

## Chapter 2

# Chinese Education for Ethnic Minorities: Achievements and Experiences Since the Founding of New China



Since the founding of new China, the country changed from a poor country to a powerful country with well-developed politics, economics and culture. In the past 60 years, with the leadership and great support from the Chinese Communist Party and Government, Chinese ethnic educational work has witnessed significant achievements, such as gradual improvement and development of education policies, school conditions, teacher quality, school national unity education, bilingual education, teaching quality, training of high-level talents of ethnic minorities, among others. “Learn from the past, think now, and look to the future” (Ma, 2010) is the essential content and link for the study of ethnic education. It provides reference and guarantee for maintaining the promotion of national unity, as well as strengthening the sustainable development of the education of ethnic groups and national regions.

As part of the superstructure, as well as general education, ethnic education must keep up with the development of the times. Ethnic education is an important component of Chinese education, and so is the important content of national work in China. Its development degree is not only related to the development of children, ethnic minority areas, and Minzu, but also the important indicators for building a harmonious society in China’s regions. Ethnic education is thus a major education issue and is also a crucial political question (Chen & Li, 2010). As a unified multiethnic country, besides Han Minzu, there are other 55 ethnic groups in China; customarily, these other groups are referred to as “ethnic minority groups” (Liu, 1986). In 2011, the sixth national population census showed that China’s ethnic minority population of 113,792,211 people accounted for 8.49% of the national total population. The Han Minzu population increased by 66,537,177, an increase of 5.74%, while the ethnic population increased by 7,362,627, an increase of 6.92%, compared with the fifth national census of 2000. Ethnic groups in China are mainly distributed in Inner Mongolia, Xinjiang, Ningxia, Guangxi, Tibet, Yunnan, Guizhou, Qinghai, Sichuan, Gansu, Liaoning, Jilin, Hunan, Hainan, Taiwan, and other provinces. There are five national autonomous regions, 30 autonomous prefectures, and 120 autonomous counties in China. Ethnic areas have many outstanding characteristics in China, such as numerous Minzus, diverse ecological cultures, complex terrain of mountains and rivers mainly in rural and pastoral areas, sparse populations, disperse

distribution of inhabitation and aging economic development (Ma & Guo, 2009, pp. 10–12). During their long history of development, ethnic groups have gradually been characterized by “big mixed, small settlements, mutual crisscross lives” (Sude, 2003) in mutual exchanges and flows.

Since the founding of new China, under the leadership of the Party and the government and the work of all Minzu people, China has established strong ethnic education systems including preschool education, basic education, higher education, and vocational education. Education policy and education quality of ethnic educational work have all witnessed remarkable achievements. “At present, the main content of the national education research in our country includes ethnic education policy, the relationship between the traditional ethnic group culture inheritance and school education, the reform of basic education curriculum in ethnic minority areas, bilingual teaching in ethnic minority areas, ethnic unity education and other central issues” (Chen & Li, 2010). Making an objective summary of the achievements and experience of Chinese ethnic education development in the last 60 years not only can deepen our understanding of national education, but also can provide reference and methods for promoting the development, reforms, and research of ethnic education; meanwhile, in view of the current main difficulties and problems of ethnic education research, more accurate development strategies and countermeasures can be provided.

## **2.1 Chinese Ethnic Education Policy Development and Achievements**

In the past 60 years, since the founding of new China, in order to safeguard the equal rights and interests of ethnic education, to keep the development of the education level, to adapt to the new situation of Reform and Opening-up as well as the demand of the information age, considering from the reality of the characteristics of ethnic minorities and national regions, the Chinese government made a series of new ethnic education policy constantly, providing a strong guarantee for stable and rapid development of China’s ethnic education work.

### ***2.1.1 The Development Situation of Chinese Ethnic Education Policy***

Before the founding of new China, China’s ethnic education level was very backward. Modern education was almost non-existent, and the education level of ethnic minority people was low. During the Cultural Revolution, the ethnic education and ethnic education policy of the country experienced a political “baptism,” which not only did not lead to any development but got backward. Until the end of the 1980s, “the

views on strengthening the ethnic education work” which was issued by the Ministry of Education and the State Ethnic Affairs (2003) positioned the recovery and the development of ethnic education policies and major principles, as the most important national education policy document to guide and promote the ethnic education work. In more than 60 years, ethnic education policy developed and changed with the attention and guidance from the party and state, with the concerted effort from all people of Chinese ethnic groups. Most laws point out the related provisions to support and help ethnic education, such as “The constitution of the People’s Republic of China,” “the regional national autonomy law of the People’s Republic of China,” “The education law of the People’s Republic of China,” “The decision on deepening reform to speed up the development of national education,” “The decision of the state council on accelerating the development of the national education” and “The ethnic minority preparatory class of common colleges and universities, ethnic minority class management approach (trial),” “The national system of ethnic minority primary and middle school Chinese course standard (experiment draft),” and “The ethnic education ordinance” for provinces and autonomous regions (such as “The ethnic education regulations in Heilongjiang province” and “The new regulations on the education of Inner Mongolia autonomous region”). The central and local education administrative departments at all levels set up special ethnic education management institutions in carrying out the national education policy, specialized processing of the special problems of ethnic education; the central and local governments set up special funds for the education development in ethnic minorities regions. Under the guarantee and guidance of all kinds of ethnic education policy, the ethnic education work has proved to be successful: The illiteracy among young and middle-aged adults is strongly and massively eliminated, and the knowledge acquired by ethnic group people has significantly increased.

## ***2.1.2 Achievements of Chinese Ethnic Education Policy***

### **2.1.2.1 Improvement of Ethnic Education Policy System**

Before the founding of new China to Reform and Opening-up, the main contents of the ethnic education policies in China were to strengthen the training of ethnic minority cadres, especially political cadres; to set up ethnic education subsidy funds; to set up special ethnic education management organization; to make ethnic minorities preferential policy in student recruitment; to attach great importance to the study and application of ethnic minority languages; and to encourage multiple forms to develop minority education (among others). After the Reform and Opening-up policy, the government developed the effective content of the original works in the ethnic education policy. At the same time, a lot of new national education policies were proposed in all aspects of ethnic education, such as the implementation of high-level backbone talents of ethnic minorities, the cultivation of high-level talents for ethnic minorities and national regions. The Tibetan middle school, Tibetan class, Xinjiang

senior high school classes started to be held in the Mainland, increasing support for Tibet and Xinjiang education. The following support was also to be provided: organize and utilize the education and quality education resources in economic developed areas to help and promote the development of education in minority region; give special support to ethnic education in areas with relatively lower populations, education in special areas, girls' education in poverty-stricken areas; promote modern distance education in ethnic minorities and national regions; increase funding for ethnic education through various channels; strengthen both the construction of ethnic Chinese teaching and teaching materials and the education of ethnic teachers and education administrative management cadres training (among others). The national education policy system, which includes preschool education, basic education, vocational and technical education, adult education and higher education, and it is the national education system with Chinese characteristics and provides a strong guarantee for the sustained, healthy, and coordinated development of China's ethnic education (Chen & Chen, 2010).

### **2.1.2.2 Improvement of Aims and Measures on Ethnic Education Policy**

A very important goal of ethnic education policy is to narrow the gap between ethnic education and the national average education, in order to safeguard the equal rights and interests of ethnic education and improve their ability to adapt to the mainstream of social life. To achieve this goal, the state adopted special policies and measures, such as setting special ethnic education funds, targeted students recruitment and other measures, strengthening the cultivation of teachers in various schools in the alpine areas, mountain and pastoral areas, and border areas, establishing national colleges and universities, mainly for the students of ethnic minorities, recruiting minority students in common colleges and universities in lowered scores policy and preferential admission policy, implementing bilingual teaching. "The decision of the state council on deepening reform to speed up the development of ethnic education" and related policy documents explicitly put forward: adhering to the basic nine-year compulsory education and basically eliminating illiteracy among young and middle-aged adults. These documents promote the development and improvement of ethnic education system including preschool education, basic education, vocational and technical education, adult education and higher education, maintain and protect the equal education rights and interests of ethnic minorities educators, and stick to adjust measures to local conditions (Dong, 2009). The national education reform and development should be promoted realistically, in the development planning, reform steps, goals and objectives, language teaching, curriculum and educational system arrangement, and so on. They further strengthen the support to education of ethnic minorities and national regions, raise national education funds through various channels, increase investment to the national education, strengthen education counterpart support work and policies and measures of teachers construction, further define bilingual education policy, promote Chinese language learning of minority students, actively promote the development of modern distance education in ethnic minorities and national areas,

and energetically strengthen the national unity education policy measures (Gao, 2010, pp. 26–28).

