

Preserving and Developing *Vi, Giặm Nghệ Tĩnh*: Ten Years after Its Inscription in UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage: Case Study of Nghệ An

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Abstract: *Vi, Giặm Nghệ Tĩnh* have long been considered precious cultural heritage of Nghệ An and Hà Tĩnh provinces, reflecting the region's deep cultural roots and traditions. After being inscribed on UNESCO's list of intangible cultural heritage a decade ago, there have been concerted efforts to preserve and promote these songs, with noticeable success in various areas. This paper aims to examine the local community's perception of these preservation efforts and presents an analysis of key data, offering policy recommendations to further protect and develop this musical heritage. The focus is on leveraging the cultural and tourism potential of *Vi, Giặm Nghệ Tĩnh* while ensuring their continued relevance for future generations. Over the past ten years, significant strides have been made, such as increasing public awareness of the value of these songs and creating more platforms for their performance in both traditional and modern settings. However, as globalization and modern music trends continue to dominate, it is essential for preservation initiatives to be flexible, evolving strategies to ensure that *Vi, Giặm Nghệ Tĩnh* remain a vital and cherished part of the region's cultural landscape.

Keywords: Preservation, development, *Vi, Giặm Nghệ Tĩnh*, Nghệ An.

Subject classification: Cultural studies.

1. Introduction

Vi, Giặm Nghệ Tĩnh, recognized as UNESCO intangible heritage for over a decade, are treasured as cultural gems of the Nghệ An and Hà Tĩnh provinces.

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Being born from rich cultural areas, traditional songs often “have moved beyond their historical roots to serve as vital tools for education and cultural preservation” (Wang & Woramitmaitree, 2024). Intangible cultural heritage music is more than just an art form; it is a precious legacy filled with deep cultural and historical significance (Bing, et al., 2024).

Ví, Giặm Nghệ Tĩnh are described as “a popular musical form sung by a wide range of Việt communities in Nghệ An and Hà Tĩnh provinces in the north-central part of Vietnam” (Ministry of Culture, Sport and Tourism, 2014). In 2014, UNESCO’s Intergovernmental Committee, under Decision 9.COM 10.46, officially inscribed them onto the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. The committee emphasized the importance of using language that aligns with the Convention’s spirit and discouraged terms such as “authentic.”

This recognition was based on five criteria met by *Ví, Giặm Nghệ Tĩnh*, as stated on UNESCO website: (a) the tradition is passed down through generations within Nghệ Tĩnh (including Nghệ An and Hà Tĩnh) communities, holding a central place in their cultural and spiritual lives, and embodying their cultural identity, worldview, and emotions; (b) it plays a role in raising awareness of intangible cultural heritage, fosters appreciation and empathy among diverse ethnic groups, and facilitates dialogue among performers of different musical styles; (c) the songs’ preservation benefits from State and local financial support, demonstrating the commitment of both the authorities and communities to ensure its continuity; (d) the nomination process involved active participation from community members, practitioners, specialized institutions, and experts, with communities providing free, and informed consent; and (e) in 2012, the Vietnam Institute of Culture and Arts Studies included the tradition in the National List of Intangible Cultural Heritage, maintained by the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism.

In Nomination File No. 01008 for the 2014 Inscription on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, the Ministry of Culture, Sport, and Tourism reported that “in 2013, a total of 260 villages - 168 in Nghệ An province and 92 in Hà Tĩnh province - had practitioners of *Ví* and *Giặm* folk songs. This heritage is predominantly found in villages along the banks of the Lam and La rivers, particularly in Kim Liên and Bồi Sơn villages in Nghệ An, and Thạch Việt and Trường Lưu villages in Hà Tĩnh.”

