

# The Zhuang Nursery Rhymes in Guangxi: Local Wisdom, Cultural Protection and Inheritance

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## Abstract

As an important part of traditional Zhuang culture, Zhuang nursery rhymes play an important social and cultural function in the process of the historical development of Zhuang society, showing a distinctive national style and local wisdom, especially in the Guangxi region. This research aimed to study: (1) The local wisdom contained of Zhuang nursery rhymes in Guangxi. (2) The problems and guidelines on the protection and inheritance of Zhuang nursery rhymes in Guangxi. This research mainly adopts qualitative research methods. The research tools used mainly include basic surveys, observations and interviews. 5 key informants, 8 casual informants and 18 general informants were selected. The data was collected through written documents and field work, then organized and analyzed, and presented using descriptive analysis method. The results of the research are as follows: (1) Zhuang nursery rhymes in Guangxi are an important carrier for inheriting Zhuang culture and wisdom, and contain local wisdom in cultivating moral values, regulating interpersonal relationships, inheriting culture and traditional customs, and using nature for practice and creation. (2) At present, the protection and inheritance of Zhuang nursery rhymes in Guangxi is facing the problems of aging singers, weak inheritance consciousness, lack of language carriers, and single dissemination methods and contents. By analyzing the factors that caused the problem, the following guidelines are proposed: enhance the awareness of cultural identity and inheritance, improve the status of the Zhuang language as the mother tongue, innovate the dissemination methods and contents of Zhuang nursery rhymes, and give play to the guiding and supporting role of the government. The results of this research have certain reference value for government departments to formulate cultural inheritance policies, for researchers to conduct further in-depth studies of Zhuang nursery rhymes, for analyses of nursery rhymes of other ethnic groups, and for the creative development of cultural industries.

**Keywords:** Zhuang nursery rhymes in Guangxi; Local wisdom; Cultural identity; Cultural protection and inheritance

## Introduction

Nursery rhyme is a form of children's literature. It has become an important part of children's enlightenment with its short form, simple language and easy-to-understand meaning. This kind of literary form includes not only the children's self-composed and self-sung works, but also the works imitated by adults. (Chen, 2020). Nursery rhymes have been created in the initial stage of human civilisation. All countries and ethnic groups in the world, even those without written texts, have a large number of nursery rhymes, which are sung by word of mouth and have become an indispensable element in the culture of ethnic groups all over the world.

As the most populous ethnic minority in China, the Zhuang people have a rich history and cultural heritage. In the course of its long historical development, the Zhuang people have created a series of Zhuang nursery rhymes with unique ethnic characteristics by combining their own life practices and production activities (Qin, 2018). As a branch of nursery rhymes, Zhuang nursery rhymes, with Zhuang as the language carrier, have been passed down from generation to generation in the Zhuang-inhabited areas of Guangxi, Guangdong, and Yunnan in China, Especially in Guangxi, as the most densely populated area of the Zhuang, Zhuang nursery rhymes have been sung most widely and have the longest history.

Zhuang nursery rhymes are closely related to the social and cultural environment of the Zhuang. They come in a variety of categories, including lullabies, game songs, counting songs, question-and-answer songs, tongue twisters and riddle songs. They usually have simple and clear language, beautiful melodies and vivid images (Wei, 1988). People are good at using the rhetorical techniques of simile, personification, hyperbole and prose in the process of creating nursery rhymes. These rhetorics are often combined with things in the Zhuang countryside, making them more strong Zhuang flavour while being artistic and interesting (Yang, 2017). With children as the main audience, Zhuang nursery rhymes convey knowledge and reasoning in an entertaining way.

Zhuang nursery rhymes are an important part of the traditional culture of the Zhuang people and contain the rich local wisdom and culture of the Zhuang people. It is deeply rooted in the cultural soil of the Zhuang people, truly and vividly reflecting the cultural patterns and cultural traditions of the region where the Zhuang people are located, preserving and conveying the living patterns, folk customs, religious beliefs, moral etiquette, values and other aspects of the Zhuang people (Qin, 2019). Through chanting nursery rhymes, children can gradually understand and identify with the cultural traditions and values of their own ethnic group, thus forming a unique sense of national identity.

However, under the impact of the modernisation process and the multicultural environment, Zhuang nursery rhymes are facing serious transmission challenges. The influx of foreign cultures, changes in living habits and shifts in values, as well as the immaturity of the Zhuang writing system, have put this traditional cultural form at risk of gradual marginalisation or even extinction (Pan, 2021; Luo, 2019). After checking the literature review, it is found that there are fewer studies on Zhuang nursery rhymes, and the scope of the research mainly focuses on the study of linguistic features and content, moral education function, and the analysis and comparison of specific single nursery rhyme texts (Tan, 2018; Yang, 2016; Qin, 2020; Pan, 2022; Li, 2017). The collection and organisation of Zhuang nursery rhymes is also unsatisfactory, with many still existing in various parts of the folklore in a fragmented manner.

