities such as the Hmong in Wenshan can lead to the design of policies and guidelines for managing cultural diversity in universities effectively and sustainably, and was consistent with the research of Napaporn Assawarangseekul (2019) on Problems of Ethnic Groups in Thailand: Cultural Identity Changes. The research results found that government policies on security and economic development have a significant impact on the lives of ethnic groups. The use of control methods has caused ethnic groups in forest areas to face various problems, lacking the right to manage resources in the community, and engaging in commercial agriculture as recommended by the government, which has led to less self-reliance. They have had to change their lifestyles, change their occupations, and seek social spaces in different contexts. Cultural identity has been commodified for the tourism business. Relations in the community have changed. Money has become more influential. Ethnic identity has changed for various benefits.

2. The result of research objective 2 found that the components of cultural diversity management of ethnic students can be divided into 5 factors: 1) educational equity and policy support 2) multicultural education and teaching practices 3) cultural identity and sense of belonging 4) cross-cultural communication and interaction 5) teachers' cultural competence and training. This is consistent with the research of Kanchit Pimjai and Dawruwan Thawinkarn (2023) on A Cultural Diversity Management Model In The Extra-Large School, Nakhon Ratchasima Province. The research results found that 1) cultural diversity management has 5 components: (1) cultural leadership, with 3 indicators, (2) intercultural communication, with 4 indicators, (3) cultural training, with 3 indicators, (4) diverse personnel placement, with 3 indicators, and (5) mentoring and counseling system, with 3 indicators. 2) Indicator model The developed cultural diversity management model was consistent with the empirical data with $\chi^2=90.257$, P-Value=0.0521, Df=70, RMSEA=0.026, SRMR=0.030, CFI=0.996 and TLI=0.993. 3) The cultural diversity management model in extra-large schools in Nakhon Ratchasima Province consisted of the model name,

principles, objectives, goals and driving mechanisms that were appropriate, feasible and beneficial at the highest level. And Zhang Xiao Yuan and Zhang Li (2025) on The Teaching Quality of Adult Education of Kunming University The results show that the content of adult education courses positively affects the teaching quality, while the curriculum design goals affect the teaching quality of Kunming University. It was found that the curriculum design goals, and curriculum design standards are important interrelated factors, indicating that a comprehensive approach to improving the curriculum content can lead to better alignment and implementation of the curriculum design goals and standards. The curriculum design standards affect the teaching quality of Kunming University. It was found that the overall approaches to improving the quality of adult education are: 1) strengthening the construction of essentials for teaching quality; 2) strengthening the construction of discipline, curriculum, and teaching materials; and 3) strictly inspecting the teaching quality.

3. The results of the research objective 3 found that the importance of comprehensive policies, multicultural education, support for cultural identity, intercultural communication, and teachers' cultural competence in promoting academic environments are interrelated and important factors for the management of cultural diversity for ethnic minority students. By designing a future through the ethnographic futures research (EFR) technique, a model of cultural diversity management of ethnic minority students in universities in Yunnan Province can be created. This is consistent with the research of Choomsak Inrak (2014) on Educational Management in Multicultural Society for Mountain Students of Primary School at Northern Marginal Area. The research results found that the educational management approach requires schools to cooperate with communities to organize various activities to be successful and beneficial to ethnic children in the community. Developing teachers to have knowledge and understanding of local cultures to be able to integrate them into teaching and learning. Relevant agencies must support a sufficient budget to develop the quality of education for ethnic children to have educational opportunities equal to students in urban communities.

## Knowledge from Research

This research demonstrates the interrelated nature of these factors, starting with clear and equitable policies, leading to multicultural instructional design, identity

promotion, development of intercultural communication skills, and training of educational personnel, to create inclusive educational environments for ethnic minority students in universities.

