

Parental Involvement in Early Childhood Education in China: A Qualitative Systematic Literature Review and Implications for Education Management in Yunnan Province

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Abstract—Parental involvement (PI) plays a crucial role in early childhood education (ECE), influencing children's academic and social development. However, in China, particularly in Yunnan Province, parental engagement is shaped by a complex interplay of cultural traditions, socioeconomic factors, and educational management challenges. This study employs a qualitative systematic literature review approach to synthesize existing research on PI in Chinese ECE, focusing on cultural influences, socioeconomic barriers, and educational management issues. Using the PRISMA framework, a total of 32 qualitative studies published between 2010 and 2024 were analyzed. Findings reveal that Confucian values significantly shape parental expectations, with urban parents demonstrating higher engagement levels compared to rural families. Socioeconomic barriers, including financial constraints, parental migration, and low literacy levels, hinder rural parents from actively participating in their children's education. Moreover, educational management challenges in Yunnan—such as the lack of structured parent-teacher engagement programs and language barriers among ethnic minority families—further limit effective PI. To address these challenges, this study proposes culturally responsive parental engagement programs, including bilingual communication strategies and culturally tailored training workshops. Strengthening school-parent collaboration through flexible parent-teacher meetings and community-based learning initiatives is also essential. Additionally, leveraging technology-driven solutions, such as WeChat-based educational platforms and online learning resources, can enhance parental participation, especially in rural and remote areas. This research contributes to the growing body of literature on PI in Chinese ECE by highlighting the unique regional challenges and proposing targeted educational management strategies. The findings underscore the need for localized, inclusive, and technology-supported engagement approaches to bridge the urban-rural gap and promote equitable early childhood education outcomes in Yunnan.

Keywords—Parental Involvement, Early Childhood Education, Educational Management, Socioeconomic Barriers, Confucian Values, Yunnan Province, China

I. INTRODUCTION

Parental involvement (PI) is widely recognized as a crucial factor influencing children's cognitive, social, and emotional development in early childhood education (ECE) (Sadownik, 2023). Previous research consistently highlights that when parents actively engage in their children's learning experiences, it leads to numerous benefits, including improved academic performance, stronger motivation, enhanced self-esteem, and better social adaptability (Kovács

et al., 2022). Early childhood is a critical period for shaping foundational skills, and parental support during this stage plays a vital role in reinforcing learning both at home and in school. The engagement of parents can take various forms, ranging from direct participation in classroom activities and school events to indirect involvement, such as providing a conducive home learning environment and fostering positive attitudes toward education.

In China, parental involvement is deeply embedded in cultural and historical traditions, particularly influenced by Confucian values (Wang, 2022b). Confucianism emphasizes the family's responsibility in cultivating a child's moral and intellectual development, positioning education as a fundamental path to social mobility and success (Wang & Huang, 2023). This cultural backdrop has historically shaped Chinese parents' strong commitment to their children's education. However, despite the widely acknowledged importance of parental engagement, the extent and nature of involvement vary significantly across different regions, socioeconomic backgrounds, and ethnic communities. Economic conditions, parental educational attainment, work commitments, and geographic location all contribute to shaping how parents engage with their children's education.

Yunnan Province, located in the southwest of China, presents a unique case for examining parental involvement in ECE due to its diverse ethnic composition and socioeconomic disparities. As home to numerous ethnic minority groups, Yunnan's cultural and linguistic diversity influences the ways in which parents interact with educational institutions. In rural areas, particularly among minority communities, limited financial resources and lower levels of parental education can act as barriers to active engagement in ECE (Rao et al., 2023). Many rural parents have to migrate to urban centers for work, leaving their children in the care of grandparents or relatives. This phenomenon of "left-behind children" has raised concerns about the lack of direct parental involvement and its potential negative effects on early childhood learning and emotional development. Furthermore, many rural parents may perceive formal education as the sole responsibility of teachers and schools, leading to a more passive role in their children's learning journey.

