

# *Innovation and Promotion of Hainan Li Ethnic Intangible Cultural Heritage Tourism Products*

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**Abstract:** This paper aims to delve into the innovation and promotion of cultural tourism products related to the intangible cultural heritage of the Li ethnic group in Hainan. The Li ethnic group's intangible cultural heritage is rich and diverse, holding significant historical and cultural value. However, despite its enormous potential, there is room for improvement in its promotion and innovation within the tourism industry. Through an analysis of the characteristics, challenges, and potential development spaces of the Li ethnic group's intangible cultural heritage in Hainan, this paper proposes a series of strategies for innovation and promotion. These strategies aim to facilitate the sustainable development of cultural tourism products related to the Li ethnic group's intangible cultural heritage, further enhancing their attractiveness in the tourism market, and actively contributing to the preservation, inheritance, and promotion of local intangible cultural heritage. Through these efforts, it is anticipated that a foundation will be laid for the broader dissemination of the Li ethnic group's intangible cultural heritage in the field of tourism, increasing its visibility and competitiveness in the cultural tourism market.

## 1. Introduction

Hainan, the southernmost province of China, boasts a rich cultural heritage, with Li ethnic intangible cultural heritage being a unique regional treasure with historical significance. However, despite the longstanding history of Li ethnic intangible cultural heritage in Hainan, it still faces various challenges in terms of promotion and innovation within the tourism industry. This paper seeks to study how to innovate and promote Hainan's Li ethnic intangible cultural heritage tourism products, aiming to foster sustainable local economic development while preserving and passing down this valuable cultural heritage.

## 2. Characteristics and History of Hainan Li Ethnic Intangible Cultural Heritage

### 2.1. Origin and Evolution of Li Culture

The Li ethnic group in Hainan is one of China's ethnic minorities, and its culture has a long history. The origin of the Li ethnic group can be traced back to the Neolithic period over three thousand years ago. Their ancestors primarily inhabited the mountainous and hilly regions of Hainan, relying on

fishing, hunting, and agriculture for their livelihoods. This unique geographical environment shaped their way of life and cultural characteristics. During this period, the Li people began to engage in cultural exchanges with neighboring ethnic groups, gradually forming a distinct cultural identity.[1]

### **2.1.1. Origin and Formation**

The origins of the Li ethnic group can be traced back to over three thousand years ago during the Neolithic period. Their ancestors primarily resided in the mountainous and hilly regions of Hainan, relying on fishing, hunting, and agriculture for sustenance. This unique geographical environment influenced their way of life and cultural features. During this time, the Li people began to engage in cultural exchanges with neighboring ethnic groups, gradually forming their unique cultural identity.

### **2.1.2. Symbiosis of Nature and Culture**

The culture of the Li ethnic group is deeply influenced by the natural environment. Living on a tropical island, they depend on abundant water sources, dense forests, and fertile land. This close connection with nature is reflected in their culture, religion, and traditions. For instance, they venerate natural deities and believe that various elements of nature possess mysterious powers that should be respected and protected.

### **2.1.3. Historical Evolution**

Throughout history, Li ethnic culture has evolved and been influenced by other cultures. Ancient Hainan was once part of the Silk Road, leading to cultural exchanges with different regions. During this process, Li culture absorbed some external elements while still maintaining its distinct characteristics.[2] For example, the Li language belongs to the Sino-Xizang language family, but it also retains some ancient language features, reflecting its unique history and culture.

## **2.2. Types and Characteristics of Li Ethnic Intangible Cultural Heritage**

The intangible cultural heritage of the Li ethnic group is diverse and includes various art forms, handicrafts, and traditional activities. Here are some of the main types and characteristics of Li ethnic intangible cultural heritage:

### **2.2.1. Traditional Music and Dance**

The music and dance of the Li ethnic group are central to their culture. They use simple instruments such as bamboo flutes, bamboo pipes, and bells to produce unique melodies that accompany traditional dance performances. These performances often depict themes related to nature, agricultural activities, and religious rituals, such as dances imitating farming and harvest or musical performances during ceremonies to honor natural deities.

