



# The Importance and Approaches to Enhancing the Influence of Yunnan Minority Sports Culture in The Context of “The Belt and Road Initiative”

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## Abstract

It is of great significance to enhance the influence of Yunnan minority sports culture in the context of the "the Belt and Road Initiative." Yunnan's ethnic minority sports culture, as an important part of the excellent traditional culture of the Chinese nation, has unique charm and value. By increasing its influence, it helps promote cultural exchange and cooperation, strengthen national cohesion and identity, and drive local economic development. This study examined the infrastructure construction, funding distribution, and participation rate before and after "the Belt and Road Initiative" using quantitative data analysis techniques. Whereas the qualitative research was conducted to assess how Yunnan's ethnic minority sports culture was highlighted through advertising campaigns, cultural exchange initiatives, and infrastructure development projects. Its importance included promoting cultural dissemination, enriching tourism resources, and enhancing international friendship. In order to increase the influence of Yunnan minority sports culture and give it a bigger role in the construction of "the Belt and Road Initiative," measures were taken to strengthen cultural protection and inheritance, innovate sports activities, conduct international exchange activities, and use modern media.

**Keywords:** The Belt and Road Initiative; Approaches; Yunnan Minority Sports Culture

## Introduction

Perhaps of the main achievement in the development of communist discretion with Chinese highlights is the "B&R" project, which is additionally alluded to as the Silk Road Financial Belt and the 21st Century Maritime silk Road. A fundamental hub territory of the drive, Yunnan is likewise a bridgehead and radiation focus of China pointing toward the South and Southeast Asia (Duan, 2018). Its area at the crossing point of the old Southern Silk Road makes it an optimal topographical area for the region. The focal government has proposed an arrangement to develop the Silk Road and the 21st Century Maritime silk Road mutually. The objective of this plan is to support cross-line exchange, cooperation, and financial development among the countries that are situated along the Silk Road (Kang, 2019). Yunnan has made important efforts in economic growth, and its gross domestic product has been consistently expanding despite the changing economic environment. Tourism has become a prominent symbol of people's quest of quality living, and Yunnan has made these considerable efforts (Zhang & Xiong, 2018).

The "B&R" project seeks to break through development bottlenecks and complement development shortcomings, with the ultimate goal of assuring the sustainable growth of tourism in Yunnan and boosting economic development.

## Yunnan province and its diverse ethnic minority groups

Yunnan province, which is located in the southwest of China, is renowned for its magnificent scenery, abundant wildlife, and distinctive cultural tapestry that is woven by the 25 ethnic minority groups who are officially recognised at the provincial level. For this reason, it is considered to be one of the most varied areas in China, with minorities constituting around one-third of the total population overall (Yang, 2018).



Some of the most prominent groups include:

Yi: The largest minority, known for their warrior traditions, vibrant festivals, and distinctive architecture.

Bai: Concentrated around picturesque Dali, renowned for their matriarchal society, intricate embroidery, and the iconic Three Pagodas.

Dai: Inhabiting the lush Xishuangbanna region, famous for their Theravada Buddhist traditions, elephant festivals, and colourful attire.

Hani: Skilled farmers residing in terraced landscapes, known for their unique "water ladder" irrigation system and vibrant festivals.

Miao: Scattered across various regions, celebrated for their diverse dialects, rich folklore, and intricate silverwork.

The people from various ethnic groups in Yunnan province demonstrated the charm of their traditional sports recently (Fig 1 and 2).



Fig 1: Charming sports of Yunnan province

(Cited from (<https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202006/02/WS5ed60af5a310a8b24115a502.html>))



Fig 2: Yunnan ethnic group shots a ball with a traditional bow made solely of bamboo <https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202006/02/WS5ed60af5a310a8b24115a502.html>

### **The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI): Connecting Continents**

China initiated the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) in 2013, which is sometimes alluded to as the One Belt, One Road (OBOR) initiative. This ambitious global development plan was made public by China. The construction of a network of commercial routes and infrastructure that connects Europe, Africa, and Asia is the objective of this project (Zhu & Li, 2021).

The initiative primarily focuses on two main parts:

**The Silk Road Economic Belt:** An organization of land-based infrastructure projects, including trains, highways, and different ventures, that stretches from China to Europe, passing via Focal Asia and Russia.

**The 21st Century Maritime Silk Road:** To link China with Southeast Asia, South Asia, the Middle East, and Africa, an ocean based organization of ports, shipping channels, and marine infrastructure is utilized.



