

# **An Empirical Analysis of Casting a Sense of Chinese Community in Yunnan's Ethnic Minority Communities Relocated to Poverty Alleviation Communities**

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**Abstract.** This research project takes as a specific research target the most southwestern province of China, Yunnan (YN), which is a border province with the largest number of ethnic minorities, the largest variety of ethnic languages, and rich ethnic cultures in China. This paper examines the current situation of the ethnic minority relocation communities from a social perspective and the necessity of implementing relocation to alleviate poverty at the stage of consolidating China's overall building of a moderately prosperous society. A quantitative statistical approach is used to analyze data on the quality of life of ethnic minorities after relocating them to alleviate poverty. Literature analysis and in-depth interviews (ethnic minority college students, (EMs) university teachers, local administrators, and Yunnan provincial officials) were used to explore the rationality of forging a sense of Chinese community in relocated communities. The findings suggest that in the context of multi-ethnic Yunnan, where geographical remoteness and regional disparities, socioeconomic factors, and language barriers contribute to the phenomenon of poverty return, relocation to poverty alleviation is indeed reasonable and important for casting a sense of Chinese ethnic community.

**Keywords:** Yunnan; ethnic minorities; communities relocated to alleviate poverty; sense of community.

## **1. Introduction**

### **1.1 Overview of China and Yunnan's Ethnic Minorities**

The People's Republic of China, with Chinese civilization as its source and Chinese culture as its foundation, is one of the oldest countries in the world. China's ethnic groups have created a glorious culture, and the Chinese language and Chinese characters are commonly used. "Minorities" refers to the 55 non-Han ethnic groups officially recognized by China. They are defined as historically formed, stable communities of people, based on a common language, territory, economic life, and heart composition expressed in a common culture" (Mackerras, 2003). They share "a language, a territory, an economic life, a culture" (Gladney, 1994). According to Yunnan Provincial People's Government. Population and Ethnicity Report, Yunnan is the province with the largest variety of ethnic groups in China, with 26 ethnic groups living in an area of 394,000 square kilometers; in addition to the Han Chinese, 15 of the 25 living ethnic groups are endemic to Yunnan, and 16 are cross-border ethnic groups. (Cai Yong, 2014)

### **1.2 Yunnan Ethnic Minority Relocation Communities for Poverty Alleviation**

#### **The Big Picture of Diversity**

The sense of Chinese community emerged from the interaction, exchange and integration between different ethnic groups, and the historical evolution of "breathing together and sharing the hardship". Yunnan Province's easy-access relocation communities are mainly in Yunnan's Diqing Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, which is the only Tibetan autonomous prefecture among the eight autonomous prefectures in Yunnan Province. "It has three counties (cities) under the jurisdiction of Shangri-La, Deqin County and Weixi Lisu Autonomous County, 29 townships, 193 village committees and a total population of 410,000. At the end of 2015, there were 74,139 poor people in the state, with a poverty rate of 24.95%. 93% of the state's poor were ethnic minorities, and 54% of the state's poor were "ethnic minorities", with a wide poverty area and deep poverty. It is one of the

"three regions and three states" deep poverty areas in China." (2012, Zhou Zhengming) Yunnan is located at the junction of Yunnan, Sichuan and Tibet provinces and is the hinterland of the three rivers, and is a multi-ethnic area with Tibetans as the main inhabitants. Since July 1987, Diqing Prefecture has been carrying out poverty alleviation work in a planned, organized and large-scale manner, and has been consolidating and expanding the results of poverty eradication and promoting rural revitalization through the relocation of the poor until 2021.

### **Determinism of Historical and Economic Development**

Against the backdrop of the "two centuries" and based on the state-ethnic theory of building a Chinese national community, the theory starts from the framework structure of modernizing the national governance system. In recent years, relocation, special industries and health poverty alleviation have been carried out one after another throughout Tibet, enabling more poor people to embark on the road out of poverty and create a new and better life. It has not pushed the Chinese nation into a closer community of destiny, but has penetrated into the blood of all ethnic groups, and has also been integrated into the modernization of China, coalescing the common will for the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. At present, we are at an important stage of realizing the "two centuries", and the sense of national community will provide a strong cohesion and sense of mission for building a modern socialist country. Based on the historical orientation of the new period, the key to casting a firm sense of community among the Chinese nation is to strengthen the stability and durability of the casting effect from the root of cultural identity, so that the pluralistic Chinese nation can share the glory and dreams of the new era with firm cultural confidence, and form a bond of interest linking the community of destiny of the Chinese nation with a sense of community rooted deep in the heart, which will help promote the realization of the "sense of community" in the future. In the realization of "community consciousness", the unification of people's hearts and spirits will be realized.