### **2.2.2. Handicrafts**

The Li ethnic group is renowned for its exquisite handicrafts, including weaving, embroidery, pottery, and more. These handicrafts are not only practical but also showcase the Li people's aesthetics and creativity. For example, their weaving skills excel in bamboo weaving, straw weaving, and palm weaving, creating various traditional tools and decorative items.

### **2.2.3. Traditional Festivals and Rituals**

The Li ethnic group celebrates numerous traditional festivals and rituals, such as Li New Year and

wedding ceremonies. These rituals reflect their religious beliefs, family values, and social structure, serving as important carriers of cultural heritage. During Li New Year celebrations, people participate in traditional ceremonies, including dances, music performances, and rituals, to welcome the new year while praying for a bountiful harvest and happiness.[3]

#### **2.2.4. Traditional Clothing**

Traditional Li clothing is known for its vibrant colors and intricate patterns, reflecting their culture and way of life. These garments are often handmade and passed down through generations. Women's traditional attire typically features bright colors and delicate embroidery, while men often wear garments made of coarse fabric and bamboo weaving, suited for the mountainous and jungle environment.

#### **2.2.5. Oral Traditions**

The Li ethnic group relies on oral traditions to pass down history, legends, and knowledge from generation to generation. This oral culture is crucial for preserving the authenticity and uniqueness of Li culture.[4] Stories, folk songs, and oral histories are integral parts of this tradition, allowing the younger generation to learn rich cultural knowledge and gain insights from their ancestors' experiences and wisdom.

### **3. The Current Status of Li Ethnic Intangible Cultural Heritage in the Tourism Industry**

#### **3.1. Impact of the Tourism Industry on Li Ethnic Intangible Cultural Heritage**

The tourism industry plays a significant role in the development of Hainan, and Li ethnic intangible cultural heritage, as a valuable cultural heritage, has also been influenced by the tourism industry. This chapter explores the impact of the tourism industry on Li ethnic intangible cultural heritage, along with related opportunities and challenges.

##### **3.1.1. Promotion and Preservation of Li Ethnic Intangible Cultural Heritage by the Tourism Industry**

The tourism industry provides a robust platform for the preservation and promotion of Li ethnic intangible cultural heritage. When tourists visit Hainan, they have the opportunity to personally experience Li culture, participate in traditional music and dance performances, appreciate handicrafts, visit traditional villages, and attend ceremonies, among other activities. This interaction facilitates the dissemination of Li ethnic intangible cultural heritage, raising public awareness and encouraging the younger generation's participation and learning.

##### **3.1.2. Economic Benefits and Employment Opportunities**

The tourism industry generates economic benefits and employment opportunities for local communities. Li communities can earn additional income through the sale of handicrafts, the provision of tour guide services, and the performance of traditional programs. These earnings can support cultural preservation activities and improve community infrastructure, ultimately raising the living standards of local residents.

##### **3.1.3. Cultural Protection and Awareness**

The rise of the tourism industry has prompted local communities to place greater emphasis on cultural preservation. To meet the needs of tourists, communities often enhance the protection of intangible cultural heritage, safeguarding traditional skills and knowledge. This increased awareness

of protection contributes to the continuous inheritance of intangible cultural heritage and prevents its gradual erosion.[5]

## **3.2. Issues and Challenges**

However, despite the positive impact of the tourism industry on Li ethnic intangible cultural heritage, it also brings forth some issues and challenges.

### **3.2.1. Commercialization and Distortion**

With the growth of the tourism industry, some traditional cultural activities and handicrafts may become commercialized, losing their authenticity. To cater to tourists' tastes, certain traditional performances and products may undergo excessive packaging and alterations. This commercialization could compromise the authenticity and purity of intangible cultural heritage.

### **3.2.2. Cultural Erosion and External Influences**

The development of the tourism industry introduces external cultures and values, which may negatively impact Li ethnic intangible cultural heritage. The younger generation may become more attracted to external cultures, reducing their interest in traditional culture, potentially leading to the gradual loss of intangible cultural heritage.

