

Practical Exploration of Integrating Hainan Li and Miao Music into Kindergarten Music Activities from the Perspective of Cultural Heritage

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Abstract: Hainan Li and Miao music constitutes a vital component of China's outstanding traditional culture, embodying the life wisdom, ethnic spirit, and cultural heritage of the Li and Miao peoples, while possessing unique artistic and educational value. From the perspective of cultural preservation, integrating Li and Miao music into kindergarten music activities serves as a crucial approach to promote the living inheritance of ethnic minority traditions, enrich preschool music education content, and cultivate children's cultural identity and aesthetic literacy. This study examines the integration of Li and Miao music into kindergarten music programs through the lens of cultural preservation and early childhood education. It analyzes practical challenges, including insufficient resource development, monotonous teaching methods, inadequate teacher competence, and lack of support mechanisms. By considering the physical and mental development patterns of 3-6-year-old children and the characteristics of kindergarten education, the research explores practical solutions through resource selection and adaptation, innovative activity design, home-school-community collaboration, teacher training programs, and evaluation system optimization. The findings aim to establish a systematic, operational, and localized integration model, providing theoretical support and practical references for developing distinctive music education programs and preserving Li and Miao musical traditions in Hainan kindergartens.

Keywords: Cultural inheritance; Hainan Li and Miao music; Kindergarten; Music activities; Practical approaches

Online publication: December 20, 2025

1. Introduction

The Chinese Excellent Traditional Culture Inheritance and Development Project explicitly advocates integrating ethnic culture into schools, classrooms, and students' minds, laying a solid foundation for cultural heritage from early childhood. As the only province with concentrated Li and Miao ethnic communities, Hainan boasts a long-standing and diverse musical culture. Li folk songs, bamboo and wood instrument music, firewood-drying dance melodies, Miao mountain songs, and lusheng music feature simple melodies, lively rhythms, and close ties to daily life—perfectly aligning with young children's musical perception and learning characteristics. The "Guidelines for Learning and Development of Children Aged 3-6" emphasizes leveraging local cultural resources to help children appreciate their hometown's cultural charm and cultivate love for their homeland and ethnic identity^[1].

Currently, Hainan's preschool education is increasingly emphasizing the integration of local culture. However, most kindergarten music activities still rely on standardized teaching materials, with the incorporation of Li and Miao music remaining at a superficial level of appreciation and basic singing practice. The lack of systematic design, creative implementation, and sustainable mechanisms not only hinders the educational value of Li and Miao music but also impedes intergenerational transmission of ethnic culture. Against this backdrop, exploring practical approaches to integrating Li and Miao music into kindergarten music activities with cultural preservation as the core objective holds significant importance for promoting distinctive preschool education and establishing routine mechanisms for ethnic cultural inheritance.

2. The Value of Integrating Hainan Li and Miao Music into Kindergarten Music Activities from the Perspective of Cultural Heritage

2.1. Cultural Heritage Value: Preserving National Cultural Genes and Promoting Living Transmission

Liemiao music serves as an artistic medium reflecting the history, daily life, and beliefs of the Li and Miao ethnic groups, standing as a distinctive symbol of Hainan's indigenous culture. Integrating it into kindergarten music activities enables young children to engage with, appreciate, and develop a love for ethnic music during their formative years. This approach facilitates a shift from "passive preservation" to "active inheritance" of cultural heritage, allowing Liemiao music to rejuvenate within early childhood education settings while sustaining the continuity of ethnic cultural roots^[2,3].

The Li-Miao music embodies the Li ancestors' reverence for nature (as reflected in hunting and farming ballads), the resilience and wisdom from Miao migration history (such as narrative mountain songs), along with unique ethnic languages and living customs. These cultural elements subtly permeate young children's cognition through melodies, rhythms, and lyrics. For instance, the Li people's "Luoni Tune" predominantly uses pentatonic scales with melodious and lyrical compositions, often depicting natural landscapes like forests and rivers. Through singing practice, children not only experience musical beauty but also learn about the Li people's philosophy of harmonious coexistence with nature under teachers' guidance. The lively rhythms of Miao Lusheng performances, often paired with group dances, allow children to intuitively experience the ethnic group's warm hospitality and collaborative spirit through musical games. This musical-based cultural immersion helps children develop an early affinity and identity with their ethnic heritage, cultivating "little guardians" of cultural genes. Such efforts preserve Li-Miao traditions by nurturing new generations with emotional foundations and cultural recognition, effectively preventing cultural decline caused by declining youth engagement^[4].