This research is committed to further protecting and inheriting Zhuang nursery rhymes. Through field surveys, some Zhuang nursery rhymes scattered in Guangxi were collected, arranged and analyzed. On this basis, this research starts from the perspective of cultural studies, digs deep into the local wisdom contained in the Zhuang nursery rhymes in Guangxi, and discusses the main problems faced in the process of protection and inheritance as well as the corresponding solution guidelines. It is expected that this research will inject new academic content into the field of Zhuang nursery rhymes, and at the same time contribute to the enhancement of the cultural identity of the Zhuang people, the promotion of the effective protection of the traditional Zhuang culture, and the comprehensive revitalisation of the Zhuang culture.

## **Research Objectives**

1. To study the local wisdom contained of Zhuang nursery rhymes in Guangxi.
2. To study the problems and guidelines on the protection and inheritance of Zhuang nursery rhymes in Guangxi.

## **Research Methodology**

### **1. Research methodology**

In this research, a qualitative research method was used, and Fulie Village in Mashan County, Nanning City, Guangxi Province, China, was chosen as the location for the fieldwork. The village is a hereditary Zhuang village that retains a relatively complete and representative Zhuang cultural identity. This will help to explore in depth the local wisdom contained of Zhuang nursery rhymes in Guangxi and analyse the existing problems, and then propose guidelines for their protection and inheritance.

### **2. Source of data**

There are two main sources of data for this research: first, primary data collected through fieldwork, including records of basic surveys, observations and interviews, which provide rich field materials for this research. The second is secondary data obtained from written documents, such as relevant historical documents, research reports and government announcements, which provide the necessary background and supporting information for this research.

### **3. Population and sampling**

The target population of this research is members of the Guangxi Zhuang community. Sample selection was done using purposive sampling, and three types of participants were selected: firstly, 5 key informants, who are officials from the local government's cultural department and researchers of Zhuang language and culture. Secondly, 8 casual informants, who are local people who can sing and teach Zhuang nursery rhymes. Finally, 18 general informants, who are local villagers representing different age groups.

### **4. Data collecting**

Data collection was mainly carried out through basic surveys, observations and interviews. The basic surveys include literature survey and preliminary fieldwork, which were used to obtain relevant information such as background information of the Zhuang community and the study of Zhuang nursery rhymes. The observations were used to understand the daily life, habits and culture of local Zhuang people, and to record the practice of Zhuang nursery rhymes in the daily life of Zhuang people. Interviews were conducted with different types of

informants to gain insights into their perceptions, experiences and attitudes towards the local wisdom, protection and inheritance of Zhuang nursery rhymes.

### 5. Analysis of data

In the process of data analysis, the conceptual framework will be used as a guide. The data obtained will first be initially categorised and organised according to the research objectives. Through the transcription and coding of the interviews, combined with the observation and survey data, the local wisdom and culture in Zhuang nursery rhymes, as well as the challenges and strategies faced in the process of protecting and inheriting them, will be identified and explained. In addition, data collected from different sources will be validated and analysed using The triangulation technique to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the research. Finally the results of the research are presented in the form of descriptive analyses.