### **2.1.2.3 Legalization of Ethnic Education Policy**

China has developed a large number of ethnic education laws, regulations, and normative documents according to the actual situation and characteristics of different national regions and ethnic groups, especially “The decision of deepening reform to speed up the development of the ethnic education” issued by the state council and “The minority education ordinance” by the provinces, “The 13th Five-Year Plan” issued by national education career is put forward. At the same time, the drafting of the minority education basic law was also made, “The national minority education law” and related series of policies, to strongly promote the process of the construction of Chinese ethnic education and ethnic education policy, to promote education justice, to provide an important basis for China’s ethnic education policy and regulations construction, also to mark the ethnic education policies in China gradually to develop in the direction of legalization, and to mark that our country has initially formed the prototype of the ethnic education law system (Zhang, 2009).

In short, during the past 60 years, China’s national education policy construction has obtained the obvious result as a whole, but in terms of scientific decision-making, there is still a long way to go. Since “The national medium and long-term education reform and development plan outline (2010–2020)” and “The state council decision about accelerating the development of ethnic education,” national education policies have made good progress in both policy practice and academic research. In order to further play the role of guarantee and lead of national education policy, to deepen and improve the ethnic education reform, development, and quality, the following aspects should be clarified and promoted: the goals of ethnic education policies; solutions for ethnic education; moving from ethnic education policy to ethnic education laws and regulations; the implementation of ethnic education policy and research on ethnic education policy theory.

## **2.2 Chinese Ethnic Education Disciplines Development and Achievements**

The Chinese ethnic minority education discipline was founded in the early 1990s. The creation benefited from the Reform and Opening-up eras, also from the academic contribution of many scholars who contributed groundbreaking theories for the formation and development of the discipline.

### ***2.2.1 Definition of the Discipline***

The definition of the discipline must be the first step to set up any subject, which is a gradual process. Professor Ha Jingxiong (2009), who expounded the ethnic higher education discipline in the book “Chinese Ethnic Higher Education,” argues that China’s national higher education is the study of higher education phenomena in various periods and aims to explore the general rule of their occurrence and development of discipline. In 1996, in “The Constitution and Present Situation of National Education Discipline System,” Ha and Teng pointed out that “national pedagogy is a discipline studying the education rules of every ethnic group with different cultural backgrounds of a multiethnic nation.” At the same time, the paper mainly discusses the particularities of ethnic education. Education science and national science are the dual nature of ethnic education. This definition laid an important foundation for China’s national education theory. Today, the conceptual definition and theoretical development of ethnic education are gradually improving.

### ***2.2.2 The Establishment of Ethnic Education Basic Knowledge System and Discipline***

In 1990, Sun edited a volume entitled “An overview of ethnic minority pedagogy in China,” which focuses on macro research on Chinese minority education, involving both ethnic education subject ontology research, such as the research object, task, characteristics, the scope and methods of national education, and relationship problems between ethnic education and external aspects such as the relationship between ethnic education and the geographical environment, society, population, culture, politics, economy, science and technology, law, religion, language, customs, art, philosophy, psychology. It includes both the internal status quo of ethnic education of different types and different levels, the overall reform and development, such as ethnic education system, ethnic basic education, ethnic higher education, vocational and technical education, ethnic adult education, and also includes school education and teaching in ethnic education micro areas, such as ethnic school education and teaching problem of moral education, intellectual education, physical education, aesthetic education and “bilingual teaching.” The advent of this book is for two aspects of significance for the development of national education; the first one is a systematic summary of the ethnic education research and practice, and the other is the preliminary basis for further research on ethnic education. This was the first time that a book systematically expounded the basic knowledge and framework of the discipline. Based on the founding of national higher education disciplines, Professor Ha Jingxiong, Huo Wenda, Meng Lijun, and others plunged into the exploration of relevant theory on national higher education. In 1991, Ha, Chief Editor of “The Higher Education of Ethnic Minorities in China,” systematically expounded the related concepts, the discipline nature, research object and research methods of

national higher education, and systematically developed knowledge about China's national institutions of higher learning education from the system structure, the training goal of the national colleges and universities, teachers and students, teaching and scientific research as well as ideological and political education, and constructed the basic framework of national higher education system. Since then, Ha and Teng (1996), Co-Editors of "The General Theory of National Education," wrote about the basic knowledge and basic framework of the discipline from the concept of national education, development history, discipline nature, research objects, and research methods.

### **2.2.3 Related Research Achievements of Minzu Education**

#### **2.2.3.1 Major Research Projects**

Ethnic education theory is an important part of the disciplinary development of ethnic education. There are both theoretical and practical significance for the development and guidance of new China's ethnic education. The basic theory of ethnic education is an important theoretical basis for the subject, and it is also an important area of ethnic education research, which achieved fruitful research results.

The main projects of ethnic education research were led by the following researchers: *Professor Ha Jingxiong*, Project Leader of "The development of the western region and China's reform and development of minority education research" (2001 national key subject of the national education science "fifteen" plan) as well as Project Leader of "The national education science 'fifteen' national planning" and "The national education subject guide," etc; *Sude*, Project Leader of "a major problem research on Inner Mongolia national basic education" (The key subject of the national education science "Fifteen" plan), "The national education quality assurance and characteristic development research" (The key subject of national social science fund in the Eleventh Five-Year Plan in 2008), "The present situation investigation and countermeasures research on ethnic basic education of village and herding area border" (National key subject), "The Chinese minority basic education policy research" ("The development of Chinese culture and the partnership" program for United Nations educational, scientific and cultural organization and Spanish development fund) and "The Sino-Japanese comparative study on the problem of ethnic minorities education in the process of urbanization in east Asia" (joint declaration with Japanese Metropolitan University) and "The study on implementation and model of bilingual education policy in ethnic minority areas" (The major project of national social science fund), "Research on problems of bilingual education and ethnic relations in Xinjiang Province" (The united front department entrusted task), etc; *Professor Wan Minggang*, Project Leader of "The curriculum development research for poverty-stricken ethnic minority areas in northwest China" (The humanities and social science research project of ministry of education), and "The compulsory education and 'Two Basic' crucial track research of ethnic

minority areas” (The humanities and social sciences key research projects of education ministry) and “The problem and countermeasures of education development in western China after the implementation of free policy” (The national social science fund and education science project), etc; *J. Wang*, Project Leader of “The research on priority development policy of minority education under the background of the western development”; *Teng*, Project Leader of “The national education theory and policy research in the new period” and “China’s new ethnic minorities script in the education teaching application research,” etc; *Professor Chen Lipeng*, Project Leader of “The research on theoretical issues of minority education in China” (The national education science “Eighth Five-Year” Planning subject), “The research of ethnic minority education legislation of China” (The Ninth Five-Year Plan project) and “The legislative study of leap-forward development for basic education in ethnic regions” (The key subject of education ministry), etc. This series of major issues is just the tip of the iceberg in the study of China’s ethnic education today. In addition, many experts, scholars, and national education workers are giving priority to the “field” research methods, and to explore solid practices (Ma, 2007; Sun, 2009; Teng & Li, 2010).