2.2. Value of Early Childhood Development: Cultivating Comprehensive Literacy and Promoting Holistic Growth

Li-Miao music features simple melodies, distinct rhythms, and sincere emotions, aligning well with the auditory development and emotional perception characteristics of young children. Participating in Li-Miao music activities enhances children's musical perception, rhythm sense, expressiveness, and creativity; through musical experiences, they gain insight into the cultural essence of their heritage, fostering cultural identity, attachment to their homeland, and aesthetic appreciation; via interactive methods such as movement exercises, games, and performances, these activities develop children's physical coordination, social cooperation skills, and expressive abilities.

When learning the Li ethnic group's bamboo pole dance, young children must flexibly adjust their footwork to musical rhythms while avoiding bamboo pole entanglements and maintaining synchronized movements with peers. This process not only enhances physical flexibility and reaction speed in a joyful atmosphere but also teaches them to listen and understand others' intentions through coordinated teamwork, fostering collaborative awareness. When learning Miao flying songs, children are captivated by their high-pitched melodies and instinctively mimic singing postures with open arms and proud chests. This natural emotional expression helps release inner emotions and boosts self-expression confidence. Additionally, the rich natural sound effects in Li and Miao music—such as imitating bird calls, flowing water, and wind

sounds—stimulate children’s imagination and creativity. They may use simple tools like bamboo tube percussion or sand hammer shaking to recreate these sounds, even composing their own “natural symphonies.” This immersive experience subtly promotes the comprehensive development of cognitive abilities, emotional attitudes, and social skills, laying a solid foundation for future learning and growth^[5-7].

2.3. Educational Innovation Value: Enriching Teaching Content and Developing Locally Distinctive Curricula

Integration of Li and Miao music can break the homogenization dilemma in kindergarten music activities and promote localized and distinctive curriculum development. By incorporating the regional cultural characteristics of Hainan, a thematic activity system for Li and Miao music can be established to form a kindergarten-based music curriculum, thereby enhancing the quality of preschool education and institutional uniqueness, and contributing to the high-quality development of preschool education in Hainan.

In practical teaching scenarios, educators can skillfully integrate Li-Miao musical elements into diverse musical activities, including singing, rhythmic movement, music appreciation, and instrumental performance. For instance, during singing sessions, teachers may select melodious Li-Miao nursery rhymes with vivid lyrics, guiding children to learn and perform them in their local dialects to experience the unique charm of language-music integration. In movement-based activities, educators can create simple yet engaging dance routines inspired by traditional Li-Miao dance rhythms and movements, allowing children to experience ethnic musical rhythms through physical expression. During music appreciation sessions, performances using traditional Li-Miao instruments like nose flutes, mouth bows, and dingdong zithers are played to help children distinguish different timbres and appreciate the cultural richness of Li-Miao music. For instrumental practice, educators utilize local Hainan materials, such as bamboo, coconut shells, and gourds, to create simple instruments, enabling children to experiment with Li-Miao rhythms and sparking their interest in musical composition. This deep integration of Li-Miao music into kindergarten activities not only enriches teaching content and formats, making musical experiences more engaging and appealing, but also aligns preschool curricula with children’s life experiences and regional cultural backgrounds, ultimately establishing a distinctive Hainan-native music curriculum system for kindergartens.

2.4. Regional Development Value: Strengthening Cultural Provincial Competitiveness and Empowering Cultural Tourism Integration

Cultural enlightenment during early childhood serves as the foundation for future ethnic cultural dissemination and innovation. Promoting Li and Miao music through kindergarten music activities can cultivate a new generation of local cultural inheritors, reserve talent for Hainan’s ethnic cultural industry and rural cultural tourism development, and contribute to the construction of Hainan as a culturally strong province and the integrated development of culture and tourism.

As a unique cultural symbol of Hainan, Li-Miao music integrated into kindergarten music activities allows children to immerse themselves in the charm of local culture from an early age, planting seeds of love for their homeland’s heritage in their hearts. Children nurtured through Li-Miao music may grow into conscious promoters and active advocates of this culture, potentially contributing to fields such as ethnic music composition, traditional dance performances, and cultural research, injecting fresh vitality into Hainan’s ethnic cultural industry development. As these children mature, their deep-rooted cultural affinity will translate into greater recognition and a willingness to consume Hainan’s local tourism products. The cultural memories formed during early childhood will lead them to prefer Li-Miao-themed travel experiences—including watching traditional performances, participating in interactive music activities, and purchasing cultural merchandise—effectively boosting related tourism consumption and fostering rural cultural tourism prosperity. This early cultural immersion holds profound strategic significance for establishing Hainan’s “culture + tourism” integration model, enhancing the cultural depth and core competitiveness of its tourism industry^[8].

