



# Performance Practices and Traditional Values in Tianyang Guimei Folk Songs

Li Liaona<sup>1,2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Baise University, Baise, China;

<sup>2</sup>School of Music Department, Philippine Women's University, Manila 1004, Philippines

Email: 435127157@qq.com

**Abstract:** This study explores the performance practices and traditional values embedded in the Tianyang Guimei folk songs of the Zhuang people in Tianyang County, Baise City, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region. Utilizing an ethnographic approach, the research investigates the evolution of performance techniques, the cultural significance of the songs, and the impact of modernization on their preservation and transmission. The study includes participant observation and semi-structured interviews with five key artists involved in the practice and transmission of these folk songs. The findings reveal that the Tianyang Guimei folk songs are rich in vocal techniques, call-and-response structures, and communal participation, which reinforce social cohesion within the community. The songs express core values such as respect for elders, communal bonds, reverence for nature, and moral education. However, the study also identifies challenges to the continuation of these traditions, particularly due to migration, technological changes, and the shifting social structure. Despite these challenges, efforts by the community and local artists to preserve and promote these folk songs through digital platforms and intergenerational teaching offer hope for their future survival. This research highlights the cultural importance of these folk songs and provides recommendations for their protection and revitalization.

**Keywords :** Tianyang Guimei folk songs, Zhuang people, performance practices, traditional values, ethnographic study, community cohesion, cultural preservation

## I. Introduction

### 1.1 Background and Rationale

Tianyang, located in Baise City in the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, is a region rich in cultural heritage and traditional folk music, particularly its Guimei folk songs. With a deep historical and cultural foundation, the region's folk music is known for its diverse forms, captivating melodies, and unique structures. Among the main types of folk songs performed in the area, the Tianzhou, Guimei, and Babel melodies stand out. These songs, typically structured in seven-character and five-character lines, use rhyme and repetition, making them both engaging and easy to memorize[1]. In addition, the practice of call-and-response singing (duet-style) is a defining feature, further enriching the community's cultural expression. The intricate patterns and melodious tones of these songs have contributed to their enduring popularity across the region. As a result, a number of prominent "singing markets" (歌圩) have emerged, where these songs are performed during cultural events, such as the Pohong Guimei Singing Market on the 9th day of the first lunar month, the Dengjing Town Singing Market on the 10th of March, and the Babel Township Singing Market on the 8th of April. Among these, the Gan Zhuang Singing Market is the largest and oldest, having been established during the Sui and Tang Dynasties, over a thousand years ago.[2]

Tianyang Guimei folk songs are considered a significant part of the region's intangible cultural heritage, with their inclusion in the Guangxi Intangible Cultural Heritage List in 2011. Notable inheritors of the tradition include Pan Zheng'an (regional-level inheritor), Liang Ailing (city-level inheritor), and Ma Qiuming (city-level inheritor). These individuals play a key role in preserving and promoting the tradition of Guimei folk songs. However, despite the recognition and efforts of cultural preservation, the transmission of these songs faces significant challenges in the contemporary context.

One major issue is the aging population of folk song performers. [3] With many younger individuals leaving their rural homes in search of work in urban centers, the opportunities to learn and practice these songs have become increasingly scarce. Consequently, individuals between the ages of 20 to 50 are often unable to sing these songs, leading to a gap in the transmission of the tradition. This generational divide has resulted in the preservation of the songs largely being left to older generations, which are now facing the pressures of an aging population. In addition, the advent of modern entertainment and cultural practices, particularly those influenced by technology and global culture, has significantly diminished the interest of younger generations in traditional folk songs. As a result, Tianyang Guimei folk songs are on the brink of extinction, with a potential loss of their original performance and lyrical values.