### **1.3 Innovativeness of this study**

Community has been extensively researched, and the most typical result is "Nationalism" by Elie Kedourie, University of London, UK (Elie Kedourie, 2002). In his article "Community", Zygmunt Bauman points out that the reason why community is a lifelong desire is because it is a place where people can rely on each other, support each other, depend on each other, and constitute a harmonious and free and equal concept of "family". (Zygmunt Bauman, 2003) Nancy Pelosi suggests that community consists of three parts, which are in a specific area, and in the process of interacting with people, they become a link with each other. Taken together, the sense of community changes with the changing times. In his book *Community and Society: Basic Concepts of Pure Sociology*, German sociologist Ferdinand Tönnies asserts that the community is a mutually determined, mutually serving individual, and that it plays a large supporting role in interacting with each other. (Ferdinand Tönnies, 1999) American political scientist Samuel Huntington discusses community through the lens of political science, asserting that the development of community is the integration and division of a society, and that different communities can lead to prejudice and an obstacle when it comes to creating an effective political system. Within a given region, the nation is a group that is subservient to laws and institutions, whose first task is to create a community with a history and destiny that further builds national identity. He uses the symbol of community in relation to the state to describe the national community. (Samuel Huntington, 2005) Kelly, *Out of Control: The Fate and End of All Mankind*, takes into account the situation in China, sorts out the process of community formation in China, and summarizes and inscribes the profound connotation and evolution of the sense of community. (Kevin Kelly, 2021) Glynn T points out that the development of Chinese community consciousness is not static, but also a dynamic process that has to change with the changes of society. (Glynn T, 1986) Combing the literature, we found that at this stage, foreign studies on casting a firm sense of community have also developed relatively gradually, and this study hopes to provide references to domestic and foreign studies on community consciousness from the perspective of Yunnan minority communities who have been relocated to alleviate poverty.

## **2. Purpose of the study and the problem**

### **2.1 Purpose of the study**

This study's dissection of the historical flood of the new era of Yunnan minority communities relocated to alleviate poverty to cast a firm sense of Chinese national community, clarify a spiritual spectrum of the establishment of a global common community in the intersection of multiple values in the same structure of individual and social values, and expand the reality and utility of the identity and solidarity of the global community today.

### **2.2 Research Questions**

To achieve the research objectives, this study attempts to answer the following questions:

- (1) What is the current situation of Yunnan's ethnic minority communities that have been relocated to alleviate poverty?
- (2) What factors determine the need to forge a sense of Chinese ethnic community?

### **2.3 Limitations of the Study**

The results of this study cannot be generalized to all ethnic minority regions because the sample selected for this study was mainly 16 ethnic minority college students, college teachers, local administrators, and Yunnan provincial officials in three counties, Shangri-La City, Deqin County, and Weixi Lisu County. In addition, the data derived from the Yunnan Provincial People's Government, Population Ethnicity can only be used as a reference because it is the most recent information available. This study was conducted in Yunnan, China from 2022 to 2023.

## **3. Methods**

This study intends to adopt a cross-sectional approach based on qualitative methods. The descriptive statistical method is adopted to describe the Yunnan minority relocation communities mainly for the general situation of Yunnan minority relocation communities. For the qualitative method, a semi-structured interview method was adopted to obtain data from different minority participants based on the educational level of the residents of the relocated communities of the minority sample. In the following section, a valid analysis is conducted based on the obtained data in order to analyze the rationality and feasibility of casting a sense of community in the context of easy-access relocation communities in Yunnan, China. After the analysis of both methods, it allowed the researcher to better identify the sources from various data and to understand the overall situation. In addition, the researcher used a longitudinal approach by taking graduate students, farmers, drivers, and office workers from the poverty alleviation and relocation areas. Also, a cross-sectional multidimensional comparison and analysis of different ethnic minorities, including Han Chinese, was conducted to gain an objective and comprehensive view of the study.

### **3.1 Study participants**

#### **Sample for quantitative methods**

There are many ethnic minorities in Yunnan, including nine ethnic groups, including Tibetan, Naxi, Bai, Hui, Yi, Miao, and Pumi. This study uses community residents from three counties, Shangri-La, Deqin County, and Weixi Lisu County, which are covered by the relocated communities in Yunnan, China, as representatives. Therefore, this study mainly selects the residents of these three counties relocated from poverty-stricken areas as the sample to analyze the current situation of forging a sense of Chinese ethnic community among Yunnan's ethnic minorities. Data source from Yunnan Provincial People's Government. Population Ethnicity Seventh National Population Census.

