

Guidelines for Promoting Literacy Transmission and Education of Rongshui Han Folk Songs in Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, China

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ARTICLE INFO

Article history

Received: June 18, 2023

Accepted: September 01, 2023

Published: October 31, 2023

Volume: 11 Issue: 4

Conflicts of interest: None

Funding: This research project was financially supported by Mahasarakham University.

ABSTRACT

Rongshui Han folk songs, symbolic of Liuzhou's ethnic culture, hold significant cultural value in transmitting history and traditions. However, contemporary scholars have limited attention, requiring further exploration and research. The objective of this study was to propose guidelines for promoting literacy transmission and education through Rongshui Han folk songs in Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, China. This is a qualitative study that includes relevant literature research, surveys, interviews, and transcriptions. This information is drawn from the research of two scholar informants and four informal informants. Analyze data from Rongshui Han, Miao, and Zhuang folk songs, focusing on their cultural significance and historical context. The result of this study shows that the government plays a crucial role in promoting and safeguarding Rongshui Han folk songs for literacy transmission education. Emphasizing their unique attributes and leveraging their inherent advantages is essential. Nurturing younger generations and investing in training initiatives are crucial. Online media platforms can further broaden the dissemination of Rongshui Han folk songs for the preservation and propagation of this intangible cultural heritage. Increase awareness and understanding of local ethnic culture while engaging youth in cultural preservation and transmitting folk song traditions.

Key words: Rongshui Han Folk Song, Literacy Transmission, Transmission Process, Guangxi, China

INTRODUCTION

The transmission and preservation of Rongshui Han folk songs, as a branch of Liuzhou folk songs, hold significant cultural value in Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, China. These songs play a crucial role in the folk song culture and history of the region (Kexia et al., 2023; Yi et al., 2023). However, there is limited attention and research on Rongshui Han folk songs in contemporary scholarly discourse. Therefore, this study aims to propose guidelines for promoting literacy transmission and education through Rongshui Han folk songs in the Guangxi Autonomous Region.

Rongshui Miao Autonomous County, located in Guangxi, is a multi-ethnic area where Miao, Han, Zhuang, Yao, Dong, and other ethnic groups reside (Zang, 2016; Wang & Jiang, 2021; Zeng & Li, 2022; Cao & Woramitmaitree, 2023). Each ethnic group has its own folk song practices, rooted in the ancient ritual music and dance of the Baiyue tribe. The Zhuang and Han ethnic groups in southwest China share a collective singing tradition with young men and women. The intermingling and influence of Miao, Zhuang, and Han cultures are evident in the singing festivals and venues where these diverse folk songs are performed together (Mackerras, 1984; Unger, 1997; Atwill, 2005; Rees, 2010).

Traditionally, Rongshui Han folk songs played a significant role in various aspects of society. They were used as a symbol of identity in antiphonal singing practices, where young men and women chose their spouses based on the songs they sang. Singing folk songs became a means of communication between different villages and an important link for ethnic communication and community cohesion (Rice, 1994; Gao, 2013). However, with societal changes, the social functions and singing activities of Rongshui Han folk songs have also evolved. They have found new platforms through network media, economic markets, government celebrations, and enterprise events (Jian, 2018; Chen, 2020; Chen, 2021).

To address the research gaps, this study focuses on Rongshui Han folk songs in Rongshui Miao Autonomous County. The investigation involves key informants such as Li Longqiu, a prominent figure in the transmission of Liuzhou folk songs, and singers Hu Huilan, Huang Yuexiang, and Xie Qingliang, along with their respective village families and singing groups. Fieldwork and first-hand information are utilized to understand the survival and transmission of folk songs (Erjian & Chuangprakhon, 2023; Ren & Thotham, 2023).

By comprehensively understanding the singing customs and regional culture formed by the Guangxi Liuzhou folk

songs, particularly Rongshui Han folk songs, the objective of this study was to propose guidelines for promoting literacy transmission and education through Rongshui Han folk songs in Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, China, of this important intangible cultural heritage.

Research Question

- How can literacy transmission and education of Rongshui Han folk songs be effectively promoted in Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, China, considering their cultural significance, historical context, and evolving social functions?

