Ethnic Identity, Acculturation and Life Satisfaction of the Yi in the Context of social media: Moderating and Mediating Effects

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ABSTRACT

To investigate the influence of social media on the acculturation and life satisfaction of ethnic minorities, the mediating effect of acculturation on the relationship between ethnic identity and life satisfaction was analyzed. 522 Yi villagers were surveyed using an ethnic identity scale, a social media use scale, an acculturation orientation scale and a life satisfaction scale. The results showed that :(1) ethnic identity positively predicted life satisfaction; (2) Acculturation orientation played a partial mediating role in predicting the effect of ethnic identity on life satisfaction; (3) social media has a positive predictive effect on life satisfaction, and has a negative moderating effect on ethnic identity and Yi Acculturation Orientation. Therefore, the social media use can improve the Yi villagers' life satisfaction and acculturation, which is of great value to the development and solidarity of the Yi region.

CCS CONCEPTS

• **CCS Concept: Information systems**; • **World Wide Web**; • **Web applications**; • **Social networks**;

KEYWORDS

Social media, Yi ethnic, Ethnic identity, Acculturation, Life satisfaction

1 INTRODUCTION

The extensive use of social media has a profound impact on the life and cognitive mode of ethnic minority people [1]. In China, social media platforms such as WeChat, Tik Tok, and dating software have been widely popularized nationwide and penetrated the lives of

ethnic minorities. The use of social media not only influences people to establish and maintain social network relationships but also provides opportunities and platforms for them to understand and learn about different cultures. However, few scholars have empirically tested the different effects of social media on ethnic identity, acculturation, and life satisfaction. China is a multi-ethnic country, and each ethnic group has its characteristics of development. In today's world, in addition to referring to traditional political and economic indicators, life satisfaction has also become an important indicator to measure ethnic development when measuring the living conditions of various ethnic groups. Although today's China is a period of rapid economic development, it is also a period of prominent concentration of social contradictions. Under this dual background, the analysis of the life satisfaction of ethnic minorities plays a vital role in maintaining ethnic unity and promoting ethnic identity. In the long course of historical development, the Yi ethnic has gradually formed its unique ethnic character and cultural style. There was almost no relevant research on the Yi people. This study will focus on the impact of social media, ethnic identity, and acculturation on the Yi villagers' life satisfaction and its mechanism.

2 RESEARCH REVIEW

Researchers generally believed that ethnic identity is closely related to the psychology and behavior of individuals or groups and that ethnic identity has a direct and indirect impact on individuals' life satisfaction. Utsey [2] investigated the relationship between life satisfaction and ethnic identity of ethnic minorities adults in American society, including Hispanics, Mexicans, and French, and found that individuals with higher ethnic identity would be more satisfied with their current life and have a positive outlook on their future life. Suh [3] observed the interpersonal communication in the multi-ethnic living area in the western part of the United States and found that those individuals who were dissatisfied with the development status of their ethnic group had a higher level of dissatisfaction with the real-life, although they had a high attachment to the culture and belief of their ethnic group. Fan Lina [4] pointed out that the perception of social justice based on ethnic identity can significantly affect the life quality of ethnic minority individuals in the mainstream cultural atmosphere. Vang [5] found that when ethnic minority individuals find that the white people around them respect the minority culture, they will have a higher identification of their own ethnic identity, and will also have a more positive emotional experience, to obtain higher satisfaction. On the contrary, when ethnic minority individuals find that their social development is backward and not recognized by members of other ethnic groups,

they will feel inferiority in public social occasions, and their life satisfaction will be reduced.

Based on the results of previous studies, this study believes that in the regions where multi-ethnic cultures coexist, the status of ethnic identity will directly affect the life satisfaction of ethnic members. Individuals with high ethnic identity will gain more positive experiences, have a positive understanding of their ethnic identity, and improve their life satisfaction. On the contrary, Yi people with low ethnic identity tend to have negative feelings of inferiority, thus reducing their life satisfaction. Therefore, this study assumed that:

H1: Ethnic identity of the Yi people positively affects life satisfaction.

