

Research on the Development Opportunities and Restrictive Factors of Tourism Industry in Yunnan Ethnic Areas in the Post-epidemic Era

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ABSTRACT

The travel industry has been one of the hardest hit by the coronavirus (COVID-19) over the past two years. How to deal with the new crown epidemic (COVID-19) effectively has become a major event affecting the health, economic and social development all over the world. Tourism industry is a pillar industry in ethnic minority areas in Yunnan. How to discover new problems, new opportunities and new directions for cultural and tourism development in ethnic areas under normalized epidemic prevention and control has become an urgent practical and theoretical problem to be solved. This paper mainly studies and summarizes the characteristics of the tourism industry in Yunnan ethnic areas, and discusses the development opportunities and constraints of the tourism industry in Yunnan ethnic areas in the post-epidemic era and puts forward some practical suggestions.

Keywords: *Post-epidemic Era; Ethnic Areas; Development Opportunities; Constraints*

1. INTRODUCTION

Yunnan is a beautiful and magical land. Both natural and cultural landscapes have unique advantages, with a three-dimensional climate of cold and tropical tropics, and most cities are like spring in all seasons. There are majestic mountains, rivers, forests, peaks, caves, lakes and waterfalls. There are ancient and long-standing historical and cultural relics, as well as modern revolutionary historical monuments. It is a treasure trove of knowledge for visiting ancient times to educate cultural traditions and revolutionary traditions. There are also 25 ethnic minorities with different cultural characteristics and colorful folk customs. Tourism resources are all over the province. Before the outbreak of the epidemic, ethnic tourism has become a pillar industry and economic growth point in Yunnan ethnic areas. People's demand for ethnic tourism is also increasing year by year. However, after the outbreak of the epidemic, the willingness and behavior of tourists have changed, and the tourism industry chain in ethnic areas has been hit hard. However, China's epidemic prevention and control is basically normalized at present. The international epidemic situation is still severe, and international tourism is still at a standstill. The

advantages of eco-tourism resources and unique ethnic culture in Yunnan ethnic areas also bring opportunities for the development of the tourism industry, and at the same time, it also brings opportunities for the development of domestic tourism. Therefore, it is important to discuss the opportunities and constraints of the tourism industry in ethnic areas under the development of the post-epidemic era. This paper based on the development of the post-epidemic era Tourism products that meet the new tourism needs of tourists, improve the construction of tourism infrastructure, and the level of tourism services, and enhance the brand of ethnic tourism. Therefore, it'll attract tourists who cannot travel internationally due to the epidemic to ethnic areas, and help the recovery of tourism in Yunnan ethnic areas. It has a theoretical and practical significance for sustainable development.

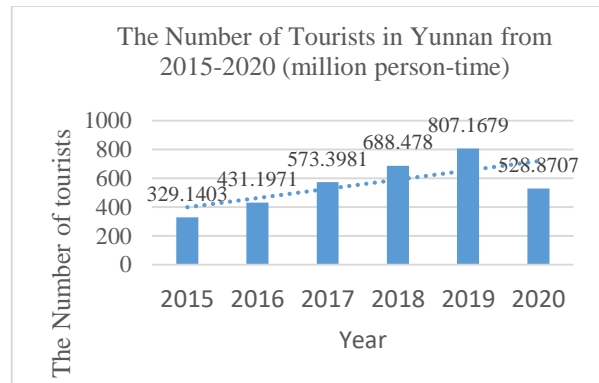
2. OVERVIEW OF TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN ETHNIC MINORITY AREAS IN YUNNAN UNDER THE BACKGROUND OF REGULAR EPIDEMIC PREVENTION AND CONTROL

The impact of the epidemic on China's tourism

industry is unprecedented, but after the epidemic was brought under control, national tourism consumption recovered immediately. People realized that tourism is an important indicator of improving living standards. Tourism is not only an important driving force for economic development, but also an important field for promoting social harmony, an important carrier of cultural construction, and an important link for cultural exchanges. Tourism returning to culture is an advanced stage of tourism industry development.