## Research Conceptual Framework

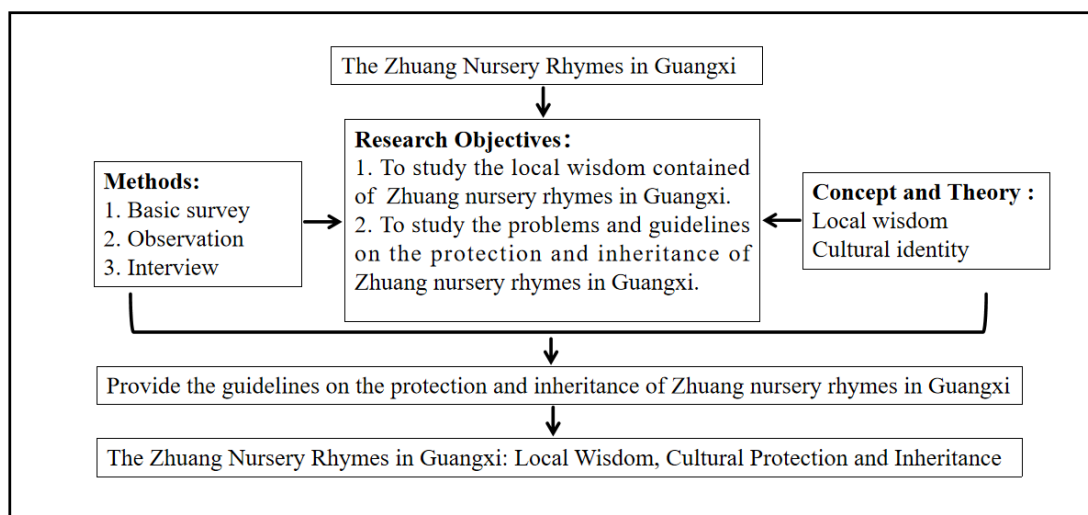


Figure 1: Research Conceptual Framework

## Results

### 1. The local wisdom contained of Zhuang nursery rhymes in Guangxi

In this part, the author mainly obtained data through both literature and fieldwork. The author conducted a fieldwork on the village of Fulei in Guangxi, China, and collected, classified and organised some of the local Zhuang nursery rhymes through visits. In the process, key aspects of the local social structure, production and living practices, customs and habits, and cultural traditions were also observed and understood in depth. At the same time, the author conducted an in-depth analysis of the collected Zhuang nursery rhymes in the context of the socio-economic background, natural environmental features and deep cultural heritage of the Zhuang region in Guangxi. The results of this research show that these nursery rhymes demonstrate the rich and unique local wisdom of the Zhuang people in multiple dimensions, which can be summarised in the following four aspects, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Overview of local wisdom contained of Zhuang nursery rhymes in Guangxi

<p><b>Wisdom category:</b> Cultivating moral values.  <b>Content:</b> Hard work, optimism, integrity, honesty, etc.  <b>Sample nursery rhymes and providers:</b> <i>Transplant Rice Seedlings</i> (Zhenliang Luo), <i>The Little Sparrow Stealing Food</i> (Zhenke Luo).</p>
<p><b>Wisdom category:</b> Regulating interpersonal relationships.  <b>Content:</b> Family relationships, social relationships.  <b>Sample nursery rhymes and providers:</b> <i>Clapping Hands</i>, <i>Dividing Pears</i> (Zhenliang Luo), <i>Sharing the Grapefruit</i> (Zhenda Luo), <i>Little Brother Little Sister</i> (Zhenda Luo), <i>Asking Auntie for Eggs</i> (Zhenda Luo), <i>The Round Moon</i> (Zhenliang Luo).</p>
<p><b>Wisdom category:</b> Inheriting culture and traditional customs.  <b>Content:</b> Cultural heritage education, food culture, festival customs.  <b>Sample nursery rhymes and providers:</b> <i>Song of Persuasion</i> (Zhenliang Luo), <i>Sifting Rice Bran</i> (Meiqin Huang), <i>The Swing Is Vibrating</i> (Meiqin Huang), <i>The Song of Cattle</i> (Zhenliang Luo), <i>Debris Flies into the Eyes</i> (Meiyu Huang).</p>
<p><b>Wisdom category:</b> Using nature for practice and creativity.  <b>Content:</b> Knowledge of agricultural production, traditional skills, herbal therapy.  <b>Sample nursery rhymes and providers:</b> <i>The Cuckoo Heralds Spring</i> (Zhenke Luo), <i>White Spotted Cloth</i> (Haiyan Huang), <i>Playing with Ants</i> (Haiying Li).</p>

What follows is a specific analysis of the content of these four types of local wisdom that are embedded.

### 1.1 Wisdom of cultivating moral values

The moral values of the Zhuang are deeply rooted in the cultural, social and personal belief systems of the Zhuang, and play a central role in shaping the character and moral behaviour of Zhuang people. Zhuang nursery rhymes contain deep local wisdom in fostering moral values. With vivid images and close-to-life scenes, these nursery rhymes convey core values such as hard work, integrity and honesty to children in order to promote the development of their personal qualities.

The Zhuang are a rice-farming people who rely on agricultural labour to achieve self-sufficiency. In the traditional conception of the Zhuang people, hard work is the key to a long and secure life. Therefore, the Zhuang people regard the virtue of hard work as an indispensable part of moral education, such as the following Zhuang nursery rhyme, “*Transplant Rice Seedlings*” was collected from the fields and goes like this: “Sister Rice Seedling, you're so lucky, you're traveling in a sedan chair. My feet are as hot as fire, The water in the field soaks through my robes. Sister Rice Seedling, grow up quickly. Sister Rice Seedling, you'll soon become strong. I look forward to your golden rice.” This nursery rhyme depicts the image of a farmer's hard work in transplanting rice seedlings, reflecting the Zhuang people's reverence for agricultural production. In the form of a nursery rhyme, the Zhuang forefathers showed children the deep emotion of the Zhuang people with the land and nature, and also conveyed the spiritual power of hard work, resilience and optimism. “*The Little Sparrow Stealing Food*” : “Little sparrow, with a sharp beak, flying to steal rice from people. Beware of being caught one day, I'll shave your head bald.” This nursery rhyme, on the other hand, uses the image of an animal to warn children that getting something for nothing and stealing are shameful behaviours, and educates them to be responsible and disciplined people.

## 1.2 Wisdom in regulating interpersonal relationships

In their long-term production and living practices, the ancestors of the Zhuang people have accumulated a wealth of wisdom in dealing with interpersonal relationships. This wisdom is reflected in the depiction of family and social relationships in Zhuang rhymes, which are passed down and expressed through the unique cultural form of Zhuang rhymes, in order to promote the harmony of interpersonal relationships.