Acculturation attitude is an important mediating variable. Many studies have found that when individuals strongly identify with their group, in-group preference and out-group bias will be generated, thus affecting their mental health level [6]. Ingroup preference is the identity of ethnic culture. Rhee [7] found that among Korean-American adolescents, those with higher levels of ethnic belonging, achievement, and acculturation have higher levels of mental health, which often represents higher life satisfaction. The acculturation attitude is the key factor to avoid emergencies in the ethnic identity. The higher the ethnic identity, the more likely the individual is to develop a positive acculturation attitude and be more satisfied with life. Therefore, ethnic identity is likely to influence individuals' life satisfaction by influencing their acculturation attitude. In this study, the acculturation attitudes include Yi Acculturation Orientation (YAO) and Mainstream Acculturation Orientation (MAO). We assumed that:

H2: The acculturation attitude of Yi people plays a mediating role in the relationship between their ethnic identity and life satisfaction.

H2a: YAO plays a mediating role in the relationship between ethnic identity and life satisfaction.

H2b: MAO plays a mediating role in the relationship between ethnic identity and life satisfaction.

Social media refers to a kind of service based on the network, which can provide a lot of convenient opportunities for individual social interaction. Although individuals encounter different difficulties and setbacks in the multicultural environment, through the social media platform, they can fully interact and communicate with their families, friends, peers, and elders, and get a lot of oral encouragement and suggestions from them to overcome the hardships or from other aspects of the society [8]. Social media provides a platform for ethnic minorities to gather. Ethnic minorities join online ethnic communities and participate in online collective activities to seek a sense of belonging, thus strengthening their ethnic feelings [9]. Through the interaction and communication of social media, individuals can obtain oral or social encouragement needed in difficulties, improve their mental and physical health, and thus promote individuals to have a satisfactory life state. Therefore, this study assumed that:

H3: The use of social media by Yi people can positively predict their life satisfaction.

According to Social Cognition theory, behavior is the result of the interaction of individual factors, such as individual expectation, other volitional elements, and social environment elements [10]. The social media platform is a virtual social network environment.

Individuals' behaviors using social media belong to vicarious behaviors and personal experiences. Vicarious behaviors and personal experiences can affect individuals' psychological cognition, and then affect individuals to produce new emotions.

In addition, the theory of Individual-Environment Matching points out that individual performance is the result of the interaction between the individual and the environment [11]. Individuals with high ethnic identity tend to actively explore ethnic cultural information and thus have a strong sense of ethnic belonging. Social media may interact with individuals' ethnic identity, and as environmental factors, positively influence individuals' acculturation process. The knowledge acquired by individuals from social media reconstructs their cognitive framework system, cultivates their cultural awareness, and enables them to understand different cultural situations well, thus promoting the acculturation and mental health level of individuals. Therefore, with the improvement of ethnic identity, Yi people who use social media more are likely to have better acculturation than those who use social media less. This study hypothesized that:

H4: The social media use of Yi people plays a moderating role between ethnic identity and acculturation attitude.

H4a: social media negatively moderates the promoting effect of ethnic identity on YAO, that is, the more use of social media, the weaker the promoting effect of ethnic identity on YAO;

H4b: social media positively moderates the hindering effect of ethnic identity on MAO, that is, the more use of social media, the stronger the hindering effect of ethnic identity on MAO;

In conclusion, this study believes that ethnic identity is not only directly affect life satisfaction, but also through acculturation indirectly affect life satisfaction. Acculturation plays a mediating role between ethnic identity and life satisfaction. Social media positively predicted life satisfaction and played a moderating role between ethnic identity and acculturation. Based on the perspectives of Social Cognition theory and Individual-Environment Matching theory, this study empirically studies the relationship between ethnic identity, acculturation, and life satisfaction of Yi people under the context of social media. Ethnic problem is unavoidable in China's multi-ethnic country, which is related to the long-term development of the country. In the new perspective of the network environment change, it is of great significance to look at the issues of ethnic identity.

3 DATA AND METHOD

3.1 Sample

This study selected the Nuosu (Sichuan Yi) branch and the Lipo (Yunnan Yi) branch as the main objects of study. The Nuosu came from Sichuan Province in China, while the Lipo came from Yunnan Province in China. In addition, some other Yi branches that lived with the mainstream were randomly selected. A stratified sampling method was used to distinguish the branch, region, gender, and age features. A total of 650 questionnaires were sent out from eight representative Yi villages, and 522 valid questionnaires were recovered.