LITERATURE REVIEW

The General Knowledge of Rongshui Han Folk Songs in Guangxi, China

Rongshui Han folk songs, belonging to the intangible cultural heritage of Guangxi Liuzhou folk songs, are named after their origin in Rongshui Miao Autonomous County. Rongshui County, known for having one of the highest proportions of minority population in Guangxi, boasts a rich and colorful folk song culture. Guangxi is renowned as the "ocean of folk songs" and the hometown of Liu Sanjie, the "song fairy." It is a region where people who love songs and possess singing talents gather. Folk songs in Guangxi reflect values such as wisdom, emotional expression, aspirations for freedom, and a disregard for material wealth and power. The region's folk songs encompass a variety of genres, including folk songs, labor songs, water songs, fishing songs, ballads, children's songs, wine songs, and custom songs. Guangxi is home to numerous ethnic groups, each with their own unique folk songs and traditional singing festivals. These include the "March 3" festival of the Zhuang ethnic group, the "Zuo niang" festival of the Yao ethnic group, the "Huiqi" festival of the Dong ethnic group, and the "Ganpo" and "Zuo mei" festivals of the Miao ethnic group. The convergence of these diverse musical traditions has earned Guangxi the reputation of being the "Sea of Songs" (Yang, 2006).

Liuzhou folk songs refer to the folk songs sung in the Guizhou-Liu dialect, primarily transmitted in Liuzhou, Yizhou, Laibin, and Guilin. In academic circles in Guangxi, they are known as "Guanhua folk songs." These songs have been traditionally passed down through oral transmission. With a history of nearly one thousand years in central Guangxi, Liuzhou folk songs carry profound cultural, spiritual, educational, aesthetic, and economic values. The transmission and development of Liuzhou folk songs hold significant importance for the construction and development of ethnic culture in Guangxi (Guangxi Ethnic Publishing House, 2003).

Rongshui Han folk songs are typically improvised on a fixed melody, consisting of lyrics sung in four sentences using various rhetorical techniques and interspersed with liner notes. While there are rules and regulations governing the structure of the four-sentence folk songs, they provide a standardized system that allows singers to improvise and communicate effectively. The expressive richness, linguistic

beauty, and rhythmic regularity of Rongshui Han folk song lyrics make them irreplaceable by other language systems. These folk songs are typically sung during traditional festivals, life rituals (such as weddings and banquets), and various daily life occasions of the local ethnic groups. Folk songs in Rongshui serve as an important medium for interpersonal communication and emotional exchange, often expressing sentiments that cannot be conveyed through words alone. They play a role in traditional marriage customs, where young men and women use folk songs to express their feelings and engage in courtship (Wu, 2014).

The local government of Rongshui County organizes several large singing events annually to preserve local cultural customs and attract participation from local singers as well as those from across Guangxi. The county has established the Rongshui Miao Autonomous County Folk Song Association in collaboration with the Guangxi Mountain Song Association, which regularly organizes and hosts various singing activities in the city and county. Rongshui folk songs have also adapted to the changes brought by the market economy. In addition to participating in traditional folk festivals and government events, local singers are often invited to perform at corporate celebrations such as store and company openings (Wu, 2014).

The Rongshui Miao, a subgroup of the Miao ethnic group, mainly reside in Rongshui Miao Autonomous County, located in the northern part of Guangxi and extending eastward from the Miaoling Mountains on the Yunnan-Guizhou Plateau. Rongshui Miao folk songs, with themes centered around daily life, can be classified into narrative songs, love songs, ritual songs, and labor songs. Miao ballads possess high literary and historical values, providing insights into the origin, migration, social composition, customs, and traditions of the Miao ethnic group (Wu, 2014).