In terms of family relations, Zhuang society is deeply influenced by the Confucian culture of filial piety. When dealing with grandchildren and parent-child relationships, the virtues of filial piety and respect for elders and love for the elderly are emphasised, such as in the Zhuang nursery rhyme “*Clapping Hands, Dividing Pears*”, which reads: “Give the red ones to grandpa, give the bigger ones to grandma, give the best ones to mom and dad, keep the smallest one for myself.” This highlights the cultural environment in which the Zhuang focus on filial piety in daily life. When dealing with sibling relationships, Zhuang nursery rhymes advocate the family ethic of mutual assistance and respect. The nursery rhyme “*Sharing the Grapefruit*” in which “Elder brother cut the flesh of the grapefruit, one for his younger brother, one for his younger sister.” This conveys the way of living in harmony through the depiction of the daily life of sharing the grapefruit.

Zhuang nursery rhymes also reflect important wisdom in dealing with broader social relationships. When dealing with classmates and friends, Zhuang nursery rhymes convey the social norms of unity, love, modesty and order. For example, in “*Little Brother Little Sister*” : “Little brother, little sister, get up early, don’t snooze, do morning exercises, stand in line, sit in rows, eat fruits, stand in rows, sing well.....”, children are taught these social norms through the regulation of daily behaviour. In terms of neighbourhood relations, Zhuang nursery rhymes also demonstrate the community spirit of mutual help and reciprocity, and harmonious coexistence. In particular, the “go liemz” mentioned in “*Asking Auntie for Eggs*” is a social practice of the Zhuang that continues to this day. During busy farming seasons, neighbours help each other to enhance their friendship. In dealing with host-guest relationships, Zhuang nursery rhymes also highlight the ethnic tradition of hospitality and respect for guests, as seen in the nursery rhyme “*The Round Moon*” : “The moon tonight is as round as a jade plate, we have guests visiting our home. We want a chicken leg to coax my grandson, a muntjac leg is used to entertain guests. After a pleasant conversation and dinner, we take the guests to the entrance of the village.” It is vividly reflected in.

## 1.3 Wisdom of inheriting culture and traditional customs

As part of their cultural heritage, Zhuang nursery rhymes harbour the wisdom of passing on culture and traditional customs, conveying knowledge related to specific cultural activities. They often incorporate elements of daily life and traditional practices to teach Zhuang children about the culture, customs and rituals that have shaped their society.

Zhuang nursery rhymes convey a sense of cultural identity and tradition between generations. For example, “*Song of Persuasion*” : “Dung beetles roll their droppings and leave traces , Nowadays Zhuang people have writing. Teach your children and grandchildren to learn more, don't be a white cow and go wandering around .” Through the allusion to the dung beetle making words and the analogy of the white cow, it emphasises the importance of cultural inheritance, reflecting the Zhuang people's perseverance and inheritance of their long history and unique culture. Meanwhile, “*Sifting Rice Bran*” : “Sifting rice bran, frying ciba, wrapping glutinous rice.” and “*The Swing Is Vibrating*” : “The swing is vibrating, we are

making ciba. Some use sesame seeds as fillings, some use mugwort leaves to make gnocchi. Some use a steamer to steam, Some are fried in pan. Make zongzi in the twelfth month of the lunar calendar, and send it to relatives next month.” The above two nursery rhymes vividly depict the production scenes of the traditional food culture of the Zhuang people, such as the production of glutinous rice, ciba and zongzi. The Zhuang people have a long history of growing glutinous rice. These Zhuang specialities made of glutinous rice as the main ingredient have become a cultural symbol, demonstrating the dietary customs and cultural traditions of the Zhuang people.

In addition, Zhuang nursery rhymes carry a wealth of festival customs, reflecting the social culture and psychological state of the Zhuang. Among them, the Cattle Soul Festival is one of the important festivals unique to the Zhuang. In “*The Song of Cattle*” : “Eighth of the fourth lunar month is coming, it's time to cattle soul festival! I have respect for the cattle, I take off the oxbow. let you take a breath, let you have a rest. let you eat something good, listen to my song of cattle.” The celebratory scene of the Cattle Soul Festival depicted in this nursery rhyme not only embodies the distinctive characteristics of Zhuang farming culture, but also carries the significance of national identity and cultural inheritance. And in the nursery rhyme “*Debris Flies into the Eyes*” : “Debris flies into the eyes, ask the flower lady to pick it out. Let's kill pigs tomorrow, kill chickens the day after tomorrow. Debris come out together.” The beliefs and rituals of the “Flower Lady” mentioned in the nursery rhyme reveal the profound practice of the Zhuang people in maintaining and passing on the culture of their ethnic groups through beliefs and rituals.

