

Research Review on Adult Education in Ethnic Minority Areas of China

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Abstract—Since the reform and opening up, adult education has rapidly developed, but with the completion of the historical mission of adult education, how to break through the bottleneck of its own development has become a hot research issue today. However, China is a multi-national country and there are differences in the development of adult education among different ethnic groups in different regions. This paper focuses on the frontier ethnic minority regions in China and summarizes the research results of adult education in ethnic minority areas in recent decades in order to guide the future research of adult education in frontier ethnic minority regions.

Keywords—adult education; minority areas; literature review

I. INTRODUCTION

As a typical multi-national country, China's economic and social development embraces its own characteristics and cannot be copied. In case of China wants to develop, it must follow the road of socialism with Chinese characteristics in the new era, and the realization of this goal needs the unity and cooperation of all Chinese nationalities. In the article "Diversity and Integral Structure of the Chinese Nation" published by Mr. Fei Xiaotong who elaborates on the concept of "Diversity and Integral Structure of the Chinese Nation, including: on the one hand, it affirms that the Chinese Nation is the general name of 56 contemporary Chinese nationalities, and on the other hand, it believes that "the Chinese Nation is a self-conscious national entity, which stemmed from the confrontation between China and the western powers in the past hundred years." Therefore, although the population of ethnic minority areas only accounts for 8.41% of the total population of our country, the value of intangible cultural heritage and cultural customs inherited by various ethnic groups is beyond measure. In the report of the Nineteenth National Congress, Secretary Xi Jinping once again emphasized the importance of sticking to "cultural self-confidence", which means that sticking to traditional national culture is the basis for the survival and development of a country and the accumulation of civilization. However, the most important medium for achieving cultural heritage and cultural output is education, at the same time, education is also the most important intermediary agent to maintain national stability, convey national spirit and consolidate national unity. Among them, the most important contribution is the adult education of ethnic minorities. Its flexible teaching methods of time and space have trained many outstanding minority cadres

and outstanding technical talents from all walks of life, which have contributed to the development and prosperity of minority border regions.

II. RESEARCH STATUS

In China National Knowledge Infrastructure, 243 papers are got through searching the topics with "ethnic minorities" and "adult education" as keywords. In accordance with the visual analysis function of China National Knowledge Infrastructure, the research results on the direction of basic education in this field are the most, totaling 174 articles, in fund category projects, the research results of national education science planning are 6 articles in total. Among them, the Minzu University of China is the research institution that publishes the most relevant literature in this field. According to the number of cited literature, it can be found that the most cited literature is the "Summary on the Party's and the State's Ethnic Minority Education Policies since the Third Plenary Session of the Eleventh Central Committee" published by Yang Jun who come from the Northwest Normal University in 2005, with a total of 44 cited times. The retrieved literature titles are imported into NoteExpress for classifying and we can find that the types of literature retrieved are 4 newspaper articles, 5 conference papers, 49 dissertations and 185 Journal articles. By visual analysis of all the literature from 2010 to 2017, we get the keyword collinear network. At the same time, it is found that the research contents on adult education of ethnic minorities mainly focuses on teachers' continuing education and bilingual teachers' training. Through bibliometric methods, this paper sorts out and analyses the current research results of adult education for minority nationalities, and obtains the actual and objective research situation in order to provide a reference for subsequent researches.

A. Literature Distribution Time

Combining with the data of the selected samples, this paper gets the historical scale map of publication of adult educational research in minority areas, as shown in Figure 1. According to the annual publication time of the retrieval literature, the time from 2005 to 2009 is a high-incidence period of the gradual increase in the publication of the literature in this field. This period mainly summarizes the development of this field, and most of the literature focuses on the achievements of teachers'

continuing education and adult education in minority areas of China. From "Fig. 1", it can be seen that since the peak of literature publication in 2009, the related research literature about this field has been declining continuously. The main reason is that the context term of adult education itself is still seeking its own positioning, it has not been able to form a

systematic education system so far, which leads to the weakening of the relevant theoretical research foundation. Along with the regional educational research in ethnic minorities have strong regional limitations, so the research on the direction of adult education in minority areas has been in a marginal state.