3. Practical Challenges in Integrating Hainan Li and Miao Music into Kindergarten Music Activities

3.1. Superficial resource mining with insufficient adaptability resources

Most kindergartens' development of Li and Miao musical resources remains superficial, merely collecting a limited number of folk song excerpts without systematic organization, curation, or adaptation. These resources fail to be simplified or creatively adapted according to children's age characteristics, resulting in some musical content being obscure and rhythmically complex, making them unsuitable for direct teaching use. Additionally, there is a lack of supporting audio materials, videos, picture books, and teaching aids; the resources are fragmented and lack a coherent framework, rendering them inadequate for supporting regular educational activities^[9].

3.2. The activity formats are monotonous, lacking both entertainment value and cultural continuity.

In practice, Li and Miao music integration primarily adopts methods such as "teacher-led singing with children's participation" and "music playback for appreciation," which often result in monotonous formats lacking interactive engagement. The approach fails to incorporate gamified teaching concepts by integrating music with rhythmic movements, dance, games, handicrafts, and situational performances. Activity designs emphasize skill imitation over cultural comprehension, leaving children merely perceiving musical forms without grasping the underlying ethnic cultural significance, thereby weakening the effectiveness of cultural transmission.

3.3. Weak faculty competence and insufficient professional support

Kindergarten teachers generally lack professional knowledge of Li and Miao music, with insufficient understanding of its history, classification, performance methods, and cultural connotations. They also lack skills in music adaptation, activity design, and instruction of ethnic musical instruments. The absence of systematic local music education training has resulted in teachers being unable to "teach, dare to teach, or teach effectively" when attempting to organize activities, which has become a critical bottleneck hindering educational integration.

3.4. Lack of safeguard mechanisms makes long-term advancement challenging

Some kindergartens insufficiently emphasize local cultural education and have not incorporated Li and Miao music into their overall teaching plans; they lack specialized teaching research, financial support, and evaluation mechanisms; collaboration among kindergartens, families, and communities is inadequate, with limited awareness of Li and Miao music preservation among families and society, failing to establish a preservation system led by kindergartens, supported by families, and backed by society.

4. Practical Exploration of Integrating Li and Miao Music into Kindergarten Music Activities from the Perspective of Cultural Heritage

4.1. Resource Reconstruction: Screening, Adaptation, and Creative Development of Children-Friendly Li and Miao Music Resources

Layered Resource Selection: Resources are categorized by age groups—small classes, middle classes, and large classes—for targeted implementation. Small classes focus on simple rhythms, crisp instrumental sounds, and short melodies; middle classes emphasize folk song excerpts with accessible lyrics and catchy tunes; large classes prioritize complete folk songs, traditional music, and basic instrument experiences. **Scientific Adaptation Process:** Traditional Li and Miao folk songs undergo simplified adaptations through shortened compositions, optimized lyrics, and reduced vocal ranges while preserving ethnic rhythms and core elements. The rhythms are creatively integrated with children's daily language and nursery rhymes to develop playful Li and Miao nursery songs. **Resource Library Development:** Collaborating with

folk artists, cultural/tourism departments, and universities, we establish a kindergarten-specific Li and Miao music resource library containing audio recordings, videos, visual guides, teaching materials, and activity case studies to provide sustainable support for program implementation^[10].

4.2. Activity Innovation: Developing a Gamified, Life-Related, and Localized Music Activity System

Rhythm perception activities center on the Li ethnic group's firewood-drawing dance rhythms and clanging wooden percussion patterns, featuring games like rhythmic clapping, rhythm relay, rhythmic building blocks, and traditional ethnic drums. These activities enable young children to experience ethnic musical rhythms through play, fostering their sense of rhythm and concentration. For singing instruction, classic Li and Miao folk songs such as "Five-Finger Mountain Ballad" are adapted into child-friendly versions. Singing sessions incorporate visual aids, situational scenarios, and action-based memorization techniques, enhanced by role-playing, duets, and group singing formats to boost engagement and deepen appreciation of ethnic vocal traditions.

Instrument experience activities introduce simplified versions of single-log drums, lusheng, and dingdong wooden instruments, or utilize cardboard boxes, bamboo tubes, and straws to create locally characteristic handmade musical instruments. These activities include percussion performances and ensemble shows, allowing young children to experience the charm of traditional ethnic instruments.