To preserve the *Ví, Giặm Nghệ Tĩnh*, “the provinces of Hà Tĩnh and Nghệ An have officially included *Ví, Giặm Nghệ Tĩnh* in the school curriculum, a move that has initially shown positive momentum” (Bùi Đức Ái, 2022). However, various challenges persist. The Deputy Minister of Culture, Sport, and Tourism noted that “resources allocated for preserving and promoting the value of *Ví, Giặm Nghệ Tĩnh* are still insufficient; coordination and unity between Nghệ An and Hà Tĩnh in

implementing preservation measures remain limited; and the influence and vitality of this heritage within the community are not as robust and enduring as hoped for” (Thương Nguyễn, 2023). The author seeks to examine how the *Ví, Giặm Nghệ Tĩnh* have been preserved and developed over the decade following their recognition as UNESCO intangible heritage. As noted by Creutzenberg (2019), “the need for repeated performances in historically varying contexts makes the analysis of performing arts particularly fruitful for understanding how practitioners of tradition (have to) adapt to change. A historical-comparative perspective provides concise insights into the dynamics of development that informs tradition today”. Thus, this study aims to answer the following question: to what extent, and with what effectiveness, has the administration of Nghệ An fulfilled its role in preserving the *Ví, Giặm Nghệ Tĩnh* during the 10 years since their 2014 inscription in UNESCO’s list of intangible heritage?

2. Literature review

2.1. The concept of cultural preservation

The concept of “preservation”, particularly in relation to intangible heritage, has been approached in diverse ways, with a consensus among researchers that the process should be practical and adaptive. Yuan (n.d.) suggests that “the intangible cultural heritage of historic areas consists of three aspects: *firstly*, the entire layout of the area, which defines its identity; *secondly*, the lifestyle of the inhabitants, which gives the area life; and *thirdly*, traditional crafts, folklore, drama, and similar elements that originate from the historic area.” In 2014, the Ministry of Culture, Sport, and Tourism outlined preservation approaches for *Ví, Giặm Nghệ Tĩnh*, noting that, “there are no customs restricting access to *Ví, Giặm Nghệ Tĩnh*. Everyone can sing and improvise new songs in ways that fit the context and situation. This openness and accessibility have enabled these songs to be integrated widely into musical compositions, products, performances, and research. The safeguarding measures, as detailed in 3.b.(i), aim to popularize *Ví, Giặm Nghệ Tĩnh* and to ensure easier and broader access to information on this heritage in the future”.

Trịnh Thị Hồng Lựu emphasized that “to truly preserve *Ví, Giặm Nghệ Tĩnh*, they should be performed in real-life settings, rather than just on the stage” (Quang Đại, 2022). In other words, the focus should be on integrating them into everyday life, not just as formal performances. The challenge then becomes about how to organize communities to perform in such authentic settings. According to the Ministry of Culture, Sport and Tourism (2014), “Today, *Ví, Giặm Nghệ Tĩnh* are commonly

performed at community cultural events and sung by artists on theatrical stages. These songs are deeply connected to the lifestyles and customs of the Nghệ Tĩnh communities, maintaining strong vitality in contemporary life and having been passed down, preserved, and promoted over time.” Elsewhere, Wang and Woramitmaitree (2024) further noted that by being performed in daily life, “songs are not merely preserved; they are cherished, understood, and celebrated by new generations.”

2.2. Keeping the original reality or making transformation in the process of preservation

Researchers worldwide have shown interest in finding ways to preserve intangible heritage. Takamitsu (2023) stated that “Preserving and implementing intangible cultural heritage through traditional methods is beneficial for its environmental sustainability.” However, maintaining the original form of intangible heritage proves to be challenging due to a lack of audience interest, which in turn limits its opportunities for wider dissemination (Bá Mạnh & Thanh Thủy, 2023). The decision of keeping the original form or making transformation in the process of preservation varies greatly, and it is easier to be said than done. The spirit of the traditional heritage should be kept at best for the future generations.

2.3. Ví, Giặm Nghệ Tĩnh singing

The Ministry of Culture, Sport, and Tourism (2014) described *Ví, Giặm Nghệ Tĩnh* as “two related forms of folk songs performed without instrumental accompaniment, created by the Nghệ Tĩnh communities over hundreds of years. These songs are practiced in villages and are closely tied to people’s work and daily lives. For example, they are sung while cultivating rice in the fields, rowing boats, making conical hats, and lulling children to sleep. Ví songs are named based on the context in which they are performed, such as ‘rice-seedling transplanting Ví,’ ‘conical-hat making Ví,’ or ‘weaving Ví.’ Giặm songs also come in different forms, including ‘lullaby Giặm,’ ‘narrative Giặm,’ and ‘advice Giặm’.