The General Knowledge of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region

Guangxi, also known as the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, is situated in southern China. It shares borders with Guangdong to the east, is adjacent to the Beibu Gulf in the south, neighbors Hainan Province across the sea, and is flanked by Yunnan to the west, Hunan to the northeast, Guizhou to the northwest, and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam to the southwest. The land area of Guangxi spans approximately 237,600 square kilometers, including about 40,000 square kilometers of Beibu Gulf waters, resulting in a total mainland coastline of 1,628.6 kilometers. In 2022, the resident population of the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region reached 50.47 million. The region comprises 14 prefecture-level cities, such as Nanning, Chongzuo, Liuzhou, Laibin, Guilin, Wuzhou, Hezhou, Yulin, Guigang, Baise, Qinzhou, Hechi, Beihai, and Fangchenggang. As an autonomous region, Guangxi is predominantly inhabited by the Zhuang nationality and is recognized for having the largest minority population in China. Within its territory, 12 ethnic groups coexist, including Zhuang, Han, Yao, Miao, Dong, Mulao, Maonan, Hui, Jing, Yi, Shui, and Gelao (National Bureau of Statistics of China, 2022).

Delving into the Rongshui Miao Autonomous County, this area is located in the northern part of the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, approximately 108 kilometers away from Liuzhou City. It holds the honor of being the first Miao Autonomous County established in China and remains the only one in Guangxi. Spanning a total area of 4,663 square kilometers, this county is renowned for its vibrant ethnic festivals. It hosts nearly 100 ethnic festivals and gatherings of various scales, including more than ten large-scale events, earning it the nickname "Hometown of Hundred Festivals". Rongshui folk songs, a form of oral literature intrinsic to Rongshui County, serve as documentation of the historical evolution and societal circumstances of all ethnic groups. They have been orally taught, passed down, and further developed through numerous folk activities over many years (China Ethnic Minority Network, n.d.). Figure 1 presents the map of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region.

Research Theory

Musicology

Provides a foundation for studying the historical development, cultural context, and musical characteristics of Rongshui Han Folk Songs (Smith, 2009; Jones, 2015).

Ethnomusicology

Examines how Rongshui Han Folk Songs function within the community, their role in rituals and identity formation, and the cultural significance attached to them (Titon, 2008; Turino, 2013).

Fieldwork

Involves direct observation, participant observation, interviews, and recordings to gather data on performance

practices, transmission processes, and the lived experiences of Rongshui Han people (Spradley, 1980; Denzin & Lincoln, 2018).

Music analysis

Focuses on the detailed examination of musical elements such as melody, rhythm, structure, and vocal techniques in Rongshui Han Folk Songs (Cook, 2001; Caplin, 2013).

METHOD

Research Site

The decision to study the folk songs of the Han people in Rongshui County was driven by several factors. Firstly, Rongshui County is situated in the northern mountains of Liuzhou City in central Guangxi. The area is characterized by dense mountains, forests, and inconvenient transportation, resulting in a relatively closed culture. Unfortunately, ethnic culture research and cultural export in the region have not received sufficient attention. Festivals serve as vital carriers of the folk songs in Rongshui, earning the county the title of "the hometown of a hundred festivals." Rongshui County is known for its diverse ethnic festivals, which play a significant role in preserving and showcasing the folk songs of the region. These folk songs, serving as oral literature, document the historical development and social conditions of all ethnic groups in Rongshui County. As a mainstream cultural expression, the folk songs of the Han people in Rongshui have also influenced the development of folk songs among neighboring ethnic groups. However, the transmission of the folk songs of the Rongshui Han people has primarily relied on oral teaching and has evolved through various folk activities. It was not until 2000 that the government recognized the importance of protecting the folk songs of the Han people in



Figure 1. Map of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, China
Source: Chinafolio (n.d.), Solutions, E. D. (n.d.)

Rongshui. Since then, efforts have been made to vigorously preserve and protect this valuable aspect of folk music heritage.

Key Informants

In this study, the key informants will be categorized into two groups: Scholar informants and informal informants.

Scholar informants, the criteria used for their selection are as follows

- 1) Research experience of more than 30 years in Guangxi Rongshui folk songs.
- 2) Publication of more than 15 articles related to the subject.
- 3) Age is above 60 years.
- 4) Proficiency in analyzing Rongshui music.

The scholar informants have been meticulously selected for their expertise and extensive knowledge in the field, ensuring their ability to provide valuable insights and make significant contributions to the research objectives. For the complete list, please refer to Table 1.

