

# Literature Review on Tourism Development in Yunnan

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**Abstract:** This research conducts a comprehensive review of the literature concerning the development of tourism in Yunnan, delving into its development trends, existing issues, as well as the current research status at home and subsequently puts forward proposed solutions. The tourism sector in Yunnan is exhibiting trends towards diversification, intelligentization, sustainability, internationalization, high-end development and regional collaboration. Nevertheless, it is confronted with a series of challenges, including resource conservation, product innovation, infrastructure construction, market regulation and regional cooperation. Domestic scholars have carried out research from various perspectives. Future research efforts should place greater emphasis on practical implementation, aiming to address the existing problems and propel the healthy and sustainable development of Yunnan's tourism industry.

**Keywords:** Yunnan tourism; Development trends; Problems and challenges; Research status; Literature review

DOI: 10.62639/sspjiss15.20250202

## 1. Introduction

The development of the tourism industry has undergone the process of transformation and upgrading from "sightseeing reception" to "economic industry" to "pillar industry." (Wang, 2018). It has not only become an important engine to promote local economic growth, but also an important window to show the unique charm of Yunnan and promote cultural exchanges. At the macro level, the development of tourism is closely intertwined with the utilization of natural resources, the protection of cultural inheritance, the adjustment of economic structure and the reconstruction of social relations. At the same time, the protection of cultural inheritance is also very important. The rich national culture in Yunnan is the soul of tourism. (Wang, 2018). In addition, the development of tourism has a profound impact on the economic structure. When discussing the strategies and paths of tourism development in Yunnan province, scholars have put forward many theoretical and practical suggestions from different perspectives. However, although the existing studies provide useful guidance for the development of tourism in Yunnan province to some extent, there are still some shortcomings that need further further research and improvement.

## 2. Basic Situation of Tourism Development in Yunnan Province

### (1) Rich tourism resources

Yunnan has a unique natural landscape, endowed with strange karst landforms. Tourist resources are the premise

(Manuscript NO.: JISS-25-2-8001)

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and basis for the development of tourism industry, as well as the key and core of tourism development. Tourist resources are composed of 6 indicators: scenic spot grade, number of scenic spots, location conditions, festival activities, resource richness, and climate comfort. The higher the grade of the scenic spot in the tourist destination, the greater the attraction to tourists. (Feng,2023).In addition, there are many national scenic spots in Yunnan, such as Shilin, Yulong Snow Mountain, Shangri-La Pdacuo National Park, etc. These natural landscapes form a solid foundation for Yunnan's tourism industry.

Table 1. Overview of major natural scenic spots in Yunnan

Scenic spot name	Geographic position	The main features
Three rivers flow together	Northwest Yunnan Province	The Jinsha River, the Lancang River and the Nujiang River flow in parallel
Hoodoos	In Shilin Yi Autonomous County, Kunming City	Unique karst landscape
Nine township karst cave	Yiliang County, Kunming City	Spectacular karst cave landscape
Xishuangbanna	Southern Yunnan province	Tropical rainforest ecosystem
Gaoligong Mountain	Western Yunnan Province	Primitive forest and biodiversity
the Dian Lake	Southwest Kunming	wetland ecosystem

Yunnan is one of the provinces with the largest ethnic minorities in China, with 25 ethnic minorities, each of which ethnic group has its own unique languages, characters, costumes, customs and festivals. The Torch Festival of the Yi nationality, the Water-sprinkling Festival of the Dai nationality and the March Street of the Bai nationality are rich and colorful, attracting a large number of tourists to participate in and experience. Ethnic tourism is a characteristic tourism form of Yunnan, which takes exotic culture as the core experience object and is rich in unique attractiveness and brand identity. With its unique resources and obvious regional advantages, it can occupy a key position in Yunnan's tourism industrial system. (Wang,2018).In these festivals, tourists can enjoy the colorful ethnic song and dance performances, taste the unique national food, and feel the strong ethnic customs. Ethnic handicrafts, such as embroidery of Yi nationality, bamboo weaving by Dai nationality and Dongba paper of Naxi nationality, are also popular among tourists and become an important part of Yunnan tourist souvenirs.

