

Comparative Study of Drum Musical Instruments in Thailand and China through Education and Literacy

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ABSTRACT

This comparative study investigates the drum musical instruments in Chiang Mai, Thailand, and Xishuangbanna, Yunnan, China, through the lens of education and literacy. The objective is to explore how educational practices and literacy efforts influence the preservation and transformation of these traditions amidst modernization and globalization. Fieldwork, interviews, participant observation, and document analysis were conducted in these culturally rich regions. Six key informants, selected based on their expertise and involvement in drum music culture, provided insights into traditional and modern educational practices. Data were analyzed thematically, focusing on historical and cultural contexts, educational practices, literacy efforts, and comparative analysis. The study finds that both regions effectively blend traditional apprenticeship models with contemporary educational practices, ensuring the transmission of drum music cultures. Government policies and community initiatives play crucial roles in supporting these efforts. The findings highlight the importance of integrating cultural heritage into formal and informal educational frameworks to maintain cultural continuity. This research contributes to broader discussions on cultural preservation and provides strategies for sustaining traditional arts through education and literacy. The study suggests that policy-making, curriculum development, and community engagement are pivotal in preserving and revitalizing intangible cultural heritage in the face of globalization.

Key words: Drum Culture, Education, Literacy, Cultural Preservation, Chiang Mai, Xishuangbanna

INTRODUCTION

The rich tapestry of musical traditions in Southeast Asia includes the fascinating drum cultures of Thailand and China. Specifically, the long drum traditions in Chiang Mai, Thailand, and Xishuangbanna, Yunnan, China, offer a compelling comparative study in education and literacy. Both regions have deep-rooted histories and cultural practices surrounding their drum music, which play significant roles in their communities. Various educational and literacy practices influence the preservation and transmission of these musical traditions, providing a framework for understanding how these cultures continue to thrive amidst modernization and globalization (Mans, 2009; Chen & Sensai, 2024). The unique cultural landscapes of Chiang Mai and Xishuangbanna present an ideal opportunity to explore the intricate relationship between traditional musical instrument cultures and contemporary educational approaches (Schippers, 2009; Wright, 2017).

Despite the geographical proximity and shared cultural heritage of Chiang Mai and Xishuangbanna, their approaches to maintaining and promoting drum music through education and literacy exhibit similarities and differences. The

problem lies in the potential erosion of these cultural traditions due to a lack of systematic educational support and the challenges posed by rapid socio-economic changes (Naidoo, 2003; Powell & Somerville, 2020; Walden, 2020). In Chiang Mai, the Klong Yao, or long drum, has evolved from its traditional roots, incorporating modern techniques and materials. This evolution raises questions about the impact of education and literacy in preserving the authenticity and significance of these drum cultures. Similarly, in Xishuangbanna, the Xiangjiao Gu, another form of a long drum, has changed its making process and usage. Introducing machinery in the drum-making process and adapting performance contexts reflect broader societal changes that impact cultural practices (Lounsbury, 2001; Howard, 2016; Li & Choatchamrat, 2024).

The significance of this study lies in its potential to highlight the crucial role of education and literacy in cultural preservation (Moje & Lewis, 2020; Zhou & Chuangprakhon, 2023). By examining how these practices influence the drum cultures in Chiang Mai and Xishuangbanna, this research can provide insights into practical strategies for sustaining traditional arts. Moreover, it can contribute to broader discussions

on cultural heritage preservation in the face of globalization (Anheier & Isar, 2011; Bridgewater & Rotherham, 2019). Understanding the dynamics of drum culture transmission through education and literacy can inform policy-making, curriculum development, and community initiatives to safeguard intangible cultural heritage. Additionally, this study can enhance the appreciation of these unique musical traditions, encouraging local and international audiences to engage with and support their preservation efforts (Brandellero & Janssen, 2014; Roberts & Cohen, 2014; Susemihl, 2023).