### **3.2.3. Sustainability Issues**

The continued growth of the tourism industry may exert pressure on the natural environment and local communities. Excessive tourist flows and infrastructure development could harm local natural resources and cultural landscapes. Therefore, a balance must be struck to ensure the sustainable development of the tourism industry while preserving intangible cultural heritage and the natural environment.

### **3.2.4. Education and Inheritance**

To ensure the inheritance of Li ethnic intangible cultural heritage, various educational and inheritance methods must be employed. Although the tourism industry raises awareness of this culture, it cannot fully replace traditional methods. Traditional education includes learning skills and knowledge from elders, villagers, and heritage bearers, as well as the transmission of cultural content through oral traditions, stories, songs, and more, which remains crucial.

However, modern societal changes and urbanization pose a threat to traditional methods, as the younger generation tends to favor modern education and employment opportunities over the time and effort required for intangible cultural heritage inheritance. Therefore, it is essential to explore ways to integrate modern education with intangible cultural heritage inheritance to engage the younger generation.

Collaboration among the government, communities, and educational institutions is crucial. They can formulate policies, support educational and inheritance projects related to intangible cultural heritage, provide resources and funding, train traditional craftsmen, and offer education to the younger generation. Community involvement is also key, as communities can provide venues and support, organize cultural activities, and promote intangible cultural heritage inheritance.

All stakeholders in the tourism industry can also play a role in incorporating intangible cultural heritage into tourism activities, providing learning and experiential opportunities for tourists, disseminating culture, and creating income and employment opportunities for communities.

In conclusion, comprehensive measures are crucial for the protection and inheritance of Li ethnic intangible cultural heritage. The combination of traditional and modern education, collaboration between the government, communities, educational institutions, and the tourism industry, all

contribute to effectively preserving and inheriting this culture within the tourism industry, maintaining its diversity and uniqueness.

## **4. Innovating Hainan Li Ethnic Intangible Cultural Heritage Tourism Products**

This chapter will focus on innovating Hainan Li ethnic intangible cultural heritage tourism products to promote their inheritance and sustainable development. It will introduce product development, experiential tourism activities, and educational and heritage projects.

### **4.1. Product Development and Design**

Product development and design are crucial steps in integrating Li ethnic intangible cultural heritage into the tourism industry. By creating attractive, educational, and entertaining products, more tourists can be attracted, while enhancing their understanding and respect for intangible cultural heritage.

**Modern Design of Traditional Handicrafts:** Traditional crafts such as weaving, embroidery, and pottery can be combined with modern design elements to create appealing new products. For example, fashionable clothing, home decor, and accessories can be designed by blending traditional skills with modern aesthetics to attract more shoppers.

**Cultural Creative Merchandise:** Developing cultural creative merchandise related to Li ethnic culture, such as cultural shirts, gift packages for handicraft workshops, souvenirs, etc., can meet tourists' shopping needs and encourage them to delve deeper into the culture.

**Traditional Food Experiences:** Incorporating traditional Li ethnic cuisine into tourism products, such as offering traditional Li ethnic cooking classes or food tours, allows tourists to experience and savor the local flavors firsthand.

**Music and Dance Performances:** Organizing captivating music and dance performances enables tourists to feel the vibrancy and charm of Li ethnic culture. These can be regular cultural performances or personalized performance experiences for tourists.

### **4.2. Conducting Experiential Tourism Activities**

Experiential tourism activities are an effective way to allow tourists to gain a deeper understanding and engage with Li ethnic intangible cultural heritage. Here are some innovative experiential tourism activities:

**Handicraft Workshops:** Providing tourists with handicraft-making workshops where they can actively participate in traditional crafts like weaving, embroidery, pottery, and learn and experience these skills themselves.

**Cultural Heritage Tours:** Organizing cultural heritage tours that lead tourists to visit traditional villages, temples, and cultural heritage sites, providing them with in-depth knowledge of Li ethnic history and traditions.

**Food Tours:** Designing food tours that include visits to traditional markets, tasting authentic Li ethnic cuisine, and participating in cooking classes to immerse tourists in the culinary culture.