Further complications arise from inadequate financial support and a lack of organizational infrastructure for preserving these traditions. Cultural activities such as the annual singing markets rely on voluntary donations, and without a formal organization to manage the events, participation and enthusiasm have steadily declined. The challenges are compounded by the diminished role of folk songs in the education system. Historically, these songs served an important function in moral education, teaching young people about life values, social behavior, and community cohesion. However, the focus



on standardized national curricula in schools has led to a loss of local cultural identity and a reduction in the role of folk songs in the moral education of children. This shift from family-based to school-based education has contributed to the gradual fading of Tianyang Guimei folk songs as a medium for teaching traditional values.[4]

In light of these issues, there is an urgent need to develop effective strategies to safeguard and revitalize the practice of Tianyang Guimei folk songs. Recommendations for addressing these challenges include the establishment of cultural preservation institutions, which could systematize the research and development of these folk songs, organize community events, and provide training for a new generation of singers and songwriters. Financial support, including specialized funds for folk song creators and performers, would also be vital in sustaining these traditions. Moreover, efforts to integrate folk songs into educational curricula, particularly through multimedia and digital technologies, could play a key role in enhancing their relevance to younger generations.

#### 1.2 Research Problem, Objectives, and Questions

The central problem this study addresses is the tension between traditional performance practices and the pressures of modernization, which threaten the preservation of Tianyang Guimei folk songs. As the younger generations in rural areas of Guangxi become more influenced by modern forms of entertainment and communication, the traditional practices surrounding these folk songs are gradually being lost. Moreover, the values represented in these songs are often overlooked or misunderstood in the face of rapid societal changes.

- To investigate and address this issue, the study has the following objectives:
- To explore the performance practices of Tianyang Guimei folk songs, including the techniques, instrumentation, and social settings in which they are performed.
- To examine the traditional values embedded in the lyrics and performances of these songs, such as communal identity, love, nature, and social cohesion.
- To assess the impact of modernization on the preservation of these folk songs, including how traditional practices and values are adapted or transformed in contemporary settings.

The research will be guided by the following questions:

- What are the key performance practices associated with Tianyang Guimei folk songs, and how have these practices evolved over time?
- What traditional values are reflected in the lyrics and performances of Tianyang Guimei folk songs, and how do these values contribute to the community's cultural identity?
- How has modernization affected the preservation and transmission of Tianyang Guimei folk songs, and what measures can be taken to safeguard these cultural practices for future generations?

#### 1.4 Significance of the Study

This study contributes to the growing body of research on the folk music of ethnic minorities in China, particularly the Zhuang people, by focusing on Tianyang Guimei folk songs, a topic that has received limited attention in academic literature. This research fills a gap by examining the intricate relationship between performance practices and traditional values in the context of Zhuang folk music, offering a deeper understanding of their cultural richness and artistic expressions. Furthermore, the findings have practical implications for cultural preservation initiatives, as they document the current state of Tianyang Guimei folk songs and highlight the challenges posed by modernization and migration. These insights can inform efforts to safeguard these traditions, offering valuable recommendations to policymakers, cultural practitioners, and local communities working to protect their intangible cultural heritage. Finally, the study contributes to broader discussions in ethnomusicology and cultural studies, particularly regarding the tensions between tradition and modernity in the face of globalization.

## II. Literature Review

### 2.1 Overview of Traditional Folk Music in China

Traditional folk music in China is a vital part of the country's cultural heritage, with each ethnic group contributing its distinct styles, instruments, and performance practices. These folk music traditions are primarily transmitted orally and serve as a reflection of the daily lives, customs, and spiritual beliefs of local communities. Folk music has played a central role in shaping the social fabric of many Chinese ethnic groups, such as the Zhuang, Miao, and Han peoples, among others. In the case of the Zhuang people, the most significant form of folk music is the "Zhuang Mountain Songs," which are sung in both solo and call-and-response formats and are deeply tied to their agricultural and spiritual practices [5].

Folk songs in the Zhuang communities are not only artistic expressions but also essential tools for passing down cultural narratives, values, and historical knowledge. The regional variety of folk music across China demonstrates both the shared cultural heritage and the diversity that exists within the country's numerous ethnic groups. As part of this larger folk tradition, Tianyang Guimei folk songs are integral to the identity of the Zhuang people in Guangxi.