Conversely, urban parents, especially those with higher levels of education and financial stability, often have greater access to educational resources and exhibit higher levels of engagement in structured educational activities (Gross et al., 2022). They are more likely to enrol their children in supplementary learning programs, communicate regularly with teachers, and actively participate in school decision-making processes. This stark contrast between rural and urban parental involvement underscores the need for targeted educational management strategies to bridge the

gap and promote equitable engagement across different communities in Yunnan.

Given these complexities, it is crucial to explore the factors that influence parental involvement in early childhood education and to identify strategies that can enhance participation among diverse groups. This systematic literature review (SLR) seeks to synthesize existing qualitative research on parental involvement in Chinese early childhood education, with a particular focus on Yunnan Province. By analysing the socio-cultural, economic, and institutional factors that shape parental engagement, this study aims to provide valuable insights for policymakers, educators, and educational administrators. The findings will contribute to the development of effective educational management strategies that foster stronger collaboration between parents and schools, ultimately enhancing the quality of early childhood education in Yunnan Province and beyond.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Defining Parental Involvement in Early Childhood Education

Parental involvement in early childhood education (ECE) refers to the active engagement of parents in their children's learning experiences, both at home and in school settings (Cutshaw et al., 2020). This involvement encompasses a broad range of activities, including home-based support (e.g., reading with children, providing learning materials, monitoring homework), school-based participation (e.g., attending parent-teacher meetings, volunteering in school activities, participating in decision-making), and community engagement (e.g., joining parent networks, advocating for educational initiatives). Researchers have widely examined the impact of parental involvement, emphasizing its critical role in fostering children's academic achievement, social competence, and emotional well-being.

Epstein's (1997) framework on parental involvement identifies six key types of engagement: (1) parenting, which refers to creating a supportive home environment; (2) communicating, which includes interactions between schools and families; (3) volunteering, where parents contribute time to school-related activities; (4) learning at home, which involves parental support for academic tasks outside school; (5) decision-making, where parents take part in school governance and policies; and (6) collaborating with the community, which focuses on partnerships between schools, parents, and local organizations. These dimensions provide a useful framework for understanding how parents can be involved in their children's early education and how educational management strategies can be tailored to promote active engagement.

In the Chinese context, parental involvement is deeply shaped by cultural values that emphasize academic excellence and familial responsibility. Parents, particularly in urban areas, are often highly invested in their children's education, frequently enrolling them in extracurricular programs and tutoring sessions to ensure academic success. However, rural parents face distinct challenges that hinder their participation, including economic constraints, lower

levels of education, and limited awareness of the significance of early learning support. Many rural families perceive formal education as the sole responsibility of schools, leading to minimal home-based involvement (Rao et al., 2022). These disparities highlight the need for region-specific approaches to fostering parental engagement in ECE.

Cultural and Regional Influences on Parental Involvement

Cultural beliefs and regional disparities play a significant role in shaping parental involvement in early childhood education across China. Confucian traditions, which emphasize the importance of education as a means of social mobility and personal virtue, continue to influence parental attitudes (Wang, 2022a). Chinese parents generally place strong expectations on children to perform well academically, with education being perceived as a family obligation rather than merely an individual pursuit. This cultural emphasis is particularly evident in urban areas, where parents are more likely to take an active role in shaping their children's educational experiences. Competitive academic environments in cities drive parents to invest in private tutoring, extracurricular enrichment programs, and structured learning activities outside the classroom.

However, in rural regions, parental involvement is shaped by different socio-economic realities. Yunnan Province presents a particularly unique case due to its diverse ethnic composition and varying levels of economic development. Many ethnic minority families in Yunnan face language barriers, as Mandarin is not always the primary language spoken at home. This linguistic gap can create challenges in school-home communication, making it more difficult for parents to engage with teachers and educational institutions effectively (Brown, 2017). As a result, children from minority backgrounds may not receive the same level of parental support in their early education as their peers in predominantly Mandarin-speaking households.

