

Preservation and Transmission of Literacy Practices for the Zhuang Bronze Drum in Guangxi, China

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ABSTRACT

This research investigates the preservation and transmission of literacy practices for the Zhuang Bronze Drum in Guangxi, China, emphasizing the role of education and community engagement in cultural heritage preservation. The study examines current practices and identifies challenges in sustaining this cultural artifact through a qualitative approach involving detailed interviews with five key informants and comprehensive document analysis. The findings reveal that material culture literacy practices, including meticulous documentation, robust legal frameworks, and effective conservation methods, are essential for safeguarding the Zhuang Bronze Drum. Educational initiatives, both formal and informal, play a vital role in transmitting cultural knowledge, while community engagement and technological innovations further enhance preservation efforts. However, globalization and urbanization pose significant threats, necessitating a balanced approach that integrates traditional and modern strategies. The study underscores the importance of involving local communities and cultural bearers in preservation efforts, offering practical recommendations for enhancing literacy practices in cultural transmission. These insights contribute to the broader discourse on cultural heritage preservation and provide a model for other cultural artifacts facing similar threats.

Key words: Zhuang Bronze Drum, Cultural Preservation, Literacy Practices, Ethnomusicology, Community Engagement

INTRODUCTION

The Zhuang Bronze Drum, an ancient musical instrument with deep cultural significance, holds a special place in the heritage of the Zhuang people in Guangxi, China. These drums, adorned with intricate patterns and motifs, are musical instruments and symbols of cultural identity, historical continuity, and artistic expression (Li, 2022; Liu & Nicolas, 2024; Luo & Gu, 2024). Over centuries, the Zhuang Bronze Drum has been integral to various rituals, ceremonies, and communal activities, reflecting the socio-cultural fabric of the Zhuang community. However, with modernization and changing socio-economic dynamics, the preservation and transmission of this cultural artifact face numerous challenges. This research aims to delve into the current practices that contribute to the preservation and transmission of the Zhuang Bronze Drum, emphasizing literacy practices that ensure sustainable cultural continuity (Howard, 2016; Ismail, 2022; Gong et al., 2024).

Globalization and urbanization have significantly impacted traditional cultures worldwide in recent years, and the Zhuang Bronze Drum is no exception. The traditional knowledge and practices associated with these drums are at risk of being lost as younger generations migrate to urban areas and adopt modern lifestyles (Pham, 2021; Nitzky,

2022). A lack of systematic documentation and inadequate transmission of cultural knowledge further exacerbates the problem. While various efforts have been made to preserve the material aspects of the Zhuang Bronze Drum, such as museum collections and cultural heritage sites, the intangible cultural heritage, including the skills, rituals, and stories associated with these drums, requires more focused attention. Addressing these issues necessitates a comprehensive approach integrating material and intangible cultural preservation strategies (Howard, 2022; Liu et al., 2024).

The significance of this research lies in its potential to provide insights into effective preservation and transmission practices that can be applied not only to the Zhuang Bronze Drum but also to other cultural artifacts facing similar threats. This study highlights the role of education and community engagement in cultural preservation by focusing on literacy practices. Literacy practices encompass a wide range of activities, from formal education in schools to informal learning within communities, and they play a crucial role in transmitting cultural knowledge and values to future generations (Rogoff et al., 2016; Wang et al., 2018). Understanding how these practices are implemented and their effectiveness can inform policies and programs to safeguard intangible cultural heritage. Moreover, this research

underscores the importance of involving local communities and cultural bearers in preservation efforts, ensuring that knowledge transmission is authentic and sustainable (Clark et al., 2016; Rieckmann, 2018).

This research investigates and analyzes the preservation and transmission of literacy practices of the Zhuang Bronze Drum in Guangxi, China. This includes examining how these practices are implemented, the challenges faced, and their impact on the sustainable cultural continuity of the Zhuang Bronze Drum. The findings of this research are expected to contribute to the broader discourse on cultural heritage preservation and offer practical recommendations for enhancing the effectiveness of literacy practices in cultural transmission. Through this research, we hope to shed light on the vital role that education and community engagement play in preserving the rich cultural heritage of the Zhuang people and ensuring that the legacy of the Zhuang Bronze Drum continues to thrive for future generations.