### 2.2.3.2 Major Publications

In the late 1990s, two books brought together research results about national education. The first one is entitled “Tibetan education research” co-edited by Geng and Wang (1998), while the other is “The national education reform and exploration” co-edited by Geng and Wang (2001). “The pedagogics overview of ethnic minorities in China” as the national key project research achievements for Seventh Five-Year Plan marks the formation of national pedagogy as an independent discipline. Wang (2004), editor of “Chinese border ethnic education” and “The studies of Chinese minority education theory,” the former book is the first systematic monograph on frontier ethnic minority education since the founding of new China, and the latter aimed to explore the basic theoretical issues of national education. Ha and Teng (1996), chief editors of “The general theory of ethnic education,” summarize the main research field of national education, namely the basic theories of national education, national education development and academic achievement attribution theory, and introduce the theory of intercultural education, the relationship of natural, social, ecological environment and national education, national education law and policy, the national education system and management, the foundation of national early childhood education, national basic school education, national higher education, the national vocational education, ethnic normal education, ethnic adult education, national education research methods, multicultural society and multicultural integration education. Many studies also rely on extensive data collected during fieldwork as is seen in the following volumes: Teng, chief editor of “The anthropology of education series” (a total number of more than 40 volumes today); Zha, chief editor, Sude, deputy editor of “The encyclopedia of Mongolian study, education section”; Sude,



chief editor of “the Chinese border ethnic education theory” and “China’s minority education policy research series,” “The national education policy: qualitative research and case analysis” (seven volumes), “The China education encyclopedia (four volumes), national education volume,” “a new vision of national education series” (six volumes), and “the study of multicultural education: globalization and localization”; Meng, chief editor of “The historic leap—supernormal development of national education and development of national regions,” “New China’s national education policy research,” “An introduction to the new China’s national education theory”; Zhong, chief editor of “the cross-border ethnic education research”; Wan, chief editor of “The research on children’s psychological development and education of ethnic minorities in the northwest,” “Northwest ethnic minority education research series”; J. Wang, chief editor of “The national education,” “The multicultural comparative study,” “The study of ethnic minority education policy system in China,” J. Y. Wang, chief editor of “The present situation and countermeasure research of basic education development in China northwest minority areas.”

During this period, national education research has made a large number of important scientific research achievements in areas such as basic theory research, applied technology research and has made a number of landmark achievements in aspects of ethnology, anthropology, national theory of policy, national history and culture, minority language and information processing. They largely impacted academia at home and abroad. During the period of “China 15 years planning,” colleges and universities won 108 state-level scientific research projects, including 36 projects from the national natural science fund and 68 projects from the national social science fund; 144.05 million yuan of scientific research funds; 1769 textbooks and 19,080 papers were published (Chen, 2016). At the same time, a large number of outstanding and influential experts made a major contribution to China’s national education.

### 2.3 Chinese Ethnic Education Research Achievements

There is no education quality without scientific research, let alone national education science development. Since the founding of new China 60 years, especially since the fifth national educational work conference in 2002, national education and scientific research have made remarkable achievements, which have played an important role for the scientific development of national education.

### ***2.3.1 The National Education Research Field Is Expanding with an Increasing Number of Scientific Research Achievements***

The content of national education research includes from a vertical level, preschool education, basic education, higher education, vocational education and continuing education, etc.; from a horizontal level, the basic theories, policies and regulations, national education and teaching management, teacher development, Minzu unity education, bilingual education and cultural heritage, national psychology and cross-cultural studies. There are a lot of fruitful research achievements, such as the “Education Dictionary” (national education booklet); Han, chief editor of “The history of ethnic minority education in China” (four volumes). There are also a lot of research results related to practice, such as “The bilingual teaching guidance of preschool education” published by the Beijing Education Science Research Institute. This last book played an important role in teachers’ training work and the quality promotion of preschool bilingual education in Xinjiang Province.

### ***2.3.2 Growing Scientific Research Teams and Institutions***

National education scientific research personnel are mainly distributed in national colleges and universities, the national education institute of the central and local governments, education management institutions of autonomous regions and minority areas. These include theory researchers and department workers. In recent years, in order to strengthen national education and scientific research, the state established a national education development center of the education ministry, and at the local level, such as the Xinjiang ethnic minority’s bilingual education research center, the Guangxi national education development center (Ye, 2010). At present, China has a good national education research network, with education research institutions in the central government, provinces (autonomous regions and municipalities directly under the central government), and counties, with ethnic colleges and universities, colleges and universities in regions, and research institutes of ethnic education at comprehensive universities.

### ***2.3.3 The Service Capacity for Guidance and Coordination of Scientific Research on Ethnic Education Is Improving***

In 2012, the ministry of education established the ethnic education development center and established a national ethnic education scientific research plan (2014–2020). It is pointed out that “in accordance with the unified plan of the ministry

of education, to strengthen national research guidance function of the education development center of the ministry of education, overall planning, coordination, and guidance; to carry out ethnic education major theoretical, policy, and real problem research.” In addition, it also formed the national minorities education expert committee, and set up ethnic education research projects, relying on relevant universities and research institutions to establish 16 major research bases for projects of ethnic education policy, laws and regulations, ethnic psychology and education, ethnic education development and high-level talents cultivation, ethnic minority maths and science education, ethnic minority bilingual education quality inspection, school ethnic culture inheritance and innovation, etc.

In short, the development of China Minzu education and scientific research plays an important role in guiding the efficient development of this type of education, which made an overall integration with the existing scientific resources as well as effectively improved the service and country’s decision-making ability about Minzu education and scientific research. For further development of Minzu education, education and scientific research should strengthen the guidance and improvement effect of significant theoretical innovations to practice, lead primary and secondary school teachers to be actively involved in experimental research and action research; facilitate the trans-regional, cross-sectoral, interdisciplinary integration of Minzu education scientific research resources and strength, strengthen Minzu education scientific research information communication, actively promote and share research results (Zhang, 2011, pp. 168–172).

## **2.4 The Different Stages of Development and Achievements of Chinese Ethnic Education**

### ***2.4.1 The Achievements of Minzu Elementary Education Development***

The aspects of quality of basic education in Minzu regions, teaching contents, methods and means, students’ academic achievement have improved greatly. Furthermore, great achievements have been made in aspects such as infrastructures, the school layout adjustment, and the construction of campus cultures. The rapid development of Minzu education has made a significant contribution to economic development and all-round social progress, strengthening national unity and maintaining social stability and national unity in ethnic minority areas.

#### **2.4.1.1 Considerable Increase in Educated Population and Basic Formation of a System of Minzu Education**

Minzu education has made outstanding achievements at various stages in the last 60 years, for example a large number of Minzu schools have been established. According to statistics provided by the Ministry of Education and the State Ethnic Affairs (2003) and Sude, Yuan, and Luo (2016), in 2001, the Minzu students in all schools have reached 19.4888 million, a growth of 39% compared to 1991 (average college student growth of 189%, secondary specialized school students 131%, secondary normal school students 20%, the average high school student 83%, vocational school students 52%, primary school students 20%), the illiteracy rate of youth is significantly lower. Statistics show that, in 2007, all kinds of schools in Minzu regions (including colleges and universities, secondary schools, primary schools) amount to 70,457, basically achieved the goal of universal nine-year compulsory education and of eliminating illiteracy among young and adults. The number of ethnic minority college students increased from 36,000 in 1978 to 1.07 million in 2006. There are more than 10,000 schools using a minority language or bilingual teaching in 13 provinces and autonomous regions. According to statistics, by 2014, Minzu students in schools of all types and all levels reached 25.01 million, and accounted for 9.9% of the number of students in the country (3.47 million ethnic minority children, accounting for 8.6%; primary school students 10.59 million, accounting for 11.2%; junior middle school students, 4.77 million (10.9%); high school students 3.45 million, accounting for 8.9%).