The primary objective of this research is to compare the drum musical instruments in Thailand and China through the lens of education and literacy. This involves exploring how educational systems, formal and informal learning environments, and literacy practices impact the transmission and preservation of drum music traditions (Skerrett, 2018; Lebaka, 2019). The study will investigate the changes in drum-making processes, the methods of learning and teaching these traditions, and the contemporary functions of these instruments within their communities. By doing so, the research aims to identify both the challenges and opportunities in maintaining these vibrant cultural practices for future generations. Ultimately, this comparative analysis seeks to uncover how education and literacy can serve as pivotal tools in preserving and revitalizing the cultural heritage of drum music in Chiang Mai and Xishuangbanna.

Research Question

- How do educational practices and literacy efforts influence the preservation and transformation of drum musical instruments in Thailand and China?

LITERATURE REVIEW

The study of drum musical instruments in Thailand and China through the lenses of education and literacy necessitates a comprehensive understanding of how these traditions are taught, learned, and sustained. Theories in ethnomusicology, cultural preservation, and educational models provide a solid foundation for this analysis. Ethnomusicology emphasizes the significance of music as a cultural and social practice, highlighting how musical traditions are deeply intertwined with the identity and history of a community. Cultural preservation theories explore how cultural practices are maintained, adapted, or lost over time, considering globalization, modernization, and government policies. Educational theories, including formal and informal learning models, shed light on how knowledge and skills related to musical traditions are transmitted across generations. This literature review synthesizes existing research and theoretical perspectives relevant to the comparative study of drum musical instruments in Chiang Mai, Thailand, and Xishuangbanna, China.

Ethnomusicology and Cultural Preservation

Ethnomusicology provides critical insights into the cultural significance of musical instruments and their role

in community life. In the context of Chiang Mai and Xishuangbanna, long drums are not merely musical instruments but cultural symbols that embody historical narratives and social values (Curran & Radhakrishnan, 2021; Zhang & Wu, 2023). Music is a means of communication, a repository of cultural knowledge, and a medium for social cohesion. In both regions, the long drum is deeply embedded in religious, ceremonial, and festive contexts, reflecting the intertwined nature of music and culture. The challenges posed by modernization and globalization necessitate a strategic approach to cultural preservation, emphasizing the role of intangible cultural heritage in maintaining cultural diversity (Taylor, 2009; Cottrell, 2010; Stefano, 2021).

Educational Theories and Learning Models

The transmission of musical traditions through education involves formal and informal learning environments. The importance of social interaction and cultural context in learning processes is underscored in various educational theories (Ng, 2020; Yembuu, 2021). In Chiang Mai, the establishment of learning centers and the involvement of community elders in teaching drum making and playing reflect a communal approach to education. Informal learning is evident in these communities' observational and participatory methods, where learners acquire skills through immersion and practice rather than structured curricula. In contrast, formal educational settings in Xishuangbanna, such as cultural centers and schools, incorporate structured programs and curricula to teach drum music, reflecting a more institutionalized approach. Educational systems perpetuate cultural norms and values, which, in this case, relate to the preservation and adaptation of drum musical traditions (Jenkins, 2011; Nzewi & Omolo-Ongati, 2014; Prest, 2020).

Comparative Studies and Cultural Exchange

Comparative studies offer a valuable perspective on how different cultural contexts influence the preservation and transmission of musical traditions. Such research helps identify unique and shared challenges across cultures, facilitating the development of context-specific strategies for cultural preservation (Li & Sun, 2023; Edward & Brandon, 2024). The influence of globalization and cultural flows provides a framework for understanding how global influences impact local traditions. In both Chiang Mai and Xishuangbanna, the influence of tourism, economic development, and cross-cultural interactions play a significant role in shaping the contemporary functions of long drums. Comparative studies also highlight the importance of cultural exchange and dialogue, recognizing the dynamic nature of traditions (Fitch, 2006; Rogers, 2006).

The Role of Government and Policy

Government policies and initiatives are crucial in supporting the preservation of musical traditions. International frameworks for protecting cultural practices, including musical traditions, set the stage for national and local efforts

(Gwerevende & Mthombeni, 2023; Gong et al., 2024). National and local governments in Thailand and China have implemented various policies to support cultural preservation, such as recognizing drum-making and playing as intangible cultural heritage and providing funding for cultural programs. The effectiveness of these policies in promoting education and literacy related to drum musical traditions can be assessed through their impact on cultural sustainability. The involvement of government agencies in organizing festivals, competitions, and educational programs highlights the role of policy in facilitating cultural sustainability (Brown et al., 2000; Lauesen, 2016; Chang et al., 2024).