Informal informants, the criteria used for their selection are as follows

- 1) Boasting more than 40 years of expertise in performing Guangxi Han Rongshui folk songs.
- 2) Recipient of the esteemed folk song singing award.
- 3) Age is above 60 years.
- 4) Possesses in-depth understanding of the singing customs of Rongshui's Han folk songs.
- 5) Well-versed in the transmission process of Rongshui folk songs.

The informal informants have been meticulously selected for their expertise and extensive knowledge in the field, ensuring their ability to provide valuable insights and make

significant contributions to the research objectives. For the complete list, please refer to Table 2.

RESULTS

Rongshui Han folk songs, emblematic of the local ethnic culture in Liuzhou, Guangxi, constitute an important part of the intangible cultural heritage of "Liuzhou folk songs" at the Guangxi level. These songs bear significant cultural value, especially for their role in the transmission of cultural literacy. Regrettably, modern scholars have paid little attention to Rongshui Han folk songs. Consequently, this chapter strives to provide a comprehensive analysis of the current state, challenges, and potential solutions concerning the perpetuation of these folk songs. The ultimate aim is to make a meaningful contribution to the preservation and evolution of Rongshui Han folk songs, with the subsequent study exploring various facets of this topic. Rongshui Han folk song is a vital offshoot of the Liuzhou folk song tradition. These songs, originating from Yufeng Mountain in Liuzhou City, have primarily spread throughout Liuzhou's urban and surrounding rural areas, notably in Rongshui County, Liuzhou City District, Luzhai County, and Liucheng County. In 2007, this musical tradition was recognized as part of the intangible cultural heritage of the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, predominantly transmitted orally.

Historically, Rongshui was known as a disadvantaged mountainous region. It was common for village children to leave formal education after primary or junior high school to assist with farming. As these children grew, they learned to sing folk songs from the most proficient singers in their own or neighboring villages. The focus of learning extended beyond mastering basic folk melodies to include the improvisation of lyrics, a significant element of Rongshui Han folk songs. Singers had to exhibit exceptional adaptability, crafting songs that were quick, relevant, and contextually appropriate, akin to the ancient poets' eloquent verse. As such, folk song learners spent considerable time honing their improvisation skills and practising in diverse singing environments. Folk song singing became an essential way for them to acquire knowledge, understand society, and even find partners. As a result, local society developed a folk song

Table 1. Scholar informants

Scholar name	Birthdate	Background
Liu Zhentao	May, 1954	Guangxi Rongshui folk songs
He Jianwu	May, 1962	Guangxi Rongshui folk songs

Table 2. Informal informants

Informal name	Birthdate	Brief Bio
Li Longqiu	March, 1951	Is a transmitter of Liuzhou folk songs. He's recognized as a Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region level inheritor of intangible cultural heritage folk songs and is a recipient of Chinese national subsidies.
Hu Huilan	November, 1970	Is a Rongshui Han female singer and farmer. At age 15, she began teaching herself to compose and sing folk songs. She later studied art under a teacher in 2010 and was honored with the title of Guangxi Song King in 2013.
Xie Qingliang	February, 1992	Is a young male singer and farmer from Rongshui Han. His passion for folk songs began in his childhood, leading him to study under multiple teachers. Today, he stands as one of the few young male folk singers in Rongshui County.
Li Baohua	September, 1973	Is a Rongshui Han male singer and farmer, who is notably skilled in singing Rongshui Han folk songs. His talent has earned him local popularity in Rongshui County, with a repertoire that includes hundreds of Rongshui Han folk songs.

transmission model characterized as "youths learning songs, adults singing songs, and elders teaching songs."

The Transmission Method

Prior to the 1980s, the transmission of Rongshui Han folk songs primarily took place within two contexts: firstly, intra-familial transmission within the village community, and secondly, mentor-apprentice transmission that extended beyond the confines of the familial village. Intra-familial transmission predominantly entailed the transfer of these songs from one generation to the next within the village-based family unit, a method characterized by a certain level of exclusivity and insularity. Most of the locally distinguished singers initiated their journey of folk song learning under the guidance of their clan elders from a young age. This form of transmission has proven to be the most stable and enduring method for the propagation of Han folk songs in Rongshui.