**Music and Dance Experiences:** Offering music and dance experiences, including teaching tourists how to play traditional instruments or learn traditional dances, allowing them to personally experience the cultural charm.

### **4.3. Implementing Educational and Heritage Projects**

To ensure the inheritance of Li ethnic intangible cultural heritage, educational and heritage projects must be implemented to cultivate the next generation of cultural inheritors and protectors. Here are some feasible projects:

**Cultural Education Centers:** Establishing cultural education centers to provide opportunities for the younger generation to learn about Li ethnic culture. These centers can offer language courses, traditional arts training, and cultural history programs.

**Cultural Heritage Workshops:** Organizing cultural heritage workshops and inviting elder traditional craftsmen to pass down their skills to the younger generation. These heritage activities can take place in schools, community centers, or tourist attractions.

**Scholars and Artists in Residence Programs:** Inviting cultural scholars and artists to reside in Li ethnic villages, collaborate with local residents, and engage in cultural research and creative projects to promote cultural inheritance and innovation.

**Cultural Festivals and Competitions:** Holding regular cultural festivals and competitions to encourage young people to participate in traditional music, dance, handicrafts, and other fields to showcase their talents and carry forward the culture.

Through the innovative product development and design, experiential tourism activities, and educational and heritage projects described above, we can better ensure the inheritance and protection of Li ethnic intangible cultural heritage while bringing more attractiveness and sustainability to the tourism industry. This not only enhances the tourist experience but also promotes the vitality and diversity of traditional culture.

## **5. Promotion Strategies**

### **5.1. Marketing and Promotion Channels**

**Digital Marketing:** Utilize the internet and social media to promote Hainan Li ethnic intangible cultural heritage tourism products. Create official websites and social media accounts to share appealing content, including photos, videos, stories, and tourist reviews. Collaborate with online travel agencies to ensure product visibility on major booking platforms.

**Offline Promotion:** Seize opportunities for offline promotion through traditional media, exhibitions, and tourism expos. Collaborate with travel agencies and tourism magazines to publish feature articles and advertisements to capture more attention from tourists.

**Word-of-Mouth Marketing:** Provide outstanding tourist experiences to expand awareness through word-of-mouth. Through recommendations and sharing by tourists, attract more visitors to experience.

**Distinctive Packaging:** Design unique tourism packages and experiences such as cultural tours, food tours, and handicraft shopping tours to attract different types of tourists.

### **5.2. Government Support and Collaboration**

**Government Funding Support:** Seek government funding support for the development and promotion of Hainan Li ethnic intangible cultural heritage tourism products. Governments can establish special funds to sponsor research and development projects and market promotion efforts.

**Regulatory and Policy Support:** Collaborate with government departments to formulate regulations and policies that support the development of intangible cultural heritage tourism. This includes policies related to cultural heritage protection, tax incentives, and land use planning.

**Cultural Festivals and Events:** Collaborate with the government to host cultural festivals and events to attract more tourists. The government can provide venues, publicity, and coordination support to make these events more successful.

### **5.3. Community Engagement and Collaboration**

**Community Collaboration:** Actively collaborate with Li ethnic communities to involve them in the product development and promotion process. Community participation can increase the authenticity

and appeal of the products.

**Cultural Protection and Inheritance:** Collaborate with local communities to support cultural inheritance projects and workshops. This helps train the next generation of traditional craftsmen and artists and promotes the inheritance of intangible cultural heritage.

**Community Tourism Collaboration:** Establish tourism partnerships with local communities to promote community tourism experiences. This may include community tour guide services, homestays, and the promotion of local cuisine.

By employing these strategic approaches, including the effective use of marketing and promotion channels, government support and collaboration, and community engagement and collaboration, successful promotion of Hainan Li ethnic intangible cultural heritage tourism products can be achieved. This will not only attract more tourists to experience and learn about Li ethnic intangible cultural heritage but also contribute to the sustainable development and cultural inheritance of local communities.

## **6. Benefits and Sustainable Development of Hainan Li Ethnic Intangible Cultural Heritage Tourism Products**

The development and promotion of Hainan Li ethnic intangible cultural heritage tourism products have not only enhanced the tourist experience and cultural preservation but have also generated positive benefits for the local economy and community development. This chapter will explore these benefits while offering future prospects and recommendations.