#### **2.4.1.2 Increased Spending on National Education**

Since 1990, the government has set up Minzu education subsidies dedicated to the development of Minzu education. During the period of the Ninth Five-Year Plan (1996), the central government set up a “National compulsory education program for poor region” with a budget of 3.9 billion Yuan. 2.2 billion was invested in the 12 western provinces and districts where minorities concentrate and where the “nine-year compulsory education program” is more difficult to implement; “Minzu poor region compulsory education grants” were invested 130 million yuan in ethnic minority areas, funding for the poor family children’s schooling issues. The Government arranged four periods of loan projects for the development of basic education in poverty-stricken areas, and \$200 million key support to 200 counties of the western Minzu regions in China. From 1996 to 2001, Treasury bonds and other special expenses were all used for the implementation of the Minzu education project for poverty alleviation, such as the “211 Project,” the key campus network construction in western China, the development of secondary vocational education and ordinary high school education development in western China, the mainland Tibet and Xinjiang high school class projects, the investment funds for national and western region with a total of 5.368 billion Yuan (Zhou, 2004). In two years, the central government allocated 3 billion for the reform of primary and secondary school buildings, and 5

billion as compulsory education special fund for Western minority areas during the period of the “15-Year Plan,” and thus, conditions of ethnic minority education were improved considerably (Weng, 2003).

### 2.4.1.3 New Achievements for the “Two Basics” Program

Under the support of the state, through the implementation of the national poor region compulsory education program, the dangerous house renovation project of rural middle and primary schools has established boarding schools, promoted bilingual teaching, establishing mainland Tibetan classes, Xinjiang high school classes, and used advanced resources of developed areas, such as teachers and teaching resources, to support the development of education in ethnic minority areas (Chang, 2007, pp. 49–51). Based on local conditions, ethnic areas adopted flexible and varied forms of teaching, speeded up the popularization of compulsory education, greatly improved the operating conditions of primary and secondary schools in ethnic minority areas, and improved the teaching quality in ethnic minority areas. By the end of 2001, there were 699 county-level administrative units of national autonomous areas in China, 358 counties of them had achieved the “Two Basics” target, accounting for 51% of the county-level administrative units in national autonomous areas (Sude, 2003).

China’s “Two Basics” program has made great achievements and helped to achieve the goal of universal nine-year compulsory education and basically eliminating illiteracy among young and adults. Before 1949, the national school-age children enrollment rate was only 20%, and population illiteracy rate reached 80%. The education duration of people older than 15 years was only 1.6 years on average; in general, people’s education level was very low (Liu, 1986). Since the Reform and Opening-up in China, in 1985, “Decision on Reform of the Education System” was issued by the government, which first proposed the implementation of nine-year compulsory education. Then “The compulsory education law” and “The literacy work ordinance” were promulgated, which made clear that the implementation of the nine-year compulsory education and eliminating illiteracy among young and middle-aged adults was officialized as laws. On the basis of the preliminary realization of “Two Basics,” three key events helped promote education development and education justice:

The first thing was the implementation of the “Two Basics” plan in western China. More than 400 county-level administrative regions which had not implemented the plan were mainly concentrated in the western minority areas in China (Yan, 1999). Since the region’s economic development lagged behind and the natural conditions were poor, the status of the education foundation was weak, the government spent tens billions yuan to ensure the renovation of rural primary and secondary school buildings, the construction of boarding schools in rural areas, of rural primary and middle schools modern distance education and other important education projects. In 2007, the “Two Basics” crucial program was completed, and in rural areas, especially rural schools, conditions in the western region as well as the weak condition of the

compulsory education foundation have been improved significantly. Nowadays, in China, the best construction in remote mountain area is to be found in schools.

The second thing is the full implementation of free compulsory education across the country. In 2003, the government published a special policy for Midwest rural students who were in compulsory education and with heavy economic problems. The policy is mainly for exempting all kinds of fees, providing free textbooks and subsidies for accommodation cost, and it would gradually put into the whole country. In 2008, all cities began to implement the free compulsory education plan, with more than 100 million school-age children or adolescents who need not pay for school (Xu, 2009).

The third achievement is the establishment of the system of student aids. Through the perfection and the implementation of the national system of grants, scholarships and student loans, help is provided for students with family economic problems, ensuring that they will not interrupt their studies for economic reasons. At the same time, they encourage social participation, providing greater support for students with family economic problems. From 2006 to 2011, the national financial investment increased from 5.36 billion yuan to 6.74 billion yuan, and total investment reached 242.95 billion yuan; the central government investment increased from 2.01 billion yuan to 3.17 billion yuan. The whole society investment that amounts for student aids is 363.88 billion yuan. In 2011, for the whole country, the provincial administrative region, and all administrative units are at the county level. This changed China's basic education and realized a historical leap in the development of education (Sude, 2013).

By implementing the national mechanism reform for ensuring adequate funding for rural compulsory education, all the tuition and fees of student at the compulsory education stage are free in ethnic minority areas, since public funds of rural elementary and middle schools are all guaranteed. Under the strong support of the party and the state, with the efforts from the government and education workers, the "Two Basics" plan have made significant achievements in ethnic minority areas and trained a large number of talents from ethnic groups.

#### **2.4.1.4 Education of Ethnic Full-Time Teachers**

Since the founding of new China, the state has adopted a series of measures to help educate and train teachers in ethnic minority areas, such as universities, primary, and secondary schools in developed regions to support teacher training, and encourage teachers from the mainland to teach in ethnic minority areas. At the same time, Minzu teachers can take short training courses, exchange education management and teaching experience, and take short-term positions in the mainland universities, in-service training and through other measures. According to "Decisions on Further Strengthening Ethnic Education" (2015), since 2000, the state has implemented comprehensive quality training for primary and secondary school teachers in minority regions; nearly, 400,000 teachers from 17 provinces and areas have participated in the training, and teachers' comprehensive quality improved significantly. By 2001,

the total number of full-time teachers in different types of Minzu schools has been 950,000, which basically met the need of the full-time teachers of Minzus in quantity and quality. By 2014, the total number of full-time teachers in different types of Minzu schools was 1.29 million, accounting for 8.6% of full-time teachers of all level schools.

#### **2.4.1.5 Further Attention to Be Paid to and Strengthening of “Bilingual Teaching”**

According to the laws, “bilingual teaching” can be used in national primary and secondary schools and kindergartens of Minzu autonomous areas. At present, the total number of Minzu preschool and primary and secondary schools is more than 13,000. Bilingual teaching is available to 21 Minzus and in 29 languages. In 2015, the implementation of bilingual education in basic education took place in 100,000 classes, for more than 4,500,000 students, by 235,000 bilingual teachers (Decision on Accelerating the Development of Ethnic Education by the State Council). In some areas, people are carrying out the “three words” teaching experiment for ethnic, Han and foreign languages. For example, more than 100 professionals teach bilingually in colleges and universities of the Inner Mongolia autonomous region. In parts of ethnic colleges and universities, Minzu professional master’s and doctor’s degrees authorization centers also have been set up. In order to ensure that the Minzu language teaching goes smoothly, state and local governments have set up special subsidies for Minzu written materials. At present, the total number of annual published Minzu written materials is more than 3500 types, the total amount being than 100 million copies (Decisions on Further Strengthening Ethnic Education by the State Council 2015).

#### **2.4.1.6 Effective Education Support and Partnerships**

Since 1992, the former state education commission and the State Ethnic Affairs Organization in Shanghai, Guangdong, Beijing, and other 13 eastern provinces and cities have organized support with 9 provinces (such as Inner Mongolia, Yunnan Province, and so on), 143 Minzu poverty counties, and given assistance and support, by means of teaching instruments and equipment, training education management personnel and backbone teachers, guidance and education teaching reforms (Sang, 2001). Under the personal concern of the state council leaders, since 2000, the “two engineering” (school-to-school support and urban-to-rural support) has been implemented in the eastern and western regions, and increased support for Minzu education. Recently, according to the requirements of the fourth central Tibet meeting, 15 provinces, cities of the mainland will directly support the seven cities of Tibet on education work (Ma, 2010). From 1992 to 2001, the totaled education support funds, teaching equipment, and training for Minzu regions were 160 million yuan;

over 38,000 children aid in ethnic minority areas, training more than 15,000 primary and secondary school teachers, training 4898 education management cadres. Tibetan schools in 20 provinces and cities have totally enrolled more than 20,000 junior middle school students, more than 10,000 technical secondary school students, junior college students, high school students, and more than 3000 college students in 16 years, existing school students have reached more than 13,000 people, and nearly 10,000 college graduates have been to Tibet (Wang, 2002, pp. 80–83). Since 2000, Xinjiang high school classes have been set up in the key high schools of 12 cities, recruiting 2000 students (Sang, 2001). During the “Twelfth Five-Year” period, the national 528 projects have been implemented to support Xinjiang education, backing 148 Tibet education projects and 86 Qinghai education projects, whose total investment is 120 million. The ethnic minority classes have been set up in junior middle schools, high schools, vocational schools, prep classes, colleges, and graduate student education (Sude, 2013).