### 2.2 The Role of Folk Songs in Ethnic Communities

Folk songs serve as a cultural backbone for many ethnic communities in China. They are more than just entertainment; they act as vehicles for transmitting moral lessons, social norms, and historical consciousness. In particular, for the Zhuang people, their folk songs are intricately woven into the fabric of everyday life, used during celebrations, rites of passage, and work-related activities [6]. Zhuang folk songs also serve as a form of resistance and resilience, helping preserve ethnic identity against external pressures, such as political upheaval or the influence of mainstream culture.

The communal aspect of folk song performances is vital in these communities. Songs are often sung in group settings, where harmony and participation strengthen social bonds. In the case of the Tianyang region, this communal singing has historically taken place during the singing markets, festivals, and other social gatherings [7]. These folk songs not only

express individual emotions but also reinforce collective identity, unity, and solidarity. As such, they play a significant role in maintaining social cohesion among the Zhuang people.

### 2.3 Tianyang Guimei Folk Songs: History and Development

The development of Tianyang Guimei folk songs is closely tied to the historical and geographical context of the region. Situated in the mountainous areas of Guangxi, Tianyang has developed its unique musical traditions, blending influences from neighboring ethnic groups and local musical practices. Guimei songs are characterized by their use of distinct musical scales, melodic lines, and rhythmic patterns. These songs can be categorized into different types, such as Tianzhou, Guimei, and Babel melodies, each with its own lyrical and structural characteristics.

Tianyang Guimei songs have evolved over centuries, reflecting the changing dynamics of the region's society, economy, and culture. According to Li, Guimei songs were initially used for religious rituals, agricultural work, and community storytelling, but over time, they became more stylized for public performance during the singing markets [8]. These songs have been passed down primarily through oral traditions, with few written records, which makes their preservation an urgent concern for cultural heritage scholars.

### 2.4 Performance Practices in Traditional Folk Songs

Performance practices in traditional folk songs are vital in preserving the authenticity and vibrancy of these musical traditions. In the case of Tianyang Guimei folk songs, the performance practices emphasize vocal techniques, harmonic structures, and interaction between the singer and the audience. Singers typically perform in a call-and-response format, where one performer leads the song, and the community responds. This communal approach fosters a sense of unity and participation, ensuring the social function of these songs within the community [9]. In addition to vocal techniques, instrumentation plays a role in the performance of Tianyang Guimei folk songs. Traditional instruments such as the suona (a double-reed horn), the zheng (a stringed instrument), and the dizi (bamboo flute) often accompany the vocal performance. These instruments add a layer of complexity to the music, enhancing its emotional and cultural depth.

### 2.5 Traditional Values in Tianyang Guimei Folk Songs

The traditional values embedded in Tianyang Guimei folk songs are deeply tied to the cultural worldview of the Zhuang people. Themes of nature, love, and community are commonly expressed in the lyrics, offering listeners insights into the Zhuang people's relationship with the environment, social norms, and human relationships. For example, many songs depict the beauty of the natural world, such as rivers, mountains, and fields, emphasizing the Zhuang people's connection to their land. Similarly, love songs often reflect the idealized relationships between men and women, with lyrics that are both poetic and symbolic [10]. Tianyang Guimei folk songs have historically served as a medium for moral education. The songs often teach lessons about ethics, such as respect for elders, harmony in relationships, and the importance of hard work. These songs play a crucial role in transmitting cultural values to the younger generation, fostering a sense of belonging and cultural pride [5].

## III: Research Methodology

### 3.1 Research Design

This study adopts an ethnographic approach to explore the performance practices and traditional values embedded in Tianyang Guimei folk songs. The ethnographic approach is particularly well-suited to this study because it enables an in-depth understanding of the cultural context, music, and community dynamics associated with Guimei folk songs. Ethnography allows the researcher to explore the lived experiences of participants, their interactions within their community, and the broader cultural and social meanings of their performances.