Another factor influencing parental involvement in Yunnan is the high rate of labor migration. Many parents in rural Yunnan move to urban centers in search of better economic opportunities, leaving their children in the care of grandparents or extended family members. These left-behind children often experience reduced parental support, which can negatively impact their emotional well-being, social development, and academic progress (Wang, 2023). While grandparents may provide care and supervision, they often lack the educational resources and knowledge required to facilitate early childhood learning effectively. This situation underscores the need for targeted policies that address the specific challenges faced by left-behind children and their caregivers.

Barriers to Effective Parental Involvement in Yunnan

Despite the well-documented benefits of parental involvement in early childhood education, several barriers hinder active engagement in Yunnan, particularly in rural and disadvantaged communities. These challenges can be categorized into economic, social, and institutional barriers

that limit parents' ability to participate meaningfully in their children's education.

One of the most significant barriers is economic constraint. Many parents in rural Yunnan work in low-income agricultural or industrial jobs, often requiring long hours and migration to other regions (Sun et al., 2024). The financial burden of providing basic needs often takes precedence over educational involvement, leaving little time or resources for parents to engage in structured learning activities at home (Lase et al., 2022). In contrast, urban parents with higher incomes and greater financial stability can afford educational resources such as books, learning materials, and tutoring services, further widening the gap in parental involvement between rural and urban families.

Another major challenge is the educational background of parents. In many rural areas, parents themselves may have had limited access to formal education, leading to a lack of confidence in assisting their children with school-related tasks. Some parents may feel unqualified to support their children's learning, reinforcing the perception that education is the sole responsibility of schools (Wang, 2022c). This belief reduces the likelihood of parents engaging in home-based learning activities and communicating regularly with teachers about their children's progress.

Parental migration further exacerbates the issue by physically separating children from their primary caregivers. Left-behind children in Yunnan often experience emotional and academic struggles due to the absence of parental guidance and support. Studies indicate that children who grow up with prolonged parental absence tend to have lower academic achievement and weaker social skills compared to those with active parental involvement (Shi et al., 2021). The reliance on elderly grandparents as primary caregivers also presents challenges, as older family members may not have the digital literacy or pedagogical knowledge to support modern educational practices.

Institutional barriers also play a role in limiting parental involvement. Schools in rural areas often lack structured programs or initiatives that actively encourage parental participation. In some cases, teachers may not have the necessary training to engage with parents effectively, resulting in weak school-home collaboration. Additionally, logistical challenges such as long travel distances, lack of access to transportation, and inflexible work schedules make it difficult for parents to attend school meetings, parent-teacher conferences, or community-based educational programs (Paris, 2012).

Addressing these challenges requires a multi-faceted approach that includes targeted educational policies, school-led outreach programs, and community support initiatives. Schools and educational policymakers need to implement culturally responsive strategies that accommodate the unique needs of ethnic minority families, provide training programs for caregivers, and develop flexible participation opportunities that align with parents' work schedules (Kwak et al., 2024). Strengthening the link between families and educational institutions can play a crucial role in ensuring that all children, regardless of their socio-economic background, receive adequate parental support in their early childhood education.

III. Method

Research Design

This study adopts a qualitative systematic literature review (SLR) approach to synthesize and analyze the existing qualitative research on parental involvement (PI) in Chinese early childhood education (ECE). The primary aim is to explore the factors influencing parental engagement in ECE and the implications of these factors for educational management, particularly in the context of Yunnan Province, China. The systematic review process ensures a comprehensive and unbiased summary of the existing body of literature, offering a clearer understanding of the topic while highlighting gaps that warrant further investigation.

To guide the process of data collection and analysis, the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) framework was employed. This framework helps ensure a transparent and methodologically rigorous review by providing a structured guideline for conducting systematic reviews. The PRISMA framework supports various stages of the review, including literature identification, screening, eligibility assessment, and data extraction, ensuring that all steps follow a standardized and replicable methodology. By following the systematic approach outlined in the PRISMA framework, this study aims to provide a robust, well-rounded analysis of the qualitative literature on parental involvement in early childhood education in China and its broader educational management implications.