Research Question

- How do current preservation and transmission of literacy practices contribute to the sustainable cultural continuity of the Zhuang Bronze Drum in Guangxi, China?

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Zhuang Bronze Drum, an integral part of the cultural heritage of the Zhuang people in Guangxi, China, symbolizes not only the musical traditions of this ethnic group but also their rich cultural identity. Ensuring its preservation and transmission to future generations requires a multifaceted approach encompassing material and intangible cultural practices.

Theories of Cultural Sustainability

Cultural sustainability is a theory that emphasizes the long-term preservation of cultural heritage, focusing on living traditions that evolve. In the context of the Zhuang Bronze Drum, it involves preserving the drums, rituals, knowledge, and associated skills. Formal measures like cultural reserves and legal protections are implemented to sustain the culture. However, the real strength of these measures lies in their ability to engage the community and foster an ongoing connection to their heritage (Rivero Moreno, 2020; Rosetti et al., 2022). Community-based initiatives that engage local populations with their cultural heritage. These efforts ensure that the Zhuang Bronze Drum remains an active part of Guangxi's cultural landscape, fostering identity and continuity among the Zhuang people (Auclair & Fairclough, 2015; Huang, 2023).

Ethnomusicological Perspectives

Ethnomusicology is a field that studies the cultural significance of musical instruments and their roles within communities. It emphasizes the role of music in social, historical, and spiritual contexts. The Zhuang Bronze Drum, viewed through this lens, is a cultural artifact that embodies the

history, beliefs, and social structures of the Zhuang people. Ethnomusicological research highlights the drum's role in rituals, festivals, and community gatherings, which are crucial for transmitting cultural knowledge and reinforcing social bonds. The findings reinforce the significance of the Zhuang Bronze Drum as more than just an instrument but as a living element of community identity, where the role of music becomes intertwined with social cohesion (Wang & Chuangprakhon, 2023). By analyzing and documenting the use of the Zhuang Bronze Drum, we can protect its intangible cultural heritage and ensure that future generations will recognize and value its significance (Harrison, 2015; Morgenstern, 2018; McKerrell, 2022). This also highlights ethnomusicology's broader potential in helping safeguard other endangered cultural heritages.

Literacy Practices in Cultural Transmission

The Zhuang Bronze Drum is a cultural transmission instrument involving formal and informal education. Formal education incorporates the instrument into school curricula, teaching students its historical significance and musical techniques. This approach fosters an appreciation for cultural heritage from an early age. Informal education, on the other hand, involves community-based activities like festivals and workshops, promoting intergenerational learning. The Zhuang Bronze Drum is also documented and shared using modern media and technology, making it accessible to a broader audience and ensuring its place in the digital age (Liu & Nicolas, 2024; Widman, 2019). The combination of formal and informal literacy practices strengthens cultural transmission, ensuring that knowledge is taught and experienced through community engagement.

Integration of Theoretical Perspectives

The Zhuang Bronze Drum, a cultural artifact, is being preserved and transmitted through a holistic approach that combines theories of cultural sustainability, ethnomusicology, and literacy practices. This approach ensures dynamic and adaptable preservation efforts, focusing on cultural heritage's material and intangible aspects. Ethnomusicology provides a deep understanding of the Zhuang Bronze Drum's cultural context and significance, while literacy practices offer practical methods for transmitting cultural knowledge. The integration of these perspectives supports the preservation of the Zhuang Bronze Drum and offers a framework for preserving other cultural artifacts facing similar pressures from modernization and globalization. This research aims to develop a comprehensive strategy for the sustainable cultural continuity of the Zhuang Bronze Drum, preserving traditions, skills, and knowledge for future generations (Deng, 2020; Ling, 2023; Yan & Yifei, 2019).