### 3.2 Participants and Sampling

The participants will consist of 10 artists who are actively involved in the performance, transmission, and preservation of Tianyang Guimei folk songs. These artists will be selected using purposive sampling, as they are the key figures responsible for maintaining and performing these folk songs in the community. The criteria for participant selection include experience in performing Tianyang Guimei folk songs, both solo and in communal performances, knowledge of traditional performance practices such as vocal techniques, song structures, and associated rituals, and their role in transmitting the tradition through teaching younger generations or leading public performances.

### 3.3 Data Collection Methods

#### 3.3.1 Participant Observation

The researcher will observe Tianyang Guimei folk song performances, singing markets (歌圩), and other cultural events where the folk songs are actively performed and passed down.

As an ethnographer, the researcher will observe the social dynamics of these performances, including how the singers interact with each other and the audience, and how the songs are structured and performed. The researcher will also participate in some of the communal activities when appropriate, such as singing along with the performers during informal gatherings or participating in song teaching sessions. This will allow the researcher to gain first-hand experience of the performance practices and understand the cultural significance of these songs in a more intimate and holistic way.

#### 3.3.2 Semi-structured Interviews

In addition to participant observation, semi-structured interviews will be conducted with the 5 artists. These interviews will be designed to elicit detailed personal narratives about the participants' experiences with Tianyang Guimei folk songs, their roles in the community, and their views on the preservation and transmission of the tradition.

The semi-structured format allows flexibility in questioning, while ensuring that key themes are explored. The interviews will focus on the following topics:

- Personal histories and experiences with Tianyang Guimei folk songs.

- The cultural and social significance of these songs to the Zhuang people of Tianyang.
- The challenges involved in passing the tradition to younger generations.
- The impact of modern influences, such as migration and technological change, on the performance and transmission of these songs.

The values expressed through the lyrics and performance of the songs.

#### 3.4 Data Analysis

The collected data—field notes, interview transcripts, and song analyses—will be analyzed through thematic analysis. Thematic analysis will allow the researcher to identify and interpret patterns in the data related to the research questions.

The analysis will focus on key themes:

- The performance practices of Tianyang Guimei folk songs, including their structure, vocal techniques, and the role of instruments.
- The traditional values embedded in the lyrics and performances, such as respect for elders, communal bonds, and reverence for nature.
- The challenges faced by the community in preserving and transmitting these folk songs, particularly in light of modernization and migration.

The role of community events, such as singing markets, in the transmission of the folk songs and the continuity of cultural practices.

### IV. Contextualizing Tianyang Guimei Folk Songs

#### 4.1 Geographic and Cultural Background of Tianyang, Baise City

Tianyang County is located in the Baise City, in the western part of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, southern China. It lies within the Right River (右江) valley, characterized by its unique karst topography—a landscape marked by jagged limestone mountains, deep valleys, and winding rivers. Tianyang's topography, combined with its subtropical monsoon climate, has shaped the life of its residents, particularly the Zhuang ethnic group, who have lived in harmony with this rugged terrain for centuries.

The county's geographical positioning—approximately 200 kilometers from Nanning, the provincial capital—has historically made Tianyang both an isolated and yet strategically important region, serving as a link between the interior of Guangxi and the bordering provinces of Yunnan and Guizhou, as well as the Vietnamese border. Tianyang's landscape of mountains, rivers, and forests is reflected in the richness of its cultural practices and the enduring significance of traditional forms of music, such as the Guimei folk songs. Culturally, Tianyang is rich in ethnolinguistic diversity, with the Zhuang people forming the largest ethnic group in the area. The Zhuang people are known for their deep-rooted agricultural traditions and a way of life that revolves around the cultivation of rice, corn, and other staple crops. The seasonal rhythms of agricultural life, such as planting and harvest times, are intimately tied to the community's musical practices, including the singing of folk songs like the Guimei songs. The local festivals, rituals, and folk performances are often centered around agricultural cycles, community gatherings, and social celebrations.