In conclusion, the literature on ethnomusicology, cultural preservation, educational theories, and comparative studies provides a comprehensive framework for analyzing the drum musical instruments of Chiang Mai, Thailand, and Xishuangbanna, China. These theoretical perspectives help elucidate the complex interplay between tradition and modernity, education and culture, and local and global influences. The research objective of comparing drum musical instruments through education and literacy in these regions necessitates a multidimensional approach that considers historical, social, and educational contexts. By synthesizing these diverse theoretical insights and addressing existing gaps, this study aims to contribute to understanding how cultural traditions can be preserved and revitalized through targeted educational and literacy initiatives.

METHOD

The methodology for this research involves a comprehensive comparative study of the drum musical instrument culture in Chiang Mai, Thailand, and Xishuangbanna, Yunnan, China. The research objective is to compare how these traditions are maintained and transmitted through education and literacy practices in these regions. Qualitative research methods included fieldwork, interviews, participant observation, and document analysis.

Scope of Content

This study focuses on the making, playing, and cultural significance of long drums in Chiang Mai and Xishuangbanna. It explores the educational practices and literacy efforts involved in preserving these traditions.

Selection of the Research Sites

Chiang Mai, Thailand, and Xishuangbanna, Yunnan, China, were selected due to their rich, long drum music traditions and cultural connections. These sites provide a comparative perspective on drum music cultures in Southeast Asia and East Asia, as shown in Table 1.

Selection of Key Informants

A total of six key informants were selected based on their expertise and involvement in drum music culture, with three

Table 1. Selection of the research sites

Research Sites	Description
Chiang Mai, Thailand	Known for its rich tradition of long drum music, particularly the Klong Yao, used in festivals, religious ceremonies, and tourism
Xishuangbanna, Yunnan, China	Famous for its elephant foot drums (Xiangjiao Gu) used in ethnic festivals, religious ceremonies, and modern performances

informants from each region. The criteria for selecting informants included:

- Born in or has lived in the research location for at least thirty years
- Having studied the production or performance of drum instruments for more than ten years
- Possessing a deep understanding of the local drum music culture, recognized by local industry or government, and awarded certificates or commendations

Research Tools

Fieldwork is the primary research method, supported by interviews and observations. The following tools were developed and validated by academic experts:

- Interview Forms: Designed to collect comprehensive data from key informants.
- Observation Checklists: These are used to record observations during fieldwork systematically.

Data Collection

The research involves a mix of literature reviews, field observations, interviews, and audio-visual material analysis. Table 2 outlines the specific methods and steps taken in this study.

Data Management and Analysis

Collected data were systematically categorized and managed. Literature, audio recordings, videos, and photographs were organized based on content and chronological order. This systematic approach ensures easy access and retrieval for analysis. Data were analyzed using thematic analysis, focusing on the following aspects:

- Historical and Cultural Context: Understanding the background and significance of drum music in each region.
- Educational Practices: Examining formal and informal teaching methods and learning drum music.
- Literacy Efforts: Assessing the role of literacy in preserving and transmitting drum music traditions.
- Comparative Analysis: Identifying similarities and differences in drum music culture between Chiang Mai and Xishuangbanna.