Table 2. The historical background of major cultural and historical attractions in Yunnan

Scenic spot name	historical background	cultural features
Old Town of Lijiang	Founded in the Song Dynasty, it was once an important post station on the ancient tea-horse road	Naxi traditional architecture, Dongba culture
Dali State Site	The political and economic center of Nanzhao State and Dali State	Three towers, Chongsheng Temple
Yi Torch Festival	Traditional Yi festivals, a symbol of exorcising evil spirits and avoiding disasters	Torch parade, song and dance show
Dai splashing water festival	The Dai New Year, a symbol of washing away the misfortune of the past year	Splash water, peacock dance
Bai March Street	Bai traditional festivals, markets and religious activities	Three courses of tea, ethnic songs and dances

(2) Development status of tourism

The total Yunnan tourism revenue has increased from a low level in the past to hundreds of billions of yuan, and the reception of domestic and foreign tourists has also achieved a substantial growth.(Hu,2018).This growth trend not only reflects the attraction of Yunnan's tourism resources, but also benefits from the continuous improvement of tourism infrastructure and the gradual improvement of tourism service quality.

Table 3. Major scenic spots in Yunnan and their tourism activities and infrastructure

Feature spot	The main landscape	Earlytravel activities	Infrastructure
Hoodoos	Karst landform	Hiking to watch	Easy footpath, simple hotel
Erhai Lake	Lakes and idyllic scenery	Take a boat tour and experience the life of the fishermen	Simple wharf, farmhouse music

Through the above table 3, the development path of the early tourism industry of Yunnan province can be clearly seen. From the discovery of natural resources to the initial development, to the reception and service of tourists, every link has laid a solid foundation for the subsequent development of Yunnan tourism. Although the infrastructure and tourism activities during this period were relatively simple, its unique natural landscape and initial efforts opened the door to the development of tourism in Yunnan.

The construction of tourism infrastructure in Yunnan has made some progress, and the traffic conditions have been significantly improved. The expressway network continues to extend, connecting major cities and tourist attractions in the province, making travel more convenient for tourists. Railway construction is also accelerating. (Feng,2023).The opening of high-speed rail has shortened the time-and-space distance between Yunnan and other regions, and improved the travel efficiency of tourists. In terms of air transport, Yunnan has a number of international airports, covering many cities at home and abroad, facilitating the flow of domestic and foreign tourists.Focusing on the layout of "One Ring Road, Two Belts and Six Hubs," we will accelerate the construction of road, railway and air transportation infrastructure along the Yunnan-West Tourism Ring Line, and promote the construction of comprehensive communication and transportation system along the border and the Yangtze River. By 2035, the "fast forward slow travel" comprehensive tourism communication and transportation system will be completed. (Feng,2023). In addition, tourism facilities such as hotels, restaurants, shopping and so on are also developing. Various star hotels and special homestays can meet the accommodation needs of different tourists. A rich and variety of catering choices allow tourists to taste the local food, and special shopping blocks provide places for tourists to buy souvenirs and special goods.(Wang,2018).

### **(3) Connection between tourism development and related fields**

Tourism culture is one of the core competitiveness of Yunnan tourism industry. Yunnan's rich cultural resources are deeply integrated with the tourism industry, forming a unique tourism and cultural brand.(Ren,2011).Cultural elements are everywhere, from the naming of tourist attractions to the design of tourist products. The coordinated development of tourism and transportation is of great importance to Yunnan tourism. The optimization of civil aviation airport layout has played a positive role in promoting the local tourism industry in Yunnan. The study shows that civil aviation development is positively related to the tourism and urban development in Yunnan. Through correlation analysis, coupling and coordination degree analysis and GIS spatial analysis methods, it is found that the reasonable layout of civil aviation airport not only shortens the travel time of tourists, improves the accessibility of tourism, but also promotes the process of tourism urbanization and drives the economic development of surrounding areas. (Jian, et al.,2017).For example, the completion and operation of Kunming Changshui International Airport has greatly enhanced Kunming's status as a tourism hub city and facilitated domestic and foreign tourists to travel to all parts of Yunnan. At the same time, the improvement of transportation infrastructure is also conducive to integrate tourism resources, create cross-regional tourism routes, and enhance the overall competitiveness of Yunnan tourism.