**MODEL OF CULTURAL DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT FOR ETHNIC MINORIT STUDENTS**

- Educational Equity and Policy Support
- Multicultural Education and Culturally Responsive Teaching
- Promotion of Cultural Identity and Sense of Belonging
- Cross–Cultural Communication and Engagement
- Cultural Competence and Professional Development of Teachers
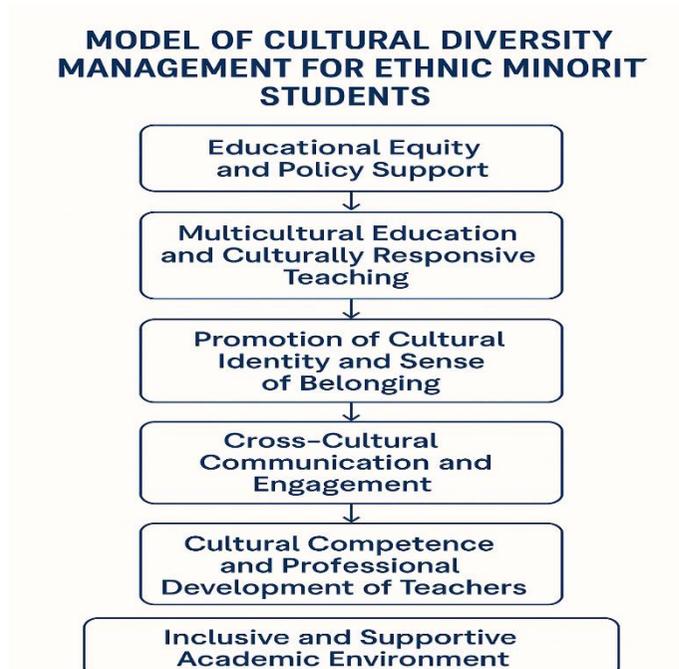- Inclusive and Supportive Academic Environment

Figure 1 Knowledge Derived from the Research

## Conclusion and Recommendations

Research Results, The study on Cultural Diversity Management for Ethnic Minority Students in Yunnan Province's universities reveals that overall, the level of cultural diversity management is high. Both administrators and teachers acknowledge the importance of promoting educational equity, cultural respect, and integration through inclusive policies, culturally sensitive curricula, and supportive campus environments. Measures such as multicultural education, fair enrollment policies, teacher training, and cross-cultural collaboration projects are effectively implemented. Particularly, activities that enhance students' cultural confidence, identity, and participation — like ethnic cultural festivals, multicultural dormitories, and curriculum integration — are widely practiced and seen as impactful.

Moreover, the findings highlight that institutional support, including multicultural policy enforcement, resource allocation, and leadership development, plays a critical role in sustaining an inclusive educational environment. Teachers and

administrators agree that multicultural teacher training, the establishment of dedicated cultural offices or resource centers, and the inclusion of cultural indicators in performance assessments contribute significantly to reducing cultural inequalities. These initiatives promote not only student adaptability and belonging but also help preserve ethnic heritage while encouraging innovation and mutual understanding in a diverse academic community.

From the research results, the researchers have the following recommendations:

Based on the research findings, the study proposes that policymakers in Yunnan Province intensify efforts to foster educational equity and cultural inclusion through comprehensive policy reform and institutional collaboration. It is recommended that specific support policies be developed in line with national education reform strategies and ethnic unity regulations, particularly by allocating greater funding to minority demonstration zones and establishing special development funds for ethnic minority students. These efforts should be accompanied by differentiated enrollment policies that prioritize underrepresented groups in border regions and promote bilingual education aligned with the province's ethnic language regulations.

In terms of curriculum development and campus culture, the integration of ethnic knowledge and values should be encouraged through localized multicultural courses, interdisciplinary research, and the promotion of Chinese cultural identity. Higher education institutions are encouraged to organize cultural festivals, traditional skills workshops, and symbolic cultural displays on campus. The use of ethnographic future research (EFR) methodologies should be promoted in academic settings to deepen understanding of evolving cultural identities. Cross-cultural competence can also be strengthened through peer support programs, training initiatives, and collaboration with ethnic scholars and professionals, creating inclusive learning environments.

To ensure sustainable implementation, it is further recommended that universities adopt dynamic evaluation mechanisms such as a "National Cultural Integration Index" and develop collaborative models with local governments and ethnic communities to build internship and cultural exchange platforms. Teachers' multicultural literacy should be enhanced through targeted training and immersive field experiences. The study also suggests applying the proposed cultural diversity

management model in practical settings—through curriculum design, institutional policy-making, and a compiled casebook of best practices. A "Five-Dimensional Model of Cultural Diversity Management" could serve as a guiding framework, while a policy proposal urging the inclusion of "ethnic cultural competence" in teacher evaluations may be submitted to the Yunnan Provincial Education Department.

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