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative research approach to investigate and analyze the preservation and transmission of literacy practices for the Zhuang Bronze Drum in Guangxi, China. The

focus is on understanding the depth and nuances of the practices in place through detailed interviews and document analysis. This approach allows for an in-depth exploration of the lived experiences, insights, and perspectives of those involved in preserving and transmitting the Zhuang Bronze Drum.

Key Informants

A total of five key informants were interviewed for this study. These informants were selected based on their expertise and involvement in preserving and transmitting the Zhuang Bronze Drum. The informants include experts and scholars in bronze drum research, museum researchers, and individuals associated with the Intangible Cultural Heritage Center.

Interview Methodology

- **Selection of Informants:** Five key informants were identified based on their extensive knowledge and active participation in preserving and transmitting the Zhuang Bronze Drum.
- **Interview Process:** Semi-structured interviews allowed for in-depth discussion while ensuring that all relevant topics were covered. The interviews focused on the informants' experiences, perspectives, and insights regarding the preservation and transmission practices.
- **Data Collection:** The interviews were recorded, transcribed, and analyzed to identify key themes and patterns related to the research question.

Document Analysis

- **Document Selection:** Six key documents were selected for analysis. These documents include books and reports that discuss the preservation and transmission of the Zhuang Bronze Drum from various perspectives.
- **Content Analysis:** The documents were analyzed to extract information on preservation and transmission practices, legal frameworks, cultural projects, and educational initiatives.

Data Analysis

- **Data Integration:** The data from interviews and document analysis were integrated to identify common themes and discrepancies.
- **Thematic Analysis:** Key themes related to the preservation and transmission of the Zhuang Bronze Drum were identified and analyzed. These themes included legal protections, educational initiatives, community engagement, and cultural sustainability practices.
- **Comparison:** The findings from interviews and documents were compared to highlight areas of success and improvement.

Steps in Research

- **Literature Review:** Conduct a comprehensive review of existing literature on the Zhuang Bronze Drum to contextualize the research and identify gaps.

- **Interview Key Informants:** Conduct semi-structured interviews with five key informants to gather qualitative data on preservation and transmission practices.
- **Document Analysis:** Analyze six key documents to extract relevant information on preservation and transmission practices.
- **Data Integration and Analysis:** Integrate and analyze data from interviews and document analysis to identify key themes and patterns.
- **Comparative Analysis:** Compare findings from interviews and documents to identify strengths and weaknesses in current practices.
- **Report Findings:** Synthesize the findings into a comprehensive report that addresses the research objective and question.

By employing these qualitative methodologies and steps, this research aims to provide a thorough investigation and analysis of the preservation and transmission of literacy practices for the Zhuang Bronze Drum in Guangxi, China, contributing to the understanding and enhancing cultural continuity of this significant heritage.

RESULTS

The data collected through interviews and document analysis reveals various strategies and methods to ensure this significant heritage's cultural continuity. The focus on literacy practices provides insights into how knowledge and skills related to the bronze drum are preserved and transmitted across generations, contributing to its sustainable cultural legacy.

Material Culture Literacy Practices

Material culture literacy practices

The preservation and transmission of the Zhuang Bronze Drum in Guangxi are deeply embedded in material culture literacy practices. These practices encompass meticulous documentation, cataloging, legal frameworks, and conservation methods that ensure the survival and continuity of this cultural heritage. The following sections detail these aspects, highlighting the comprehensive efforts undertaken to preserve the Zhuang Bronze Drum.

Documentation and cataloging literacy

Documentation and cataloging literacy are crucial for preserving the Zhuang Bronze Drum. This involves detailed processes for recording and documenting the bronze drums, including their historical significance, physical characteristics, and cultural contexts. Museums and cultural institutions play a pivotal role in this process. Systematic cataloging helps maintain a comprehensive record of each bronze drum, ensuring that valuable information is preserved for future generations.