The Ministry further noted that the lyrics of Ví and Giặm use the specific dialect and linguistic expressions of the Nghệ Tĩnh region, with practitioners singing in the distinct voice characteristic of the local people. The songs employ various poetic forms and meters, including pairs of six- and eight-syllable lines, as well as variations of these for Ví, and five-syllable lines for Giặm. Ví is performed in three styles: non-alternating, alternating, and ‘organized group’ singing, while Giặm is performed in two styles: recitative and alternating call-and-response

between boys and girls. Ví and Giặm can be sung separately or alternately. The benefits of practicing traditional songs are enormous, because “songs have demonstrated their potential as powerful educational tools, bridging the past and present, fostering cultural identity, and facilitating multifaceted learning” (Wang and Woramitmaitree, 2024).

According to the Ministry of Culture, Sport, and Tourism (2014), when Ví, Giặm Nghệ Tĩnh was inscribed as intangible heritage, several key figures in this folk tradition were recognized. “There were 75 Ví and Giặm Folk Song Groups, with notable ones including the Hồng Sơn, Ngọc Sơn, O Nhãn, and Thạch Khê groups. Numerous master practitioners were actively involved in performing and transmitting Ví and Giặm, such as Mr. Nguyễn Trọng Đồng (82 years old), Ms. Võ Thị Vân (49 years old), Mr. Trần Khánh Cầm (74 years old), and Ms. Vũ Thị Thanh Minh (58 years old). Additionally, several artists contributed to the preservation and promotion of the tradition, including Ms. Trịnh Hồng Lựu and Mr. Nguyễn Ngọc Át from the Center for the Safeguarding and Promotion of *Ví, Giặm Nghệ Tĩnh*, as well as Mr. Vương Ngọc Vinh and Mr. Nguyễn Ngọc Thịnh from the Theatre of Traditional Arts in Hà Tĩnh”.

2.4. Previous studies

The preservation and development of *Ví, Giặm Nghệ Tĩnh* have garnered significant attention from researchers both in Vietnam and internationally. In 2014, the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism submitted Nomination File No. 01008 for the inclusion of *Ví, Giặm Nghệ Tĩnh* on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2014a) detailed their characteristics. Additionally, UNESCO (2014b) issued a description and decision from the Intergovernmental Committee regarding the inscription of these songs on the Representative List. Vũ Anh Tú (2014) examined the policy mechanisms for their preservation and promotion.

Bùi Đức Ái (2022) proposed several methods for preserving and promoting *Ví and Giặm Nghệ Tĩnh* folk songs within schools. Nguyễn Phương Thanh (2022) examined the characteristics and unique values of *Ví, Giặm Nghệ Tĩnh* from the Nghệ Tĩnh region. Khánh Hòa (2023) outlined the development of the Center for the Conservation and Development of Ví Giặm Cultural Heritage - Loa Thành as a means of preserving *Ví, Giặm Nghệ Tĩnh*. In a different context, Khắc, et al. (2022) studied the case of Xoan singing in Phú Thọ province, focusing on the digitalization of this artistic heritage to conserve and promote it within contemporary cultural life. While the preservation of Xoan singing in Phú Thọ is not directly related to *Ví, Giặm Nghệ Tĩnh*, it provides valuable insight into preserving and fostering a national treasure.

In global case studies, Fan et al. (2024) explored the preservation and transmission of Youyang Chinese folk songs, emphasizing the importance of maintaining the original style of folk songs. Creutzenberg (2019) conducted research on the balance between preservation and change in performing arts heritage development in the Republic of Korea, or South Korea, proposing that change in real life is inevitable. Takamitsu (2023) investigated the sustainability of Japan's Intangible Cultural Heritage, noting that the key to success lies in the communities that foster such cultures. Toshiyuki (2019) examined the legal preservation of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Japan, suggesting that more measures were needed to address the demands of modern life. Jiaxun and Sarawut (2024) explored the educational significance of preserving and transmitting Chinese folk songs in Tongliao province, Inner Mongolia, highlighting the strong connection between local people and the benefits intangible heritage brings them. Li (2023) researched cultural communication and diversity along China's Grand Canal, focusing on folk songs as part of intangible cultural heritage. The study concluded that "the intangible cultural heritage of folk songs is an important representative," and that greater efforts are needed to preserve this heritage in everyday life (Li, 2023).

The Library of Congress (2008) suggested that "material culture is intertwined with ideas, memories, knowledge, skills, creativity, spirituality, emotions, traditions, and other intangible qualities. As much as possible, preservation of these intangible aspects of material culture, in conjunction with the objects they are associated with, is a goal of modern preservation efforts" (Library of Congress, 2008).