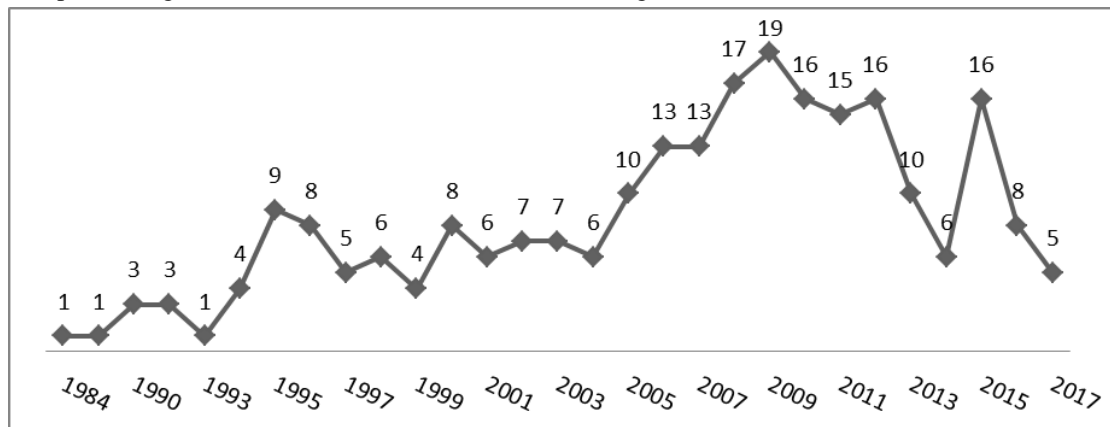


Fig. 1. Quantity chart of annual publications.

B. Centralized Distribution of Literature Publications

In NoteExpress, this paper statistically classifies the sources of the literature and counts the top ten publications by using the data filtering function in Excel, as shown in "Fig. 2". It can be seen from the figure below that the publication of the relevant literature in this field ranks first is the publication of the Journal Ethnic Education Research. At the same time, in China National Knowledge Infrastructure, this paper retrieves the relevant literature published in the top four journals in this field, and got the total cited amount of each journal: the number of cited literature about this research in National Education Research is 67 times; the number of cited literature about this research in Continuing Education Research is 49 times; the number of cited literature about this research in China Adult Education Research is 8 times; The number of cited literature about this research in Continuing Education is 12. In the journal, the most cited literature is the article "Summary on the Party's and the State's Ethnic Minority

Education Policy since the Third Plenary Session of the Eleventh Central Committee" published by Yang Jun who comes from Northwest Normal University in Qinghai Ethnic Studies in 2005. The total cited number is 44 times, which is far higher than the total cited number of the third and fourth journals. This article sufficiently summarizes the process of educational policy changes in ethnic minority areas in China, which provides a reference for later researchers in the relevant fields of ethnic minority areas. The article mentions that since the adoption of the Decision on Reform and Development of Adult Education in December 1986, under the guidance of policies and guidelines, adult education in minority areas has initially established a multi-channel, multi-specifications and multi-forms national adult education system to train middle and primary practical talents, with independent adult schools as the main body and other educational institutions participating in. However, with the shrinking of adult education market, the construction of adult education system for ethnic minorities is also facing a major crisis.

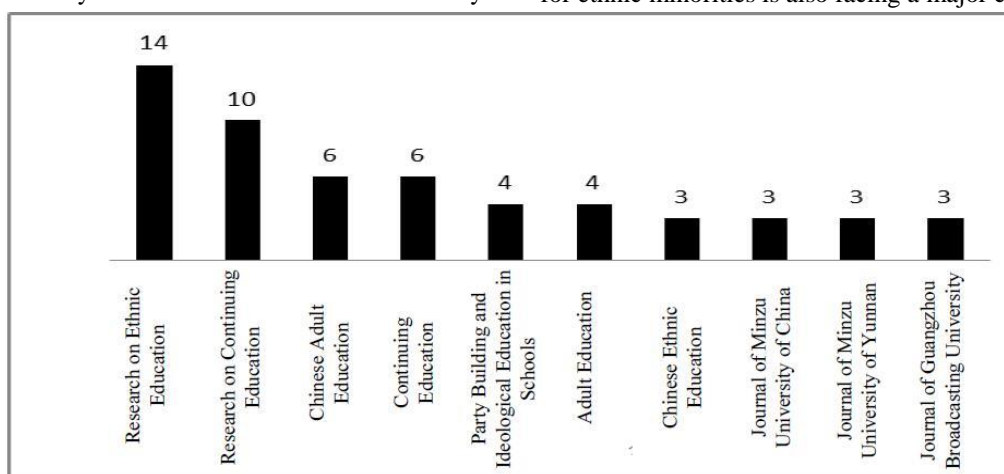


Fig. 2. Quantity chart of journal publications.