#### 4.2 Ethnic Composition and Cultural Identity of the Zhuang People

The Zhuang people, who are part of the Tai-Kadai language family, constitute one of the largest ethnic minorities in China, and they make up the majority of the population in Tianyang County. The Zhuang share a long and complex history with the broader southern Chinese communities, with their cultural practices often blending indigenous customs with influences from neighboring regions, including Vietnam and Southeast Asia. Culturally, the Zhuang people have maintained a distinct identity, characterized by their language, customs, and religious practices. The Zhuang language, a tonal language with several regional dialects, serves as a core element of cultural expression, alongside Chinese (Mandarin) in formal and modern contexts. Despite the increasing influence of Mandarin as the national language, the Zhuang continue to preserve their linguistic heritage, which plays a key role in maintaining their sense of identity.

Traditional festivals, such as the Zhuang New Year (which usually occurs around the lunar new year), and song festivals, are celebrated with great enthusiasm and are accompanied by performances of folk songs, which serve as a form of oral history and cultural transmission. The Zhuang people's connection to their land, ancestors, and spiritual beliefs are often expressed in the lyrics and themes of their folk songs, including Guimei songs.

#### 4.3 Social and Historical Context of Guimei Folk Songs

Guimei folk songs, a unique subset of Tianyang folk music, hold significant historical and social meaning. These songs are believed to have originated in the Tang Dynasty (618-907 AD) and developed over centuries, with their traditional forms continuing to evolve. The Guimei songs are often passed down through oral tradition and are intergenerational in nature. They are sung in a variety of settings, including song markets (歌圩), festivals, and family gatherings. Historically, the Guimei folk songs served as a symbol of social identity and community cohesion. During the Tang Dynasty, the Zhuang people began to use these songs to express not only personal emotions and experiences but also to address larger social and political issues, including family dynamics, social hierarchies, and local politics. For instance, songs about the harvest would often reflect the hopes, struggles, and rewards of agricultural life. The Guimei songs also have roots in shamanistic rituals and ancestral worship, serving as a medium through which the Zhuang people could communicate with spiritual entities. Through the Song Markets, which functioned as regular communal events, Guimei songs became deeply embedded in the social fabric of Tianyang. These singing festivals allowed individuals to come together, compete in song performances, and demonstrate their musical prowess. In this way, Guimei songs were also used to maintain social order by encouraging cooperation, resolving conflicts, and reinforcing community bonds.

However, the historical context of Guimei songs also reveals tensions and challenges. With the spread of modernization, migration, and technological change, traditional forms of music have faced significant decline. The advent of pop music, television, and digital media has reduced the space for folk traditions, leading to concerns about the erosion of this rich cultural heritage.

## V. Results and Findings

### 5.1 Key Performance Practices in Tianyang Guimei Folk Songs

Based on observations and interviews, the following performance elements were identified:

**Vocal Techniques and Song Structures:** At the core of Tianyang Guimei folk songs lies a repetitive, melodic structure that creates a fluid, almost hypnotic rhythm, making it easy for both performers and listeners to engage. The lyrics are often structured in seven-character (七言) or five-character (五言) forms, with the music flowing seamlessly from one line to the next. The rhythm and melody of the songs are designed to be parallel, reinforcing the sense of unity between voice and melody. Many of these songs feature call-and-response patterns, where one singer leads and others follow, creating a dynamic interaction. This format not only encourages active participation but also reinforces the communal bonds of the group, emphasizing the importance of cohesion within the performance.

The vocal delivery itself is distinctive, characterized by bright, resonant tones, with vibrato being a notable feature. Experienced performers place great emphasis on vocal control, which is essential in conveying the emotional depth of the lyrics. The ability to navigate the nuances of tone and pitch is regarded as a mark of skill. Moreover, oral improvisation is a common practice, allowing singers to insert personal expression into the performance while still adhering to the traditional structures of the songs.

**Role of Instruments:** While many Tianyang Guimei folk songs are performed a cappella, the use of traditional instruments such as the guitar, erhu (二胡), and flute can be observed in some performances. These instruments serve not as the primary focus but as subtle accompaniments that enhance the emotional depth of the songs. The integration of instruments allows the lyrics to resonate more powerfully with the listener, amplifying the expressive power of the song. However, this practice is not universal and is typically reserved for more formal performances or during special cultural festivals.