Figure 2. 96-year-old song king Wei Baode sings wine drinking song
Source: Wang Shun

Family transmission

Located in the Yongjiang River Basin of Rongshui, Dongtian Village of Sirong Township lies within the southwestern mountains of Rongshui. Within this village, the Wei family has played a unique role in the transmission of Rongshui Han folk songs. Having migrated from Meixian County in Guangdong during the late Qing Dynasty, their settlement in the area spans over 200 years. Today, two family members hold the esteemed title of 'Song Kings', their fame extending even to the northern parts of Guangxi.

Since the transmission of Rongshui Han folk songs in a village environment is intrinsically tied to family lineage, it is appropriate to first present the transmission genealogy of the Wei family. Wei Baode, the oldest singer in the clan at 96, recounts that their ancestors were a Hakka couple residing in Meixian County, Guangdong. They traveled over a thousand kilometers to reach and settle in Rongshui County, Guangxi, specifically in the remote mountainous region of Dongtian Village. Despite facing challenges related to adapting to local customs and lifestyle, the family gradually expanded over several generations through strategic intermarriages with surrounding ethnic villages. This involved women from their ethnic group marrying into different ethnic groups, or young individuals from other ethnic groups coming into their village to marry and settle. Today, the Wei family is in its eighth generation in Dongtian Village, with Wei Baode representing the family's fifth generation. To provide a clear narrative, I have employed unified symbols from anthropology and sociology that represent social relationships to sketch a rough genealogical outline of the eight generations of folk song transmission within the Wei family (Figure 2 and Figure 3).

In the aforementioned genealogical outline, the horizontal rows from top to bottom represent the first through the eighth generations, and the dashed boxes signify intermarriages with those outside the clan. The fifth and sixth

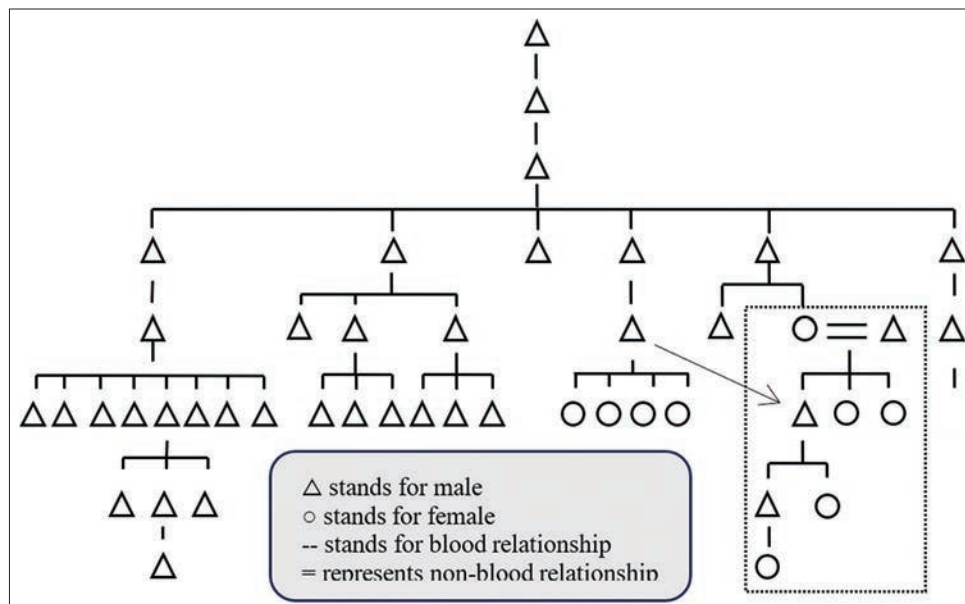


Figure 3. Family folk songs inheritance
Source: Wang Shun

generations of the Wei family are the most populous in the clan. The survival rate in the earlier generations was low due to harsh living conditions, and from the seventh generation onwards, the implementation of a national family planning policy limited each mother to one child, thereby affecting the growth of the family population to a certain degree.