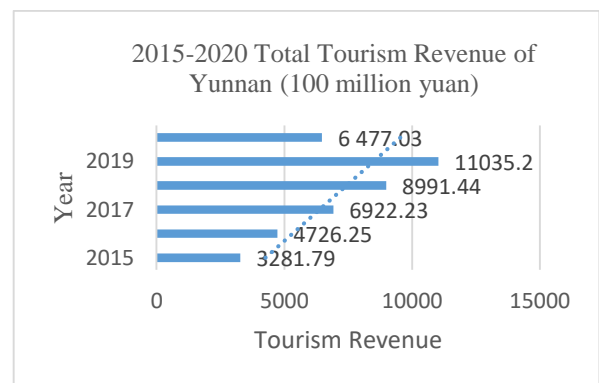
Statistics from the Yunnan Provincial Holiday Tourism Information Statistics Center show that during the Chinese New Year in 2019, Yunnan received 34.7406 million tourists, and a total of tourism revenue was achieved into 24.173 billion yuan. Compared with the Chinese New Year in 2019, the number of overnight tourists to Yunnan during the Chinese New Year in 2020 decreased by 4.5 million to 5 million person-times, and the loss of tourism economic income exceeded 20 billion yuan [1]. The official website of the Yunnan Provincial Department of Culture and Tourism released the data on tourism in Yunnan Province during the holidays of Chinese National Day. From October 1st to 8th, Yunnan received a total of 23.166 million tourists, a year-on-year recovery of 79% on a comparable basis, the same as the national level. Among them, 4.603 million overnight tourists were received, a year-on-year recovery of 82%; 18.563 million one-day tourists were received, a year-on-year recovery of 78.3%. The total tourism revenue was 19.2 billion yuan, a year-on-year recovery of 80.4% on a comparable basis, 10 percentage points higher than the national level. In 2020, there were 528.8707 million tourists in Yunnan, and the total tourism revenue reached 647.703 billion yuan (Figures 1-2). Under the background of regular epidemic prevention and control of holiday tourism economy, Yunnan tourism generally shows a trend of effective recovery and continuous improvement. Holiday tourism presents three characteristics: Firstly, it has an unbalanced regional recovery. Kunming, Dali, Lijiang, Diqing and other traditional tourism cities are popular, and the tourism market has recovered effectively. Border cities such as Xishuangbanna, Dehong, and Honghe have experienced significant year-on-year declines due to the risk of imported epidemics from abroad. Zhaotong, Qujing and other prefectures remain in a moderate state. Secondly, the long-distance market has declined, and intra-provincial travel has grown significantly. During the holiday, the number of people entering Yunnan accounted for 33.5% of the total number of trips, and the number of residents traveling in the province accounted for more than 65%. It has become the main force of holiday tourism in Yunnan Province. Self-driving tourists are estimated to exceed 17.8 million, accounting for more than 17.8 million trips in the province. 76.8% of the total number of trips, self-driving tours, surrounding tours, and outings are very popular among tourists. Thirdly, cultural

and tourism integration experience products are very popular. During the holidays, there are many tourists with new formats and new products such as leisure vacations, characteristic towns, boutique hotels (homestays), car tourism camps, tent villas, and camping RVs [2].



Source: "2021 Yunnan Statistical Yearbook"

Figure 1. The total number of tourists in Yunnan from 2015 to 2020 (10,000 person-times)



Source: "2021 Yunnan Statistical Yearbook"

Figure 2. The total tourism revenue of Yunnan from 2015 to 2020 (100 million yuan)

3. DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR TOURISM INDUSTRY IN YUNNAN MINORITY AREAS

3.1 The unique customs and culture of ethnic areas

Yunnan is the province with the largest number of ethnic groups in China. In addition to the Han people, there are 25 ethnic minorities with a population of more than 6,000. Among them, 15 ethnic groups are unique to Yunnan, and their populations account for more than 80% of the national total population of these ethnic groups. This means that Yunnan's folk customs are representative and unique. Due to historical reasons and the special relationship between districts and cities, the diversity of ethnic folk culture in Yunnan is very prominent. First, the cultural characteristics are distinct.

Secondly, it is the diversity of religious and cultural influences. Yunnan not only has many primitive religions, but also has a profound influence of foreign religious cultures, such as Taoist culture and Christian culture. Buddhist culture has the greatest influence in Yunnan, including Tibetan Buddhism, Southern Buddhism, and Chinese Buddhism. The coexistence of great Buddhist sects is also unique in the history of the spread and development of Buddhism. Each ethnic group in Yunnan has gradually formed a specific cultural connotation in the process of their own development. The good combination of tourism resources provides favorable conditions for Yunnan to form a tourist area with its own characteristics and strong attractiveness [3].