**Singing Markets and Festivals:** Singing markets (歌圩), where people gather to sing, dance, and exchange stories, are essential venues for the performance and transmission of Tianyang Guimei folk songs. These markets, often held throughout the year, serve as both social events and cultural expressions, providing an environment where people not only perform but also connect across generations. These events are deeply communal, and the intergenerational exchange is particularly important. Young performers look to elder singers, who act as mentors and guides, helping to perpetuate the tradition. At these festivals, singers may compete in impromptu performances, where the fluidity of the folk song structure is tested and celebrated. Through these events, the songs continue to function as vital connectors, linking the community together through shared cultural expressions.

### 5.2 Traditional Values Reflected in the Lyrics and Performances

Through the analysis of song lyrics and in-depth interviews, the study identified several core values expressed in the songs:

**Respect for Elders and Ancestors:** A central theme in the Tianyang Guimei folk songs is the reverence for elders and ancestors. The lyrics often depict elders as the wisdom keepers, whose life experiences and knowledge are pivotal in guiding the younger generation. In one song, for example, the guidance of an elder is compared to a shining light, which helps to illuminate the path of the younger members of the community. This respect is mirrored in the performance context, where younger singers defer to older performers, acknowledging their role as cultural custodians. The hierarchical relationship between generations is not only evident in the lyrics but also in the performance dynamics, where the elderly often take the lead in singing.

**Communal Bonds and Cooperation:** The call-and-response structure of the songs reinforces the importance of communal participation. It emphasizes that each individual, while distinct, is part of a larger whole. Many songs contain verses that focus on helping each other and cooperating during difficult times, particularly during harvest seasons. The act of singing together is seen as a form of mutual support, and the songs foster a sense of unity and solidarity. This emphasis on cooperation is central to Zhuang cultural identity, as it highlights the value of working together for the collective good, a principle that resonates throughout the agricultural community.

**Reverence for Nature and Agricultural Cycles:** Many Tianyang Guimei folk songs are a reflection of the Zhuang people's deep connection to the land. Nature, including mountains, rivers, and forests, is frequently invoked in the lyrics, not as a passive backdrop but as an integral part of the community's existence. The cycles of nature, especially those related to agriculture—such as rice planting, harvesting, and seasonal changes—are common themes. The songs express gratitude for the land's abundance and emphasize the importance of living in harmony with nature. The agricultural cycles are seen not just as practical realities but as sacred rhythms that shape the spiritual and social life of the community.

**Moral Education and Life Lessons:** The Guimei folk songs serve as important vessels for the transmission of moral teachings. The lyrics are often laced with life advice, instructing young people on values such as integrity, hard work, and honesty. Many of the songs tell stories that are didactic in nature, offering guidance on how to navigate the complexities of social relationships, resolve conflicts, and maintain community harmony. The songs are more than just musical performances; they are cultural textbooks, encoding moral teachings and the wisdom of generations past.

### 5.3 Impact of Modernization on Preservation and Transmission

The study highlighted that urban migration, the rise of digital technologies, and the evolving role of traditional performance spaces have all affected how these songs are passed down. Migration, in particular, has led to a disconnect between the younger generation and traditional practices, with many young people leaving Tianyang for urban employment opportunities. Elder performers noted that this migration has hindered intergenerational transmission, as fewer young people participate in traditional performances or are familiar with the songs, putting the cultural heritage at risk. Additionally, the advent of digital media and modern entertainment options, such as TikTok and YouTube, has shifted cultural consumption towards more visually engaging and instant forms of entertainment. While some participants acknowledged the potential of the internet to broaden the audience for these songs, there were concerns that the simplicity and live interaction of traditional performances were being overshadowed by more commercialized media. Despite these challenges, efforts to preserve Tianyang Guimei folk songs remain strong. Several participants emphasized their commitment to teaching younger generations through informal gatherings and workshops. Local government organizations and cultural institutions have started revitalizing traditional events like the singing markets, and some artists are using digital recording technologies to capture performances and share them on social media, helping to preserve the songs while making them relevant for contemporary audiences.