3. Methodology

For this research, the author employed a fieldwork method to gather and analyze data, which included surveying residents and administration officers, as well as conducting in-depth interviews. A total of 60 participants responded to the survey, conducted in the first half of 2024. The collected data from the information submitted by the Ministry of Culture, Sport and Tourism to UNESCO in 2014 for the inscription of *Ví, Giặm Nghệ Tĩnh* was also analyzed. An analysis of secondary documents is also conducted.

4. Findings

4.1. Human resources

As of September 2024, the field of *Ví, Giặm Nghệ Tĩnh* in Nghệ An and Hà Tĩnh provinces included 42 folk artists recognized by the Vietnam Folk Arts

Association, along with one People's Artist, 48 Meritorious Artists, five People's Artists, and 16 Meritorious Artists awarded by the President. The provinces the had 140 clubs (excluding those formed by the Nghệ An and Hà Tĩnh people outside their provinces), with more than 3,000 members from various age groups and professions.

Ví and Giặm folk song clubs are established based on the policies of local authorities at the commune, ward, and town levels, with the goal of practicing and passing down these folk song heritages within the community across generations. The activities of these clubs are often tied to the working lives of the residents, typically taking place during holidays, at festival time, and on a weekly or monthly basis. However, the clubs are responsible for covering their own operating expenses, and their activities are irregular, which impacts on the practice and transmission of *Ví, Giặm Nghệ Tĩnh* within the community.

Ví, Giặm Nghệ Tĩnh artists do not rely on singing as a profession, but instead participate in folk activities within government-established clubs (at the ward, commune, and cultural center levels) on a voluntary basis. While the artists vary in age, most of the current practitioners are middle-aged, and there has been limited success in attracting younger generations to continue the tradition. This lack of succession poses a significant challenge to the vitality and development of *Ví, Giặm Nghệ Tĩnh* today. The number of folk artists who preserve and perform traditional melodies is dwindling due to aging and health issues, making it harder to pass down the songs (Miên Thảo, 2022). Moreover, few young people show an interest in learning, resulting in less people to carry on the tradition. Among the artists, there are few who are trained to teach systematically and technically, with most instruction happening informally through word of mouth and via club activities. As a result, the resources available for teaching these songs are becoming increasingly scarce. To ensure the continued vitality and development of *Ví, Giặm Nghệ Tĩnh*, it is essential to implement programs, projects, and plans that encourage and promote club activities, as well as provide training for young successor artists.

4.2. Folk song teaching

Teaching traditional songs plays a crucial role in their preservation. As noted by Wang and Woramitmaitree (2024), "Songs have found a new lease on life in education through meticulous preservation efforts and community engagement." The teaching of *Ví, Giặm Nghệ Tĩnh* is carried out in various settings, including family and community activities, practice sessions at clubs, and formal education in schools, as well as in colleges of culture and arts.

In the field of education, some schools have begun integrating the teaching of folk songs into their curricula. However, the effectiveness of this approach

remains limited due to several challenges. One key issue is the lack of teaching staff that are properly trained in *Ví, Giặm Nghệ Tĩnh*, compounded by a shortage of instructional materials and inadequate facilities for teaching these songs. To address these shortcomings, a program is needed that highlights the role of practitioners and artists in the field of folk music, aiming to train and enhance the skills of teachers of *Ví, Giặm Nghệ Tĩnh* in both clubs and schools. Drawing on global experiences in folk song education is valuable, as Bing et al. (2024) emphasize, “Educators need to have a deep understanding of the culture and history behind it.”

Training and teaching *Ví, Giặm Nghệ Tĩnh* at the provincial College of Culture and Arts has gained increasing public attention. The college has developed a curriculum to teach these traditional songs to students. However, it faces challenges in attracting students to enroll in traditional arts majors. Each year, the number of applicants for the *Ví* and *Giặm* folk song program remains low. To address this issue, it is essential to implement a policy mechanism that assigns graduates in *Ví, Giặm Nghệ Tĩnh* to work with the provincial art troupe, helping to preserve and promote this traditional art form. A valuable lesson from another Asian country suggests that, “Songs have been made possible through the involvement of local individuals, cultural centers, educational institutions, and government authorities. This collaborative approach has safeguarded these songs and fostered a more profound sense of community and cultural pride” (Wang & Woramitmitree, 2024).