#### **Sample for qualitative methods**

The interview sample consisted of four main groups, Yunnan minority university students, university teachers, local administrators, and Yunnan provincial officials. Approximately four

relevant representative respondents from each of the 16 minority university participants (75 students) participated in individual and focus group interviews. They were randomly recommended by local teachers and volunteered to join this activity. In addition, five Han Chinese students were sampled for some specific comparisons. In addition, the ethnic public institutions, namely Yunnan University, (YNU)Yunnan University for Nationalities,(YUN) Kunming University of Science Technology, (KUST)and Dali University, (DU)which are known for enrolling local minority university students, were targeted to select university teachers from different ethnic groups who are experienced in working with education regarding the residents of the poverty alleviation area. In addition, six administrators were from Yunnan University, Yunnan University for Nationalities, Kunming University of Science Technology, and Dali University, and two other officials were from the Yunnan Provincial Poverty Alleviation Office (YPAO)and the Diqing Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture Government. (DTAPG)Through random and targeted sampling methods, a total of 231 respondents were surveyed, from different ethnic groups, different regions, different fields of study, and with some work and study experience. Relying on minority college students and the rich resources of the four university sites provided the possibility for prepared results. The following from Table1 to Table5

Table 1. Basic information on the participants

| Participants        | Number | Method of selection | Notes of sampling                              |
|---------------------|--------|---------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| EMs                 | 75     | random sampling     | 4 for each of the 16 EEMs, plus 5 Han students |
| University teachers | 4      | purposive sampling  | YNU, YUN, KUSTU, DU                            |
| Administrators      | 6      | purposive sampling  | YNU,YUN,KUST, DU                               |
| Officials           | 2      | purposive sampling  | YPAO and DTAPG                                 |

Table 2. Demographic information on the EMs and Han participants

| Universities                         | YNU     | YUN        | KUST      | DU       |
|--------------------------------------|---------|------------|-----------|----------|
| Individual interview (No)            | 15      | 20         | 16        | 16       |
| Focus group interview (Ethnicity-No) | Bai-5   | Han-5      | Suxi-5    | Zhuang-5 |
| Level of education                   | MA      | MA         | BA        | BA&MA    |
| Location (City)                      | Kunming | Shangri-la | WeixiLisu | DeQen    |

Table 3. Demographic information on teacher participants

| Samples           | Teacher1     | Teacher2      | Teacher3 | Teacher4     |
|-------------------|--------------|---------------|----------|--------------|
| University        | YNU          | YUN           | KUST     | DU           |
| Professional Post | EFL AssoProf | EFL Lecturer. | EFL Prof | EFL Lecture. |
| Pseudonym         | Mrs Lu       | Mr Yao        | Mr Hi    | Mr ReN       |
| Ethnicity         | Miao         | Yi            | Bai      | Hui          |
| Teaching Period   | 8            | 15            | 6        | 20           |

Table 4. Demographic information on administrative and official participants

| Samples          | Adm-1   | Adm-2     | Adm-3  | Official-1 | Official-2    |
|------------------|---------|-----------|--------|------------|---------------|
| Work unit        | YNU     | DU        | KUST   | YPAO       | DTAPYP        |
| Pseudonym        | Mrs Lin | Dr Yangzi | Mr Liu | Ms Xie bin | Mrs Song Jing |
| Ethnicity        | Han     | Yi        | Naxi   | Naxi       | Bai           |
| Years of working | 13      | 8         | 18     | 16         | 23            |

### 3.2 Data collection

#### Question 1

The data for the quantitative study relied on 16 colleges and universities, and selected students, college teachers, Yunnan Han Chinese personnel, and social foundation workers outside of the schools in Shangri-La City, Deqing County, and Lisu County, Yunnan Province, who were relocated to easy access areas. All data were collected through the official website of the Seventh National Census of Yunnan, China. The percentages of the indices describing the residents of Yunnan ethnic

minorities who were relocated to ease poverty alleviation are presented in the following Table 5 and Table 6

### Question 2

In interviews, the research method of generating data as one of the most common means, in this study we used semi-structured interviews to explore the perceptions of the residents of the relocation site and their forging of a sense of Chinese community. Each in-depth individual lasted 30 minutes and the focus groups ranged from approximately one hour, with most of the interviews conducted on campus. A sample of the four universities were located in classrooms, on the playground, at the Tu Embassay, and in offices. Chinese was used as the primary language for the interviews, with English used for support when necessary. Most importantly, this study involves the advancement of the project, so confidentiality is the primary principle. At the same time, interviews with teachers and local officials revealed the ideological origins of the Chinese community in the process of poverty alleviation in China, and the search for a sense of belonging and a common spiritual home for the nation. With the support of China's poverty alleviation policy, the minority people in Yunnan have been lifted out of poverty and helped to forge a sense of Chinese community. In addition, all relevant policy documents are checked at the Yunnan Provincial Poverty Alleviation Office.