Data Collection

A systematic search of relevant academic databases was carried out to gather qualitative studies related to parental involvement in early childhood education in China. The academic databases accessed included Web of Science, Scopus, CNKI (China National Knowledge Infrastructure), and Google Scholar. These databases were selected for their comprehensive coverage of educational research, particularly in the Chinese context.

The search process involved the use of a range of keywords tailored to capture relevant literature on the topic. The key search terms included: "Parental involvement in early childhood education in China", "Educational management and early childhood", "Qualitative studies on parental engagement in China".

These keywords were designed to ensure the inclusion of studies focusing on parental involvement, early childhood education, and educational management, specifically within the Chinese context. The inclusion of both Chinese and English-language databases ensured that a diverse range of studies, including those with unique cultural and regional insights, was reviewed. The search was conducted with the goal of identifying qualitative studies that provided in-depth analysis of parental involvement in ECE and the implications for educational management in various parts of China, including rural and urban regions.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

In order to ensure that only the most relevant and high-quality studies were included in the review, a set of inclusion and exclusion criteria was established. These criteria were designed to select studies that closely align with the research objectives of exploring parental involvement in Chinese ECE and its educational management implications.

TABLE I: INCLUSION CRITERIA

Criterion	Description
Study Type	Qualitative studies
Publication Period	Published between 2010 and 2024
Focus Area	Studies focusing on parental involvement in early childhood education in China
Context	Studies that discuss educational management implications of parental involvement in Chinese early childhood education
Region	Research that addresses both rural and urban settings within China, particularly in Yunnan Province

TABLE II: EXCLUSION CRITERIA

Criterion	Description
Study Type	Quantitative studies without qualitative insights
Educational Level	Studies focused on primary or secondary education
Geographic Focus	Studies not conducted in China, or those that are not region-specific to China
Relevance	Research that does not address parental involvement in early childhood education or its educational management implications

Data Analysis

The data analysis process followed a thematic analysis approach, which is a widely used method for analysing qualitative research. This approach was selected because it enables the identification, analysis, and interpretation of key patterns and themes across the studies, providing a comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing parental involvement and educational management in early childhood education. The thematic analysis was conducted in three stages: open coding, axial coding, and selective coding.

Open Coding

In the initial stage of the analysis, the data was read and re-read to identify key themes, concepts, and patterns within the studies. This involved a detailed examination of the research findings from the selected studies, with a focus on the factors influencing parental involvement in ECE. This stage of open coding allowed for the identification of recurring themes related to cultural beliefs, regional disparities, socioeconomic barriers, and the role of schools in fostering parental engagement.

Axial Coding

In the second stage, the identified themes were organized and grouped based on similarities and relationships between them. The axial coding process aimed to categorize the findings into broader thematic groups, such as "barriers to

parental involvement," "regional disparities in parental engagement," and "implications for educational management." This stage helped in understanding how different themes related to one another and how they shaped the overall picture of parental involvement in Chinese early childhood education.

Selective Coding

The final stage involved focusing on key themes directly related to educational management in Yunnan Province. This phase sought to identify the implications of parental involvement for policy and practice in the region, particularly in light of the unique cultural, linguistic, and socioeconomic challenges faced by families in Yunnan. The selective coding process allowed for a deeper exploration of how educational management strategies can be adapted to promote more effective parental engagement in early childhood education, especially in rural and ethnically diverse areas like Yunnan. By following these three stages of coding, the thematic analysis provided a structured framework for understanding the complex relationships between parental involvement, educational management, and regional disparities in Yunnan. This approach enabled the extraction of valuable insights that could inform future policies and practices aimed at enhancing parental participation in early childhood education.

IV. RESULTS

Following the systematic selection process, a total of 32 qualitative studies met the inclusion criteria and were analysed. The thematic analysis revealed three key themes that illustrate the factors influencing parental involvement in early childhood education (ECE) in China, with a particular focus on Yunnan Province. These themes provide insight into the cultural, socioeconomic, and educational management challenges that shape parental engagement in early childhood education.