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3.2 Measurement scale

Ethnic Identity Scale. A revised Multiracial Identity Measurement Scale (MEIM-R) by Phinney [12] was used, which was based on Phinney's (1992) MEIM scale. The revised scale has good universality and applies to a broader range of ethnic minority groups. The scale has six items, including exploration (3 questions) and commitment (3 questions), and is rated on the 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree), with four being neutral. The Cronbach's a coefficient of the scale in this study was 0.873.

Life satisfaction scale. The Life Satisfaction Scale (SWLS) measures a person's overall assessment of their life, such as "In many ways, my life is close to what I want it to be"[13]. The scale has five items, graded on a seven-point Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). SWLS is a widely used measurement method that has been proven to be reliable and effective. The Cronbach's a coefficient of the scale in this study was 0.921.

Social Media Scale. In this study, the Social Media Usage Scale (revised version) of Ellison [14] was used to replace Facebook in the original scale with WeChat in the Chinese context. WeChat is the most representative social media platform in China, which has the status and function similar to Facebook. The scale consists of 8 items. Using Exploratory Factor Analysis of SPSS, the Cronbach's a of the scale is 0.93, and the KMO value is 0.91, which is suitable for factor analysis. Two factors, attitude, and frequency can be extracted, explaining 69.7% of the total variation. The factor load of all items is greater than 0.6, and the revised scale is consistent with the factor composition of the original scale.

Acculturation Orientation Scale. This study used Qiang Acculturation Questionnaire (QAQ) by Han Li and Berry [15] and revised it according to the actual situation of the Yi people. There were 18 questions, including the original acculturation attitude (11 questions) and the mainstream acculturation attitude (7 questions), and the score was based on the Likert 7-point scale. The questionnaire passed expert evaluation and pilot test. The reliability and validity of the questionnaire were tested by Exploratory Factor Analysis (SPSS) and Confirmatory Factor Analysis (AMOS). The Cronbach's a of original acculturation attitude, mainstream acculturation attitude, and the total questionnaire were 0.903, 0.887, and 0.938. Factor analysis found that the KMO value is 0. 884. The extraction of two principal components can explain the total variation of 60.742%. The factor loads of all items are greater than 0.6. The two principal components' combined reliability was 0.924 and 0.913, and the average variance extracted was 0.526 and 0.601. The values of RMSEA, RFI, NFI, CFI and χ^2/df were 0.065, 0.904, 0.926, 0.947 and 3.2. The dimension model of acculturation orientation fits well with the sample data.

3.3 Measurement procedure

Before the large-sample test, 60 villagers of the Yi ethnic in Panzhihua were randomly selected for the prediction test. According to the prediction test results, a few questions were modified to form a formal questionnaire. The stratified sampling method was used in the formal test, considering the characteristics of different demographic variables such as region, gender, age, job, and income. The whole trial lasted four months, during which five Yi college students assisted the Yi villagers in answering questionnaires and received the support and cooperation of the local village director. During the annual celebration day, assembly day, and payment day of the Yi ethnic, contact the village director in advance and drive to do the test.

4 RESULTS

4.1 Descriptive statistics

This study used the variance analysis (ANOVA) of SPSS. The results (Table 1) showed that the average scores of Yi people's life satisfaction, ethnic identity, and acculturation orientation were significantly higher than the median value of 4, indicating that they were generally satisfied with life, with high ethnic identity and good acculturation. The use of social media in the Yi area is low, lower than the average median value of 4.125. Ethnic identity, social media, and acculturation orientation all have a significant influence on the Yi branch. Among them, the life satisfaction of the Nuosu Yi is the highest, and individuals in the mixed areas (living with the mainstream groups) are the lowest. The ethnic identity of the Nuosu Yi is the highest while the mixed areas are the lowest. Individuals in the mixed area use the most social media, while the Lipo Yi uses the least.

4.2 Correlation analysis

Partial correlation analysis was carried out in SPSS. Demographic variables were set as control variables, and two dimensions of ethnic identity, social media, social support, and acculturation orientation were set as related variables. Setting control variables can effectively avoid the influence of demographic variables on other variables. Results (Table 2) showed that all variables were significantly correlated, among which ethnic identity and acculturation orientation had the highest correlation. The correlation between the MAO and ethnic identity, social media and ethnic identity, social media and YAO, MAO and YAO are low.