#### **1.4 Wisdom of using nature for practice and creativity**

As a carrier of cultural inheritance, Zhuang nursery rhymes contain the local wisdom of practice and creation using nature. These nursery rhymes not only impart knowledge about the use of natural resources, but also cultivate children's creativity and practical ability, reflecting the valuable experience accumulated by the Zhuang people in the process of living in harmony with nature.

For example, the Zhuang nursery rhyme “*The Cuckoo Heralds Spring*” : “Cuckoo Cuckoo, the cuckoo is chirping, spring is coming. The seedlings sprout in the Rain Water, the beans come out in the Spring Equinox. Rice transplanting season starts in early February, rice planting begins in March. Don't miss the farming season, only in autumn can we have a good harvest.” By depicting the connection between the cuckoo and spring, the nursery rhyme vividly conveys the close connection between agricultural production and the 24 solar terms. This not only helps children understand agricultural knowledge, but more importantly, passes on the experience and wisdom of agricultural production in the Zhuang region, which is adapted to the time and place. Meanwhile, “*White Spotted Cloth*” : “Dots are scattered on the cloth, connected to form a flower. Become a tree again, there are also small animals. The cloth is fully dyed, make clothes, shoes and socks.” This nursery rhyme, on the other hand, shows the mastery of traditional Zhuang skills and the uniqueness of ethnic wisdom by depicting the process of making white-spotted cloth. In the process of making white-spotted cloth, glutinous rice is finely ground into a paste, dipped into the white cloth with the help of bamboo sticks to outline the pattern, and dyed with indigo, a plant dye unique to the Zhuang region of Guangxi. This traditional technique is a product of the harmonious coexistence between the Zhuang people and the natural environment, and is preserved and passed on to the next generation through the singing of nursery rhymes.

The Zhuang region of Guangxi has a favourable natural ecological environment, which is rich in precious plants with medicinal properties. The wisdom of the Zhuang people in using plants to cure diseases is also contained in the Zhuang nursery rhymes. In these nursery rhymes, specific plants and their therapeutic properties are skilfully conveyed, providing valuable insights into herbal remedies. For example, in the following rhyme “*Playing with Ants*” : “Mom, her throat hurts, grandpa go to the mountains to collect herbs. The paulownia fruit to help soothe, the couch-grass can also cure ailments.” The paulownia fruits and the couch-grass mentioned here are traditionally used for their medicinal properties as a kind of medicinal plant with the effects of resolving phlegm, relieving coughs, reducing inflammation, and relieving pain, and they are used by the Zhuang people to treat a number of sore throats and other ailments. These nursery rhymes not only connect children with nature, but more importantly, they emphasise the importance of the wisdom of using plants as remedies in sustainable and holistic healthcare practices.

In summary, Zhuang nursery rhymes in Guangxi are deeply rooted in the local cultural heritage and demonstrate their rich local wisdom in the above four areas. These nursery rhymes act as a moral compass in life, transmitting to children personal values and ethical principles unique to the Zhuang people, thus promoting personal moral qualities. They also provide guidance for establishing and maintaining harmonious interpersonal relationships, thereby promoting family and social harmony and enhancing group cohesion. It plays a key role in the preservation and dissemination of cultural traditions and customs and in the maintenance of the Zhuang identity. In addition, the skilful integration of nature into the narratives of the nursery rhymes provides valuable insights into sustainable practices and the creative use of natural elements.

## 2. Problems and guidelines on the protection and inheritance of Zhuang nursery rhymes in Guangxi.

In this part, the author collects, organizes and analyzes the data from literature survey and field survey, summarizes the current problems in the protection and inheritance of Zhuang nursery rhymes in Guangxi, and analyzes the factors affecting their protection and inheritance, and finally aims to propose guidelines for its protection and inheritance.

### 2.1 Problems on the protection and inheritance of Zhuang nursery rhymes in Guangxi.

This research conducted interviews with the interviewees on the theme of the protection and inheritance of Zhuang nursery rhymes in Guangxi, and the interview data is shown in Table 2.

**Table 2:** Problems on the protection and inheritance of Zhuang nursery rhymes in Guangxi

Interviewee	Viewpoint
1	I am worried about the inheriting of the Zhuang nursery rhymes as young people are no longer interested in them, and the singers are mainly those of us who are over 60 years old.
2	I don't teach my children to sing Zhuang nursery rhymes, nor do I use them in my education; they prefer to play mobile phones and computer games.
3	I don't know much about Zhuang nursery rhymes and find them monotonous compared to modern music.

4	In schools, students no longer learn Zhuang rhymes and some children no longer speak Zhuang.
5	The inheritance of Zhuang nursery rhymes faces the crisis of missing language carriers, and many young parents no longer use Zhuang as the main language for their children to learn.
6	Zhuang nursery rhymes can be disseminated through modern media, but at present the content is small and unattractive.

According to the analysis of the interview data and combined with the literature, the author found that in the current social and cultural context, Zhuang nursery rhymes in Guangxi are facing multiple protection and inheritance problems, mainly including the following aspects.

