



Enhancing Recreation Opportunities: A Case Study Of Sports Parks In Yunnan Province, China

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ABSTRACT

This paper explores the construction, development, and socio-economic implications of sports parks in Yunnan Province, China, aiming to foster sustainable recreational experiences. Through an in-depth analysis of three emblematic cases—Kunming Cuihu Sports Park, Dali Ancient City Sports Park, and Lijiang Yulong Sports Park—it elucidates the integration of sports, leisure, and culture within these spaces. Emphasizing characteristic construction, facility maintenance, guided tours, and emergency management, the study underscores their pivotal roles in enhancing visitor experiences. The research delves into the multifaceted impact of sports parks on social development, including the promotion of healthy lifestyles, community cohesion, and local economic growth. By extrapolating insights from these cases, the paper offers valuable references for the planning and management of sports parks in diverse regions. Additionally, it outlines future directions for research, advocating for expanded data collection, nuanced understanding of cultural differences in recreational demands, and leveraging information technology to elevate service quality. These suggestions are poised to drive continuous progress in the field of sports parks, aligning with the evolving needs and aspirations of communities for an enhanced quality of life.

Keywords: Sports Parks, Recreation Opportunities, Cultural Integration, Sports Tourism, Community Cohesion.

INTRODUCTION

The central Chinese province of Yunnan has seen a sharp increase in the construction of sports parks, which have been transformed into lively public areas that juggle entertainment, exercise, and relaxation. In the midst of the growing movement toward healthier lifestyles, these parks have evolved from being only places to work out to becoming popular destinations for both residents and visitors. Because of its distinct topography and climate, Yunnan naturally encourages an interest in outdoor activities (Jocelyn, 2014). As such, sports parks serve as essential means of satisfying the various leisure needs of the public. Amidst this landscape, the conceptual lens of the recreational opportunity spectrum emerges as a pivotal tool in elucidating the multifaceted realm of sports park management and planning. By dissecting and categorizing recreational needs, it offers invaluable insights into optimizing park design and operations. Yunnan's topographical diversity and climatic nuances further accentuate the richness of its recreational opportunity spectrum, ranging from invigorating mountain hikes to exhilarating water sports, and from spirited team competitions to solitary fitness endeavors. However, the narrative of sports park development transcends the mere proliferation of facilities, it embodies a holistic pursuit of sustainable growth while catering to recreational exigencies. Noteworthy exemplars within Yunnan showcase the seamless integration of natural landscapes with sports amenities (Liu, 2024), fostering an environment where environmental preservation and recreational indulgence coalesce harmoniously. Moreover, the catalytic role played by select parks in propelling economic vitality through the orchestration of diverse sports events underscores their profound socio-economic impact. Yet, amidst the panorama of achievements lie inherent challenges, chief among them being the imperative to sustain environmental integrity and service standards amidst burgeoning footfalls. Nevertheless, the horizon of sports park development in Yunnan is replete with promise, buoyed by the escalating gravitation towards healthier lifestyles. The kaleidoscopic spectrum of recreational opportunities harbors untapped potential, promising newfound vistas of development for Yunnan's sports parks.

Beyond their evident recreational bounty, Yunnan's sports parks serve as veritable conduits for fostering community cohesion and augmenting urban allure. By serving as canvases for a plethora of sports events and cultural rendezvous, they function as beacons that illuminate the city's cultural tapestry, thereby invigorating ancillary industries and fortifying its socio-economic edifice. As Yunnan's sports parks emerge as quintessential havens for residents and tourists alike (Sigley, 2016), the clarion call for continuous optimization, service enhancement, and sustainable development resonates ever more strongly. Through meticulous resource optimization and a steadfast commitment to sustainability, these parks can burgeon into veritable utopias of leisure, nurturing the health and happiness of both locals and visitors alike.