## 4. Results and Discussion

The sense of community of the Chinese nation is traced back to the 2011 Annual Forum on Cross-Strait Peaceful Development. Through the development of four aspects, from "establishing", "cultivating", "nurturing" to "forging" over the past ten years, we have made continuous innovation in theory and exploration in practice. In the theory of continuous innovation, in the practice of continuous exploration. And "as a major initiative of precise poverty alleviation strategy, the relocation plan for poverty alleviation has successfully relocated nearly 10 million poor people in the 13th Five-Year Plan period (2016-2020). (Zhu Jin, 2022), relying on the help of students and teachers from 16 Yunnan's relocation sites and government officials, it is found that China's relocation policy for poverty alleviation in Yunnan's minority populated areas, where the level of economic development is backward, is to better promote the formation of ethnic unity and sense of community.

### 4.1 Current Situation of Relocating Minorities to Poverty Alleviation Areas in Yunnan

In order to further understand the new situation of Yunnan minority people's residents who are relocated to alleviate poverty, this study relied on 16 universities and Yunnan Han Chinese as the sample. The relevant data of the population were obtained from the seventh national population of Yunnan, China, and the researcher used SPSS2.0 to conduct frequency analysis of the statistical data to measure the proportion of indicators describing and summarizing the relocation of Yunnan's ethnic minorities to alleviate poverty.

From the data below (Table 5), the number of Yunnan ethnic minorities relocated through easy-access poverty alleviation is high. While the number of people relocated through easy-access poverty alleviation in Yunnan Diqing Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Shangri-La, Vixi Lisu, and Deqin people differ, research with social grassroots workers reveals that Yunnan ethnic minorities are more willing to move away from previously poor areas, while Deqin, being the poorest, is the area with the highest number of relocated people.

Table 5. Diqing Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture easy poverty alleviation relocation situation of the others in Yunnan, China

| <b>Population of Education</b> | <b>Uneducated</b> | <b>MA</b> | <b>Peasant</b> | <b>Taxi Driver</b> | <b>Office Worker</b> |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|-----------|----------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| Shangri-la (N=million)         | 2.39              | 2.04      | 1.59           | 3.1                | 6.3                  |
| Percentage (%)                 | 1.99              | 4.19      | 2.4            | 8.8                | 6.1                  |
| Weixi Lisu (N=million)         | 1.3               | 1.23      | 9.02           | 8.3                | 7.5                  |
| Percentage (%)                 | 6.6               | 4.39      | 1.67           | 10.03              | 3.05                 |
| DeQen (N=million)              | 7.3               | 1.19      | 1.58           | 4.27               | 2.6                  |
| Percentage (%)                 | 1.96              | 3.88      | 5.61           | 3.91               | 1.64                 |

(Source of the population: <https://www.diqing.gov.cn/> )

The economic development of ethnic areas, the development process of primary, secondary and tertiary industries, and the continuous growth of GDP. Not only embodies the distinctive people and ethnicity, is an important theoretical source to forge the generation of Chinese national community consciousness" after the corresponding national home poverty alleviation strategy and policy system, adhere to the developmental poverty alleviation, so that it is organically combined with poverty alleviation policy; improve the new poverty alleviation standards, consolidate the results of the relocation of easy access to poverty alleviation. Besides, in the new round of poverty alleviation work, it has solved the problem of food and clothing of the poor people as fast as possible and to the maximum extent, so that they can finish getting out of poverty and become rich. It focuses on strengthening the ability of the rural poor to develop themselves, implementing social assistance for those who are unable to work or incapable of working; strengthening support for ethnic areas, border areas and poor areas. In the new era, poverty alleviation in Diqing has returned to the rural areas to provide new vitality for the development of socialism. (Table 6)