## **3. Research Status**

In terms of the innovation and promotion of tourism products, it is suggested to introduce new technologies, new ideas and new models to enrich the product content and forms. For one hand, may involve relevant contents in the research on the development of digital tourism innovation in Yunnan Province. At the same time, it pays attention to product cultural connotation and local characteristics.(Duan Bin,2021).For another, the research on the planning and design of the concept of "biodiversity" as a tourism route in Yunnan reflects this idea.(Li&Li,2024).

In terms of environmental protection and resource management, the importance of ecological protection is emphasized, such as the establishment of ecological compensation mechanism, the promotion of green

tourism model and the strengthening of environmental supervision to balance the relationship between tourism development and environmental protection. To sum up, domestic scholars have conducted studies on the development of Yunnan tourism from different perspectives. With the development of tourism in Yunnan, relevant research will continue to deepen and expand to provide stronger support for its healthy and sustainable development.

#### **4. Analysis of the Problems or Challenges Existing in Yunnan's Tourism Development**

##### **(1) Sustainable utilization and protection of tourism resources**

Yunnan is rich in tourism resources, The vertical zone climate is obvious, forming different climate groups of tropical, subtropical, temperate, and frigid zones. In addition to the influence of topography and altitude, it is known for its vertical climate characteristics of "four seasons in one mountain and different weather in ten miles." (Li&Li,2024).but in the process of development, resource protection is facing great pressure. Excessive development leads to the destruction of ecosystem, such as the reduction of forest vegetation and soil erosion in some scenic spots; threatening biodiversity, destroying the living environment of some rare animals and plants; losing cultural heritage, excessive commercialization damages the traditional architectural style and folk culture. Although the importance of protection is theoretically emphasized, there is a lack of concrete and operational implementation plans. For example, the application of technology for monitoring the tourist flow is insufficient, and it is difficult to accurately control the number of tourists; the environmental protection measures during the peak tourist period are not fully implemented, and the work of garbage disposal and ecological restoration lags behind.

##### **(2) Innovation and diversification of tourism products**

The current tourism product structure is single, mainly focusing on sightseeing tourism and cultural heritage tourism. This single structure limits the diversity of tourist experiences, makes it difficult to meet the needs of different tourists, and restricts the tourism industry's long-term development. The production chain of transforming tourism resources into products and the tourism product structure are still immature. (Hu,2018). Many challenges are faced in developing high-end tourism products, ecotourism, and experiential tourism. It is difficult to balance economic benefits and environmental protection, and there is a lack of strategies to attract and retain high-end tourists. Market demand research is not in-depth enough, resulting in a disconnection between tourism product design and market demand. Product innovation lacks depth and continuity, and it is unable to form brand effects and market competitiveness. (Ren, 2011).

##### **(3) Improvement and upgrading of infrastructure**

Yunnan is located in the border area, with a relatively backward infrastructure. In terms of transportation, road conditions in some areas are poor, the accessibility of remote scenic spots is low; accommodation conditions are uneven, and the number of high-quality hotels and characteristic homestays is insufficient; the communication network coverage is imperfect, and the signal in some scenic spots is poor. (Hu,2018). In the process of infrastructure construction, interest coordination is difficult, all parties have differences on construction planning and resource allocation; the effective use of funds faces challenges, and the low return on investment affects the enthusiasm of social capital investment; prominent environmental and social problems in the construction process, such as land occupation and resident relocation. In addition, the application of digital and intelligent technologies in infrastructure upgrading is insufficient to meet the needs of tourists for convenient and efficient tourism services.

## **5. Countermeasures and Suggestions for Yunnan Tourism Development**

### **(1) Tourism product innovation**

#### **1) Deep excavation of cultural resources**

Yunnan should dig into the rich cultural resources, especially the minority culture, and develop cultural tourism products with local characteristics. There are many ethnic groups in "South of the Rainbow Cloud," with 25 ethnic minorities living in different climate zones and terrain areas in Yunnan. The folk customs are simple, and the national culture is distinctive and diverse in all aspects. (Li & Li, 2024). At the same time, cultural elements will be integrated into the design of tourist souvenirs, and characteristic commodities with commemorative significance and cultural connotation will be developed, such as ornaments inspired by ethnic minority costumes and patterns, and handicrafts based on national legends. In addition, the protection and inheritance of intangible cultural heritage should be strengthened, and tourists can deeply understand and experience the unique cultural charm of Yunnan through live performances and interactive experience.