In conclusion, the interview process, crucial to the study, entailed structured and semi-structured interviews with key informants such as drum makers, performers, and educators,

Table 2. Data collection methods

Data Collection Method	Description	Steps
Literature Review	Analysis of existing research, historical records, and cultural documentation related to drum music culture	1. Conduct a comprehensive literature review to establish a theoretical framework and context for the study
Field Observations	Detailed observations of drum-making processes, performances, and educational settings	2. Plan field visits and secure necessary permissions for research activities in Chiang Mai and Xishuangbanna
Interviews	Structured and semi-structured interviews with key informants and community members to gather in-depth information	3. Develop and validate research tools, including interview forms and observation checklists 4. Conduct field observations and interviews with key informants in both regions
Audio-Visual Materials	Recording performances, drum-making processes, and educational activities for detailed analysis	5. Record audio-visual materials of drum-making processes, performances, and educational activities

designed to uncover detailed insights into drum making, playing, and teaching. Challenges encountered during field-work included difficulties in accessing key informants, establishing trust, logistical issues in remote areas, and language barriers requiring translation. Limitations of the chosen methods included the subjective nature of interview data, the potential influence of researcher presence on field observations, and the complexity of managing and analyzing audio-visual materials. Despite these challenges, the methodology allowed for an in-depth exploration of the preservation and transmission of drum music culture through education and literacy in both regions.

RESULTS

The Drum Music Culture in Chiang Mai and Xishuangbanna

The drum music culture in Chiang Mai, Thailand, and Xishuangbanna, China, focuses on the types of drums, the drum-making processes, and the performance contexts. The analysis highlights the cultural significance, educational aspects, and changes in drum music traditions in both regions.

The drum music culture of Chiang Mai, Thailand

The drum in Chiang Mai, Thailand, is called Klong Yao, also known as the long drum, and holds a significant place in Chiang Mai's traditional music culture. This drum is a staple instrument, especially in large festivals and religious ceremonies, where its resonant sound and distinctive appearance add to the celebratory and solemn atmospheres. The craftsmanship and design show that:

- **Materials:** The Klong Yao is meticulously crafted from wood and cowhide. The drum's body is slender, tall, and hollow, allowing it to produce a rich, resonant sound when struck. The cowhide is used for the drumhead, providing durability and a unique tonal quality.
- **Decoration:** This drum is often adorned with colorful cords, enhancing its visual appeal and reflecting the region's cultural aesthetics. Additionally, a distinctive circular spot is placed at the center of the drumhead.

This spot, made from rice paste and charcoal, adds a secondary pitch to the drum's sound, enriching its tonal complexity.

Traditionally, the Klong Yao is slung over the shoulder of the performer. This positioning allows for mobility and dynamic performance styles. The drum is primarily played with the hands, utilizing various striking techniques to produce different sounds and rhythms. However, skilled drummers can also play it using other body parts such as elbows, knees, heels, and even the head, showcasing their dexterity and adding a visual element to the performance.

Using the Klong Yao in festivals and ceremonies highlights its cultural importance. In these settings, the drum's powerful sound helps to enhance the overall atmosphere, whether it is a joyful festival or a solemn religious event. The Klong Yao's role in these contexts underscores its integral place in the cultural and musical traditions of Chiang Mai, making it a symbol of the region's rich heritage, as shown in Figure 1.

Historically, drums were used primarily in Buddhist rituals, royal ceremonies, and festivals like the Songkran Festival. They were also employed during wedding ceremonies, although this depended on personal preferences. However, it was strictly forbidden to use drums during funeral proceedings.

The drum music culture in Xishuangbanna

The Xiangjiao Gu, commonly called the elephant foot drum, is a vital folk instrument of the Dai ethnic group in Xishuangbanna. Its unique design and rich cultural significance make it an integral part of the region's musical traditions. The craftsmanship and design show that:

- **Materials and Shape:** The Xiangjiao Gu is crafted from wood and features a distinctive shape that resembles a tall wine glass. This design includes a cup-shaped resonating body at the top, which enhances the drum's acoustic properties. The drumhead is made of skin, typically cowhide, tightly bound around the perimeter with thin strips of cowhide. This allows for adjustable tension and contributes to the drum's unique sound.