BRI aims to achieve several key goals:

Promote economic cooperation and regional integration; Boost infrastructure development; Strengthen cultural exchange and mutual understanding; Promote peace and stability.

## Research Background

National strategic promotion: Provides opportunities for the development of Yunnan's ethnic minority sports culture, enabling it to move towards a broader international stage and enhance its influence.

The demand for cultural inheritance and development: Yunnan's ethnic minority sports culture has rich connotations and unique value, which helps to better inherit and promote cultural heritage (Shi, 2018).

Promote people to people connectivity: an important bridge and link to promote mutual understanding and friendship between the people of China and countries along the Belt and Road, and enhance cultural identity among people of all countries.

## Research Objectives

Cultural inheritance and promotion, promoting ethnic exchanges and solidarity, promoting economic development, and enriching the cultural connotation of the "the Belt and Road".

Communication strategy formulation, education and talent cultivation, industrial development, international cooperation.

## Research Questions

How does Yunnan minority sports culture play the role of cultural exchange and integration in the "the Belt and Road" initiative? What is the significance of enhancing the cultural confidence and national pride of Yunnan's ethnic minorities? What specific ways and strategies can better showcase and spread Yunnan's ethnic minority sports culture?

## Research significance

The sports culture of Yunnan's ethnic minorities is the crystallization of their wisdom, carrying rich history, traditions, and values. It has important significance in cultural inheritance and protection, promoting national identity and unity, driving economic development, cultural exchange and integration, and spreading the concept of healthy living.

## Literature Review

### Sorting of research literature

Li et al. (2019) Study on the ecological development model of the nature resources of sports tourism in the Yi ethnic areas of Yunnan Province should be implemented. In this research, the importance of green tourism activities is emphasized which adheres with the ecological principles that are covered in the BRI. The paper proposes an approach which could be applied in an attempt to achieve the sustainable relationship between tourism and environment.

Liang et al. (2019) The national boundary scenic route between China and Lanmei has to be constructed and supplied with a general planning and building strategy The employment of tourism infrastructure as a measure used to propagate national cultural soft power is a wider idea that is embodied in their work, and this strategy is reflected in this concept. This is an embodiment of a greater vision that this approach portrays. The paper conforms with the importance of the Belt and Road Initiative on the social trading side by tourism which is a core issue.

Based on the "the Belt and Road" initiative of Luo (2018), this study aims to promote the development of Yunnan minority sports culture, and emphasizes its importance and strategy in tourism discourse. It also discussed the ways of communication of Guizhou ethnic minority culture



in the international community. From the research results, it was found that good communication is essential to support culture and rally people. The "the Belt and Road" initiative was seen as one of the measures to establish international population ties. Through the "whole process" model, Tuo (2017) focuses on how traditional ethnic sports can have cross-cultural significance transmission. It has contributed to the theme of cultural exchange and sports diplomacy in the the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), because it has brought a more inclusive perspective.

In summary, previous studies have emphasized the importance of cultural inheritance and protection, while others have placed greater emphasis on the driving role of economic development. This article will explore how to enhance its influence and ensure the continuity of cultural heritage; Examine its value in promoting ethnic unity and maintaining social stability; Explore ways to cultivate professional talents in the inheritance of ethnic sports culture, and propose suggestions and prospects for future research (Wang, 2018).

### Research related theories

Cultural communication theory: by participating in the "the Belt and Road" cultural exchange activities and using modern media to promote, promote the spread and diffusion of culture, and enhance the understanding and integration of different cultures.

Cultural identity theory: By promoting traditional ethnic sports activities, more people can understand and feel their cultural connotations, thereby generating cultural identity.

Symbolic interaction theory: in the context of the "the Belt and Road", through the display of national sports cultural symbols, it can trigger and promote their interaction and exchange with the culture represented by these symbols, so as to enhance their influence.



## **Importance of Enhancing Influence of Yunnan Minority Sports Culture In BRI**

In the context of the "the Belt and Road" initiative, it is of great significance to strengthen the influence of Yunnan minority sports culture. Yunnan minority sports culture can become a force field for social exchanges, economic development and international cooperation. Its diversified sports clusters and unique social resources can make significant contributions to the "the Belt and Road" initiative (Xi, 2017). Actively promoting and incorporating narration can show the diversity and history of Yunnan society, improve global popularity, attract traffic and promote tourism development. As a social tool, it can achieve cross-cultural understanding and cooperation, consistent with the goals of the "the Belt and Road" initiative. By enhancing its influence, Yunnan has the opportunity to become a major figure in the social dimension of the "the Belt and Road" initiative, contribute to the common well-being of people of all countries, and make the world more interdependent and dynamic.