C. High Frequency Keywords

This paper rearranges the keywords of each article of 202 literature retrieved from China National Knowledge Infrastructure by using the sorting function of EXCEL, with the total number of keywords being 1144 and the number of different keywords being 670. In NoteExpress, this paper statistically analyzes the keywords of the literature and obtains the frequency of each keyword. By using Donohue's formula of high-frequency and low-frequency word boundaries, this paper calculates the boundary points of high-frequency and

low-frequency words in the searched literature keywords, with the threshold value of high-frequency keywords being 25.88 and being about 26. However, only "adult education", "continuing education" and "ethnic minorities" in the obtained high- frequency word are more than the threshold value of 26. The frequency of other keywords is below 26, which lacks operability and cannot reflect the connection degree of keywords in the literature about this field. Therefore, this paper intends to use keywords with frequency greater than or equal to 5, with a total of 30 for listing, as shown in "Table I".

TABLE I. HIGH-FREQUENCY KEYWORDS

Keywords	Word Frequency	Keywords	Word Frequency
Continuing Education	56	Current Status	7
Ethnic Minority	38	Communist Party of China	6
Adult Education	29	P.E. Teachers	6
Ethnic Minority Areas	23	School	6
Ethnic Areas	20		5
Cadre Education	12	Human Resources Development	5
Nation	12	Adult Higher Education	5
Subject of Rights	11	Anti-Literacy	5
Countermeasures	10	Teachers	5
	10	Education	5
Ethnic Adult Education	10	Xinjiang	5
Continuing Engineering Education	9	Ethnic Education	5
Women Education	9	Ethnic Universities	5
Adult Higher Education	7	Economy	5
Rural Adult Education	7	Vocational Education	5
Ethnic Higher Education			

After sorting all keywords and combining two into one group, this paper obtains two columns of data in Excel. The matrix table of 23*23 is obtained by analyzing the keyword Co-word matrix with the data perspective table in Excel, as shown in "Table II" (Partial). From the analysis of the complete keyword Co-word matrix, the research direction of

adult education in minority areas is mainly focused on the current status of teachers' continuing education in minority areas, the anti-literacy campaign of adult education in minority areas, cadre education in minority areas and the related research on the current status and countermeasures of continuing education in minority areas.

TABLE II. KEYWORDS CO-WORD MATRIX (PARTIAL)

Counting items: Keyword 1	Keyword 1						
Keyword 2	Adult higher education	Adult higher education	Adult education	Counter measures	Women education	Cadre education	Continuing education
Adult Higher Education		2					
Adult Higher Education	2						
Adult Education							
Countermeasure			1				3
Women Education							
Cadre Education							
Continuing Education				2			
Teacher				1			
Education							
Economy							
Nation							
Ethnic Adult Education		1					

III. THE PREDICAMENT OF ADULT EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT IN ETHNIC MINORITY AREAS

Adults are the main body of the construction of minority areas. The key to the development of western minority areas is to improve the quality of adults and train high-level technical personnel. However, the key to improve the quality of adults is to develop adult education in this area. However, the backwardness of the economy in the western minority areas, some deep-rooted views that are formed by traditional customs and communication barriers caused by different languages all restrict the development of adult education in minority areas. Therefore, under the influence of international multiculturalism and the new background of industrial restructuring and upgrading, it is particularly of great importance to improve the quality of workers and absorb professional and technical talents from all walks of life. Adult education of ethnic minority needs to play its own space role, helps practitioners to continue education, and improves the overall quality and technical skills of practitioners in minority areas. As an area with weak general language in China, the training of bilingual teachers is an important guarantee for the realization of bilingual education. However, the training work of bilingual teachers is systematic and professional, which requires adult education to be able to adapt to local conditions and circumstances and integrate local customs, culture and language background to match the characteristics of bilingual teachers' learning when it conducts the teacher's education. However, this form of education is often referred to as teacher continuing education rather than adult education, so on the other hand, it can be reflected that the context term of adult education is often unacceptable to the public, which is also a restriction on the development of adult education in minority areas. As a solid backing for the development of adult education, the government should pay more attention to basic education in minority areas. Since the founding of the People's Republic of China, the curriculum reform of national basic education has been carried out eight times at the national level, and the related policies of adult education are few. This phenomenon has become a barrier to the development of adult education in ethnic minority areas. Therefore, the barrier to the development of adult education in ethnic minority areas is not only the impact of the whole social environment, but also restricted by the national policy supporting, market macro-control and the change of adult demand in minority areas. All those are all the difficulties that minority adult education needs to face in seeking development.