The documentation includes creating detailed descriptions, photographs, and digital records of the bronze drums. These records are then stored in databases accessible to

researchers, historians, and the public. The Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region Ethnic Museum is a prime example of an institution that has excelled in the documentation and cataloging of literacy. The museum's extensive collection and well-maintained records contribute significantly to preservation efforts, as shown in Figure 1.

Legal and policy literacy

Legal and policy literacy involves understanding and applying laws, regulations, and policies to protect the bronze drum heritage. Several legal frameworks and policies have been established in Guangxi to safeguard the Zhuang Bronze Drum. These laws protect the physical artifacts and preserve their cultural practices and traditional knowledge.

One of the key policies includes the Regulations on the Protection of Traditional Ethnic and Folk Culture of the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region. This policy provides a legal foundation for protecting and managing the bronze drums, outlining the responsibilities of various stakeholders, including government bodies, cultural institutions, and local communities. Legal literacy among these stakeholders is essential for effectively implementing these regulations and ensuring that the bronze drum heritage is preserved, promoted, and transmitted.

Collection and conservation literacy

Collection and conservation literacy is fundamental to the physical preservation of the bronze drums. This involves best practices in collecting, preserving, and maintaining bronze drums within museums and local communities. The Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region Ethnic Museum and other local museums have developed sophisticated methods for conserving these ancient artifacts.

The conservation process includes measures to prevent deterioration, such as controlling the environmental conditions in which the drums are stored, conducting regular maintenance checks, and employing restoration techniques when necessary. Collection literacy also involves educating the local communities about the importance of these artifacts and encouraging them to participate in preservation efforts. By integrating modern conservation techniques



Figure 1. Guangxi Zhuang autonomous region ethnic museum

Source: Shanshan Jiang, from fieldwork in December 2022

with traditional knowledge, these institutions ensure that the bronze drums are well-preserved for future generations, as shown in Figure 2.

In conclusion, material culture literacy practices are integral to preserving and transmitting the Zhuang Bronze Drum in Guangxi. The cultural heritage of the bronze drum is safeguarded through meticulous documentation and cataloging, robust legal frameworks, and effective collection and conservation methods. These practices protect the physical artifacts and ensure the sustainable cultural continuity of the Zhuang Bronze Drum, thereby contributing to the rich cultural tapestry of Guangxi.

Educational and Transmission Literacy Practices

The preservation and transmission of the Zhuang Bronze Drum heavily rely on educational and transmission literacy practices. These practices focus on embedding the knowledge and appreciation of the bronze drum within the educational curriculum, employing effective pedagogical strategies, and engaging the broader community. This section discusses the various educational and transmission literacy practices that contribute to the sustainable cultural continuity of the Zhuang Bronze Drum in Guangxi.

Curriculum integration literacy

Curriculum integration literacy involves incorporating the knowledge and skills related to the Zhuang Bronze Drum into the educational curricula of schools and universities. This ensures that the younger generation is exposed to this cultural heritage early, fostering a deep-rooted appreciation and understanding. Educational institutions in Guangxi have made significant strides in integrating bronze drum literacy into their curricula.

For instance, primary and secondary schools in Hechi have introduced after-school programs focused on bronze drum music, where students learn to play the drums and understand their historical and cultural significance. Higher education institutions like the Bama National Normal School in Hechi City have also established specialized courses and programs dedicated to studying bronze drum culture. These



Figure 2. Guangxi Bronze Drum cultural products

Source: Shanshan Jiang, from fieldwork in December 2022

initiatives preserve the knowledge and ensure its transmission to future generations, as shown in Figure 3.

Pedagogical literacy

Pedagogical literacy refers to the effective teaching methods and strategies for teaching students about the Zhuang Bronze Drum. Educators use a variety of approaches to make learning about the bronze drum engaging and impactful. These methods include hands-on learning, where students can play the drums, and interactive lectures and multimedia presentations highlighting the historical and cultural context of the bronze drum.