The transmission of Rongshui Han folk songs is intimately connected to the genealogical lineage of the family. With a deeply entrenched singing tradition, everyone in Rongshui County learns and loves to sing. Every generation of the Wei family has produced accomplished singers of these folk songs, and the family annually organizes singing events in conjunction with other families during folk festivals. As a Hakka family, the Wei clan communicates internally using the Hakka dialect and employs Guangxi Chinese for external communication. When queried if they could sing Hakka songs, the elderly song king, Wei Baode, and other clan members clarified that while they speak Hakka, they no longer sing Hakka songs; their favored music is Gui Liu folk songs (Han folk songs). Asked why he speaks Hakka but does not sing Hakka songs, he responded, "Hakka isn't ideally suited for singing folk songs, while the language and pronunciation of Han Chinese perfectly accommodate folk song performance."

According to the elder, clan members have been immersed in folk songs from a young age, gradually mastering them with the assistance of older members as they grow. The folk songs have thus been passed down from generation to generation. Each generation within the clan boasts its own folk song composers and singers, and it is not just the men; women often sing these folk songs at weddings and birthday celebrations in neighboring villages. The songs typically performed by village elders are four-line tunes, the most popular melodies in Rongshui County. The Wei family, residing in Dongtian Village, Sirong Township, has propagated these four-line melodies for hundreds of years, with every generation singing these tunes. The lyrics, however, are so numerous and varied that they are impossible to quantify.

Presently, the younger singers in the family continue to perform these traditional melodies. Due to intermarriages with other ethnic groups, young individuals from these groups have also learned some of the Rongshui Han folk song melodies. In the contemporary era, the expansion of the clan's social sphere and the diversity of communication methods have enabled the clan to learn more folk song melodies across ethnic and regional boundaries, thereby enriching and further developing the transmission of Han folk songs within the clan.

The mentor-apprentice instructional transmission

"Mentor-Apprentice Instructional Transmission" refers to the pedagogical exchange occurring between varying ethnic groups and regions as inter-regional exchanges increase and personal life scopes expand. This learning method transcends the constraints of familial and village boundaries, empowering singers to immerse themselves in social networks. Notably open and increasingly dominant in contemporary

society, this instructional method plays a crucial role in the transmission of Rongshui Han folk songs.

Social transmission of Rongshui Han folk songs can be viewed as an extension of familial transmission. Within the propagation of Rongshui Han folk songs, Song Kings emerge as a unique group, embodying professional mastery over folk songs. Most of these artists are rooted in village environments, maturing under the pervasive influence of folk songs, and learning to sing these songs under the tutelage of village elders at a suitable age. As their singing skills develop, these singers participate in local folk song competitions, broadening their musical understanding through inter-regional exchanges and the mentorship of accomplished folk singers.

Li Longqiu, a renowned Han Chinese folk singer from Rongshui County, exemplifies this process. Crowned as the "Song King of Guangxi" in 2007, Li serves as the representative inheritor of "Liuzhou Folk Song", an intangible cultural heritage project of Guangxi. Besides, he held the position of Vice President of Guangxi Folk Song Society. Despite his professional career as a doctor, Li consistently dedicated his free time to mastering folk songs, absorbing local songs from each place he visited and eventually gaining proficiency in dozens of foreign tunes alongside the ones he learned in his village.

In 1990, Li attended the training course of the "Folk Song University" conducted by the Guangxi Folk Song Society, honing his artistry in composing and singing folk songs. Beyond his professional commitments, Li was an active participant in various folk song singing activities across Guangxi. His participation in the inaugural Song King Competition in 2007, organized by the Guangxi Culture Department, culminated in him winning the title of "Guangxi Song King". Recognizing Li Longqiu's exceptional talent in folk songs and his significant contribution to their transmission, the Guangxi Culture Department awarded him the title of representative transmitter of Liuzhou folk songs in 2008 (Figure 4).

Despite being a doctor by profession, Li Song King values his accomplishments in the realm of folk songs far more. As a celebrated Song King in Rongshui County, singers from neighboring villages, and even those from distant regions



Figure 4. Li Longqiu shows folk song honors
Source: Wang Shun

like Liuzhou and Hechi, journey to learn from him. Li is always open to imparting his folk song skills and has mentored over a dozen apprentices in recent years, primarily local folk singers from Rongshui, and some from Hechi City.