IV. RESEARCH CONTENTS OF ADULT EDUCATION IN ETHNIC MINORITY AREAS

A. Research on the Education of Minority Cadres

In the book "Ethnic Issues in Marxist-Leninist Theory and Strategies", Professor Connor elaborates on Stalin's ethnic theory from various perspectives. Up to now, this book has influenced the national policies of many socialist countries, of course, including, the training of minority cadres in China. In the article of the role of boarding schools for ethnic minorities during Vietnam's reform period: educational policy for ethnic minority cadres in the 1990s and "Plan 7", Ito Weifan analyzes

the great significance of "Plan 7" to the training and education of ethnic minority cadres. In "Education Work for Minority Cadres Before the Founding of the People's Republic of China", Shen Guiping systematically summarizes and analyzes the train of thought, methods and feasible ways of cultivating minority cadres at that time with the beginning of the founding of New China as time division point. In the "Outline of the Reform of Cadre Education and Training 2010-2020", it is also pointed out that grass-roots cadre education and training should be strengthened, and support for cadre education and training in Western and ethnic areas should be strengthened. Maslow, a famous American psychologist, believes in his theory of self-actualization that self-actualization occurs more often in "older people", which also shows that adults should shoulder on the important task of realizing "comprehensive and full thematic research on administrative and legal development". Adult education should guide adult learners to complete the process of affirming themselves, creating themselves and surpassing themselves. Therefore, a large part of the literature is about the research of direction of minority cadres' education and training courses. The purpose of the research is to optimize the overall structure of cadres' quality, improve the overall quality of minority cadres' individual and groups, and settle the problem of insufficient reserve force of minority cadres. In order to train minority cadres, we need to establish a cadre education and training system. When referring to the training courses, many scholars said that the minority cadres' education and training should fully draw on and absorb the basic theoretical viewpoints and practical experience of adult curriculum development, and follow the basic rules of adult curriculum development, which is conducive to standardizing the process of cadre education and training curriculum development, thus ensuring the scientific development of cadre education and training curriculum, and improving the effectiveness of the curriculum.

B. Research on Anti-literacy Education for Ethnic Minorities

In 1953, the Working Committee on the Elimination of Illiteracy of the Government Administration Council issued a "Notice on Interim Measures for Anti-Literacy Standards, Anti-Literacy Graduation Examinations", etc. According to the Notice, anti-literacy standards are as follows: cadres and workers can generally be defined as those who can know common words, read popular books and newspapers, and write 200 or 300 words of applied essays; farmers are generally defined as those who can read common words, generally read popular books and newspapers, and write commonly used notes and receipts; urban working people are generally defined as those who can read and write common words, and reading and writing standard refers to the standard workers and farmers. In 1950, the Party and the government convened a national conference about workers' and peasants' education and decided to carry out anti-literacy education. The climax of such a large-scale anti-literacy campaign lasted until the end of the 1950s. During this period, the government has opened various types of internship schools, and the anti-literacy work has achieved remarkable results. Adult education focusing on anti-literacy is carried out from all over the country, which adheres to the anti-literacy policy of "one sweep, two block and three improvements". On the one hand, we should focus on anti-

literacy; on the other hand, we should pay attention to practical technical training after casting off illiteracy. In 1965, UNESCO first put forward the concept of "functional anti-literacy" at a meeting of educational ministers from all over the world in Tehran, Iran. "Functional anti-literacy education is a deep-level education for those who have basically reached the original standard of cast-off illiteracy, or who have attained the level of non-illiterate culture through primary and lower general education, but still does not meet the actual needs of modern social life and self-development. After training, they can adapt to the needs of modernization as soon as possible and become new educated, skilled people with strong social awareness and participation capabilities. According to the new anti-literacy standards, scholars have also begun to explore the teaching methods of anti-literacy education in ethnic minority areas. When summing up the experience of anti-literacy education, they have proposed that we should use national languages to eradicate illiteracy and implement bilingual teaching. The implementation of bilingual teaching is of great significance, which is a tool to build national confidence, an effective way to improve the teaching quality of national education, and a necessary means to preserve and transmit the excellent traditional culture of ethnic minorities.