## **Cultural Exchange and Understanding**

**Shared heritage:** The notion that sport is a unifying factor which overcomes boundaries that divide people from different cultural backgrounds held by all. The cultural dialogue and mutual understanding between China and the nations of the BRI might be promoted through the encouragement of the athletics traditions and ideas mutually, and the minority sports could serve as exactly the bridge (Yang & Zhao, 2019).

**Mutual respect and appreciation:** While engaging in these cultural exchange programs, communities get a chance to become closer to each other and share opinions in order to build up mutual understanding, appreciation and respect.



Soft power diplomacy: A necessary tool for China's soft power diplomacy may be sport with an aim to raise positive international image of both China and minorities in the world. This might be how a peaceful and harmonious global setting would be shaped.

### **Soft Power and National Image**

Unique cultural identity: Yunnan's niche sports are an endemic and colorful part of China's cultural repertoire. We can expand their reputation internationally thus getting a multifaceted and positive picture of China which focuses on the rich legacy of its long history and the commitment of China to the protection of culture and art.

Combating stereotypes: Through the demonstration of these ethnic groups our claims, misconceptions and stereotypes about China are debunked and we also give a more realistic and complete representation of the country.

Enhancing global partnerships: A positive image of the country can stimulate the popularity of tourism, attract foreign investments, and create opportunities for healthy international collaborations across many industries.

### **Economic Development**

Tourism potential: Yunnan can therefore earn tourism income and subsequently have better economic perspective by hosting sports events, art exhibitions and educational programmes for minority sports for the visiting Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) countries.

Infrastructure development: Through the modernisation of sports facilities and infrastructure development, employment opportunities may be created while regional development could be enhanced.

Handicrafts and cultural products: Spurring on traditional games may raise the buying power of patrons who now purchase the associated arts and cultural goods hence boosting incomes nearby.

## Preserving and Promoting Cultural Heritage

Sustainability of traditions: Incorporating the minority sports within the BRI means that they get more value and respect systematically (Yu & Mei, 2019). Hence the continuity of these precious cultural practices to the next generations is guaranteed.

Intergenerational transmission: Joining sports and arts activities with the young generation may hold the traditions as values passed on and knowledge of these traditions are preserved.

Promoting ethnic minority sports can enhance the identification and cultural pride of ethnic minority groups towards their own origins. The influence of Yunnan minority sports culture in the "the Belt and Road" framework can be broadened, and has broad prospects in improving soft power, promoting economic growth, protecting cultural heritage, and promoting cross-cultural dialogue and understanding. By utilizing cultural resources, Yunnan can develop economic and cultural relations with countries along the route, and promote diversity and connectivity through the implementation of relevant practices (Wang & Zhang, 2021).

## Research Methodology

This study selected five counties, townships, and villages inhabited by ethnic minorities as sample points. The surveyed population includes local ethnic minority residents, inheritors, government officials, tourism practitioners, etc., totaling 689 people. We use professional online survey platforms and paper questionnaires to ensure the scientific and effective nature of the questionnaire. Use recording equipment, cameras, etc. to record the on-site situation of the event. Obtain data on the participation rate of different age groups and the level of importance placed on cultural heritage. Interview data provides in-depth and personalized information, which can supplement the shortcomings of quantitative results.



Case Studies: Under the umbrella of Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), the demonstrative case studies completed or still on the go projects cannot be missed that have promoted Yunnan minority sports culture. This examination of the cases seeks to determine the main considerations that enhanced success as he tasks were done, and also any challenges and lessons learnt.

Interviews and Surveys: In order to promote Yunnan minority sports culture, stakeholders including government representatives, representatives of cultural and sports organizations, players, coaches, and community leaders were interviewed as well as surveys were created and distributed. Their opinions on the advantages, difficulties, and tactics for raising the profile and impact of Yunnan minority sports culture under the BRI were collected.

Quantitative Analysis: The survey data were analyzed using statistical techniques, such as inferential statistics to look at relationships between variables and descriptive statistics to summarize important findings (e.g., the impact of cultural exchange programs on the promotion of Yunnan minority sports culture).

Qualitative Analysis: To find recurrent themes, patterns, and insights connected to the study goals, thematic analysis was done on interview transcripts or qualitative data from open-ended survey questions.