Figure 1. Klong Yao, in Chiang Mai, Thailand
Source: Ailin Cui, from fieldwork in March 2024

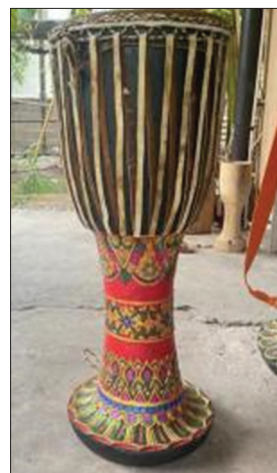


Figure 2. Xiangjiao Gu, in Xishuangbanna, China
Source: Ailin Cui, from fieldwork in April 2024

- **Decoration:** The exterior of the Xiangjiao Gu is often elaborately decorated. It is painted with intricate patterns, which may include traditional designs specific to the Dai culture. These patterns not only add to the visual appeal of the drum but also reflect the cultural and artistic heritage of the Dai people. Additionally, some drums are adorned with silk ribbons and colored balls, further enhancing their aesthetic and symbolic significance.

The Xiangjiao Gu is typically played in various settings, including religious ceremonies and folk performances. The drum is often used as a rhythmic and colorful instrument in percussion ensembles and Dai opera bands. Over time, the Dai people have developed a comprehensive drum language, allowing the Xiangjiao Gu to be struck rhythmically to mimic the spoken language and express a range of emotions, from joy and anger to sorrow and happiness.

Historically, the Xiangjiao Gu was primarily played in Theravada Buddhist temples for religious ceremonies and used solely for percussion without accompanying dance. Over time, its use has expanded beyond religious contexts to include popular folk performances. Today, it is often played alongside dance, although it is typically performed solo due to its heavy weight. In performances, it is frequently combined with other instruments, such as cymbals and bells, accompanying various traditional dances like the Peacock Dance, the Deer Dance, the White Elephant Dance, and the Scarf Dance. This expansion of use highlights the drum's versatility and deep-rooted significance in the cultural life of the Dai people, as shown in Figure 2.

Drums in Xishuangbanna are used in minority ethnic festivals, religious ceremonies, weddings, and funerals. The drum-making process is similar to that in Chiang Mai. Still, the selection of materials and specific techniques are influenced by local natural and cultural conditions, giving each region's drums unique characteristics.

This comparative study highlights the similarities and differences in drum-making processes and cultural significance in Chiang Mai and Xishuangbanna. The integration of educational activities and the preservation of traditional knowledge through literacy efforts are pivotal in maintaining

and promoting these rich cultural heritages, as shown in Table 3.

Educational Approaches in Drum Music Culture

Traditional methods of learning and teaching

Historically, the learning and teaching of drum music culture in Chiang Mai, Thailand, and Xishuangbanna, China, have been deeply rooted in traditional methods emphasizing hands-on experience and familial transmission.

- In Chiang Mai, drum making, especially the Klong Yao, has been a family secret for generations. Knowledge was passed down through apprenticeship models, where young family members assisted elderly artisans. This method preserved intricate skills for selecting materials, carving, and tuning. Known drum makers like Mr. Salanet Panchasei learned the craft by watching elders and practicing under their supervision. This apprenticeship model imparted technical skills and instilled respect for the cultural and spiritual significance of drum making.
- In Xishuangbanna, the Dai ethnic group used traditional apprenticeship models to teach drum-making skills, such as the Xiangjiao Gu, in religious contexts, especially Buddhist temples. Apprentices assisted master craftsmen, gradually learning to select wood, process materials, and decorate drums with culturally significant motifs. Family-based transmission ensured the preservation of this cultural heritage through generations of knowledge and techniques.

Modern educational practices and innovations

In recent years, both regions have seen significant innovations in the educational approaches to drum music culture, integrating traditional methods with modern educational practices to ensure the survival and relevance of these traditions.

- In Chiang Mai, Klong Yao drum music culture is being promoted and preserved through contemporary

educational initiatives. Learning centers, like Mr. Tanawat Rajchawang's, offer structured programs for students to learn drum making and playing. Modern educational tools and media are used to reach a wider audience. Incorporating drum music into school curricula and organizing drum-making competitions by local governments and cultural associations further enhance the educational landscape.

- In Xishuangbanna, institutions like Dai Cultural Village and Lexiang Cultural Center, founded by Ai Kanfeng, combine traditional apprenticeship methods with modern teaching techniques to offer Xiangjiao Gu drum-making and playing programs. These centers provide workshops, hands-on experiences, audio-visual materials, interactive sessions, and cultural experience activities. The government recognizes outstanding practitioners as intangible cultural heritage transmitters formalizes teaching, and ensures the systematic passing of these skills.