To enhance the capacity for organizing activities and managing clubs, the Center for Preservation and Promotion of Nghệ An Folk Heritage (now the Provincial Traditional Arts Center) has been organizing training courses to exchange experiences and guide the development of clubs across the province. These efforts aim to involve all age groups, particularly the younger generation. Teaching activities are primarily conducted through *Ví, Giặm Nghệ Tĩnh* singing classes, where folk artists and renowned performers are invited to teach the younger generation. However, the number of participants remains low. As part of the 2021-2025 Project to Preserve and Promote *Ví, Giặm Nghệ Tĩnh*, the Provincial Traditional Arts Center has organized six classes for gifted primary and secondary school students in Nam Đàn, Đô Lương, Diễn Châu, Yên Thành, Vinh - Hưng Nguyên, and Thanh Chương; two classes for teachers at high schools in Nam Đàn, Hưng Nguyên, Nghi Lộc, Vinh city, and Cửa Lò town; and six training sessions for folk song clubs in various districts, cities, and towns across the province. These initiatives ensure that students not only learn the music of intangible cultural heritage but also gain a deeper understanding of the culture and history behind it.

The teaching of *Ví, Giặm Nghệ Tĩnh* has made some progress and achieved positive results, but there are still several shortcomings and challenges. One

significant issue is the declining number of practitioners who have a deep understanding of, and the ability to teach, *Ví, Giặm Nghệ Tĩnh*, as many are getting old and in poor health. Additionally, there has been no long-term strategy or plan to train the next generation of young practitioners, resulting in limited effectiveness in passing the tradition on to the younger generation.

4.3. *Space and performance of Ví, Giặm Nghệ Tĩnh*

Ví and *Giặm* are practiced in villages and are closely tied to everyday human activities, including farming, rowing, fishing, making conical hats, and lulling children to sleep. *Ví* singing features a single melody but is associated with different occupations and performance settings, resulting in various types such as *Ví phường cấy*, *Ví phường gặt*, *Ví phường nón*, *Ví phường đan*, *Ví phường vải*, and so on. *Giặm*, on the other hand, has two primary performance styles: singing and narration, and there are several genres, including *Giặm ru*, *Giặm kể*, and *Giặm nói*.

Many aspects of *Ví, Giặm Nghệ Tĩnh* are being lost for various reasons and are unlikely to be revived without attention from authorities at all levels, as well as investment and active community involvement (Phạm Ngân, 2023). The traditional spaces and methods for practicing folk songs, such as in labor, guilds, and professional associations, have been eroded by industrialization, urbanization, globalization, and the influence of modern and foreign music genres. In the past, efforts to restore the songs, traditions, and performance settings of traditional *Ví, Giặm Nghệ Tĩnh* singing guilds have been overlooked and not integrated with heritage performance and tourism development, which could benefit the local community.

The performance space for *Ví, Giặm Nghệ Tĩnh* has expanded beyond traditional settings such as banyan trees, water wharves, communal houses, rowing boats, and associated with activities like collecting firewood or fishing. Nowadays, performances are integrated into events such as festivals, conferences, weddings, and funerals, and are also associated with various community organizations like the Association of the Elderly, Veterans' Association, Women's Union, and Farmers' Association. In 2020, the Provincial Traditional Arts Center introduced art performance models taking place at venues such as the Kim Liên Relic Site, Hồ Chí Minh Square, the Nghệ An Museum, and Cửa Lò Beach, significantly contributing to the preservation, promotion, and global awareness of this heritage.

4.4. *Inventory, research, and documentation of Ví, Giặm Nghệ Tĩnh*

4.4.1. Inventory

The inventory of *Ví, Giặm Nghệ Tĩnh* is conducted in accordance with Circular No.04/2010/TT-BVHTTDL, dated June 30, 2010, issued by the Ministry of

Culture, Sports, and Tourism. The Department of Culture and Sports of Nghệ An has collaborated with local authorities to carry out the inventory across 21 districts, cities, and towns. According to the inventory results from 2012, *Ví, Giặm Nghệ Tĩnh* were present in 15 districts and 104 communes; currently, they can be found in all the province's one city, three towns and 17 districts.