Theme 1: Cultural and Societal Influences on Parental Involvement

Cultural values and societal expectations significantly shape how parents engage in their children's early education. In China, Confucian traditions emphasize academic achievement, filial piety, and respect for authority, all of which influence parental attitudes and behaviours toward education. Many studies indicate that these values create a high-pressure academic environment, particularly in urban settings, where parents tend to adopt an intensive and structured approach to their children's education (Lee & Chiu, 2024). This often includes early academic training, participation in extracurricular programs, and a focus on standardized test performance. Urban parents, who generally have higher levels of education and greater economic resources, actively seek ways to enhance their children's learning experiences through structured engagement, such as reading at home, enrolling children in enrichment programs, and frequently communicating with teachers.

In contrast, rural parents often exhibit lower levels of direct involvement in their children's early education due to

a combination of lower literacy rates, economic constraints, and limited exposure to early childhood learning practices. Many rural parents perceive schools as the primary institutions responsible for educating children, leading to minimal engagement in home-based learning activities (Wei & Ni, 2020). Additionally, traditional gender roles in rural areas often place the responsibility of child-rearing on mothers and elderly family members, which can further limit the level of structured parental involvement, as these caregivers may lack the necessary educational background or confidence to actively support early learning.

Moreover, rural parents may have a more passive approach to school-related engagement, attending parent-teacher meetings only when required and rarely participating in school governance or decision-making processes. This contrasts sharply with the active participation seen among urban parents, who are more likely to join school committees, advocate for curriculum changes, or provide feedback on teaching methodologies. Addressing these disparities requires culturally sensitive strategies that empower rural parents with knowledge and skills to actively contribute to their children's early education while respecting their cultural and economic realities.

Theme 2: Socioeconomic Barriers to Parental Involvement

Socioeconomic factors play a crucial role in shaping parental involvement, particularly in rural areas where financial limitations and work-related constraints prevent parents from fully engaging in their children's education. One of the most significant barriers is financial instability, which restricts families from investing in additional educational resources such as private tutoring, learning materials, and enrichment programs that could enhance their children's early learning experiences (Bayat & Madyibi, 2022). In urban areas, where families often have more disposable income, children are more likely to receive early childhood educational support through structured activities such as music lessons, language classes, and STEM-based programs. However, in rural areas, parents may struggle to afford even the most basic school supplies, further widening the educational gap between urban and rural children.

Another major socioeconomic challenge is parental migration. In many parts of Yunnan, as well as other rural regions in China, large numbers of parents migrate to urban centers in search of better economic opportunities, leaving their children in the care of elderly grandparents or other relatives. Studies show that left-behind children often experience significant academic and emotional challenges due to the lack of parental presence, reduced emotional support, and weaker home-school connections (Miao et al., 2024). These children may struggle with motivation, discipline, and school performance, as the absence of direct parental supervision and encouragement affects their ability to remain engaged in learning. Additionally, grandparents or other caregivers may lack the educational background to assist with homework or communicate effectively with teachers, further limiting the child's academic progress.

Furthermore, time constraints and work-related stress prevent many parents—both urban and rural—from actively engaging in their children's education. Even when parents recognize the importance of early childhood education, long

working hours, job-related pressures, and economic hardship often leave them with little time or energy to participate in school activities, assist with homework, or provide additional educational guidance at home. As a result, many children receive limited parental supervision and encouragement, which can negatively impact their academic motivation and social development.

Addressing these barriers requires comprehensive policy interventions that support financially disadvantaged families, provide educational resources to rural communities, and create alternative engagement strategies for parents who are physically absent due to work commitments. Schools and local governments could implement programs such as parenting workshops, mobile learning applications, and community-based learning centers to bridge the gap between home and school.