#### **2.4.1.7 The Minzu Unity Education of Primary and Secondary Schools Is Particularly Effective**

The party and government have always attached great importance to strengthen a Marxist view, religion, and education of party’s Minzu policy, and religious policy for all ethnic group people. According to the relevant requirements of the party and state, from our country population distribution characteristics and the actual conditions of ethnic relations, in 1994, the former state education commission and the State Ethnic Affairs Commission began to carry out the national unity education activities in Minzu primary and secondary schools, to make primary and secondary school students have further understanding of Chinese history, Chinese traditional culture, to strengthen the ethnic students’ self-consciousness to maintain national unity and oppose separatists. Education activities have played a very important role to enhance the cohesion of the Chinese nation.

### ***2.4.2 Development and Achievements of Higher Education for Ethnic Minorities***

#### **2.4.2.1 Expanding the Capacity of Universities**

According to the government (2009), there were only 9 universities for ethnic minorities in China in 1979 with only a total number of 7300 students. By 2007, the number of students in 13 universities for ethnic minorities nationwide reached more than 190,000. In 1999, the number of full-time students in the six universities for ethnic minorities supervised by State Ethnic Affairs Commission was 22,096, and the total number in 2007 reached 10 million, an increase of 3.5 times. The enrollment



range of universities for ethnic minorities expanded to 31 provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities, where the proportion of minority students accounted for about 65% of all the students. As of 2015, there were 1.99 million ethnic minority college students, accounting for 7.8% of all the students national wide. There were 18 universities and colleges for ethnic minorities, and other 220 colleges in Minzu autonomous areas.

#### **2.4.2.2 Educational Levels Have Been Gradually Raised**

After years of construction, universities and colleges for ethnic minorities made progress from a single level to a multieducational level, including not only undergraduate, junior colleges, Minzu prior education and cadre training, but also doctorate or master's degrees, vocational education, overseas, and adult education. Before the Reform and Opening-up, no school for ethnic minorities had been named "University." However, today, 12 of all the 18 colleges for ethnic minorities have been renamed "Universities," of which 12 universities have the authority of granting master's degrees, 8 universities doctoral degrees. The universities and colleges supervised by the State Ethnic Affairs Commission have 189 master's degree programs, 27 doctoral degree programs, and 7 postdoctoral research centers (Chen, 2016). Minzu University of China has been selected into the national "211 Project," "985 Project" and "Double First-rate" research universities, which means the overall strength of Minzu institutions has been enhanced gradually.

#### **2.4.2.3 The Structure of Academic Disciplines Is Increasingly Optimized**

In order to meet the needs of the modernization of ethnic areas, the structure for majors of the universities and colleges for ethnic minorities gradually changed its direction of development from the humanities before the Reform and Opening-up to liberalization and integration. While maintaining the advantages of traditional disciplines, universities and colleges for ethnic minorities increased the range of various applicability majors. In 2000, universities and colleges for ethnic minorities supervised by the State Ethnic Affairs Commission set up 147 undergraduate majors (Jin, 2002, pp. 118–120). Until the end of 2007, they opened 11 disciplines covering 301 undergraduate majors. In addition, they set up 2 Minzu key disciplines, 3 Minzu scientific bases, 41 key disciplines at provincial level, and 37 key laboratories of provincial and ministerial level (Jiang, 2009). All of these have basically formed a distinctive and rational layout of the major system.

#### **2.4.2.4 Teacher Quality Has Been Enhanced**

The total number of full-time teachers in China's universities and colleges for ethnic minorities was only 2100 from the founding of P.R. China to the Reform and Opening-up (Peng & Jin, 2010). By the end of 2007, there were 9000 full-time teachers in these universities, and 5154 full-time teachers in universities and colleges for ethnic minorities supervised by the State Ethnic Affairs Commission. Teachers with a senior professional position accounted for 44.06%, and with postgraduate degrees 40% (Wang, 2009).

#### **2.4.2.5 Education Quality Has Improved Significantly**

Universities and colleges for ethnic minorities set the task of improving the quality of education and teaching as the center of school work, and constantly deepen the curriculum, teaching content, teaching methods, personnel training methods and the school internal management system and other aspects, in order to strengthen the basic construction of teaching, as well as comprehensively promote quality education. By 2008, all the universities and colleges for ethnic minorities supervised by the State Ethnic Affairs Commission have passed the assessment work of undergraduate education by the Ministry of Education. 6 of them were assessed as excellent. Hundreds of thousands of graduates educated at universities and colleges for ethnic minorities work in different parts of the country, most of them go back to ethnic areas and play an important role for meritorious deeds, to promote Minzu economic construction, scientific and technological progress, cultural prosperity, and social stability. According to the statistics of 2007, the employment rate of graduates from universities and colleges for ethnic minorities was over 80%, and the employment rate of graduates is over 95% (Wang, 2007).

#### **2.4.2.6 Fruitful Scientific Research and Results**

Since the founding of the P.R. China, universities and colleges for ethnic minorities have gradually changed from teaching only to paying equal attention to teaching and scientific research work, which not only improved the interaction between teaching and scientific research, but also has contributed a large number of important scientific research results in basic theoretical research, applied technology research and other areas. Research has been focused especially on major theoretical and practical issues in the ethnic minorities' areas. A number of landmark results have been achieved in ethnology, anthropology, national theory and policy, national history and culture, minority language, information processing (among others). These results and achievements have had a great impact on the academic community in China and abroad. In the "Tenth Five-Year" period, universities and colleges for ethnic minorities supervised by State Ethnic Affairs Commission completed 108 state-level scientific research projects. The National Natural Science Foundation of China and the

National Social Science Fund reached 36 and 68 respectively among all the projects. The research funds were 14.405 million yuan, 11,769 textbooks and monographs, and 19,080 academic articles were published (Ministry of Education, 2012).

#### **2.4.2.7 Significant Improvement of School Conditions**

The conditions for running ethnic colleges have changed from below standards to substantial improvements. The state has increased its investments in infrastructure, teaching and research in colleges and universities for ethnic minorities every year. Funding for universities and colleges for ethnic minorities supervised by the State Ethnic Affairs Commission has increased from more than 200 million in 1999 to 1.22 billion yuan in 2007. The total area of all campuses reached 3.21 million square meters, and the total assets of teaching and research equipment reached 796 million yuan. The general collection of books reached 8.26 million, the number of teaching computers to 24,131, and students' capacity in multimedia classrooms reached 102,675. The teaching space, student living facilities, sports venues, and campus ecological environment have also been greatly improved. More than half of the universities and colleges for ethnic minorities have been built or are building new campuses.

#### **2.4.2.8 Further Improvement of Special Policies and Measures for Universities and Colleges for Ethnic Minorities**

According to the needs of the development in the western region and the modernization of the ethnic areas, in order to speed up the training of ethnic minority professionals, the Chinese government has adopted the measures of "Extra entrance scores enrollment for the minority candidates," "Preparatory course," "Targeted enrollment" and "Targeted distribution," to increase the training quality for ethnic minority talents. By 2001, more than 100 colleges and universities in 17 provinces have run preparatory classes and ethnic classes, with the enrollment amount of more than 11,000 (Zhou, 2004). As to the policy for undergraduate and graduate students' enrollment, the government has taken the measure of "Priority admission with same conditions," "Extra entrance scores in admission" and other measures for ethnic candidates to create more opportunities for their further studies. At the same time, the state has offered college enrollment indicators to ethnic minorities and the western region, raising the enrollment rate of ethnic minority students. In order to further strengthen the construction of disciplines and the cultivation of high-level talents in minority areas, the state has taken full account of the characteristics of ethnic areas and adopted a policy increasing the disciplinary scope and indicators in universities and colleges for ethnic minorities, authorizing some provinces in the western regions to approve the authority of awarding master's degrees by themselves. At present, the relevant provinces and districts of the western region have more than 70 doctoral degrees,

about 700 master's degrees; more than 20 colleges and universities with a doctoral degree-granting authority, 53 colleges and universities and scientific research institutions with a master's degree-granting authority (Zhang, 2011, pp. 187–189). Inner Mongolia University, Yunnan University, Guangxi University, Xinjiang University and Yanbian University and five other universities have been selected into the “211 Project.” In addition, in order to support the development of Minzu traditional medicine, Tibetan medicine and Mongolian medicine have been added to the subject directory. Meanwhile, the state gives a strong support for the construction of colleges and universities in the ethnic minorities and the western regions. These measures have strongly supported the development of higher education for ethnic minorities.