Data Analysis and Result

Quantitative Analysis

Table 1 :Changes in Yunnan Minority Sports Culture before and After BRI Promotion Efforts

Data Category	Before BRI Promotion Efforts	After BRI Promotion Efforts
Participation Rates	100 participants per year	500 participants per year
Funding Allocations (\$)	\$50,000 per year	\$200,000 per year
Infrastructure Development	2 sports facilities	5 sports facilities

Table 1 shows that before the "the Belt and Road" initiative, the recognition and participation of Yunnan minority sports culture was low. Only 100 people participated in the event every year, with only 50000 dollars, and only two facilities were built for non-minority sports. After the self-initiated publicity, the situation has significantly improved, with the number of participants increasing from 100 to 500, funding increasing from \$100000 to \$200000 per year, and the construction of five specialized sports venues for ethnic minority sports. These improvements have made the "the Belt and Road" promotion strategy of Yunnan minority sports culture clearer and more meaningful, bringing more resources, better infrastructure and more public participation.

Table 2 :Summary of Regression

Variable	Coefficient (Beta)	Standard Error	t-value	p-value (Significance)
Intercept (Constant)	120	15	8	<0.001
Funding Allocations (\$)	2	0.5	4	0.003
Number of Sports Facilities	25	5	5	0.001
R-squared	0.85			
Adjusted R-squared	0.82			
F-statistic	35.6			
Prob (F-statistic)	<0.001			

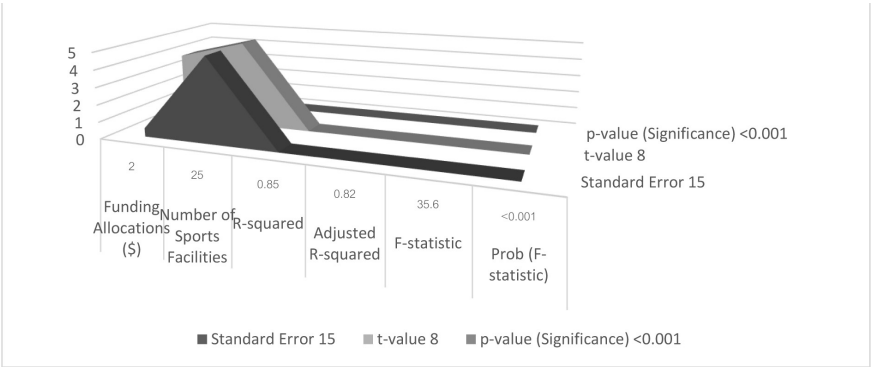


Fig 1: Summary of Regression



Table 2 and Figure 1 show the results, with an intercept of 120 indicating the expected annual participation rate of ethnic minority sports events in Yunnan. The fiscal allocation coefficient is 2, which means that for every \$1 increase in expenditure, the participation rate increases by 2 people per year. The government may consider increasing resources to promote participation. The coefficient of the number of sports facilities is 25, with an annual increase of 25 people for each additional facility, highlighting the key to facility development. The variance of the model's explanatory participation rate is 85%, and the adjusted R-squared value is 0.82, which is a conservative evaluation of the model's explanatory power.

Qualitative Analysis

**Table 3 :**Strategies and Impacts of BRI Promotion Efforts on Yunnan Minority Sports Culture

Strategy	Description	Impact
Cultural Exchange Programs	Collaborate with BRI countries to organize cultural exchange programs, including minority sports exhibitions, workshops, and training camps.	- Increased participation of athletes from Yunnan in international sports events hosted by BRI countries. - Enhanced cultural understanding and appreciation of Yunnan minority sports among international audiences.
Infrastructure Development	Invest in the construction and renovation of sports facilities dedicated to minority sports in Yunnan.	- Improved training facilities for local athletes, leading to enhanced performance and competitiveness. - Attraction of international sports events to Yunnan, boosting visibility and tourism.
Promotional Campaigns	Launch marketing campaigns targeting domestic and international audiences to raise awareness of Yunnan minority sports.	- Increased media coverage and public interest in Yunnan minority sports. - Growth of fan base and support for minority sports teams and athletes.