4.3 Regression analysis

Ethnic identity (EI) and social media (SM) were taken as independent variables and life satisfaction (LS) as dependent variables for linear regression analysis. The results are shown in Table 3. From the table, the model formula is LS=3.035+0.197*SM+0.309*EI, and the square value of R is 0.144, which means SM and EI can explain 14.4% of the change of LS. The model passed the F test (F=43.824, P =0.000<0.05). In addition, the test for the multicollinearity showed that all VIF values in the model were less than 5, indicating that there was no collinearity problem. And the DW value is near the number 2, which indicates that the model does not have autocorrelation and there is no correlation between the sample data, so the model is good. The standard coefficient value of SM is 0.197(t=4.829, P =0.000<0.01), which means that SM has a significant positive effect on LS. The standard coefficient value of EI is 0.309(t=7.594, p=0.000<0.01), which means that EI will have a significant positive effect on LS.

Table 1: Mean value and standard deviation of variables in different Yi branches

Dimension	Nuosu	Lipo	Mixed	F	p
N	207	192	123		
LS	5.52±1.22	5.31±1.30	5.24±1.10	2.569	0.078
EI	5.41±0.96	5.09±0.97	4.32±1.33	41.146	0.000**
YAO	5.79±0.82	5.39±1.00	4.60±0.96	64.581	0.000**
MAO	4.77±1.33	4.95±1.01	5.16±1.08	4.219	0.015*
SM	4.03±1.41	3.79±1.71	4.84±1.17	19.093	0.000**

Note: * represents p< 0. 05, ** represents p< 0. 01, *** represents p< 0. 001, the same as below. EI, YAO, MAO, SM and LS in the table represent ethnic identity, Yi Acculturation Orientation, Mainstream Acculturation Orientation, social media, and life satisfaction.

Table 2: Correlation analysis of variables (df=512)

	M	SD	EI	YAO	MAO	SM	LS
EI	5.035	1.141	1.000				
YAO	5.363	1.029	.688***	1.000			
MAO	4.928	1.172	.198***	.142**	1.000		
SM	4.210	1.525	.166***	.154***	.297***	1.00	
LS	5.377	1.228	.313***	.287***	.277***	.252***	1.000

Note: EI, YAO, MAO, SM and LS in the table represent ethnic identity, Yi Acculturation Orientation, Mainstream Acculturation Orientation, social media, and life satisfaction.

Table 3: Regression Analysis of the Life Satisfaction (n=522)

Independent variable	UC		SC	t	R^2	Adjust R^2	Durbin-Watson
	B	SE	Beta				
(constant)	3.035	.255		11.886	0.144	0.141	1.637
EI	.333	.044	.309	7.594***			
SM	.158	.033	.197	4.829***			

Note. EI and SM in the table represent ethnic identity and social media.

Table 4: Mediation effect analysis of YAO (n=522)

Step	Standardized regression equation	Standard coefficient	t	R2	SE	F
1	LS=0.35*EI+3.6	.35	7.854***	.106	1.162	61.685
2	YAO=0.73*EI+2.05	.730	24.354***	.533	.704	593.102
3	LS=0.25*I+0.104*YAO+3.36	.250	4.121***	.111	1.16	32.441
		.104	2.722*			

4.4 The mediating effect of acculturation

According to the mediation effect test procedure proposed by Wen Zhongling [16], ethnic identity (X) was taken as the predictive variable, YAO (M) as the mediating variable, and life satisfaction (Y) as the outcome variable to conduct mediation analysis in this study. According to the analysis results (Table 4), ethnic identity has a significant predictive effect on life satisfaction (c is significant), c=0.35, explaining 10.6% of the difference in life satisfaction, F = 61.685, P < 0.001; The prediction effect of ethnic identity on YAO is significant (a is significant), a =0.730, which explains 53.3% of the difference of integration variation, F= 593.102, P < 0.001;

When YAO was added into the regression equation as a predictive variable, it had a significant predictive effect on life satisfaction (b significant), b=0.25, and the predictive effect of ethnic identity on life satisfaction was still significant (c' is significant), c'=0.104. c' is less than c, indicating that YAO plays a partial mediating role in predicting the effect of ethnic identity on life satisfaction.