#### **2) Using modern scientific and technological means**

Actively use modern technology, such as virtual reality (VR), augmented reality (AR) and artificial intelligence (AI), to create an immersive tourism experience. In addition to allowing tourists to feel the natural scenery and cultural landscape in the virtual environment, we can also develop an intelligent guide system to provide personalized guide services through voice recognition, image recognition and other technologies. (Duan, 2021). Use AI technology to analyze tourists' interests and behavior habits, and recommend appropriate tourist routes and products for them. For example, the national culture experience game based on VR is developed, so that tourists can play different ethnic roles in the game, participate in traditional activities, and enhance the sense of participation and interaction of tourists.

#### **3) Develop theme tourism products**

According to the market demand and the resource advantages of Yunnan, to develop diversified theme tourism products. Identify the positioning of tourism cities and tourism products, and adhere to the integration of culture and tourism. Fully tap the tourism resources with Yunnan cultural characteristics (Shen, 2022). In terms of ecotourism, we will strengthen the protection of nature reserves and ecologically fragile areas, and develop projects such as hiking, ecological observation and forest health care, so that tourists can get close to nature and understand nature. Adventure tourism can combine the terrain of Yunnan to develop rock climbing, rafting, cave adventure and other projects to meet the needs of adventure lovers. Health care tourism can rely on Yunnan's hot spring resources, forest oxygen bar, etc., to develop the spa, traditional Chinese medicine health care, yoga meditation and other products, to attract tourists who pursue a healthy lifestyle. At the same time, it pays attention to the construction of supporting facilities for theme tourism products, such as environmental protection toilets in eco-tourism scenic spots, and safety equipment rental for adventure tourism.

### **(2) Resource allocation optimization**

#### **1) Accurately grasp the market demand**

Big data analysis technology is used to collect and analyze tourists' behavior data, evaluation data, search data, etc., to accurately grasp the demand changes of the tourism market. Through the analysis of the source place, age, gender, consumption habits and other information of tourists, the tourist flow and demand preferences in different time periods and different regions are predicted, so as to reasonably adjust the allocation of tourism resources. (Hu, 2018). For example, increase the number and types of special restaurants around the popular scenic spots, and improve the facilities and services of the hotel. At the same time, a dynamic monitoring mechanism of the tourism

market should be established to adjust the supply of tourism products in time to avoid resource waste and excessive development.

## **2) Strengthen regional cooperation and coordination**

Strengthen tourism cooperation and coordination among various regions in Yunnan and with neighboring provinces and countries. Within the province, break the restrictions of administrative divisions, integrate tourism resources, and jointly create cross-regional tourism routes and products. For example, by combining the snow-capped mountains, grasslands and ancient cities in northwest Yunnan with the tropical rain forests and ethnic customs in southern Yunnan, the "Yunnan Style Panoramic Tour" route will be launched. In terms of regional cooperation, we should strengthen cooperation with Sichuan, Guizhou, Guangxi and other neighboring provinces, jointly develop the tourism market, and realize the sharing of tourist sources and complementary resources. We will actively participate in the "Belt and Road" initiative, strengthen tourism cooperation with South Asian and Southeast Asian countries, and carry out cross-border tourism cooperation projects, such as joint promotion of cross-border tourism routes and mutual visa exemption policies, so as to enhance the regional influence and international competitiveness of Yunnan's tourism industry.(Hu,2018).