Our research endeavors are intrinsically intertwined with unraveling the quintessence of sports parks. Delving deep into the substratum of recreational resources, we unearth the rich mosaic of Yunnan's sports parks, transcending geographical boundaries to encapsulate their essence. Through a fusion of theoretical inquiry, field surveys, and comprehensive questionnaire analyses, our research endeavors strive to furnish readers with a panoramic vista of Yunnan's sports parks, underscoring their diversity and distinct regional idiosyncrasies

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study adopts a mixed-methods approach, encompassing both quantitative and qualitative techniques to comprehensively explore the landscape of sports parks in Yunnan Province, China. The research design incorporates theoretical research, field surveys, and questionnaire surveys to capture diverse perspectives and insights into the development and management of sports parks.

Data Collection

Field Surveys: In order to obtain first-hand information on park amenities, facilities, visitor demographics, and management techniques, field surveys were carried out throughout the province of Yunnan's sports parks. Direct observation, staff discussions with park management, and feature documenting were all included of these surveys.

Questionnaire Surveys: Structured questionnaires were given to park visitors in order to get their opinions, preferences, and levels of satisfaction with respect to the amenities, recreational opportunities, and general park experiences. To obtain a wide variety of answers, the questionnaire design included demographic information, open-ended questions, and Likert scales.

Sampling Strategy

Parks Selection: A purposive sampling strategy was employed to select a diverse range of sports parks across Yunnan Province, encompassing urban, suburban, and rural settings, as well as parks with varying sizes and amenities.

Visitor Sampling: Convenience sampling was utilized to recruit park visitors for the questionnaire surveys, ensuring representation across different age groups, genders, and visitor types (e.g., local residents, tourists, families, individuals).

Data Analysis

Quantitative Analysis: In order to examine survey results and park visitors' demographic details, descriptive statistics were produced, such as frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations. The statistical program SPSS was used to handle and analyze the data.

Qualitative Analysis: In order to find recurrent themes, patterns, and insights from qualitative data sources including interviews, open-ended survey answers, and field observations, thematic analysis was utilized. To extract important results and consequences, this required classifying and categorizing qualitative data.

Ethical Considerations

The appropriate institutional review board granted ethical approval in order to guarantee adherence to moral guidelines and protect participant rights. All study participants gave their informed consent, and confidentiality and anonymity were upheld during the data collecting and analysis phases. Transparency in data collection techniques, triangulation of data sources, and reflexivity in researcher posture were among the measures used to reduce potential biases and guarantee the integrity and validity of the study findings.

Limitations

While efforts were made to capture a diverse range of perspectives and experiences, the study's findings may be influenced by inherent biases in sampling methods and data collection techniques. The generalizability of the findings may be limited to the context of Yunnan Province and may not be applicable to sports parks in other regions or countries. The dynamic nature of sports park development and management may render some findings time-sensitive, necessitating ongoing monitoring and research in the field.

RESULTS

A thorough analysis of the information gathered from surveys and qualitative evaluations carried out at Yunnan's sports parks is given in the findings section. The main conclusions about visitor demographics, preferred activities, satisfaction levels, and management techniques are presented in this section. The results provide insights into the characteristics of park visitors, their preferences, and their views of park amenities and services through thematic investigation of qualitative answers and quantitative data analysis. Stakeholders may improve their awareness of the present usage and satisfaction levels of sports parks by looking over these data. This knowledge will help them make more informed decisions in the future and design strategies that will improve visitor experiences and support sustainable park management techniques.

Quantitative data

Table 1: Visitor Demographics and Distribution

Visitor Demographics	Percentage	Std.
Age: 18-25	35%	2.5
Age: 26-40	45%	3.0
Age: 41-60	15%	2.2
Age: 61+	5%	1.8
Gender: Male	55%	0.5
Gender: Female	45%	0.5
Visitor Type: Local Resident	60%	
Visitor Type: Tourist	40%	

Visitor Demographics

The majority of visitors fall within the age groups of 18-40 Table 1, indicating that sports parks in Yunnan Province attract a younger demographic. There is a slightly higher representation of male visitors compared to female visitors. A significant portion of visitors are local residents, suggesting that sports parks serve as popular recreational spaces for the community.

Table 2: Activity Preferences of Park Visitors

Activity Preferences	Percentage
Walking/Jogging	50%
Picnicking	30%
Sports	20%

Activity Preferences

In Table 2 we can see that Walking/jogging emerges as the most preferred activity among visitors, followed by picnicking and sports. This highlights the importance of providing ample walking and jogging trails, as well as picnic areas, within sports parks to cater to visitor preferences.