Teachers also employ storytelling techniques, sharing myths and legends associated with the bronze drum, which helps students connect with the cultural narratives. Workshops and seminars led by experts and traditional musicians are organized to provide students with firsthand knowledge and experience. These pedagogical strategies ensure that students learn about the bronze drum and develop a profound respect and appreciation for its cultural significance.

Community education literacy

Community education literacy involves initiatives and programs to raise awareness and educate the broader community about the Zhuang Bronze Drum culture. These initiatives are crucial for the wider dissemination of knowledge and for engaging community members in the preservation efforts. Various community education programs have been implemented in Guangxi to promote bronze drum literacy among the general public.

Local governments and cultural organizations frequently organize festivals, exhibitions, and performances showcasing bronze drum culture. These events serve as a platform for community members to learn about and celebrate their heritage. Additionally, workshops and training sessions are conducted in community centers and cultural institutions, where participants can learn to play the bronze drum and understand its historical context.

For example, the bronze drum culture exhibition hall of Bama National Normal School in Hechi City hosts regular



Figure 3. The bronze drum culture exhibition hall of the National Normal School

Source: Shanshan Jiang, from fieldwork in December 2022

educational tours and workshops for community members (see Figure 3). These programs educate the public about the bronze drum's significance and encourage active participation in its preservation and transmission.

In conclusion, educational and transmission literacy practices are pivotal in the sustainable cultural continuity of the Zhuang Bronze Drum in Guangxi. Integrating bronze drum literacy into educational curricula, employing effective pedagogical strategies, and engaging the broader community ensures that the knowledge and appreciation of the bronze drum are preserved and transmitted to future generations. These efforts protect this valuable cultural heritage and foster a sense of identity and pride among the Zhuang people.

Cultural Engagement and Community Literacy Practices

The preservation and transmission of the Zhuang Bronze Drum are deeply rooted in the active engagement and literacy of the community. This section explores the various cultural engagement and community literacy practices that contribute to the sustainable continuity of the Zhuang Bronze Drum in Guangxi.

Community-based literacy initiatives

Community-based literacy initiatives are crucial in promoting bronze drum literacy among the Zhuang people. These include local festivals, workshops, and cultural events that allow community members to learn about and engage with the bronze drum culture. The Hechi Bronze Drum Folk Song Art Festival is an annual event that celebrates the rich cultural heritage of the bronze drum, featuring performances, competitions, and workshops. This event encourages active participation from children and adults, ensuring the continuity of cultural practices within the community. Local workshops and training sessions also educate community members about the bronze drum's history, playing techniques, and cultural significance, often involving skilled practitioners and experts. Participation in these initiatives deepens community members' understanding and appreciation of their cultural heritage.

Transmitter literacy

Transmitter literacy refers to the role of skilled practitioners in passing down knowledge and practices related to the bronze drum, a cultural heritage. These individuals are often the bearers of traditional knowledge and play a crucial role in preserving and transmitting it. The community and government in Guangxi recognize and support bronze drum culture transmitters. They teach and mentor younger generations, ensuring the accurate and effective transmission of skills. The Bama Intangible Cultural Heritage Center has established a bronze drum culture transmission base, where skilled transmitters conduct training classes and workshops. These transmitters play the drum and deeply understand its cultural and historical context. Their role extends beyond performance to educate others about the cultural significance and traditions associated with the drum.

Public awareness and participation literacy

Public awareness and participation literacy are efforts to increase public participation in preserving and transmitting bronze drum culture. These efforts involve media campaigns, documentaries, and educational programs on television and online platforms. These campaigns often feature interviews with experts, transmitters, and community members, providing diverse perspectives. Public performances and exhibitions, such as the large-scale folk music dance poem “Bronze Drum,” are also effective tools for raising awareness and engaging the community. These events entertain and educate the audience about the history and significance of the bronze drum, fostering a deeper connection with cultural heritage, as shown in Figure 4.

In addition, community-based projects and initiatives encourage active participation from community members. These projects often involve collaborative efforts between local governments, cultural organizations, and the community, creating a sense of ownership and responsibility toward preserving the bronze drum culture.