In activity design, educators can create instrument experience sessions tailored to children's age characteristics and operational abilities. For instance, younger preschoolers should focus on identifying the shapes and basic striking techniques of wooden drums and clappers. Through the "Animal Rhythm Matching" game, they can use drumsticks or small hands to mimic the soft footsteps of kittens and heavy footsteps of elephants, experiencing rhythmic variations through different striking intensities. Middle-grade children may attempt to produce simple pitches using the Lusheng flute, combining adapted Li and Miao folk melodies for basic instrumental accompaniment. They should also be encouraged to use homemade bamboo tube instruments to accompany peers' performances, experiencing the joy of ensemble playing. Older children can participate in more challenging instrumental combinations—such as merging the steady rhythm of wooden drums, crisp tones of clappers, and the lyrical melodies of Lusheng—to create small-scale ethnic instrumental performances. Through collaborative playing, they'll understand each instrument's tonal characteristics and musical roles, deepening their appreciation for Li and Miao instrumental culture. Additionally, inviting folk artists to demonstrate traditional Li wooden drum-making processes and performance techniques allows children to observe instrument details up close and listen to authentic ethnic music, sparking their curiosity and desire to explore traditional instruments.

The rhythmic dance program integrates fundamental movements from Li ethnic group's firewood-carrying dance and Miao ethnic group's lusheng flute dance, creating simple ethnic rhythmic routines for young children. Through music-accompanied group dances and circle dances, it achieves seamless fusion of music with physical movement and culture with sports. Themed events such as the "Li-Miao Music Culture Festival," "Hometown Concerts," and "Ethnic Mini-Theaters" incorporate singing, musical instruments, dance, costumes, and folk displays, offering children immersive experiences of Li-Miao musical culture in its entirety.

4.3. Stratified Implementation: Age-specific Progressive Music Activities

Small Class: Focus on sensory experience—listening to music, identifying timbres, and imitating simple rhythms and movements to experience the lively atmosphere of Li and Miao music. Middle Class: Emphasizes singing and performance—learning simple nursery rhymes, participating in rhythm games, and performing group rhythmic activities to gain initial understanding of musical content. Large Class: Prioritizes creative expression—experimenting with lyric composition, instrumental ensemble performances, and situational enactments to showcase comprehension of ethnic music and culture.

4.4. Collaborative Education: Establishing an Integrated Heritage Model of Home-School-Community Partnership

Inclusive Environment: Integrate Li and Miao ethnic music into morning routines, themed activities, and outdoor programs to create an immersive cultural atmosphere. **Family Engagement:** Assign interactive Li-Miao music tasks for families, encouraging parents and children to learn, perform, and appreciate music together, fostering a shared cultural identity. **Community Support:** Invite Li-Miao folk artists to conduct performances and workshops at schools; organize field trips to Li villages and folk museums to expand cultural preservation opportunities. **Teacher Development:** Enhance educators' expertise in Li-Miao music instruction through specialized training sessions featuring music experts and traditional artists sharing cultural insights and teaching methodologies. **School-Based Research:** Regularly conduct music activity design workshops, classroom observation evaluations, and case study exchanges. **Fieldwork Programs:** Organize field trips to Li-Miao villages to collect authentic musical materials. **Collaborative Teams:** Establish a Li-Miao music teaching research group for joint lesson planning and activity development.

Evaluation Optimization: Establish a diversified activity evaluation system. **Early childhood assessment:** Focus on interests, participation levels, expressive abilities, and cultural identity, avoiding skill-based evaluations. **Activity evaluation:** Conduct comprehensive assessments based on objectives, content, formats, and cultural inheritance outcomes. **Teacher evaluation:** Incorporate Li and Miao music education into teaching research assessments to incentivize proactive innovation in teaching practices.

5. Conclusion

From the perspective of cultural heritage preservation, integrating Hainan Li and Miao music into kindergarten music activities serves as a foundational initiative for ethnic cultural transmission and a key direction for innovation in early childhood education. Li and Miao music naturally aligns with the physical and mental development characteristics of young children, possessing significant educational and cultural preservation value. Current challenges in resources, format, teaching staff, and mechanisms require systematic solutions through child-friendly adaptation of materials, gamified activity design, professional teacher training, collaborative educational approaches, and diversified evaluation systems.

In practice, we must uphold cultural authenticity while focusing on children's development, adhering to principles of localization, engagement, and real-life relevance. By integrating Li and Miao music into children's daily routines, we enable them to experience the beauty of ethnic music through listening, singing, rhythmic movements, and performances, thereby fostering cultural confidence and a sense of belonging to their homeland. Only through such approaches can we achieve multiple objectives: ensuring the intergenerational transmission of ethnic culture, promoting comprehensive child development, and advancing high-quality distinctive early childhood education. This will provide lasting momentum for preserving Hainan's ethnic cultural heritage and advancing preschool education.

Funding

2025 Hainan Provincial Basic Education Outstanding Achievement Development Project (Qiyin Yue: Music Education for Preschool Children in the Context of the New Era).

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