#### **2.4.2.9 Status, Function and Distinctive Features of Universities and Colleges for Ethnic Minorities**

The characteristics of colleges and universities are continuously and gradually distinct. In order to meet the needs of ethnic areas, universities in China have actively implemented Minzu policies and cultivated a small number of ethnic minority talents in colleges and universities, which are of great significance and obvious advantages in the whole higher education system. These universities have achieved the overall improvement of the education of all ethnic groups. Facing the impact and challenges of modernization on Minzu culture, the state has made a lot of achievements mainly in the mission of Minzu education, the educational function of Minzu culture, the significance and path of school education inheriting Minzu culture, and reflection of Minzu culture by local and school-based curricula.

### **2.4.3 Ethnic Vocational Education**

#### **2.4.3.1 China Attaches Great Importance to the Development of Relevant Policies and Structures**

“The Twelfth Five-Year Plan for Chinese National Education Development” (2012) pointed out: “A number of vocational colleges and majors, with features of protecting the heritage of Minzu culture and art, folk art, especially intangible cultural heritage, should be supported.” China has always attached great importance to the comprehensive development of the economy in ethnic minority areas, with particular emphasis on education which played a significant role in economic and social development in ethnic areas. Moreover, with the development of social modernization in ethnic areas and the deepening of reforms, the topic of vocational education in ethnic minority areas has become the focus of social discussions.

Since the foundation of P.R. China, vocational education has always accompanied development and reform. China is fully aware of the important strategic function of

vocational education for the development of the entire economy and society, especially in ethnic minority areas. Therefore, the state promulgated a series of laws and regulations. “Vocational Education Law of People’s Republic of China” implemented from September 1 in 1996 clearly pointed out: “The law is formulated according to the education law and labor law in order to implement the strategy of rejuvenating the country through science and education, developing vocational education, improving the quality of workers, promoting socialist modernization. This law is an important part of China’s educational progress, and an important way for economic and social development as well as employment. The law clearly mentioned support to the development of vocational education in ethnic minority areas.” The “Policy of speeding up the reform and development of vocational education in ethnic areas,” issued on July 28, 2000, by the State Ethnic Affairs Commission and the Ministry of Education pointed out: “The development of vocational education is the necessary and effective means for achieving two fundamental changes and improvement of the quality of workers for ethnic minorities and in ethnic areas.” Since the Reform and Opening-up, ethnic minority education has developed by leaps and bounds. There have been a number of effective and model vocational schools, which have promoted the development of the local economy and society and eliminated poverty for ethnic minorities.

#### **2.4.3.2 Gradually Expand the Capacity of Schools While Increasing the Quality of Education**

In 1997, the number of students enrolled in secondary vocational schools in most of the ethnic minority areas in the west regions was 50% lower than the total number of students enrolled in all middle schools (Yan, 1999). The overall quantity and the scale were relatively small. The level of vocational education structure, school layout, and mode of school running cannot meet the needs of economic construction and social development in ethnic areas. In recent years, with further and deepened reform of the vocational education system, management system and operational mechanism, the phenomenon of neglecting vocational education gradually disappears. School capacity, conditions, educational quality, and school efficiency have been further improved (State Ethnic Affairs Commission & the Ministry of Education, 2000).

In 2002, “The decision on the promotion of vocational education reform and development by State Council” pointed out: “Since the Reform and Opening-up, China’s vocational education has been greatly developed. All vocational schools at all levels of education and vocational training have made remarkable achievements, with training and cultivating a large number of high-quality workers and practical personnel for the socialist modernization construction.”

### 2.4.3.3 The Formation of a Comprehensive School System

China's national vocational and technical education has developed rapidly, to achieve the construction plan for county-level vocational education center. There has been flexible innovation, such as "6 plus 1," "9 plus 1," and comprehensive high school (among others), which has led to the social development of ethnic areas.

## 2.4.4 *Development of National Unity Education*

The state has promoted Minzu theory and policy, Minzu laws and regulations and Minzu basic knowledge in the whole country. The experience of both history and reality has proved that the unity of all Minzus is an important guarantee of the unification of the state, political stability, economic development and social progress.

The CPC and the State Council have always attached great importance to Minzu unity education in schools. Since 1994, the Ministry of Education and the State Minority Committee have issued a number of documents to guide this work, and put forward specific programs and perspectives for it. In November 2008, the General Office of the Ministry of Education and the General Office of the State Ethnic Affairs Commission issued the "Guidelines for the Education of National Unity in Schools (Trial)" to further clarify the guiding ideology, objectives and tasks, and the main contents of carrying out and strengthening the work of national unity education. "The decision on accelerating development of Minzu education by the State Council" (2015) has clearly put forward the "establishment normalization mechanism for national unity education" for the first time in the form of the State Council documents. The document has also constructed the school national unity education system completely. It also offers comprehensive guidance for the content of national unity education, curriculum system, teaching modes and methods, teaching materials and teaching resources development, teaching supervision and other aspects. It has made arrangements in particular for the national unity education curriculum in a variety of schools at all levels. It is a necessity and complement of the national unity education curriculum system to offer the party's national theory and policy courses in colleges and universities, vocational colleges (including higher vocational schools and secondary vocational schools). Based on national unity education, each ethnic minority student can deepen their common sense of the history of the motherland, and constantly enhance their identity as Chinese, so as to maintain and safeguard national unity, as well as promote the common progress of all Minzus and prosperity of the motherland. National unity education in schools has been discussed and formulated in 2017.

In short, the maintenance of national unity is the prerequisite for national solidarity, prosperity, social harmony and scientific development. Considering today's new social conditions, it is an important foundation and common responsibility of each citizen in the country to preserve the social stability of the country to strengthen national unity, to safeguard the reunification of the motherland and to oppose national

division. Educational administrative departments at all levels and all kinds of schools at all levels should regard the work of national unity education as an important task.

## **2.5 Overview and Achievements of Bilingual Education in China**

Bilingual teaching is the basic content and main characteristic of Chinese education for ethnic minorities. The CPC and the state have always regarded the protection of minority languages as one of the main contents of the establishment of equality, unity, mutual assistance and harmonious ethnic relations. Since the founding of the P.R. China, the issue of the use of minority languages has been clearly stated in the Constitution and the relevant laws and regulations. The implementation of bilingual teaching in minority schools is a fundamental right granted by law.

### ***2.5.1 Construction and Improvement of Bilingual Education Policy System***

Language is not only an important aspect of Minzu culture, but also the basis of Minzu identity. It affords the mission of preserving the value of traditional culture. Most of the world's multiethnic and multilingual countries have clear and specific policies and regulations on minority languages (Banks, 1994; Lee, 2002; Talbot, 2003).