C. Research on the Training of Bilingual Teachers of Ethnic Minorities

Since the State Council promulgated the "Decision on Deepening Reform and Accelerating the Development of Ethnic Education" in 2002, the State's support for bilingual teacher training in ethnic minority areas has been more concrete, mainly reflected in institutional support and financial support. The document pointed out that "the training and development of bilingual teachers should be the key point in the construction of teaching body in ethnic minorities and Western regions, and a qualified bilingual teacher rank should be built, and bilingual teaching in ethnic primary and secondary schools should be vigorously promoted". [7] In response to the phenomenon of weak teachers in underdeveloped border areas of China, "Opinions of the Central Committee and the State Council of the Communist Party of China on Fully Deepening the Reform of Teachers' Team Construction in the New Era" in 2018, which was emphasized that "the training of bilingual teachers in weak disciplines, special education and ethnic areas should be strengthened."¹ Many scholars have focused their attention on Xinjiang. Among them, the most frequently cited article is "The Development of Xinjiang Ethnic Education and the Practice of Bilingual Education", published by Ma Rong of Peking University in 2008. This article makes a detailed summary of the development of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region's bilingual education. It also elaborates on the phenomenon of the shortage of bilingual teachers among ethnic teachers and bilingual teachers. This article also emphasizes the importance of learning Chinese in minority areas. However, some studies have shown that most of the teachers are not very enthusiastic about bilingual teachers. For

example, in the article "Design and Implementation of Evaluation of Training Effectiveness of Minority Bilingual Teachers in Xinjiang Primary and Secondary Schools" published by Yang Jianhong and Zhang Hongyan in 2017, a large-scale evaluation of bilingual education teacher training has been carried out, but its evaluation effect is not favorable. In survey, 32.7% of the teachers expressed different degrees of unwillingness to engage in bilingual education, so how to improve the enthusiasm of bilingual teachers and develop reasonable training courses for bilingual teachers has become the focus of this period of research. In view of the shortage of bilingual teachers and the low quality of bilingual teachers, some scholars have proposed to construct a new model of minority teachers' education. "The proportion of teacher education courses should be 20% of general culture courses, 40% of subject courses, 20% of education theory courses, 10% of education skills courses and 10% of education practice courses." Focus on the cultivation of their lifelong learning ability and habits, innovative learning and inquiry teaching ability in order to the future bilingual teachers have self-improvement awareness, professional developmental ability. As a result, they can continue to develop in teaching and grow into expert teachers.

V. CONCLUSION

From the current acquired literature, the research contents of adult education for ethnic minorities mostly focus on the direction of teacher education. There are few researches on how ethnic minority teachers integrate with multiculturalism in cross-cultural context and how to improve their teaching enthusiasm. Adult education of ethnic minority starts late and is in the marginal zone. The teaching practice degree of the overall research results is generally not high, and speculative research accounts for the vast majority. From the point of view of the whole research progress, basic theoretical research and applied research stand side by side. In the research of adult education for ethnic minorities, there are also some researches on adult education for ethnic minorities abroad. For example, "The Development of Contemporary American Adult Education for Ethnic Minorities" published by Chang Yongcai in Chinese National Education in 1999 introduced the current situation of American adult education for minorities. However, with the advancement of the times, although there are some research results on the development of adult education abroad, there is a great lack of research on adult education for ethnic minorities, which leads to some domestic scholars' paradoxical though on the developmental status of adult education for ethnic minorities abroad. Of course, the complexity and sensitivity of adult education of ethnic minority themselves are also the reasons for the marginalization of this kind of research, and the breadth and depth of its research are not as good as other types of education. Nevertheless, with the constant changes in China's education policy and the rise of ethnic education, the research on adult education of ethnic minorities will become more and more diversified in the future. Researchers will also find new ways to develop adult education of ethnic minorities by constantly adjusting research directions.

¹ Source: The Opinions on Comprehensively Deepening the Reform of Teacher Team Construction in the New Era issued by the CPC Central Committee and the State Council.

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