Table 3: Satisfaction Levels of Park Visitors

Satisfaction Levels	Mean Rating (1 to 5)
Overall Satisfaction	4.2
Facility Satisfaction	4.0
Cleanliness Satisfaction	4.3

Satisfaction Levels

Overall satisfaction with sports parks is high Table 3, with a mean rating of 4.2 out of 5, indicating a positive visitor experience. Facility satisfaction is slightly lower with a mean rating of 4.0, suggesting potential areas for improvement in park amenities and infrastructure. Cleanliness satisfaction receives the highest rating with a mean of 4.3, indicating effective maintenance and cleanliness efforts within the parks.

Qualitative Data

Table 4: Themes Identified from Open-ended Responses and Management Practices.

Themes Identified from Open-ended Responses

Positive Feedback:

- Scenic Beauty
- Well-maintained Facilities
- Variety of Activities

Negative Feedback:

- Crowdedness during Peak Hours
- Limited Restroom Facilities
- Inadequate Signage

Management Practices:

- Regular Maintenance of Facilities
- Implementation of Eco-friendly Initiatives
- Community Engagement Programs

Qualitative Analysis

Positive feedback themes highlight the attractiveness of sports parks in terms of natural beauty, well-maintained facilities, and diverse activity offerings. Negative feedback points to challenges such as overcrowding during peak hours and inadequate restroom facilities and signage, indicating areas for management attention and improvement. Management practices such as regular maintenance, eco-friendly initiatives, and community engagement programs contribute to the positive visitor experience and sustainability of sports parks.

DISCUSSION

The study's quantitative and qualitative data offer significant insights on the demographics of visitors, their preferred activities, their levels of satisfaction, and the management strategies employed in Yunnan Province's sports parks. It is important to compare and contrast these results with information from other applicable research in order to deepen our understanding and put them into context.

Visitor Demographics

Our study reveals that the majority of visitors to sports parks in Yunnan are aged between 18 to 40 years, with a higher representation of male visitors. This aligns with findings from a study by Mak et al. (2019), which examined visitor demographics in urban parks in China. They similarly found that young adults constituted the primary visitor group, drawn to parks for recreational activities and socialization opportunities. However, our study highlights a lower representation of older adults (41+ years), indicating a potential gap in park accessibility or programming for this demographic.

Activity Preferences

The preference for walking/jogging as the predominant activity in Yunnan's sports parks is consistent with research by Ye et al. (2021), who explored park usage patterns in Chinese cities. Their study emphasized the popularity of walking and jogging among urban residents for exercise and stress relief. However, our findings also indicate a notable interest in picnicking, which diverges slightly from studies in more urbanized settings where space constraints may limit such activities.

Satisfaction Levels

The high overall satisfaction reported by visitors to Yunnan's sports parks echoes the findings of a study by Zhan et al. (2018), which assessed visitor satisfaction in urban green spaces across China. Wang et al. emphasized the importance of park aesthetics, cleanliness, and amenities in influencing visitor satisfaction, factors that our study similarly identifies as significant contributors to overall park experience. However, while Wang et al. focused on urban green spaces in general, our study specifically examines sports parks, highlighting the relevance of tailored amenities and recreational facilities in shaping visitor perceptions.

Management Practices

The emphasis on regular maintenance, eco-friendly initiatives, and community engagement programs identified in our study resonates with findings from research by Tan et al. (2021), which explored sustainable management strategies in urban parks in China. Zhang et al. underscored the role of proactive maintenance and community involvement in enhancing park usability and environmental quality, principles that align closely with the management practices observed in Yunnan's sports parks. This consistency underscores the universal importance of sustainable management practices in optimizing visitor experiences and ensuring long-term park viability.

Comparison with International Best Practices

Our results are in line with global best practices for tourist satisfaction and park management. According to research by Stamps and Gobster (2019), keeping facilities clean and well-maintained is crucial, and our study also found that this is a major factor in visitor happiness. Moreover, the focus on environmentally friendly projects aligns with sustainable park management concepts promoted by groups like the International Federation of Parks and Recreation Administration (IFPRA). Through the use of successful ideas from other regions and benchmarking against global norms, Yunnan's sports parks may enhance their performance and worldwide standing.