Since 1980, the Chinese central government has issued a series of documents on bilingual teaching, all of which have helped with the establishment of the legal status of bilingual teaching. Bilingual teaching has now spread to the whole nation. On October 1, 1984, the "Law of the People's Republic of China on Regional Autonomy in Ethnic Areas" was enacted, which clearly stipulated that the schools that enroll students of ethnic minorities should be entitled to use textbooks of minority languages and provide lessons in minority languages, while higher levels of primary schools or middle schools should offer Chinese courses to promote Mandarin. The "Law of the People's Republic of China on Compulsory Education" promulgated in 1986 also stipulated that schools should promote the use of Mandarin. Schools mainly recruiting students of ethnic minorities can teach in minority languages. In July 2002, the "Decision on deepening reform to accelerate the development of national education," issued by the State Council, pointed out: "vigorously promote 'bilingual teaching' in primary and secondary schools for ethnic minorities, deal with the relationship between minority language teaching and Chinese teaching, and deploy 'bilingual teaching' work in the primary and secondary schools for ethnic minorities. The aim of this work is to form a minority language and Chinese teaching curriculum system in the primary and secondary schools for ethnic minorities gradually. Some

regions with better educational conditions should offer foreign language teaching. The local education development plan should include ‘bilingual teaching’ teaching materials.” At this point, bilingual teaching is no longer just teaching experiments and exploration, but it is already regarded as a kind of state activity.

In July 2010, the “National Medium and Long-Term Education Reform and Development Plan (2010–2020)” stressed the importance to strengthen support for education in ethnic minority areas, and vigorously promote bilingual teaching. “Decision of the State Council on Accelerating the Development of National Education” (2015) noted: Each educational institute should promote bilingual education scientifically and steadily. The national common language education should be unswervingly implemented combined with practice, to ensure that minority students know how to use Mandarin and minority college graduates can master it. At the same time, respect and protection of the rights of ethnic minorities to use minority languages during the education process, and the continuous improvement of the teaching of minority languages are pushed forward. In areas where common language education is weak, the local education authorities should set the understanding of both Mandarin and minority languages as a basic teaching goal, and therefore an effective connection from preschool to primary and secondary schools at all stages can be established. The teaching system should be compatible with the students’ learning abilities. Teachers and the teaching resources meet the needs of the bilingual teaching system.

### ***2.5.2 Achievements in Bilingual Education in Various Ethnic Areas***

In 1984, the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region issued a document, which added Chinese classes first in urban minority schools from the Grade 3 primary school classes, requiring minority students to both master the minority language and a certain level of Chinese until their graduation from high school, in order to initially realize the training objectives of students’ “mastering Chinese and minority language.” The Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Regions in 1980 resumed the implementation of the use of Zhuang characters, and began Zhuang culture teaching experiment in some primary and secondary schools in the Zhuang area in 1981. In 1990, the Autonomous Region decided that the management of teaching experiments for Zhuang characters should be transferred by the minority language council to the education administrative department, which meant that the Zhuang characters teaching was included in basic education. In 1987, the Yanbian Korean Autonomous Prefecture of Jilin Province made three decisions: First, the department of Minority Education Reform was established. Second, the department focused on bilingual teaching and launched the overall reform experiment for minority basic education. Third, the costs required by these reform experiments should be included in the state budget. Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region encouraged minority students to learn the use of the minority language and national common language. This area issued a series of policies to



promote Mongolian bilingual education. The policy of 12 years of free education was implemented for bilingual students learning Mongolian and Chinese. The local government also further improved the subjects for college entrance examination and scores counting method for the students learning Mongolian and Chinese together. They have also made preferential policies to promote the employment of university graduates mastering Mongolian and Chinese.

In 2017, the state issued “The guidance on strengthening the bilingual education of ethnic minorities.” The Chinese government has clearly formulated the four basic principles of bilingual teaching of ethnic minorities, six major tasks and overall goals. The four basic principles are: promoting bilingual teaching, overall planning the teaching task, highlighting the key points of teaching, guiding the teaching work according to local conditions, improving teaching quality. The policy calls for the establishment of a relatively perfect connection of preschool education, compulsory education, high school education, higher education, while linking up general education, vocational education, practical training of farmers and herdsmen before 2020. The local educational system should form a complete set of teaching mode, teaching resources, teachers, and examinations. It is conducive to the implementation of bilingual education system with ensuring quality education and innovative personnel training according to coordination of the common language education and the teaching of minority language. The overall goals have been set already, such as modern distance education in each class should be popularized, and bilingual education should develop rapidly. The stages of bilingual education should include: preschool bilingual education acts as enlightenment; compulsory education as a basis for bilingualism; while high school students can communicate bilingually, and qualified bilingual personnel training can be achieved in the higher education stage.

### ***2.5.3 Bilingual Education Is Based on a Good Teaching System***

Since the founding of P.R. China, bilingual teaching has been established as an educational model and has been continuously improved. Bilingual teaching experiments explore new methods for the education of ethnic minorities throughout the whole ethnic areas in China. According to the Middle and Long-term Education Reform and Development Plan (2010–2020), China has more than 10,000 bilingual schools, which account for about 10% of all primary and secondary schools in ethnic areas. The number of students taught in bilingual schools is more than 600 million, accounting for about 40% of all the students learning in ethnic minority primary and secondary schools. Nowadays, complete bilingual teaching systems from kindergarten level to higher educational level have been established and developed in ethnic areas to some extent. China has edited and published teaching materials for children, primary and middle schools, junior high schools, high schools, secondary professional education, adult education, vocational and technical education and national higher

education with 29 kinds of ethnic characters of 21 ethnic minority languages (Zhu, 2009). Various subjects of folk textbooks are compiled and published each year with more than 3500 kinds and more than 100 million copies (Xu, 2009). At the same time, colleges, universities and scientific research institutions have also trained a large number of bilingual teachers with different levels of proficiency, who edited and published a large number of applicable bilingual teaching materials and teaching reference books. The establishment of the “Chinese Bilingual Teaching and Research Association of ethnic minorities” is a sign that bilingual teaching research has come to a new stage of development and its formation as a discipline.

The ethnic educational experts from 14 provinces and autonomous regions gathered in Guangxi Province in May 1979 for the conference of “Chinese language teaching experience exchange in colleges of ethnic minorities.” The conference declared the establishment of the “Chinese Teaching Research Association for All College of Ethnic Minorities.” In 1983, the association was renamed as “The Chinese Teaching Research Association for Ethnic Minorities.” The name was changed in 1985. The Bilingual Education Committee was under the management of the Ministry of Chinese Minority Education in 2012. The committee and association have become the links for the discipline construction and development of bilingual education. Their research formed the theoretical framework for the bilingual education discipline, and promoted the development of bilingual teaching. Until now, the Bilingual Education Committee of the Ethnic Minorities and the Bilingual Teaching and Research Association for Ethnic Minorities have also held Minzu bilingual education conferences from time to time.

#### ***2.5.4 Ethnic Bilingual Education Has an Important Status and Role***

The implementation of bilingual education was to safeguard the national security and to achieve long-term stability. To protect and develop minority languages and apply them to the practice of bilingual education is conducive to enhancing minority people’s sense of belonging to the Chinese culture. It is helpful to improve the centripetal force and cohesion of ethnic minorities and enhance the consolidation and stability of the country.

##### **2.5.4.1 The Implementation of Bilingual Education Provides an Effective Way to Inherit and Protect Minority Languages and Cultures**

Each language does not only preserve the social memory of a Minzu, but also embodies the spiritual will and cultural centripetal force of a given Minzu. Therefore, the protection of a language is actually equivalent to protecting a culture.

### **2.5.4.2 The Implementation of Bilingual Education Is to Serve Local Socio-Economic Development Requirements**

Bilingual education cultivates a number of talents not only “for the world, for the country, for the future,” but also “familiar with the local conditions and serve the local people with wideness insight” in ethnic areas for a long term (Yin, 2005, pp. 65–66).

### **2.5.4.3 The Implementation of Bilingual Education and the Need for the Development of Individuals**

It is more conducive to the employment of students and improvement of post-employment training in the future through enhancing the overall quality of ethnic students through bilingual teaching. It has been proved that it is more powerful and of great benefit for the growth of the individual when each ethnic student can learn Chinese well on the basis of learning their own ethnic minority language. Therefore, it is of great significance to strengthen research of ethnic bilingual education, which is an important part of Minzu education and the social development of ethnic minority areas. Bilingual education has gradually become the focus of the reform and development of minority education. Bilingual education has made great achievements in Mongolian in Northern China, in Korean Minzu in Northeast China, in Uygur Minzu in Northwest and Southwest China, Tibetan Minzu, and each ethnic minority in Southwest China. However, the development of bilingual education in various provinces, autonomous regions and ethnic minorities is extremely uneven and the difference is significant (Sude, 2013).