In conclusion, cultural engagement and community literacy practices are essential for the sustainable continuity of the Zhuang Bronze Drum in Guangxi. Promoting community-based literacy initiatives, supporting skilled transmitters, and enhancing public awareness and participation ensures that the cultural heritage is preserved and transmitted to future generations.

Technological and Innovative Literacy Practices

The advancement of technological and innovative literacy practices has significantly contributed to the preservation and transmission of the Zhuang Bronze Drum culture in Guangxi. This section delves into current practices and explores their impact on ensuring the sustainable continuity of this cultural heritage.

Digital literacy

Digital literacy is crucial for documenting and sharing information about the bronze drum, making it more accessible to a broader audience. Professor Fuqiang Li of Guangxi University for Nationalities led a digital recording and research project titled “Digital Record and Research of Bronze Drums in China and Southeast Asia,” which uses high-resolution imaging, video recordings, and 3D modeling to create a comprehensive digital archive of bronze drum customs, performances, and cultural practices. These records are made available online, allowing researchers, students, and the general public to explore the rich heritage of the Zhuang Bronze Drum. Social media platforms and online forums have also become valuable tools for disseminating information and engaging with the community.

Innovative conservation literacy

Innovative conservation literacy focuses on developing new methods and technologies for conserving and restoring bronze



Figure 4. Large-scale folk music dance poem “Bronze Drum”
Source: Shanshan Jiang, from fieldwork in December 2022

drums. Advancements in conservation techniques, such as non-invasive analysis methods like X-ray fluorescence and 3D scanning, help maintain the integrity and longevity of these artifacts. These technologies help identify areas of deterioration, corrosion, and structural weaknesses, enabling precise restoration strategies. Additionally, advancements in bronze drum casting technology have produced high-quality, replicating historical artifacts used in performances and educational settings to maintain cultural practices.

Future-oriented literacy practices

Future-oriented literacy practices aim to preserve and transmit the Zhuang Bronze Drum heritage, integrating technology and innovative methods. Collaborative networks between cultural institutions, academic researchers, and technology experts are recommended for knowledge exchange and developing cutting-edge preservation strategies. Incorporating digital literacy into the educational curriculum is also crucial, with courses and workshops on digital documentation, virtual heritage, and cultural preservation technologies. This equips the younger generation with the skills to preserve the heritage using the latest technological advancements.

Finally, public engagement initiatives should continue to leverage digital platforms to reach a wider audience. Virtual reality (VR) experiences, augmented reality (AR) applications, and interactive digital exhibits can provide immersive and engaging ways to connect with the bronze drum culture, fostering a deeper appreciation and responsibility toward its preservation.

In conclusion, technological and innovative literacy practices are pivotal in preserving and transmitting the Zhuang Bronze Drum heritage in Guangxi. By embracing digital tools, modern conservation techniques, and future-oriented approaches, these practices ensure that the cultural legacy of the bronze drum continues to thrive in the digital age.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The preservation and transmission of literacy practices for the Zhuang Bronze Drum in Guangxi, China, reveal

consistency and inconsistencies with existing research and theoretical principles. Integrating cultural sustainability, ethnomusicology, and literacy practices into preservation efforts demonstrates a holistic approach that aligns with theoretical perspectives on cultural heritage preservation. This study contributes to a deeper understanding of how these approaches can work in synergy to enhance the preservation of cultural artifacts like the Zhuang Bronze Drum, addressing tangible and intangible heritage aspects.

The study confirms that cultural sustainability theory, which emphasizes the preservation of living traditions, is crucial for the Zhuang Bronze Drum. By combining cultural preservation strategies with legal protections, the findings suggest a pathway for other cultural artifacts that face similar threats. The research findings indicate that combining material and intangible cultural practices effectively ensures the sustainable cultural continuity of the Zhuang Bronze Drum (Auclair & Fairclough, 2015; Huang, 2023). Integrating robust legal frameworks, meticulous documentation, and community engagement supports this theoretical principle. This combination is necessary for safeguarding the physical drum and maintaining its cultural resonance within the Zhuang community.