(1) Aging of singers. At present, the people who can sing Zhuang nursery rhymes are mainly old people, and few young people, especially children, can sing them. This bifurcation in the age of singers will lead to a break in the intergenerational transmission of Zhuang nursery rhymes. The number of singers of Zhuang nursery rhymes is decreasing year by year as the older singers of these rhymes die of old age and illness.

(2) Weak awareness of inheritance. In the survey on the attitude of passing down Zhuang nursery rhymes, the author found that more than half of the people chose "no" and "indifferent" to the question of "whether they will use Zhuang nursery rhymes in the education of the next generation". ". At the same time, people preferred electronic products and special interest classes to take the place of Zhuang nursery rhymes in family education. This shows that the status of Zhuang nursery rhymes in family child-rearing has seriously declined, and the atmosphere of their family inheritance has been seriously lost, with people lacking the awareness of active inheritance.

(3) Lack of language carrier. As the language carrier of Zhuang nursery rhymes, the use of the Zhuang language is becoming more and more worrying. With the popularisation of Mandarin Chinese, the frequency of using Zhuang has decreased. Many young parents no longer take Zhuang as the main language for their children to learn, and the younger generation is generally unwilling to speak, can't speak or even can't understand Zhuang, which will lead to the inheritance of Zhuang nursery rhymes facing language barriers.

(4) Single dissemination method and contents. With the development of science and technology and the popularity of modern communication methods, the aesthetic interests and cultural concepts of Zhuang people are changing. At present, the dissemination methods and contents of Zhuang nursery rhymes are relatively single, lacking innovation and diversity. Although the traditional way of oral and mental transmission has a certain communication effect, it is a single way, and it is difficult to meet the diversified needs of people in the modern society. At the same time, the content of nursery rhymes lacks a sense of the times and innovation, making it difficult to attract a wider audience.

## **2.2 Factors leading to problems on the protection and inheritance of Zhuang nursery rhymes in Guangxi**

In order to explore the factor of the above problems, the author conducted corresponding interviews with the interviewees, and the interview data is shown in Table 3.

**Table 3:** Factors leading to problems on the protection and inheritance of Zhuang nursery rhymes in Guangxi

Interviewee	Viewpoint
1	The weak sense of Zhuang cultural identity is one of the reasons for the problems in the inheritance of Zhuang nursery rhymes.
2	It feels that people's interest in and awareness of the transmission of Zhuang culture and nursery rhymes is not as strong as it used to be, probably due to the influence of modernisation.
3	Schools should teach more about Zhuang culture because the younger generation knows very little about it.
4	Nowadays, learning to speak Mandarin Chinese is required in schools and public places, so we also pay more attention to our children's Chinese language learning.
5	Bilingualism and the Zhuang curriculum were cancelled more than ten years ago, and Chinese language teaching is now required.
6	Modern people like to use mobile phones and computers to learn and communicate through the Internet, and they like creative content. Zhuang nursery rhymes have not kept up with modern demands.
7	The current lack of government policy and funding for the transmission of Zhuang nursery rhymes is also an important factor.

Through analysing the interview data and literature, the author found that the factors leading to the above problems mainly include the following:

(1) The weakening of the cultural identity of the Zhuang people. With the development of modernisation and the collision of multiple cultures, the traditional culture of the Zhuang region has been impacted by foreign cultures. People's life and entertainment styles and concepts have changed dramatically. At the same time, due to the relative lack of education on traditional Zhuang culture in the education system, the younger generation lacks understanding and recognition of Zhuang culture. This is an important internal and external factor that causes the intergenerational transmission rupture of Zhuang nursery rhymes and people's weak sense of inheritance.

(2) Language transfer. In the Zhuang community, due to multiple factors, the Zhuang people are gradually switching from Zhuang to Chinese as a medium of communication. This phenomenon is partly attributed to the vigorous promotion of Mandarin Chinese at the national level, which has led to a rise in the importance of Chinese language learning in family education and neglect of the Zhuang language heritage. At the same time, the lack of educational resources in the Zhuang region and differences in family education concepts have also deprived the younger generation of the opportunity to learn and use the Zhuang language in depth.

(3) Limited modes of dissemination and insufficient innovation in content. There are two main reasons why the dissemination of Zhuang nursery rhymes and their contents are single. On the one hand, the traditional way of dissemination is limited by time and space and cannot cover a wider audience. On the other hand, creators and disseminators lack innovative awareness and ability to create more contemporary and attractive nursery rhymes.

(4) Lack of government guidance and support. As an authoritative management organisation, the government plays an important role in the protection and inheritance of Zhuang culture and its nursery rhymes. In recent years, although Guangxi attaches importance to the protection of cultural heritage and has listed 914 intangible cultural heritages between 2007 and 2020, and both national and local governments have enacted relevant cultural regulations, there is a lack of policy guidance and financial support for Zhuang nursery rhymes. This has seriously constrained the preservation and transmission of Zhuang nursery rhymes as intangible cultural heritage.