Theme 3: Educational Management Challenges in Yunnan

Educational management plays a crucial role in shaping the effectiveness of parental involvement in early childhood education. However, in Yunnan, several institutional and logistical barriers hinder the development of strong school-family partnerships. One of the primary challenges is the lack of structured parent-teacher engagement programs. Unlike urban schools, which often implement well-developed parent outreach initiatives, regular meetings, and volunteer opportunities, many rural schools in Yunnan operate without formal mechanisms to encourage parental participation. As a result, parents may remain disconnected from school activities and decision-making processes, limiting their ability to provide input on their children's education.

Another significant challenge is language barriers in ethnically diverse regions of Yunnan. The province is home to a wide range of ethnic minority groups, many of whom speak languages other than Mandarin at home. This linguistic diversity can create communication challenges between parents and educators, making it difficult for teachers to convey important information about children's progress, school events, or educational policies (Yan et al., 2022). Language barriers also prevent parents from actively participating in school activities, attending meetings, or engaging in structured learning support at home. Schools that fail to accommodate linguistic diversity may inadvertently exclude many parents from meaningful engagement in their children's education.

Additionally, a lack of teacher training in parental engagement strategies further complicates efforts to strengthen school-family partnerships. Many early childhood educators in Yunnan receive limited professional development on how to effectively communicate with parents, address cultural differences, and involve families in educational decision-making. Without the necessary skills and resources, teachers may struggle to build trusting and collaborative relationships with parents, resulting in lower levels of parental involvement. To address these challenges, educational management strategies should focus on:

Developing culturally responsive engagement programs that accommodate linguistic diversity and promote inclusivity.

Implementing technology-driven communication tools, such as mobile apps or social media platforms, to bridge communication gaps between schools and parents.

Providing professional development for teachers on effective parent-teacher collaboration, particularly in ethnically diverse and socioeconomically disadvantaged communities.

Creating community-based initiatives that encourage informal parental involvement, such as workshops, mentorship programs, and local educational events.

The findings from this study highlight the complex interplay of cultural, socioeconomic, and educational management factors that influence parental involvement in early childhood education in China, particularly in Yunnan Province. While Confucian values promote strong parental engagement in urban settings, rural parents often face barriers related to financial hardship, migration, and lower literacy levels. Moreover, educational management challenges, such as the lack of structured parent-teacher engagement programs and language barriers, further hinder effective parental involvement in Yunnan's diverse communities. By addressing these challenges through targeted policies, inclusive school practices, and culturally responsive educational management strategies, stakeholders can enhance parental engagement and improve early childhood education outcomes in China.

V. FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS

Findings

This study highlights the multifaceted nature of parental involvement (PI) in early childhood education (ECE) in China, particularly in Yunnan Province. Cultural influences, deeply rooted in Confucian values, shape parental expectations, emphasizing academic success and structured learning from an early age. However, these expectations manifest differently across socioeconomic and geographical contexts, with urban parents often displaying more proactive engagement than their rural counterparts. Rural parents face systemic barriers that hinder their active participation in their children's education, including financial limitations, low literacy levels, and limited access to educational resources. These challenges are further compounded by the prevalence of parental migration, which leaves many children in the care of grandparents or other relatives, reducing direct parental engagement in learning activities.

Additionally, educational management in Yunnan requires localized strategies to accommodate the province's ethnic and economic diversity. Given that Yunnan is home to multiple ethnic minority groups, language barriers and cultural differences pose significant challenges to effective school-parent communication. Schools often lack structured parental engagement programs that are sensitive to these unique regional characteristics, making it difficult for parents, especially those from non-Mandarin-speaking backgrounds, to participate in school activities or make informed decisions about their children's education. These findings underscore the need for context-specific interventions that address cultural, socioeconomic, and institutional barriers to parental involvement, ultimately

fostering a more inclusive and effective early childhood education system.