In addition, to further detect the size of the mediating effect, bootstrapping was used in this paper. Table 5 shows that a and b are significant, c' is significant, and a*b and c' have the same sign, indicating that YAO partially mediates the relationship between

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Table 5: Mediation effect analysis of YAO by Bootstrapping

Item	Total effect of c	a	b	Mediation effect	c'	Result
EI=>YAO=>LS	0.350**	0.649**	0.147*	0.096	0.240**	Partial mediation

Figure 1: Partial mediating effect of YAO

Figure 2: Partial mediating effect of MAO

Figure 3: moderating effect model

Figure 4: Slope diagram of the moderating effect
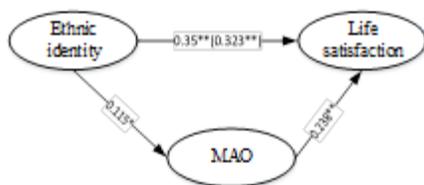
ethnic identity and life satisfaction. The mediating effect of the model is a*b=0.096, and the direct effect is 0.24 (see in Figure 1).

The same method was used to test the mediating effect of MAO (see Table 6 and Figure 2). The results in Table 5 showed that MAO plays a partial mediating role in the prediction effect of ethnic identity on life satisfaction. When MAO is added into the regression equation as a predictive variable, the predictive effect of MAO on life satisfaction is significant (b is significant), b=0.238, and the predictive effect of ethnic identity on life satisfaction is still significant (c' is significant), c'=0.323. The 95% BootCI of a*b does not include the number 0. The results showed that it had a partial mediating effect. The mediating effect of the model is a*b=0.027, and the direct effect is 0.323.

4.5 Moderating effect of social media

The moderating effect detection method of SPSS was used to verify the moderating impact of social media. After centralizing social media and ethnic identity and multiplying the resulting centralization coefficients, regression analysis was conducted. Data analysis results (table 7) showed that the product of social media and ethnic identity has a significant effect on YAO (β =-0.039, P <0.05). Hypothesis 4a is supported: social media will negatively regulate the relationship between ethnic identity and YAO. The influence effect of each variable is shown in Figure 3
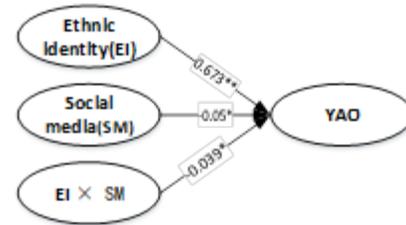
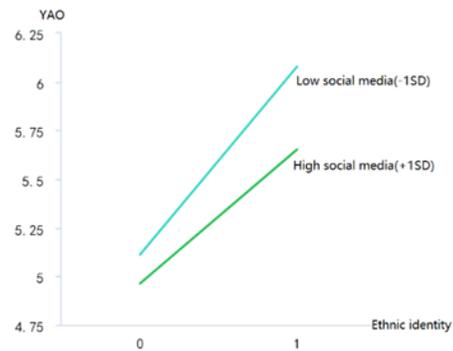From the above analysis, it can be concluded that the regression equation of moderating effect is YAO=5.368+0.673EI-0.05SM-0.039EI*SM. According to this equation, we used Excel to draw a simple slope diagram of the moderating effect (figure 4) to analyze the slope relationship between ethnic identity and Yi cultural attitude when social media is high or low. The graph results are consistent with the hypothesis that the use of social media weakens the relationship between ethnic identity and YAO.

We used the same method to test the moderating effect of social media on ethnic identity and MAO. Table 8 shows that the product term of social media and ethnic identity has no significant effect on MAO (β =-0.012,p>0.05). Hypothesis 4b is not supported, social media will not moderate the relationship between ethnic identity and MAO.

Table 6: Analysis of the mediation effect of MAO by Bootstrapping

Item	Total effect of c	a	b	a*b	95% BootCI	c'	Result
EI=>MAO=>LS	0.350**	0.115*	0.238**	0.027	0.001-0.053	0.323**	Partial mediation

Table 7: Detection of the moderating effect of social media on ethnic identity and YAO

Model	R^2	Adjust R^2	$\triangle R^2$	F	p	variable	β	p
1	.539	.537	.006	303.23	0.000	EI	0.664	.000
						SM	-.053	.010
2	.542	.540	.003	204.56	0.000	EI	0.673	.000
						SM	-0.050	.013
						EI*SM	-0.039	.049

Note: the dependent variable is YAO; EI and SM represent ethnic identity and social media.