4.4.2. Research and documentation

The *Ví, Giặm Nghệ Tĩnh* have been the subject of extensive study by numerous researchers across various fields. Hundreds of book extracts, articles, and scientific papers on these songs have been published in specialized journals. These studies cover a wide range of topics, including research and collection efforts, the origins and development of *Ví* and *Giặm*, training and educational resources related to the folk songs, and compositions these songs inspire. Nghệ An province also organizes various national and international seminars to address both theoretical and practical aspects of *Ví* and *Giặm* folk songs, focusing particularly on issues related to staging, preservation, and the promotion of their cultural values. Currently, efforts to compile and publish a collection of these folk songs suites are underway, with the aim of creating a body of valuable research and preservation resources.

While the *Ví, Giặm Nghệ Tĩnh* have attracted significant attention from scientists and musicians, there has been limited research on certain aspects. Specifically, there is a lack of studies addressing the development of these folk songs in the context of changing performance styles, the relationship between heritage preservation and local economic development or sustainable tourism, and how to reestablish the traditional folk singing troupes of Nghệ Tĩnh.

4.4.3. Dissemination and promotion

Local individuals, cultural centers, educational institutions, and government authorities play key roles in disseminating and promoting this cultural heritage. *Ví, Giặm Nghệ Tĩnh* are receiving growing attention from various ways. For example, *Ví, Giặm Nghệ Tĩnh* festivals are organized at the regional, provincial, and inter-provincial levels of districts, cities, and towns that practice this heritage. Additionally, folk song forms are integrated into festival programs and annual mass art performances, while efforts to preserve and promote the songs continue on both professional and non-professional stages.

The creation of dedicated pages, columns, articles, and reports on *Ví, Giặm Nghệ Tĩnh* through websites, social media, online theaters, and mass media plays a significant role in expanding their reach. Additionally, collaborating on the production of reports, documentaries, and the release of CDs and VCDs focused on *Ví, Giặm Nghệ Tĩnh* helps introduce this cultural heritage to a broader audience.

Following the success of the first *Ví, Giặm Nghệ Tĩnh* Festival held in 2012, Nghệ An and Hà Tĩnh provinces continued to collaborate in organizing subsequent ones in 2013, 2016, 2018, and 2023. Notably, the 2023 festival featured a range of meaningful activities, with strong involvement from the Vietnamese community both domestically and abroad in preserving, promoting, and raising awareness of this heritage. Since 2016, the promotion of *Ví, Giặm Nghệ Tĩnh* as extended to the Vietnamese community in Europe. These promotional efforts should continue to grow and expand both nationally and internationally, with a focus on 2030.

4.5. Facilities, costs and revenues of Ví, Giặm Nghệ Tĩnh performances

4.5.1. Facilities, equipment, revenues and expenses of clubs

The operating costs of clubs are primarily covered through self-funding and voluntary contributions. Some clubs and art troupes receive financial support from individuals and businesses. When they take part in competitions, festivals, seminars, or professional training events related to *Ví, Giặm Nghệ Tĩnh*, they receive partial funding from the state.

Under Resolution No.29/2021/NQ-HDND dated December 9, 2021, from the Provincial People's Council, support policies were put in place for practitioners and clubs in the field of intangible cultural heritage, and artists at the Nghệ An Provincial Traditional Arts Center. Clubs that operate regularly and effectively are supported with VND 5 million per club, while newly established ones receive VND 30 million per club. Meritorious Master Practitioners are given a monthly stipend of VND 1 million, while People's Master Practitioners receive VND 1.5 million per month. However, the facilities and equipment clubs and art troupes need, such as sound systems, speakers, and costumes, are often lacking. These groups typically rely on existing cultural institutions such as cultural houses or community learning centers, or on resources provided by the families of club members. As these grassroots art troupes incur expenses without generating income, they require more attention and financial support, along with programs and training to foster a strong leadership in the future.

4.5.2. Facilities, equipment, revenue and expenses of public service units

Currently, the facilities, equipment, revenue, and expenses of public service units are insufficient to meet the requirements for preserving and promoting *Ví, Giặm Nghệ Tĩnh* (Đức Ngọc, 2022). The traditional art center has a theater along

with facilities and equipment valued at approximately VND 2.7 billion. The value of the buildings and architectural works is about VND 6.77 billion, while the AV equipment is valued at VND 2.77 billion. Equipment for management is valued at VND 520 million. The land area of the first headquarters at 77 Nguyễn Du, Vinh City covers 7,579.5 square meters, and the second headquarters at 30 Nguyễn Sỹ Sách in Vinh city spans 2,449.5 square meters.