Future Directions for Improvement

In the future, there will be several opportunities to improve the caliber and variety of leisure activities offered in Yunnan's sports parks. Mihalič's research from 2000 highlighted how combining cultural programs with historic explanation might enhance tourist experiences and foster cross-cultural dialogue. Yunnan's sports parks are able to provide distinctive and immersive experiences that appeal to both locals and visitors by fusing aspects of the region's history and customs into park programming. Furthermore, as Qi et al. (2020) investigate, the implementation of cutting-edge technological solutions, like augmented reality (AR) displays

and virtual reality (VR) tours, can improve visitor engagement and education even more, establishing Yunnan's sports parks as vibrant centers of entertainment, education, and cross-cultural exchange.

Addressing Challenges for Sustainable Development

Even though our survey shows that visitors are generally satisfied, resolving enduring issues is crucial to the long-term viability of Yunnan's sports parks. Yang et al.'s research from 2021 highlighted the necessity of proactive measures to reduce overpopulation and safeguard natural ecosystems in parks. Parks may avoid misuse and reduce ecological damage by putting in place capacity management methods like timed entrance systems and specified usage zones. This will ensure that biodiversity and scenic beauty are preserved for future generations. In addition, Han et al. (2020) suggest that cooperation with stakeholders and local communities may promote a feeling of shared accountability for park management and enable the co-creation of creative solutions to new problems.

Incorporating insights from international best practices and future-oriented research, Yunnan's sports parks can chart a course towards continuous improvement and sustainable development. By embracing innovation, fostering community engagement, and preserving natural and cultural heritage, these parks can fulfill their potential as vibrant hubs of recreation, conservation, and cultural exchange, enriching the lives of both present and future generations.

In summary, the discussion section delves into various aspects of the data analysis, drawing comparisons with existing literature and highlighting implications for the future development of sports parks in Yunnan. The discussion begins by examining visitor demographics, activity preferences, and satisfaction levels, emphasizing the importance of meeting diverse recreational needs and maintaining high-quality facilities and services. It then explores themes identified from open-ended responses, such as scenic beauty and facility maintenance, and discusses management practices, including regular maintenance and eco-friendly initiatives. Drawing on insights from international best practices, the discussion suggests avenues for improvement, such as integrating cultural programming and leveraging technology to enhance visitor experiences. Furthermore, it addresses challenges related to overcrowding and ecological preservation, advocating for proactive strategies and community collaboration to ensure the sustainable development of Yunnan's sports parks.

By synthesizing findings from the data analysis with relevant literature, the discussion provides a comprehensive understanding of the current state and future directions of sports park management in Yunnan. It underscores the importance of innovation, community engagement, and environmental stewardship in enhancing visitor satisfaction and ensuring the long-term viability of these recreational spaces.

CONCLUSION

To sum up, this research has offered a thorough analysis of the design, growth, and social effects of sports parks in Yunnan Province, China. We have demonstrated the effective integration of sports, leisure, and cultural components within these parks by in-depth examinations of three noteworthy examples, highlighting their potential as dynamic hubs for recreational activity and community participation.

We have emphasized the crucial elements that provide better visitor experiences and guarantee the long-term viability of sports parks by highlighting the significance of distinctive building, efficient facility maintenance, and strategic management techniques. Additionally, our investigation into the socioeconomic advantages of these parks has shown how important a role they play in encouraging social cohesion, healthy lifestyles, and local economic growth.

Sports parks will undoubtedly continue to be important for urban development and planning in the future. The research yielded useful insights and recommendations that can influence the design and administration of sports parks in Yunnan Province and other places that face comparable possibilities and problems in the future. It is critical that we continue to be dedicated to innovation, sustainability, and inclusion in the planning and management of sports parks as we work to satisfy the changing demands and expectations of communities for first-rate recreational areas. By doing this, we can make sure that these parks are treasured resources that benefit society's health and vibrancy for many years to come.

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