3.2 Opportunities brought by the rural revitalization strategy

Yunnan is located in the southwestern border of the motherland. For a long time, due to the high mountains and deep valleys, inconvenient transportation and harsh natural conditions, the economic and social development of all ethnic groups and regions has been severely restricted. The countryside is the main living soil of China's intangible cultural heritage, and more than 73% of China's intangible cultural heritage items are distributed in traditional villages[4]. As a frontier province with the most concentrated ethnic minorities in China, Yunnan has more diverse and rich intangible cultural heritage resources, and it is an experimental field for China's intangible cultural heritage protection and development. Yunnan Province promulgates the "Regulations on the Protection of Traditional Ethnic and Folk Culture in Yunnan Province" in 2000, it becomes a pioneer in the protection of intangible cultural heritage in China. Yunnan is also one of the earliest provinces in China to develop intangible cultural heritage tourism. Since the Yunnan Provincial Government positioned tourism as the four pillar industries in the late 1990s, it has opened up tourism industries such as Lijiang and Dali featuring intangible cultural heritage of ethnic minorities [5].

To revitalize the countryside, we must start from the tourism culture to form a special rural cultural tourism industry[6]. The rural revitalization strategy is a major strategic deployment made by the Party Central Committee with President Xi Jinping at the core deeply grasping Chinese national conditions and agricultural conditions, and profoundly understanding the changing characteristics of my country's urban-rural relations and the laws of modernization[7]. The 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China put forward the strategy of rural revitalization. Under the background of the implementation of the rural revitalization strategy, rural tourism culture has developed rapidly and has become the top priority of revitalizing rural development. In the new era of socialism with Chinese characteristics,

the CPC Central Committee with President Xi as the core has a deep understanding of Chinese national conditions and agricultural conditions, grasps the relationship between urban and rural areas and regional development in China, and constantly summarizes the laws of modernization. In order to realize the great strategic the Two Centenary Goals, with the important orientation of practically solving the shortcoming of rural agricultural development, an important strategic orientation is put forward for the work of "agriculture, rural areas and farmers" [8]. Rural revitalization and the development of rural tourism culture complement each other. The rural revitalization strategy provides an important opportunity for the development of rural tourism culture. The development of rural tourism culture is an effective way to realize rural revitalization. Rural areas can fully exploit the region's unique landform features and resource advantages to form a unique tourism and cultural industry, which plays a key role in promoting rural economic development and promoting rural culture. In addition, due to the increasing pressure of life and study in the city, people often choose to enjoy the body and mind and relieve their emotions through rural tourism, which provides a strong opportunity for the development of tourism in Yunnan ethnic areas[9].

4. RESTRICTIONS ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM INDUSTRY IN YUNNAN ETHNIC AREAS

4.1 Constraining factors of over-exploitation in ethnic minority areas in Yunnan

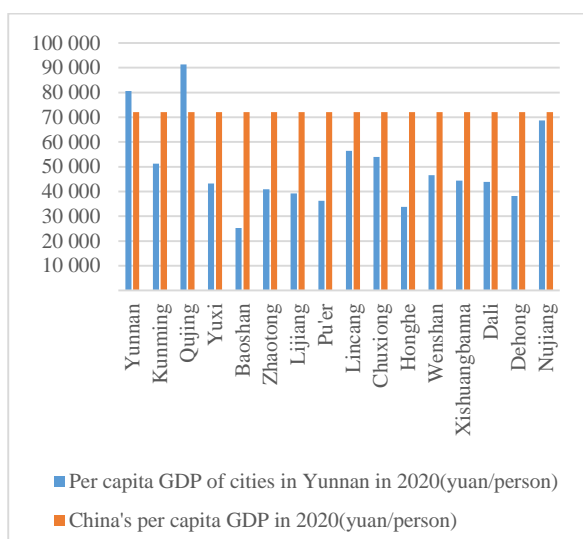
Yunnan has a total of 25 border lines. Although China has achieved great results in epidemic prevention and control, the epidemic prevention and control in border areas is still severe. In 2021, Yunnan has pressed the inter-provincial tourism pause button three times, and the tourism industry in Yunnan ethnic areas is also facing more severe challenges. The economic development of ethnic areas has a positive effect on promoting the harmonious development of society, but the erosion of ethnic culture is also an objective fact. In order to pursue economic interests. Some ethnic areas spare no effort to develop various local resources, including cultural resources. For example, a large number of aborigines in Lijiang in Yunnan have moved out, traditional national culture has been impacted, and the ecological environment is changing. In recent years, Lijiang has proposed to "grasp new industrialization like tourism" and vigorously develop ecological industries and clean energy with a view to gradually reducing the over-reliance on tourism for economic and social development.