To address the deterioration of facilities supporting artistic activities, the project to build the Center for Preservation and Promotion of *Ví, Giặm Nghệ Tĩnh* Heritage was approved by the Provincial People's Committee under Decision No.4909/QĐ.UBND-CN dated October 28, 2015, with a total investment of VND 69 billion. The breakdown of costs includes: VND 47.887 billion for construction, VND 9.620 billion for equipment, VND 955 million for project management, VND 3.667 billion for construction consulting, VND 307 million for other costs, VND 500 million for compensation related to site clearance, and VND 6.064 billion for contingencies. Regarding funding, Decision No. 572/QĐ-BKHĐT dated April 20, 2017, and Decision No.6589/QĐ-UBND dated December 22, 2016, from the Ministry of Planning and Investment and the Provincial People's Committee, allocated VND 25 billion from the central budget and VND 37.1 billion for the project. Furthermore, in Decision No.4816/QĐ-UBND dated December 28, 2020, the 2021 Public Investment Plan included VND 6.9 billion for phase 1 from the central budget. To date, the full VND 69 billion has been allocated, matching the total approved investment. However, due to insufficient equipment and facilities for performing arts activities, the project has not yet been put into operation.

4.6. State management, development and implementation of policies to preserve and promote Ví, Giặm Nghệ Tĩnh

On December 2, 2010, the Nghệ An Provincial People's Committee issued Decision No.6247/QĐ.UBND.VX, approving the Development Plan for the Province's Culture and Sports Sector through 2020. The plan emphasized investing in the Center for Conservation and Promotion of Nghệ Tĩnh Folk Song Heritage to fulfill new roles, including research, collection, experimentation, preservation, and promotion of Nghệ Tĩnh folk songs (Hò, Ví, Giặm). It also called for the establishment of a network of *Ví, Giặm Nghệ Tĩnh* clubs throughout the province in districts, cities, and towns. The plan allocated resources and investment during the 2011-2015 period to finalize and submit to UNESCO the dossier for *Ví, Giặm Nghệ Tĩnh* for their inscription as representative intangible cultural heritage of humanity. Additionally, the Provincial People's Committee issued Plan No.703/KH-UBND to promote these songs from 2014 to 2020, Plan No.370/KH-UBND on June 25, 2015, to support folk song clubs in preserving and promoting the heritage, and the Project

for Preserving and Promoting *Ví, Giặm Nghệ Tĩnh* Heritage in Nghệ An province from 2021 to 2025 under Decision No.3122/QĐ-UBND.

However, some mechanisms and policies for the preservation and promotion of *Ví, Giặm Nghệ Tĩnh* remain insufficient, such as those for establishing a fund for intangible cultural heritage preservation, supporting community-based teaching, providing subsidies for folk artists, attracting investors, and implementing funding and revenue mechanisms through tourism. As a result, these policies have not effectively motivated or engaged the broader society. “The projects demonstrate the local government’s strong commitment to preserving and passing on cultural heritage. These efforts have not only safeguarded traditional culture but also contributed to local socio-economic development” (Bing et al., 2024).

The collaboration between different levels, localities, and sectors in the preservation and promotion of *Ví, Giặm Nghệ Tĩnh* is still weak. Associated efforts have not been integrated with economic and social programs, nor with the objectives of tourism development and poverty reduction in the areas where the heritage is practiced. Additionally, there is a lack of understanding on how to leverage the heritage for economic development.

4.7. The role of the community in preserving and promoting Ví, Giặm Nghệ Tĩnh

The community has taken an active role in practicing and preserving *Ví* and *Giặm* melodies, working alongside skilled practitioners, folk artists, professional artists from the Traditional Arts Center, and club members. They have played a crucial part in keeping these songs alive by composing new lyrics and teaching new members at community clubs. Singing lessons at clubs and schools during extracurricular hours have become effective ways to preserve and promote the heritage. The establishment, maintenance, and operation of these clubs, as well as their performances, have contributed to passing down *Ví, Giặm Nghệ Tĩnh* to the younger generation (Faculty of Tourism and Hotel, 2020). This network of clubs from the provincial level to local communities and schools, has helped ensure that every household is familiar with these folk songs, serving as key “cradles” for the preservation of *Ví, Giặm Nghệ Tĩnh*.