Table 3 In the context of the "the Belt and Road" initiative, there are various ways to improve the accessibility and effect of Yunnan minority sports culture. First, through seminars, training camps and exhibitions, Yunnan athletes will be promoted to countries along the "the Belt and Road" to increase their participation in international sports affairs, promote global understanding of Yunnan minority sports, and facilitate cultural exchanges. Secondly, developing infrastructure, constructing and renovating sports venues, serving ethnic minority sports, improving the conditions of athlete training centers, enhancing the level of athletes, hosting international sports competitions, and promoting the region as a sports destination contribute to sports marketing and tourism industry. Thirdly, carry out advertising campaigns to promote Yunnan's ethnic minority sports, stimulate public interest, attract media attention, increase fans and supporters of sports teams and athletes, and obtain positive feedback and commitments from the community.

### **Case Study: Yunnan Ethnic Sports Development Program**

Of all the nationalities that inhabit Yunnan province in Southwest China, each one has unique cultural traits such as sports and cultural traditions that have been passed down through many generations. Within the framework of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), the Yunnan Ethnic Sports Development Program was established to highlight their recognition of the strategic importance of preserving and developing these cultural assets. The program's goal was the regeneration of the sports and activities of the ethnic groups of Yunnan province and their integration into people's public consciousness so that their unique culture could still be preserved.

#### **Objectives:**

Preserve and promote ethnic groups' traditional games and sports in Yunnan.



Include traditional sports in events and contests for modern sports.  
Use sports diplomacy to promote mutual learning and cultural interaction within the BRI framework.

### **Implementation:**

The following crucial elements were included in a series of efforts that were used to execute the program:

Identifying and recording the traditional games and sports that Yunnan's many ethnic groups play;

Planning sporting events, competitions, and exhibits that highlight traditional sports for both domestic and foreign spectators.

Creating coaching seminars and training programs to aid in the skill-building of coaches and players in traditional sports.

Building new facilities and renovating existing ones in locations with sizable ethnic communities in order to provide sporting facilities and infrastructure devoted to traditional sports.

Working together with BRI nations to organize cultural exchange initiatives, such as combined sporting events, seminars, and training camps.

### **Key Success Factors:**

**Cultural Preservation:** The program succeeded greatly because, it stressed on using sports as a medium to maintain the ethnic traditions of Yunnan's ethnic groups. It encouraged cultural self-worth and differentiation, as well as the upkeep of the indigenous knowledge and norms.

**Community Engagement:** The sporting events were culturally appropriate and relevant to the communities who organized and actively took part in them for communities to be the target populations for the programs.

**Government Support:** The initiative was supported by the government through funding, infrastructural development, and policies with a strong back up, making the implementation of the project sustainable.



International Collaboration: Exchanges with BRI People paved the way for knowledge exchanging and cultural interflow, manifesting the sports done by Yunnan's ethnic minorities in the world and increasing the awareness and fostering respect for global issues.

### **Challenges Faced:**

Resource Constraints: The growth of the program to take on other areas and its influences was faced by the problem of lack of funds and the inadequate infrastructure.

Cultural Sensitivity: How to maintain the integrity and authenticity of traditional sports, but at the same time to present them as more acceptable to the general public was the main task set.

Inclusivity: Adequate preparation and due time granted to communities for the various requests and preferences of theirs was required to ensure that all tribes were duly represented and benefitted from the program activities.

Sustainability: Achieving sustainability not only in terms of the financing and support in a short-term perspective but also of the development of local ownership, community engagement, and revenue generation is crucial.

Under the "the Belt and Road" initiative, Yunnan ethnic sports are an important tool for community building, cultural protection and international cooperation. Cultural diversity is protected and promoted through traditional sports exchanges, but challenges need to be addressed to achieve long-term sustainability of the project.

### **Conclusion**

In the context of the "the Belt and Road" initiative, the research aims to reveal the impact of various means on the level of participation in the event by studying the use of fund allocation, infrastructure construction and cultural exchange projects to promote minority sports culture in Yunnan. The results showed that under controlled variables, for every \$1 increase in funding



for ethnic minority sports projects in Yunnan, two more people participate each year; The infrastructure construction is expected to increase the attendance rate in Yunnan by 25 people per year. The research model fits well with an R-squared value of 0.85, indicating a significant relationship between variables, that is, funding and the availability of sports facilities play an important role in motivating Yunnan communities to participate in ethnic minority sports. The research findings suggest that enhancing its influence can promote the inheritance and protection of these precious cultural heritages; Intensify support for the development of ethnic minority sports and culture, such as funding, tax incentives, land policies, etc; Combining modern technological means to innovate the forms of expression and dissemination of ethnic minority sports culture.

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