The research also validates the ethnomusicological perspective, which views musical instruments as embodiments of cultural identity and social structure. The Zhuang Bronze Drum's role in rituals, festivals, and community gatherings underscores its importance in reinforcing social bonds and transmitting cultural knowledge (Harrison, 2015; Morgenstern, 2018). The findings demonstrate that ethnomusicology provides valuable insights into the drum's cultural context and significance, which is crucial for effective preservation. This underscores the Zhuang Bronze Drum's role as an artifact and a living tradition that binds communities together through shared history and identity.

Literacy practices in cultural transmission, including formal and informal education, are vital in preserving the Zhuang Bronze Drum. Educational initiatives, especially those embedded within curricula and community outreach, have proven effective in fostering an appreciation of cultural heritage among younger generations. Integrating bronze drum knowledge into school curricula and community-based activities promotes intergenerational learning and ensures that younger generations appreciate their cultural heritage (Liu & Nicolas, 2024; Widman, 2019). This aligns with the theoretical understanding that literacy practices are essential for transmitting cultural knowledge and values. By enhancing these educational strategies, the transmission of knowledge becomes more resilient against the pressures of modernization.

Despite these consistencies, some challenges and inconsistencies emerge. The rapid pace of globalization and urbanization poses significant threats to the transmission of traditional knowledge and practices. The study highlights the risk of losing cultural heritage as younger generations migrate to urban areas and adopt modern lifestyles (Pham, 2021; Nitzky, 2022). This finding is significant as it underscores the urgency of developing more adaptable and innovative preservation methods to bridge the gap between

traditional and modern lifestyles. This issue is exacerbated by inadequate systematic documentation and transmission of cultural knowledge, which contradicts the principles of comprehensive cultural preservation strategies (Howard, 2022; Liu et al., 2024).

Furthermore, while educational initiatives are crucial, the effectiveness of these programs can be inconsistent. The reliance on formal education alone may not be sufficient to instill a deep-rooted appreciation for the Zhuang Bronze Drum. Informal learning within communities plays a significant role in transmitting cultural knowledge, but this aspect often lacks systematic support and recognition (Rogoff et al., 2016; Wang et al., 2018). Addressing these gaps requires a balanced approach integrating formal and informal educational strategies. This study suggests that greater support for community-based informal education, alongside formal programs, would further strengthen the sustainability of cultural transmission efforts.

This research underscores the importance of a multifaceted approach to preserving and transmitting the Zhuang Bronze Drum in Guangxi, China. The study confirms that cultural sustainability, ethnomusicology, and literacy practices are critical to effective preservation strategies. Material culture literacy practices, including meticulous documentation, legal protections, and conservation methods, are essential for safeguarding the physical artifacts of the Zhuang Bronze Drum.

Educational and transmission literacy practices involve integrating bronze drum knowledge into school curricula and community-based activities, which ensures cultural knowledge's intergenerational transmission. Community engagement and public awareness initiatives further enhance preservation by fostering a sense of identity and pride among the Zhuang people.

Technological and innovative literacy practices, such as digital documentation and modern conservation techniques, provide additional tools for preserving and transmitting the Zhuang Bronze Drum heritage. These practices ensure that the cultural legacy of the bronze drum continues to thrive in the digital age.

However, the research also highlights significant challenges, particularly the impact of globalization and urbanization on cultural heritage transmission. Addressing these challenges requires a comprehensive approach that integrates formal and informal educational strategies and involves local communities and cultural bearers in preservation efforts.

Overall, the findings of this research contribute to the broader discourse on cultural heritage preservation and offer practical recommendations for enhancing the effectiveness of literacy practices in cultural transmission. By focusing on education, community engagement, and technological innovation, we can ensure the sustainable cultural continuity of the Zhuang Bronze Drum and other cultural artifacts facing similar threats.

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