5. Discussion

In general, for intangible cultural heritage, society as a whole “must conserve and promote the intangible heritage and explore better methods to conserve them efficiently” (Yuan, n.d.). Throughout the preservation of any cultural treasures, it is

important to give due attention to the art performers. As Creutzenberg (2019) notes, “The artists, who perform these genres, while not unaffected by the expectations of their audiences, have the power to transcend traditional boundaries.” In other words, these performers are key players in the preservation effort, working alongside government policies to carry out this important task.

The policies of the local administration have proven to be effective to some extent (Việt Nam News, 2023). They align with the recommendations of Jiaxun & Sarawut (2024), who emphasize that “government policies and local initiatives must focus on both preservation and innovation. National and global preservation policies, supported by local government efforts, play crucial roles. Preservation measures include resource collection, professional education, and safeguarding related elements such as instruments and cultural contexts.” Additionally, the local administration has made efforts to incorporate folk songs into the region’s social and economic activities.

As Fausto & Juan (2023) highlighted, establishing a supportive creative environment, encouraging active participation from stakeholders, and reinforcing existing preservation efforts are essential for ensuring the long-term sustainability and cultural legacy of traditional intangible heritage. Education and preservation are interconnected, with the teaching and learning these songs playing a vital role in their preservation. The collaboration between local individuals, cultural centers, educational institutions, and government authorities emphasizes the importance of collective action in heritage preservation. Furthermore, successful initiatives to involve the younger generation have ensured the ongoing transmission and enhancement of cultural knowledge.

Those involved in preserving cultural heritage should also prioritize expanding their knowledge of music culture, enhancing their musical appreciation and cultural understanding. This includes gaining a deep understanding of the historical context and the spirit of the era in which the music was created, as well as recognizing and appreciating the language, charm, and stylistic features of the music.

6. Conclusion

The cultural administration should prioritize equipping the preservation process with essential recording and photographic equipment to establish comprehensive, enduring records. These are crucial to safeguarding intangible cultural heritage, as they facilitate effective inheritance and promotion of traditions that might otherwise be lost over time. By ensuring these resources are readily

available, cultural heritage can be preserved in a form that is accessible for future generations and can be more effectively shared within and beyond local communities.

Additionally, there is a need for increased personnel and funding dedicated to preserving intangible heritage. This heritage, which serves as the non-material core of rural revitalization, requires consistent support to maintain its relevance and vibrancy. The role of grassroots cultural administration is especially significant in this effort, as local officials and cultural workers are directly involved in preserving and fostering the growth of traditional folk songs and other cultural expressions that form the backbone of community identity and pride.

The growing dominance of technology in our daily lives is both inevitable and transformative, touching nearly every aspect of culture, communication, and heritage preservation. Rather than viewing technology as a threat to traditional practices, it should be harnessed as a powerful tool to facilitate and enhance cultural preservation. By carefully integrating digital solutions, one can support the continuity of traditional arts, allowing them to adapt to modern environments without losing their essence. Technology offers unique opportunities to broaden access, promote engagement, and ensure the longevity of cultural heritage, all while addressing the challenges posed by time and space limitations. However, for this approach to be effective, it is essential that technology be applied in a manner that respects and aligns with the cultural values and traditions it seeks to support.

For *Ví Giặm Nghệ Tĩnh*, a traditional folk music genres of Vietnam, the incorporation of technology can serve as a critical means of preservation and development. Facilitating online performances and establishing reliable digital storage methods are necessary steps to safeguard this art form for future generations. Digital archiving and virtual performances offer flexibility and accessibility, allowing *Ví Giặm Nghệ Tĩnh* to reach a global audience, connecting individuals who might otherwise have little exposure to this cultural heritage. However, while technology provides a platform, the motivation and effort to preserve this heritage must come primarily from within the community it represents. It is the people who hold the knowledge, traditions, and passion for this heritage who play the central role in its survival. Their active participation ensures that the art form is not only preserved in form but also enriched and renewed through the genuine dedication of those who carry its legacy forward. Ultimately, technology should be seen as a supportive instrument, enabling communities to share and sustain their heritage in a way that honors their unique cultural identity.

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