In conclusion, both regions have successfully adapted their traditional methods to contemporary educational frameworks, ensuring the preservation and transmission of their drum music cultures. The blend of traditional apprenticeship with modern educational practices has created robust systems that maintain the integrity of these cultural practices and adapt to the changing educational needs of new generations, as shown in Table 4.

Role of Drum Music in Cultural Education and Literacy

Cultural significance and community engagement

Drum music holds profound cultural significance in Chiang Mai, Thailand, and Xishuangbanna, China. In these regions, drums are not merely musical instruments but vital elements of the cultural fabric, deeply intertwined with community traditions, rituals, and social practices.

- In Chiang Mai, the Klong Yao, or long drum, plays a central role in the community's cultural life. Traditionally

used in religious ceremonies, festivals, and royal events, the Klong Yao is an emblem of local heritage. Its presence in various ceremonies enhances the solemnity and grandeur of these events, symbolizing the spiritual and cultural values of the Lanna people. The drum's resonant sound and vibrant performances foster a sense of unity and pride among community members, reinforcing their cultural identity.

- In Xishuangbanna, the Xiangjiao Gu, or elephant foot drum, is integral to the Dai ethnic group's cultural expression. This drum is prominently featured in religious ceremonies, ethnic festivals, and folk dances, symbolizing the Dai people's rich cultural heritage. The Xiangjiao Gu's unique design and the rhythmic complexity of its music reflect the historical and artistic traditions of the Dai community.

Educational programs and literacy efforts

Numerous educational programs and initiatives have been developed in both regions to promote drum music education and literacy. These efforts aim to preserve and enhance the cultural traditions associated with drum music, ensuring their transmission to future generations.

- Chiang Mai promotes drum music education through learning centers and formal programs. Mr. Tanawat Rajchawang has established a free drum-making and playing center, teaching technical skills and cultural knowledge about the Klong Yao. Local governments and cultural associations organize competitions and workshops to raise awareness and promote the cultural importance of drum music.
- Xishuangbanna is implementing educational programs to preserve the Xiangjiao Gu drum music culture. The Dai Cultural Village and Lexiang Cultural Center, founded by Ai Kanfeng, offer workshops, historical lectures, and cultural experience activities. Government support is crucial for drum music literacy, as it acknowledges

Table 3. Comparative study highlights the similarities and differences

Aspect	Chiang Mai, Thailand	Xishuangbanna, China
Drum Type	Klong Yao (Long Drum)	Xiangjiao Gu (Elephant Foot Drum)
Material Selection	Mango/Jackfruit wood, Female cattle skin	Hazel wood, red sour wood, Local cowhide
Production Process	Manual with some machinery	Predominantly machine-assisted
Painting and Decoration	Colorful cords, Circular spot at center	Acrylic/Gold paint, Personal patterns
Performance Context	Festivals, Religious ceremonies, Weddings	Festivals, Religious ceremonies, Weddings
Educational Aspects	Local competitions, Learning centers	Dai Cultural Village, Cultural Courtyards

Table 4. Comparative educational approaches

Aspect	Chiang Mai, Thailand	Xishuangbanna, China
Traditional Methods	Family-based apprenticeship, observing and assisting elders	Temple-based learning, apprenticeship in religious contexts
Modern Practices	Learning centers, competitions, integration into school curricula	Cultural centers, workshops, formal recognition of practitioners
Educational Tools	Free instruction, media coverage, government support	Interactive sessions, audio-visual materials, cultural experience activities

Table 5. Comparative educational programs and literacy efforts

Aspect	Chiang Mai, Thailand	Xishuangbanna, China
Cultural Significance	Enhances religious ceremonies, festivals, royal events. Symbolizes Lanna heritage	Central to Dai religious ceremonies, festivals, and folk dances. Reflects Dai heritage
Community Engagement	Promotes social interaction and communal bonding during public events	Strengthens social cohesion and cultural continuity through interactive performances
Educational Programs	Learning centers, free instruction, government-organized competitions, workshops	Cultural centers, workshops, government recognition of practitioners, school curricula integration
Impact	<i>Ensures transmission of cultural knowledge and technical skills</i>	Preserves and enhances cultural traditions, formal recognition of artisans

skilled artisans as intangible cultural heritage transmitters. Educational institutions incorporate drum music into their curricula, providing structured opportunities for students to learn and practice this art form.