Li emphasizes the importance of attending all singing events to his apprentices, favoring these gatherings as ideal platforms for teaching songwriting and singing skills. At each folk festival, he engages in folk song performances with his apprentices, enhancing their practical experience. In keeping with societal advancements, Li frequently employs mobile phones and the internet for exchanging knowledge about folk song composition and singing techniques with his disciples. Simultaneously, he encourages them to spread the knowledge, urging them to teach Rongshui Han folk songs to as many young learners as possible. This digital and networked pedagogy not only amplifies the reach of traditional songs but also ensures their perpetuation amidst changing cultural landscapes (Figure 5).

While family transmission of folk songs typically operates within closed regional boundaries, fostering a strong sense of regional and ethnic affiliation among singers, it often confines the song repertoire to a handful of regional tunes. However, transcending these boundaries, particularly in multi-ethnic areas, leads to an enriched folk song tradition. This process of breaking free from regional and ethnic confines promotes cultural integration between different regions and ethnic groups, allowing for an expanded musical palette and fostering a more inclusive cultural education. This transition from limited, local transmission to a broader,



Figure 5. Li Longqiu is teaching his singing skills
Source: Wang Shun

inter-regional one enhances the cultural literacy of singers and listeners alike, offering a more comprehensive understanding of diverse ethnic musical traditions.

The folk songs competition transmission

Each year, the cultural departments across various cities in Guangxi host several, sometimes over a dozen, folk song competitions of different scales. These contests invite local singers as well as those from across Guangxi to showcase their talent. The folk song competition in Rongshui Miao Autonomous County is particularly notable, as it's a high-profile contest sponsored by the local government, occurring annually. This event attracts numerous folk singers not only from Rongshui but also from surrounding areas.

A prime example of such an event took place on the evening of December 21, 2016. The 5th Guangxi Song King Folk Song Competition was held in Lusheng Town, Rongshui Miao Autonomous County. This event marked the most substantial singing contest ever held in Rongshui County's history. Designed to promote Rongshui's unique folk songs, this competition gained considerable attention. Folk singers from around the globe, appreciating the significance of the event, registered to participate. In what follows, we'll recount the proceedings of this notable competition. The information is provided in Table 3.

The Transmission Guidelines of Rongshui Han Folk Songs

The survival and continued transmission of Rongshui Han folk songs currently face substantial challenges. Without active promotion, protection, and strategic transmission, these songs, which form a critical component of Liuzhou's intangible cultural heritage, risk disappearing entirely. As such, it is incumbent upon the government to institute a series of protective measures to preserve this invaluable facet of traditional music culture. The potential strategies have been summarized in Table 4.

The government holds a pivotal role in safeguarding and propagating Rongshui Han folk songs, a key aspect of literacy transmission and education. It is imperative to accentuate

Table 3. Background related to the folk songs competition

Category	Details
Organizers	People's Government of Rongshui Miao Autonomous County, Guangxi Folk Artists Association, Guangxi Folk Song Society, Propaganda Department of Rongshui Miao Autonomous County, County Spiritual Civilization Committee, County Culture and Sports Bureau, County Ethnic Affairs Bureau, County Federation of Literary and Art Circles
Co-organizers	Autonomous County Culture Center, County Ethnic Art Troupe, County Folk Song Association
Participating Song Teams	The competition saw the participation of over 100 folk singers from Rongshui, Guilin, Liuzhou, Yizhou, Jinxiu and other areas. It was organized in groups according to the number of participants, including single, double and 8-person groups
Competition Format	The double and 8-person groups adopted a single or double voice singing format. Contestants were required to sing the content of the song as specified in the competition rules, and then replicate the content of the song word by word in Chinese. If singing in other Chinese dialects or minority languages, they were obliged to provide translations in Chinese
Judging Criteria	Judges typically used individual scoring and collective deliberation for assessment. The scoring system was based on percentages. The scores from multiple judges were added together, and the final team score was the sum of these scores