Under the premise of the development of ethnic cultural tourism, the residents of ethnic cultural tourism destinations are unconsciously influenced by the

mainstream culture outside and change. Moreover, most of the shops, hotels, and inns in ethnic areas are run by foreigners. Some of the locals who remain can only act as cheap labor, which affects the main body of ethnic cultural heritage. Burns studied the impact of the economic level of tourist destinations on local culture and concluded that tourism will significantly increase the possibility of cultural assimilation in economically underdeveloped areas[10]. Affected by the epidemic, Yunnan ethnic areas will face loss of economic income, and ethnic tourism resources may be over-exploited, which will directly put the development of tourism in ethnic areas into trouble.

4.2 Constraining factors of unbalanced development of ethnic minority areas in Yunnan

From the perspective of the internal development characteristics of ethnic minority areas in Yunnan, vertical and horizontal inequalities exist and tend to expand, which are prominently reflected in intra-ethnic income inequality, regional development imbalance, and urban-rural development inequality within the same region[11]. From the statistics in 2021, it can be seen that only two prefectures in Yunnan have reached the national per capita GDP, while the rest of the prefectures are far below the national per capita GDP (Figure 3). For Yunnan, a province with a population of more than 47 million, which integrates frontiers, ethnic groups, and mountainous areas, it has a poor economic foundation, weak industries, low rural incomes, and a high risk of population returning to poverty. Agriculture, tourism, or other industries alone are not enough. In order to solve the actual situation of Yunnan's backwardness and underdevelopment, it is even difficult to solve basic livelihood problems.



Source: "2021 Yunnan Statistical Yearbook", "2021 China Statistical Yearbook"

Figure 3. Comparison of per capita income levels of cities in Yunnan with the national average

5. CONCLUSION

Yunnan has unique climate resources, gourmet resources, natural ecological resources and ethnic cultural resources, which make life comfortable and leisurely, suitable for living, traveling and working. People can fully relax their bodies (Free Body), relax their minds (Free Mind), and relax their lives (Free Life). "3F Resort" is the best portrayal of Yunnan as a healthy life destination, which is highly consistent with our province's concept of "free travel for tourists". Our province can use the "3F Resort" as a publicity image to build a world-class "healthy living destination" and make every effort to build a "3F" series of brand images.

The concept of "3F", like "3S tourism", is unique in the world. "F" is not only the pinyin initials of "fang", but also the first letter of "Free". Focusing on the connotation of "3F", a series of brands such as "3F Resort", "3F Vacation", "3F Tourism", "3F Life" can be formed, and it is expected to become a highly personalized, visualized and international Yunnan label in our province, which will be displayed to the world. To promote a new way of life and tourism, to help build a healthy life destination, and make Yunnan the best healthy life destination in the eyes of the world. In general, Yunnan's tourism industry will continue to be affected by the epidemic for a period of time, but tourism is a relatively sensitive and active industry. Once the influencing factors are eliminated, the rebound and growth will be faster. At present, Yunnan is at a critical stage of preventing the spread of the epidemic. The tourism system of the province is taking active measures to support tourism enterprises to overcome difficulties, stop losses, and seek recovery in accordance with the deployment requirements of "one-handed epidemic prevention and control, and one-handed economic development", and strive to promote the province's tourism industry to usher in the recovery development after the epidemic. The major national development strategies and policies are overlapping in Yunnan, and the unique location advantages, resource advantages, and openness advantages are being transformed into development efficiency at an accelerated rate. Under the background of the rural revitalization strategy, there will also be new opportunities for development.

AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

Rui Fan contributed to the conception of the study, contributed significantly to analysis and manuscript preparation and performed the data analyses and wrote the manuscript;

Hai Cheng helped perform the analysis with constructive discussions and guided the thesis.

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