### 2.3 Guidelines on the protection and inheritance of Zhuang nursery rhymes in Guangxi

Through interviews, different interviewees put forward valuable suggestions for the protection and inheritance of Zhuang nursery rhymes in Guangxi. The specific contents are shown in Table 4.

**Table 4:** Suggestions on the protection and inheritance of Zhuang nursery rhymes in Guangxi

Interviewee	Viewpoint
1	I believe that education and publicity should be used to enhance the Zhuang people's sense of cultural identity and inheritance.
2	Encourage children to speak Zhuang at home, offer Zhuang language courses in schools, and organise Zhuang language activities to improve the learning and use of the language.
3	Interesting content and modernised and diverse communication methods will attract more young people.
4	Include Zhuang nursery rhymes in school education to cultivate students' interest in and identification with their own culture.
5	The government should increase support for the inheritors of Zhuang nursery rhymes and organise related activities and competitions.
6	The government needs to formulate more specific policies to guide and support the protection and inheritance of Zhuang nursery rhymes.

Combining the views of the interviewees in Table 4 and the author's previous research results, the author puts forward the following guidelines to better protect and inherit Zhuang nursery rhymes in Guangxi .

(1) Enhancement of cultural identity and heritage awareness. Feng Tianyu (2001) proposes that cultural identity is the affirmation of traditional cultural values within a group and the distinction between different cultures. Currently, Zhuang culture faces the challenge of weakened identity, which poses a serious threat to the inheritance of Zhuang nursery rhymes. For this reason, we must take active measures to strengthen the education and promotion of traditional Zhuang culture. This will not only help improve people's understanding of Zhuang culture, but also stimulate the cultural consciousness and sense of identity of the Zhuang people. Especially in the context of multiculturalism, young people should be guided to clarify their own cultural orientation, deeply understand the cultural value of Zhuang nursery rhymes, and raise their awareness of their inheritance. This is a key internal measure to prevent the rupture of Zhuang nursery rhymes in intergenerational transmission.

(2) Enhance the status of the Zhuang language as the mother tongue. Under the multicultural language environment, the status of Zhuang as the mother tongue of the Zhuang people is threatened. As an important language carrier for the transmission of Zhuang nursery rhymes and culture, Zhuang language should be taken seriously. At the same time, it should be made clear that advocating Zhuang as the mother tongue does not conflict with the learning and use of other languages. In order to protect and pass on the Zhuang language, multifaceted measures need to be taken. Firstly, Zhuang language education should be strengthened to improve the younger generation's mastery of the Zhuang language. It should be popularised and promoted through the introduction of Zhuang language courses in schools and the organisation of Zhuang language training courses. Secondly, in family education, parents should be encouraged to create a good family context for their children to communicate in the Zhuang language. In addition, the development of Zhuang language learning software and applications using modern technology is also an important way to help young groups learn Zhuang language effectively.

(3) Innovate the dissemination methods and contents of Zhuang nursery rhymes. In terms of dissemination methods, traditional forms and modern technology should be combined. For example, Zhuang nursery rhymes should be promoted through bilingual books, family education, school curricula and new media digital platforms, so as to break the time and space limitations and promote the widespread dissemination of Zhuang nursery rhymes and culture. In terms of content, traditions should be respected while innovative ways of expression should be used. Creators can make innovative adaptations to the content of nursery rhymes and incorporate modern elements to make them more attractive. For example, they can combine the elements of popular music to compose songs and music for nursery rhymes, and they can also combine nursery rhymes with animation, film and television industries to develop cultural products with more market potential.

(4) Give full play to the guiding and supporting role of the government. The government plays a key role in the protection and inheritance of Zhuang nursery rhymes in a multicultural context. Through directional guidance, the government can explore effective paths for intangible inheritance and strengthen the protection of inheritors, including the awarding of honors, financial support, and training of new inheritors, to alleviate the problem of intergenerational inheritance rupture. At the financial and institutional levels, the government needs to coordinate investment, formulate relevant development and protection systems, and establish a specialized agency to be responsible for the collection, arrangement and archiving of nursery rhymes, and supervise the implementation of protection measures. In addition, the government should also play a publicity role to attract all sectors of society to participate in the protection of traditional culture, build a cultural platform, and explore effective ways to combine culture and economy.

In summary, the current Zhuang nursery rhymes in Guangxi are facing urgent inheritance challenges. This part discusses its protection and inheritance to provide theoretical support and practical guidance for the effective protection and inheritance of Zhuang nursery rhymes, which is of great significance for the protection and inheritance of traditional Zhuang culture.