## **3) Focus on the training and introduction of human resources**

Strengthen the cultivation and introduction of tourism human resources, and improve the professional quality and service level of tourism practitioners.Strengthen cooperation with colleges and vocational schools, adjust the curriculum setting of tourism majors according to market demand, pay attention to the practical teaching link, and cultivate tourism talents with innovative spirit and practical ability. For example, establish a tourism internship base to allow students to accumulate experience in practical work. In 2006, the Implementation Opinions on Further Strengthening the Construction and Management of the Tour Guide Team were issued, which conducted national middle-level and qualification examinations for tour guides, strengthened the training of small-language tour guide talents in the construction of the tour guide team, and improved the structure of the tour guide talent team.(Ren,2011).At the same time, introduce domestic and foreign excellent tourism management talents and professional talents to enrich Yunnan's tourism talent team. Strengthen the training of tourism practitioners, regularly hold business training, skills competition and other activities to improve their service awareness, professional skills and emergency handling ability. Establish a tourism talent incentive mechanism, give recognition and rewards to outstanding practitioners, and attract more talents to participate in Yunnan's tourism industry.

## **(3) Infrastructure construction**

### **1) Optimize the transportation network**

Further increase the investment in the construction of transportation infrastructure, and optimize the layout of the transportation network. We will speed up the construction and upgrading of expressways and railways to improve the capacity and comfort of roads.For example, strengthen the road construction in remote scenic spots to improve the accessibility of scenic spots. We will actively develop air transport, increase the density of routes and flights, expand international and domestic route networks, and strengthen air ties with major cities at home and abroad. At the same time, attention should be paid to the construction of transportation hubs to realize the seamless connection of different modes of transportation and improve the travel convenience of tourists. For example, tourist transfer centers will be built in transportation hubs such as airports and railway stations to provide one-stop transportation transfer services.

### **2) Improve the supporting tourism facilities**

Strengthen the construction of tourism supporting facilities, improve the quality and level of tourism services. In terms of accommodation, in addition to the construction of a number of boutique hotels and homestays with local

characteristics, we should also strengthen the standardized management of accommodation facilities and improve the quality and safety standards of accommodation services. We will encourage the development of diversified accommodation formats, such as tent camps and characteristic inns, to meet the needs of different tourists. In terms of catering, we will promote Yunnan characteristic food, build food streets, strengthen the supervision of catering hygiene, and ensure the food safety of tourists. We will improve shopping facilities, build large shopping centers and special shopping streets, and provide a rich variety of tourist goods. In addition, the construction of tourist toilets, parking lots, tourist service centers and other supporting facilities should be strengthened to provide a convenient and comfortable tourist environment for tourists. Conditional set travel "invite business to do," "travel supervises do," "complain centre," "travel dispute, accident handles affairs centre," "item develops do" wait for a number of branch, close the quality of service strictly, offer convenient, amenity to travel for the tourist. (Ren,2011).

### 3) Building a smart tourism platform

In short, the application of digital means in tourism marketing has brought new development opportunities to Yunnan's tourism industry. Through the in-depth integration of big data, social media and other technologies, tourism enterprises can achieve more precise and efficient marketing. The government actively plays a leading role, using digital management platforms to timely and effectively supervise the production and sales activities of tourism enterprises, promote the establishment of a healthy market development mechanism, and the government can more efficiently provide intelligent public services to tourists by accurately grasping the real-time dynamics and user needs of tourist destinations. (Duan,2021). thus promoting the sustainable development of Yunnan's tourism industry.

## 6. Summary and Future Outlook

Due to the different development conditions and advantages of tourism in the 16 cities and prefectures of Yunnan Province, it is necessary to comprehensively consider the local tourism resources, development foundation, industrial configuration, and other conditions, and formulate corresponding development strategies according to the situation. At the same time, some problems and shortcomings have been exposed in the development of Yunnan Province's tourism industry, which need to be carefully analyzed and effective solutions found in a timely manner. (Feng,2023). In the future, Yunnan tourism industry should seize the opportunity, actively respond to the challenges, and achieve sustainable development.

In the future research, the interdisciplinary research should be further strengthened, and the theories and methods of geography, sociology, economics, culture and other disciplines should be comprehensively applied to deeply analyze the complex problems in the development of tourism in Yunnan. At the same time, we should pay attention to the influence of tourism development on the local social culture, and promote the harmonious development of tourism and social culture. Through the joint efforts of all parties, Yunnan's tourism industry is expected to achieve greater development in the future, become an important force in the global tourism market, and make greater contribution to the local economic development and cultural exchanges.

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