Implications for Educational Management in Yunnan

Culturally Responsive Parental Engagement Programs

To enhance parental involvement in Yunnan's ethnically diverse communities, schools should implement bilingual communication strategies that accommodate non-Mandarin-speaking ethnic groups. Many ethnic minority parents face difficulties understanding school policies, announcements, and their children's academic progress due to linguistic barriers. By providing translated materials, multilingual parent-teacher conferences, and culturally relevant communication approaches, schools can bridge this gap and ensure that all parents have equitable access to essential educational information. Additionally, employing bilingual parent liaisons or community educators can further support parents in engaging effectively with schools.

Beyond language support, culturally tailored training workshops can help parents recognize the importance of their involvement in early childhood education. Many rural and ethnic minority parents, due to traditional beliefs or lack of awareness, may view schooling as the sole responsibility of teachers. Educating parents about their role in early learning, literacy development, and emotional support can empower them to take a more active role in their children's education. Workshops should be designed with cultural sensitivity, integrating local traditions, storytelling methods, and practical strategies that align with parents' experiences and values. By making engagement strategies culturally relevant and accessible, schools can foster stronger parental participation in the learning process.

Strengthening School-Parent Collaboration

Effective parental engagement requires fostering strong and flexible partnerships between schools and families. One approach is to schedule parent-teacher meetings at flexible times to accommodate the working schedules of rural and migrant parents. Many parents, particularly those employed in agriculture or low-income jobs, struggle to attend school meetings due to rigid work hours. Offering weekend or evening meetings, rotating schedules, or remote conferencing options can increase parental participation and ensure that all families, regardless of work commitments, stay involved in their children's education.

Another effective strategy is the establishment of community-based learning programs that integrate local leaders and networks to encourage school engagement. In many rural areas, village elders, religious figures, or community organizations hold significant influence over parental decision-making. Schools can collaborate with these community stakeholders to create informal learning hubs, parent mentoring groups, and school-based activities that align with local customs. Encouraging parent volunteers, organizing storytelling sessions featuring local history and culture, and hosting informal school gatherings in community centers can create a more inviting and familiar environment for parental participation. By leveraging existing social structures and networks, schools can foster a

more sustainable and culturally integrated approach to parental involvement.

Leveraging Technology for Parental Engagement

Technology offers powerful tools for bridging gaps between schools and parents, particularly in rural and remote areas where physical attendance at meetings and workshops may be challenging. One promising strategy is the use of WeChat-based educational platforms for direct school-parent communication. WeChat, as one of China's most widely used social media and messaging apps, provides an accessible and user-friendly medium for schools to share announcements, homework assignments, educational tips, and real-time updates with parents. By establishing dedicated school WeChat groups, educators can maintain consistent engagement with parents, addressing their concerns and offering guidance on how to support their children's learning at home.

In addition to messaging platforms, online workshops and digital learning resources can provide parents with flexible and self-paced opportunities to enhance their knowledge of early childhood education. Schools can develop video tutorials, interactive courses, and parent discussion forums where families can access expert advice, instructional techniques, and practical tips on fostering their children's cognitive and social development. Furthermore, offering mobile-based learning activities—such as storytelling apps, phonics games, and numeracy exercises—can help parents actively participate in home-based learning despite time constraints. Implementing technology-driven engagement strategies ensures that even parents who are geographically distant or occupied with work can remain involved in their children's education in a meaningful way.

VI. CONCLUSION

The findings from this study emphasize that parental involvement in early childhood education in Yunnan is shaped by cultural, socioeconomic, and institutional factors. While urban families generally exhibit strong engagement due to higher educational awareness and economic stability, rural and ethnic minority parents face multiple barriers that limit their participation. Addressing these challenges requires localized and culturally responsive interventions, including bilingual communication strategies, flexible engagement opportunities, and technology-driven solutions.

By implementing culturally inclusive educational policies, strengthening school-community collaboration, and leveraging digital platforms, educational institutions in Yunnan can create an equitable and supportive environment for all parents. Ultimately, enhancing parental involvement will contribute to better early childhood education outcomes, bridge the urban-rural education gap, and foster a more inclusive learning ecosystem for young children across diverse communities.

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