## Discussion

In this research, through systematic fieldwork and literature analysis, the Zhuang nursery rhymes in some Guangxi regions were collected, collated and analysed, and explored to derive the unique local wisdom of the Zhuang people of Guangxi, as expressed in the cultivation of moral values, the regulation of interpersonal relationships, the inheritance of culture and traditional customs, as well as the use of nature for practice and creativity. The Zhuang people have acquired valuable local wisdom through their interactions with the surrounding environment, society and others in the course of their socio-historical development. This local wisdom is the cultural and intellectual heritage of the Zhuang people, which has been passed down through the recording and singing of Zhuang nursery rhymes, and its full utilisation will contribute to the development of Zhuang society and culture. This is consistent with the principles applied to the concept of local wisdom. According to Davis (2009), local wisdom refers to the knowledge and wisdom developed and accumulated over generations in a particular community or culture. It includes not only knowledge but also understanding of life, values, moral codes and social interactions. In addition, Levinson (1996) viewed local wisdom as an important component of cultural identity and resilience in individual communities, and an in-depth understanding of how communities develop and apply their knowledge can enable them to flourish in their unique environmental and cultural contexts.

At the same time, this study reveals the key problems faced by Guangxi Zhuang nursery rhymes in the process of preservation and transmission, including the ageing of the singers, the weak awareness of transmission, the lack of language carriers and the singularity of the mode and content of transmission. These problems are rooted in the impact of foreign cultures on the indigenous Zhuang culture in the process of modernisation and the resulting weakening of the Zhuang cultural identity. This echoes previous studies. Luo (2019) also emphasises the negative impact of the imbalance between foreign and local cultures. In addition, this research highlights that language transfer, restricted modes of communication and lack of content innovation, as well as lack of government guidance and support, are also important factors in the creation of problems.

In response to the above problems, this research proposes that enhancing the cultural identity and heritage awareness of the Zhuang people is an inherently key measure from the perspective of cultural identity. In the multicultural context of modern society, emphasising cultural identity is conducive to maintaining cultural identity and diversity. This echoes the principles of cultural identity theory, and Williams (2011) argues that culture conveys the message of identity, and when different cultures interact with each other, "identity" is the first issue to be resolved, but the resolution of this issue requires a slow process of construction. Identity is the internalisation of social actions into a sense of inner identity, which is then put into action to gradually create a strong cultural identity.

At the same time, the protection of the language carrier of Zhuang nursery rhymes can be ensured by upgrading the status of the Zhuang language as the mother tongue, innovating the dissemination methods and contents of Zhuang nursery rhymes to adapt to the spiritual and aesthetic needs of modern people, and exerting the guidance and support of the government to ensure the correct direction and the implementation of the measures in place, which can provide a strong support for the protection and development of Zhuang nursery rhymes. The implementation of these measures requires the participation and synergy of multiple forces, including families, schools, society and the government. Pan (2021)

demonstrated the great potential of multi-party co-operation in the transmission of Zhuang nursery rhymes, which provides a useful reference at the practical level. And future research can further explore the effectiveness of the implementation of these responses and the challenges they may face.

## **Recommendation**

The results of this research show that Zhuang nursery rhymes in Guangxi are produced in the production practice and daily life of the Zhuang people, and are an important carrier of Zhuang cultural identity and inheritance. They contain the rich local wisdom of the Zhuang people with national characteristics. These local wisdoms have been passed down through generations of Zhuang nursery rhymes, which have shaped the character, culture and relationship with the natural world of the Zhuang people.

However, under the development of modern society, changes in lifestyles, and the impact of foreign cultures, the protection and transmission of Zhuang nursery rhymes in Guangxi are facing serious challenges. To cope with these challenges, this research proposes countermeasures such as enhancing the awareness of Zhuang cultural identity and inheritance, upgrading the status of the Zhuang language, innovating the dissemination methods and contents of Zhuang nursery rhymes, and strengthening government guidance. It aims to enhance public awareness of the value of Zhuang nursery rhymes, stimulate community participation in nursery rhyme protection and inheritance, and promote the sustainable development of Zhuang culture in modern society.

Based on this research's analysis of the local wisdom of Zhuang nursery rhymes in Guangxi, as well as their protection and inheritance, the following recommendations are made to all stakeholders and future research directions:

Drawing upon the analyses and guidelines provided in this research, government departments may refer to the results to formulate relevant policies to promote the inheritance and development of Zhuang nursery rhymes. Researchers may deepen the study of Zhuang nursery rhymes from new perspectives and methods to reveal their cultural values and social functions. Other ethnic minorities can draw on the results to promote the protection of their respective cultures. Cultural enterprises should take into account the market demand and develop cultural products that incorporate the elements of Zhuang nursery rhymes.

Future research is recommended to focus on the relationship between the economic benefits of Zhuang nursery rhymes and their preservation and inheritance, and to explore the positive impact of commercialised operations on their inheritance. At the same time, it is recommended that in-depth research be conducted on how to effectively integrate Zhuang nursery rhymes into classroom teaching and design innovative teaching activities to stimulate students' interest in and identification with Zhuang culture. These follow-up researches will contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the value of Zhuang nursery rhymes, provide strong support for their inheritance and development in modern society, and effectively promote further research on Zhuang culture.

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