## **VI. Discussion, Conclusion, and Recommendations**

### **6.1 Discussion**

One of the key findings of this study is the rich vocal and structural characteristics that define Tianyang Guimei folk songs. The call-and-response patterns in these songs are not only a feature of the performance but also an expression of the community's social cohesion. This structure allows for active participation, where performers and listeners alike are engaged in a communal experience. The emphasis on oral improvisation is another significant feature that underscores the dynamic and evolving nature of these traditions. This flexibility in performance helps ensure that the songs remain relevant to contemporary audiences while maintaining their cultural integrity. The traditional values embedded in the songs are equally significant. The themes of respect for elders, cooperation, reverence for nature, and moral education reflect a worldview that emphasizes community solidarity, respect for the environment, and ethical behavior. These values are not only taught through the lyrics but also through the performance context itself. The role of intergenerational transmission through events such as the singing markets is key in passing these values on to younger generations. However, the study also identifies a growing disconnect between younger people and these traditions, driven by both migration and the influence of digital technologies. The decline in participation from younger generations poses a significant challenge to the continued practice of Tianyang Guimei folk songs.

In response to these challenges, the preservation efforts highlighted in the findings provide a glimmer of hope. Many participants expressed a commitment to teaching younger generations through workshops, informal gatherings, and the recording and sharing of songs via digital platforms. These efforts reflect the community's resilience and determination to ensure that the tradition endures, albeit in an evolving form.

Despite the challenges posed by modernization, the Tianyang Guimei folk songs are far from being obsolete. The adaptive strategies employed by local artists and cultural custodians, such as digitally recording performances and revitalizing cultural events, suggest that these traditions can coexist with modern forms of media and entertainment, creating new avenues for engagement with younger audiences while preserving their cultural essence.

### **6.2 Conclusion**

This study underscores the cultural significance of Tianyang Guimei folk songs as more than just music—they are integral to the identity, values, and social cohesion of the Zhuang community in Tianyang. The songs are an embodiment of respect for elders, cooperation, and a deep connection to nature, all of which are critical to the community's identity. The study also highlights the impact of modernization, particularly the migration of youth and the rise of digital media, on the transmission of these folk songs.

The preservation and transmission of Tianyang Guimei folk songs face considerable challenges, but the active efforts by community members, cultural organizations, and local governments to safeguard these traditions are commendable. The adaptability of these traditions, through digital technologies and community-driven initiatives, provides a pathway to ensure that these songs remain an important part of the community's cultural landscape.

### **6.3 Recommendations**

To support the preservation and promotion of Tianyang Guimei folk songs, it is crucial to prioritize intergenerational transmission. Community efforts should focus on mentoring young people, especially through active participation in cultural events like the singing markets. Rejuvenating these events with the involvement of younger performers will help them acquire the traditional knowledge and skills necessary to pass on to future generations. This approach will ensure that the rich traditions of Guimei folk songs are preserved within the community and continue to thrive.

In addition, leveraging digital technologies can play a significant role in safeguarding Tianyang Guimei folk songs. Digital platforms can be used not only for recording and sharing performances but also for creating interactive learning tools such as online tutorials, live-streamed events, and recorded workshops. These digital resources will help bridge the gap between traditional performance practices and the modern consumption habits of younger generations. By documenting these songs in digital formats, their accessibility and survival for future generations can be ensured.

Finally, integrating Tianyang Guimei folk songs into formal education programs is essential for fostering a deeper appreciation of these songs as both cultural heritage and artistic expression. Schools and cultural institutions should incorporate the songs into the curriculum to teach students not just the music but the values and history embedded in the lyrics. Additionally, collaboration between the local government and cultural organizations can help organize festivals and

performances, providing platforms for cross-generational exchange. Preserving traditional performance spaces like the singing markets, promoting them as cultural and tourism hubs, and ensuring their continued relevance will further solidify the place of Tianyang Guimei folk songs in the community's social and cultural life.

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