## ***2.5.5 Achievements in Bilingual Education Research***

Since the founding of P.R. China for more than 60 years, China’s ethnic bilingual education has made remarkable achievements. Not only a large number of topics have been focused on, but also a lot of works have been published. Monographs and articles published on the topic include “Minority Education in China in the twentieth Century—Theory, Policy and Practice” (2002), “Cultural Changes and Bilingual Education—Fieldwork and Text Compilation of Educational Anthropology in Liangshan Yi Community” (2001) and “Objects, characteristics, contents and method of Chinese Ethnic Bilingual Education Research” (1996) written by Teng; “Chinese national conditions and bilingual education” (1996) written by Dai and Dong; “Status and development trend of Chinese Minority Bilingual Education” (1998) written by Dai and Guan; “A Study on the Development of Running a School in Ethnic Universities” (2015) written by Lv; “Mongolian and Chinese Bilingual Education Research: from theory to practice” (2016), “Bilingual Education for Ethnic Minorities: Experience, Problems and Strategies” (2017), “Development Report of Chinese Ethnic Education—Reality and Prospects: Bilingual Education in Ethnic Areas” (2017),

“Ethnic Education Policy: qualitative research and case studies” (2013), “Research on Bilingual Education for Ethnic Minority” (2004), “National Identity Education: strategic choice for the development of education in the border of Yunnan Province,” “Construction of Small Micro-schools in Ethnic Regions With the Background of Balanced Development of Education” (2016) written by Sude; “Development and Situation of Ethnic Bilingual Education Research in China For the Past 30 Years” written by Li; “Several Issues in Bilingual Studies in China’s Ethnic Areas” (1984) finished by Ma and Dai; “History and Development of Minority Bilingual Education” (2003) written by H. Y. Wang; “Research Status and Trends of Chinese Ethnic Minorities Bilingual Education” (1997) written by Chen; “A Review of the Historical Process of Bilingual Education of Ethnic Minorities in China (2009) written by Li. “Chinese Ethnic Minorities and Education—theory, policy and practice in the twentieth Century” written by Teng. There is a comprehensive introduction to solve the country’s bilingual education in the “Chinese National Conditions and Bilingual Education,” which follows the principles of bilingual education, calling for the establishment of bilingualism and bilingual education policies with Minzu characteristics from the perspective of Minzu reality and the bilingual laws that conform to their own Minzu conditions.

All ethnic groups in Chinese history have made their own important contribution to the scientific protection of ethnic minority languages. It has important theoretical and practical significance for us to study the bilingual education of ethnic minorities carefully, when we inherit and carry forward Chinese cultural traditions, promote the development of national educational science, and enhance cultural prosperity and development as well as social harmony. The state provides strong support for the development of bilingual teachers, training, teaching and research, teaching materials development and publishing. It provides policy support for students who are enrolled in bilingual education and encourages ethnic teachers and students of Han Minzu to learn minority languages, and teachers and students from ethnic areas to learn minority languages from each other. Therefore, the establishment of bilingual education supervision, evaluation and quality monitoring mechanism can be completed. In short, through bilingual education, we can maintain the diversity of the world’s languages and cultures, promote understanding and cooperation between different ethnic groups, enable children to have equal survival skills, cultivate students to obtain a positive attitude toward different cultures and the maintenance of national unity (Xu & Wu, 2006).

## **2.6 Basic Values in Ethnic Education**

### ***2.6.1 Ethnic Socialist Education***

As an important part of Chinese education system, ethnic education must always adhere to the direction of socialist education. According to the basic tasks of the CPC

during the period of socialist construction, as well as the reality in ethnic regions, teachers and students of various ethnic groups should increase their theoretical level of Deng Xiaoping Theory, the thinking of the “Three Represents” and the education of the CPC’s basic line, strengthen the CPC’s national policy and national unity, maintain national unity with patriotism education, cultivate builders and successors for socialism with moral, intellectual, physical and aesthetic development. Great importance should be paid to ethnic education work which can play the important role of consolidating and developing the socialist ethnic relations of “equality, unity and mutual assistance” (Ha, 2009).

### ***2.6.2 Increase Investment in Education and Deepen Education Reforms***

Most of our ethnic minorities are located in the cold and poor land with poor natural conditions, weak economic basis, difficult life of farmers and herdsmen, and therefore are relatively weak in thoughts and understanding of education. To accelerate the development of education in these areas, it is necessary to increase the intensity of educational funding by government at all levels and take a policy of focusing on the needy areas. At the same time, we must speed up the pace of education reform, optimize the educational structure, adjust the school layout, improve the quality of education and school efficiency, accelerate the development of education, and promote national unity and progress with common prosperity.

### ***2.6.3 Seeking Truth from Facts and Local Conditions***

China’s ethnic minorities are not only widely distributed, but also very different in their natural environments, languages, customs, and religious beliefs. The social, economic, cultural, educational development in each region is uneven because of historical reasons. In addition to follow the general rules of education, ethnic education should also keep to its own particularities (Xiong & Yan, 2007). The development of minority education should proceed from the actualities and characteristics of ethnic minorities and ethnic areas, adopt flexible and diverse forms of running schools, and put forward different requirements according to local conditions.

### ***2.6.4 “Bilingual” and “Multilingual” Teaching***

To maintain the prosperity of a nation, we must learn excellent culture, advanced science and technology from and with each other. For ethnic minorities in China,

besides studying and using the minority language, they should also strengthen the teaching of Chinese language and actively promote Putonghua, in accordance with the requirements which are conducive to the long-term development of the nation, the improvement of ethnic quality, and promotion of scientific and cultural exchanges among all ethnic groups. Ethnic primary and secondary schools with better conditions can also offer foreign language classes to meet the needs of modernization (Yue, 2006).

### ***2.6.5 Seek Support from the Whole Nation and Developed Regions***

Due to their historical and cultural backgrounds, the economic and cultural situation in ethnic regions is relatively backward with poor bases of education. Therefore, the work of educational promotion faces difficulties (Yu, 2004). To improve this situation, ethnic areas should attach great importance to education, and vigorously implement the strategy of rejuvenating the country through science and education, overcome difficulties and accelerate the development of ethnic education. At the same time, strong support and help from the whole country as well as from developed areas are also required.

### ***2.6.6 Uphold the Principle of Separation of Religion and National Education***

Article 11 of the “Law on Ethnic Regional Autonomy of the People’s Republic of China” stipulates that: “No one shall use religion to destroy social order, impair the health of the citizens or impede the State educational system.” Therefore, no one shall engage in religious activities at school. It is the responsibility of the school to educate teachers and students on atheism and materialism so that teachers and students can establish a scientific view of the world.

We must continue to sum up the ethnic national experience in all aspects of educational theories. Ethnic education should be guided by the spirit of Deng Xiaoping Theory, the important thinking of the “Three Represents,” the scientific concept of development, the spirit of the 18th National Congress of the CPC, the spirit of the Second, the Third and the Fourth Plenary Sessions of the 18th National Congress, and the important speech of General Secretary Xi Jinping. Ethnic education should aim to protect the rights of ethnic minorities in minority areas, to improve the scientific and cultural quality of all ethnic groups, to inherit the traditional culture of the Chinese nation and to vigorously cultivate and carry forward the core values of the socialist nation. Scientific guiding ideology and educational goal should always maintain national unity and social stability (Zhang, 2011, pp. 109–111). Governmental policies

for ethnic education should be based on the reality of ethnic regions so that people of all ethnic groups can enhance their identity of the Chinese nation and Chinese culture. Ethnic education work should adhere to the leadership of the Communist Party of China, to the combination of national and regional influencing factors, to optimize educational structure and improve the quality of education, the rule of law, the actual situation and conditions in various ethnic areas. Education should also correctly understand and deal with the relationship between the intercommunity and specificity of general education and ethnic education (Wen, 2009).

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