Table 8: Moderating effect analysis of social media on ethnic identity and MAO

Model	R2	Adjust R^2	$\triangle R^2$	F	p	variable	β	p
1	159.	156.	147.	49.154	0.000	EI	0.083	047.
						SM	0.295	000.
2	16.	155.	000.	32.78	0.000	EI	0.079	0.06
						SM	0.294	0.000
						EI*SM	0.012	0.666

Note: The dependent variable is the MAO; EI and SM represent ethnic identity and social media.

5 DISCUSSION AND SUGGESTIONS

This study found that social media not only directly positively predicted the life satisfaction of Yi people but also negatively moderated the promoting effect of ethnic identity on YAO. The use of social media is a multi-faceted phenomenon, and different research subjects will produce different research results. Qu Ran's study [19] showed that social media use could not directly predict adolescent life satisfaction, and Zhou Jin's study [20] found that WeChat use had a positive predictive effect on college student's life satisfaction. Social media can not only help individuals of ethnic minorities maintain communication and contact with members and friends of the ethnic group, but also help them integrate into the multicultural environment. Social media provides a platform for ethnic minorities to gather and promote intra-group communication, thus strengthening their ethnic feelings. Social media also opens a convenient channel for them to have direct contact with mainstream society, improves their social participation, and promotes mainstream acculturation. Therefore, the results of this study indicate that the widespread use of social media plays an important role in improving the life satisfaction and acculturation of the Yi villagers, which provides a new strategy for the development of Yi areas.

In addition, ethnic identity has a significant positive predictive effect on life satisfaction. The life satisfaction of individuals living in the Yi area is significantly higher than those who live mixed with the mainstream groups. Existing studies have pointed out that when individuals perceive outgroup threat, they will have a negative outgroup attitude and behavior, which has a negative impact on life satisfaction [17]. In addition, intergroup contact contributes to the formation of intergroup friendship, the sharing of knowledge, information, and beliefs, as well as the generation of multiple identities, thus contributing to the resolution of intergroup threats [18]. Ethnic identity helps increase individuals' participation in group activities and reduce inter-group threats, thus improving

individuals' life experiences. Individuals' participation in group activities can satisfy their subconscious needs for self-development and enhance their self-esteem, and enhance their identification with the "I group". Therefore, Yi residents' perception and identification of ethnic identity will promote individuals to produce positive emotions and life experiences. The results of this study support these findings to a certain extent.

The findings of this study confirm the mediating role of acculturation orientation in the relationship between ethnic identity and life satisfaction. It suggests that the sense of Yi villagers' ethnic identity can indirectly affect their life satisfaction through the role of acculturation orientation. It also confirms the research results of Rhee [7] to a certain extent, that ethnic belonging and high level of acculturation tend to have a higher level of mental health and life satisfaction.

Based on the above research results, this study has important enlightenment significance for ethnic unity and educational practice in the Yi area. First, social media can not only promote the Yi people's intra-group communication and enhance their ethnic feelings but also increase their participation in the mainstream society, enhance their ability to adapt to the mainstream culture, and improve their life experience. At present, with the arrival of the digital age, social media has been widely used in some ethnic minority areas. However, many Yi villages located in mountainous areas are still relatively closed, especially those who cannot read Chinese characters and who are older and do not know how to use the Internet, let alone social media. The government and relevant departments should strengthen the popularization of network knowledge in these areas, organize and carry out various community activities to learn and publicize network knowledge and social media applications. Make use of the digital currency policy being carried out by the country, so that they can actively integrate into the digital community from passive acceptance. At the same time, all kinds of online groups, such as community groups, relatives, and

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friend groups, should be established to encourage villagers to communicate online, pay electricity bills online and deal with problems online. Secondly, ethnic identity can effectively promote the participation of Yi people in ethnic activities, improve their evaluation of life quality and improve ethnic relations. Therefore, in the Yi area, the government should not only strengthen the poverty alleviation and economic construction, but also strengthen education, so that the Yi individuals from an early age to establish a positive ethnic outlook. At the same time, the government and communities can also organize more ethnic activities to strengthen ethnic sentiment of minority groups, reduce inter-group threats and promote ethnic unity.

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