### **6.1. Economic Benefits and Local Development**

The promotion of Hainan Li ethnic intangible cultural heritage tourism products has brought about several economic benefits to the local region.

**Increased Tourism Revenue:** The successful promotion of intangible cultural heritage tourism products has attracted more tourists, resulting in increased revenue for the tourism industry. Tourists' expenditures on activities such as sightseeing, shopping, and dining directly benefit the local community.

**Employment Opportunities:** Tourism development has created employment opportunities for local communities. Residents can find jobs in various fields, including tour guiding, handicraft production, and food services, thus improving their standard of living.

**Infrastructure Improvement:** The prosperity of the tourism industry often leads to infrastructure improvements, including transportation, communication, and utilities. This not only enhances the quality of life for residents but also elevates the overall attractiveness of the region.

### **6.2. Cultural Inheritance and Preservation**

The promotion of intangible cultural heritage tourism products has had a positive impact on cultural inheritance and preservation.

**Preservation of Traditional Crafts:** Through workshops and educational initiatives, the younger generation has the opportunity to learn traditional skills such as weaving, embroidery, and pottery. This helps preserve these skills from fading into obscurity and nurtures talent for future traditional craftsmen.

**Elevated Cultural Preservation Awareness:** The promotion of intangible cultural heritage tourism has heightened the awareness of cultural preservation among communities and tourists alike. Communities have become more committed to safeguarding intangible heritage, while tourists have grown more respectful and appreciative of local traditions.

**Cultural Exchange and Understanding:** Interaction between tourists and local communities has not only facilitated cultural preservation but also promoted cultural exchange and mutual understanding.

Tourists are more likely to comprehend and respect different cultures, fostering cross-cultural harmony.

### 6.3. Future Prospects and Recommendations

To achieve sustainable development of Hainan Li ethnic intangible cultural heritage tourism products, here are some future prospects and recommendations:

**Diversified Products:** Continue diversifying intangible cultural heritage tourism products to meet the needs of different types of tourists. This includes various types of experiences, price ranges, and durations to attract a broader audience.

**Education and Training:** Strengthen education and training for local communities to cultivate more cultural inheritors and tourism professionals. Investments in cultural education centers, skills workshops, and tour guide training programs are essential.

**Sustainability:** Focus on sustainability to ensure that tourism growth does not have irreversible impacts on the natural environment and cultural landscapes. Develop and implement sustainable tourism development plans that balance economic growth with environmental protection.

**Collaboration and Promotion:** Continue collaborating with the government, tourism industry stakeholders, and communities to jointly promote intangible cultural heritage tourism products. Governments should provide policy support, the tourism industry should offer marketing channels, and communities should actively participate and drive initiatives.

**Cultural Innovation:** Encourage cultural innovation by blending traditional and modern elements to create more attractive intangible cultural heritage tourism products. Cultural creativity and digital technologies can offer new possibilities for product development.

In summary, the successful promotion of Hainan Li ethnic intangible cultural heritage tourism products has brought multiple benefits, including economic gains and cultural preservation. By continuing to diversify products, strengthening education and training, focusing on sustainability, fostering collaboration and promotion, and encouraging cultural innovation, we can achieve the sustainable development of this invaluable cultural heritage and allow more people to enjoy the allure of intangible heritage.

## 7. Conclusion

The innovation and promotion of Hainan Li ethnic intangible cultural heritage tourism products represent a complex yet crucial undertaking. Through the research conducted in this paper, we have uncovered the immense potential of Hainan Li ethnic intangible cultural heritage in the tourism industry, along with numerous challenges. Innovative product development, effective marketing, and support from government and communities are key factors in driving the success of intangible cultural heritage tourism products. This not only brings economic benefits but also promotes cultural inheritance and preservation. Looking ahead, we recommend continued in-depth research and practical efforts to ensure the sustainable development of Hainan Li ethnic intangible cultural heritage tourism products, while also providing valuable insights for cultural tourism products in other regions.

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