Impact of educational programs

The impact of these educational programs on preserving and enhancing drum music culture is significant in both regions. By integrating drum music into formal education and community programs, these initiatives ensure that the cultural traditions associated with drum music are kept alive and relevant.

In conclusion, the educational programs and literacy efforts in Chiang Mai and Xishuangbanna play a vital role in preserving and promoting the drum music cultures of these regions. Through a combination of traditional teaching methods and modern educational practices, these initiatives foster cultural continuity and community engagement, ensuring that the rich heritage of drum music is celebrated and sustained for future generations, as shown in Table 5.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The findings from this comparative study align well with the theoretical principles discussed in the literature. Ethnomusicology's emphasis on music as a cultural and social practice is evident in Chiang Mai and Xishuangbanna, where long drums serve as cultural symbols embodying historical narratives and social values (Taylor, 2009; Cottrell, 2010). The Klong Yao and Xiangjiao Gu are not merely instruments but pivotal cultural heritage elements, deeply integrated into religious, ceremonial, and festive contexts. This reflects the role of music as a repository of cultural knowledge and a medium for social cohesion, as suggested by ethnomusicological theories (Stefano, 2021).

The study also confirms the importance of formal and informal educational practices in transmitting musical traditions. In Chiang Mai, the communal approach to education, where learning centers and community elders play a significant role, mirrors the informal learning models discussed by Jenkins (2011). Similarly, in Xishuangbanna, integrating drum music into school curricula and establishing cultural centers align with more formal educational theories, demonstrating an institutionalized approach to preserving cultural traditions (Nzewi & Omolo-Ongati, 2014; Prest, 2020).

The integration of modern educational practices with traditional methods in both regions highlights the adaptability of these cultures in the face of globalization. This hybrid approach supports the notion that practical cultural preservation requires balancing traditional practices and incorporating contemporary educational tools (Schippers, 2009). The use of competitions, workshops, and media in Chiang Mai and the formal recognition of artisans in Xishuangbanna illustrate how these regions are navigating the challenges posed by modernization while striving to maintain their cultural heritage (Howard, 2016).

The comparative analysis of Chiang Mai and Xishuangbanna reveals similarities and differences in how these cultures approach drum music education and literacy. Both regions utilize traditional and modern methods to ensure the transmission of their musical heritage. However, the specific educational practices and the extent of government involvement vary. In Chiang Mai, the emphasis on community-driven initiatives contrasts with Xishuangbanna's more structured, government-supported programs (Brown et al., 2000; Lauesen, 2016).

Government policies play a crucial role in supporting cultural preservation. The recognition of drum-making and playing as intangible cultural heritage in both regions reflects the impact of national and local policies on cultural sustainability (Chang et al., 2024). The involvement of government agencies in organizing festivals and educational programs further underscores the importance of policy in facilitating cultural sustainability (Lauesen, 2016).

This comparative study reveals the importance of music as a cultural and social practice in Chiang Mai and Xishuangbanna, Thailand. Long drums, such as the Klong Yao and Xiangjiao Gu, are not just instruments but also cultural heritage elements. Both regions use both formal and informal educational practices to transmit their musical traditions. The hybrid approach of traditional methods and modern tools in both regions demonstrates the adaptability of these cultures in the face of globalization. The study also highlights the role of government policies in supporting cultural preservation. The study provides insights into practical strategies for sustaining traditional arts and contributes to broader discussions on cultural heritage preservation in the face of globalization. Future research should explore the long-term impacts of these educational practices on younger generations and explore how digital technologies can support the preservation and transmission of drum music cultures.

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