Table 4. The transmission guidelines of rongshui han folk songs

Section	Summary
Government Integration into Tourism Economy	Elevating the branding of Pohui can stimulate the development of Rongshui Han folk songs. Combining culture, tourism, local resources, and modern trends can amplify local cultural influence and stimulate growth. Specialized folk song tourism products could be developed, and rural performance troupes could be established. Modern technology can be used to create interactive experiences of these songs.
Establishment of Rongshui Han Folk Songs Lovers' Association and Institute	A dedicated institution for the study and promotion of Rongshui Han folk songs is crucial for ensuring their preservation and transmission. Training activities for young people can be organized, and a Rongshui Han Folk Song Association would facilitate dialogue and aid in the documentation, compilation, and publication of orally transmitted melodies and lyrics.
Conducting Folk Songs Training Activities	Regularly organized training activities in community art centers could attract broader participation. This can involve the experienced practitioners teaching younger community members and nearby villagers the art of singing Rongshui Han folk songs. Special emphasis could be put on duet singing, a popular and improvisational style present in these songs.
Transmission through Media	Combining traditional and modern media platforms is essential for the preservation and advancement of Rongshui Han folk songs. Traditional media platforms like television, radio, and newspapers should be utilized to expand the reach of these songs. Digital platforms that host short videos can be used to create engaging content featuring these songs. Live streaming features can enhance public understanding and appreciation, enticing more young individuals to engage with and learn these songs.

the unique attributes of these folk songs and capitalize on their inherent advantages. The government should strive to empower the younger generation to become active carriers of this traditional art form. This can be achieved by bolstering policy and financial support for initiatives related to Rongshui Han folk songs, with a particular focus on increasing investments in training programs. Utilizing the vast reach and efficiency of online media platforms can also augment the dissemination of these folk songs. Such comprehensive measures would greatly enhance the protection and perpetuation of Rongshui Han folk songs.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The research conducted on Rongshui Han folk songs in Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region provides valuable insights into the transmission, preservation, and promotion of this cultural heritage. The findings of the study are consistent with those of the existing research and the theoretical principles in the field of musicology and ethnomusicology. The literature review highlighted the cultural significance of Rongshui Han folk songs within the broader context of Guangxi's folk song culture. It emphasized the diverse genres of folk songs in Guangxi and the intermingling of different ethnic traditions in the region (Yang, 2006). This aligns with the theoretical understanding that folk songs are not only expressions of individual communities but also reflect the interactions and influences between different ethnic groups (Bingqing, 2020).

The research methods employed in the study, including fieldwork, interviews with key informants, and analysis of the transmission processes, were appropriate for gaining a comprehensive understanding of Rongshui Han folk songs. The selection of scholar informants and informal informants based on their expertise, experience, and contributions to the field ensured the credibility and richness of the data collected. The use of tables to present the informants' details and the genealogical outline of the Wei family's transmission

of folk songs added clarity and visual representation to the discussion.

The research results provide valuable insights into the transmission methods of Rongshui Han folk songs. The discussion of family transmission, mentor-apprentice instructional transmission, and the role of folk songs competitions in disseminating these songs adds depth to our understanding of how this cultural heritage is passed down through generations. The examination of the Wei family's transmission genealogy illustrates the significance of familial ties and regional affiliation in the preservation of folk songs (Wu, 2014). The case study of Li Longqiu as a mentor and the participation in folk song competitions highlight the importance of inter-regional exchanges and the role of professional singers in the transmission process (Smith, 2009; Jones, 2015).

The conclusion draws upon the research results and proposes guidelines for promoting the literacy transmission and education of Rongshui Han folk songs in Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region. The integration of folk songs into the tourism economy, the establishment of dedicated associations and institutions, conducting training activities, and utilizing media platforms are practical strategies for preserving and promoting this cultural heritage. The role of the government in providing support and empowering the younger generation is emphasized, aligning with the theoretical understanding of the importance of institutional support and community engagement in the transmission of cultural traditions (Spradley, 1980; Denzin & Lincoln, 2018).

Overall, the research findings and conclusions are consistent with the research and theoretical principles in the field. The study provides a valuable contribution to the understanding of Rongshui Han folk songs and offers practical guidelines for their preservation and promotion. Further research and implementation of these guidelines can contribute to the cultural literacy and education of Rongshui Han folk songs in Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, ensuring the continued appreciation and transmission of this important intangible cultural heritage.

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