Table 6. Economic growth of Yunnan's ethnic minorities after relocation to other places to alleviate poverty in Yunnan (%)

| <b>2018 GDP<br/>\$2175236</b>        | <b>Added Value</b> | <b>Year-on-Year<br/>Growth</b> | <b>2022 GDP<br/>267(billion)</b> | <b>Year-on-Year<br/>Growth</b> | <b>Per capita GDP<br/>Times</b> |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Primary industry<br>Percentage (%)   | 125602             | 6.2                            | 1995                             | 13.8                           | 980                             |
| Secondary industry<br>Percentage (%) | 901662             | 15.3                           | 1954                             | 26.3                           | 15                              |
| Tertiary industry<br>Percentage (%)  | 1147972            | 5.9                            | 1951                             | 10.8                           | 8                               |

(Source of the population: <https://www.diqing.gov.cn/> )

#### 4.2 Three Determinants of Casting a Sense of Chinese Ethnic Community in Yunnan's Ethnic Minority Relocation Communities for Easy Poverty Alleviation

##### Geographical remoteness and regional differences

Yunnan's ethnic minorities are located on the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau, the birthplace of the Yangtze, Yellow and Lancang rivers and other major rivers, and are an important barrier to national ecological

security. Yunnan's ethnic minorities are rich in biological, mineral and water resources, with great potential for comprehensive development, is an important energy infrastructure for sustainable development of the country; to protect and improve people's livelihood, strengthen the development of social undertakings in Yunnan's ethnic minority areas, increase poverty alleviation and development, increase the scale of central poverty alleviation funds and subsidized loans for poverty alleviation, actively and steadily promote easy poverty alleviation and ecological migration, and accelerate the implementation of The policy of relocating ecological immigrants to easy-access poverty alleviation sites at a later stage. Then further deepen and enrich the policies, and strive for the support of national policies and projects at the same time, the state further increase financial support to strengthen the economic development of Diqing Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, social harmony and stability, ecological environment construction, economic and social development, ecological civilization construction, maintenance of social stability, grass-roots organizations in the forefront of the country's Tibetan areas.

### **Socio-economic factors**

The use of integrated media and Internet technology to strengthen ethnic religion, propaganda, improve social stability risk assessment, structural integration of minority cadres as the main talent team, etc., to create harmonious ethnic relations, to create a social environment and a solid foundation for casting a firm sense of the Chinese national community talent team. In addition, Diqing Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture after the relocation of poverty alleviation, the use of integrated media Internet technology to expand the traditional culture of ethnic minorities "double hundred project", the implementation of the "cultural prosperity of the state" strategy of publicity. At present, Diqing Prefecture through strengthening the Diqing national cultural ecological protection national pilot project, strengthen the construction of ethnic characteristics of the village, promote the cultural tourism deep integration, create a number of Chinese national community consciousness of the literary brand, enhance the cultural exchanges and identity of various ethnic groups, consolidate the root of national unity, the soul of national harmony, to forge a firm Chinese national community consciousness to build the foundation of cultural thinking.

### **Language Barrier**

Yunnan's ethnic minorities mainly use their mother tongue as (first language), Mandarin as (second language) and English as (third language), so the "Chinese language training + practical skills training" model is used in the relocation process. Deepen "intellectual and spiritual support" in relocation sites in Diqing Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Yunnan Province. Chinese language training + practical skills training" and "speaking Chinese" activities are carried out in relocation sites, so that students can become Chinese language teachers. Gradually eliminate the Chinese language barriers of family members and build a good language foundation for the relocated masses in Diqing Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, Yunnan.

Combining the advantages and characteristics of the relocated masses, promote diversified training programs and organize skills training. Through targeted labor export or self-employment, the cultural and employment level of the relocated people will be improved.

## **5. Conclusion**

For a nation and a people, the sense of community is recognized as the most enduring and deepest source of strength for the whole society. Under the policy of modern state building, since the implementation of the Diqing Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture's policy of relocating people to alleviate poverty, research from a survey of residents of Yunnan's ethnic minority relocation communities found that the economy of Shangri-La, Deqin and Vixi Lisu residents increased significantly after the relocation of the area. People have unconsciously invested in building a spiritual home for all ethnic groups, bringing together the values of each ethnic group into a sense of community. To provide scientific theoretical support for forging a firm sense of community among the Chinese people. Casting a firm sense of community among Chinese people is the "outline" and

"foundation" of ethnic work in the new era, and goes hand in hand with ideological and political education work, which can enhance the sense of Chinese cultural identity and promote exchanges and communication among people of all ethnic groups, and promote national unity and progress. " Increase the masses of various ethnic groups in the area to the new region's sense of identity and sense of belonging, once again, to strengthen the cast firm Chinese national community consciousness in Diqing Prefecture, highlighting the multi-dimensional and comprehensive results of the solid Di Xing Di Fu Min mechanism and system creation.

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