

Oral Traditions, Manuscripts, and Digital Preservation: A Study of Rajasthan's Folk Music within Indian Knowledge Systems.

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Abstract

The oral traditions have traditionally been viewed as a simplistic form of education, cultural accommodation and persistence, and transmission of knowledge. These traditions have resulted in the Indian Knowledge System. The folk music culture of Rajasthan, the Maand, Panihari, Phad, and folk heritage repertoires of both the Manganiyar and Langa people, are the living archives, which preserve the ancient Indian ideologies, ecological wisdom, moral uprightness, and social practices of the ecology of the desert, in it. Traditional oral pedagogy and community-based apprenticeship has been employed in the past to teach this knowledge; the existence of folk music groups in the indigenous people is now facing a grave danger due to intergenerational differences, declining patronage and urbanization. It is on this basis that the paper critically addresses the issue of digital preservation as an additional way of preserving oral wisdom in the Indian Knowledge System. The paper elaborates on how audiovisual documentation, manuscripts digitalization, local lyrical tales, metadata-based archiving, and AI-aided transcription can be employed as a tool of continuing the continuum of musically transmitted knowledge in the area without jeopardizing the cultural integrity of the area. It centers on the production of conventional custodianship, and a technology mediated pedagogical device to support access, generational transfer, and durability, which is defined through the Community Owned Digital Archive Model (CODA). The study has been conducted through a combination of qualitative and exploratory research methodology, reviewed within the lenses of Indian Knowledge System. Purposive Selection based analyzation is taken into consideration which include academic literature, policy and institutional reports, archival data, authenticated sourced studies in context to Rajasthan's folk music traditions, oral knowledge systems, and virtual heritage preservation. A significant attention is drawn towards the traditions such as Maand, Panihari, Phad, and the rich synchronization of the music in the Manganiyar and Langa communities. In-depth thematic categorization is done to come up with the latent themes related to oral pedagogy, cultural memory, community custodianship, ecological knowledge and digital preservation within the nature and scope of the locational extent of the Rajasthan.

The main argument of the research is the interconnection between the digital interventions and the native knowledge and community input; this networking can make the folk music culture of Rajasthan more robust and the knowledge systems more pertinent as the dynamic knowledge systems in contemporary India. ...

Keywords: Oral Traditions, Manuscripts, Digital Preservation, Folk Music, Indian Knowledge System.

Introduction

The Indian culture is founded on Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS). This was and still is the form in which the knowledge was orally passed on in the form of stories and songs as well as experience long before the school and book came about [1, 2]. There was never a simple question of memorizing things in the traditions of learning, learning was living, experiencing and passing on the lesson of the person to the person in relation to the world around them and the values that they held close to their heart [3]. The oral traditions did not simply constitute a form of communication, but the means of knowledge acquisition and retention as well as wisdom transmission [1, 4]. Folk music is a shining beacon of this. Songs do not just talk about celebrating, but also help communities to remember their background, get acquainted with their environment, teach them ideals, and bring them together [5, 6]. Living in the huge deserts where there were unbelievable cultures, folk music in Rajasthan such as Maand, Panihari, Phad, songs of Manganiyar and Langa families among other folk music has evolved as time and land

changed [7, 8]. These songs remind memory of how to discover water, how the seasons operate, how to traverse the earth and how to assist one another in a hard situation [6]. Having conducted research about the folk music of Rajasthan, one can see that such traditions are attached to land [5]. The dunes of sand, wells, winds, grazing trails and desert sporadic are also commonly referenced in the lyrics, portraying that the people are deeply attached to their music and their life [7]. This way, folk songs can be seen as living maps, passing information about the surrounding world to the new generation [4]. Folk music in Rajasthan is not merely a form of art; it is also an extremely vital way of sharing wisdom in harmony with the land and Indian Knowledge Systems [2].

Through generations, people have been training one another on musical traditions either in a family or a small community [5]. An example is the Guru-Shishya Parampara whereby a student is tutored by a teacher in a span of many years [2]. Learning in this case does not just entail copying tunes but also watching, listening and gradually incorporating into the music in real life and during special occasions [3]. Music is not an ability of such a family like the Manganiyars and Langas but a way of life, which relates to values, responsibilities, and culture [8]. Nevertheless, these traditions are disputed nowadays in many aspects. It is characterized by high urbanization; deterioration of old support systems and schools is largely focusing on knowledge on books other than practical knowledge [1]. Unless there is a vision about other careers, youths may have, it is hard to sustain music culture [6]. It is also the power of social media. Despite the fact that the internet has the capabilities to expose the folk musicians to wider reach, there are instances where some of the music is condensed into mini videos, and they are unable to maintain the meaning and connection to real life [8]. The following generation would not be studying with years of close instruction, and thus the same traditions would only have slight engagements with the music learner on the internet, and this would change the idea of learning and sharing music [5].

At the same time, digital technologies are giving high opportunities of persistence and continuation of cultural traditions [4]. The complementary tools to the roots of wisdom of the Rajputana state will be digitization of the manuscripts and lyrical stories, archive with metadata and AI-based transcriptions, which, in its turn, will not harm the cultural integrity as the soul identity [2]. Balanced and careful utilization of technology can help to improve the features of accessibility, teaching and generating new pedagogical space across generations without neglecting the oral traditions [1, 5]. The reflections of the academic literature indicate that the artists perceive technology with certain reservations in which they value visibility and survival, and also concern improper loss of fidelity, and more risks associated with AI voice replication [8].

The chapter is based on the factual and theoretical knowledge that reflects the analytical insight of the role played by online preservation under the Indian Knowledge System Framework [2, 4]. The chapter also takes the folk music of Rajasthan to the intersection of Indian knowledge systems, oral pedagogy, geography, and digital preservation and, therefore, is pertinent to broader debates concerning the future of the intangible cultural heritage and the future of indigenous knowledge [5, 6]. It underlines the need to put preservation aside as the repository of the information about the archives and to a path that recognizes folk music as a living store of knowledge in unrelenting performance, adaptation, and transmission by both traditional methods and technologically mediated methods [1, 2].

Thematic Literature Review

The Rajasthan folk music study is located on the border between various fields such as the Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS), ethnomusicology, folklore studies, and cultural geography, anthropology and heritage studies. The existing literature review will be a thematic literature review which will be critical and will assist in locating the current research within the bigger academic discourse and will assist in identifying gaps in conceptual and methodological terms.

Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) are an increasing subject of recent scholarly attention as alternative, situational epistemologies which are radically unrelated to modern western knowledge systems since the late 1990s. Instead of institutional validation and written texts, IKS itself is concerned with oral transmission, experience-based learning, ethical discipline and community validation as the relevant forms of knowledge production [9, 10]. This system produces knowledge through lived experience (anubhava), memory (smriti), and performance, and therefore remains entrenched in social relations and ecological environments. As the scholars put it, the orality of IKS does not signify any form of weakness or deprivation but rather a highly polished pedagogical method that may help preserve the rich bodies of knowledge across generations [1, 11]. The Indian Knowledge System is acknowledged for its validation as a rich repository of ecological knowledge, spiritual well-being, and community practices. This ancient Indian philosophy, designed within the social and cultural institutions, has been passing on

through the oral means of pedagogy [12, 13]. This epistemological tradition consists of the Guru Shishya Parampara, a tradition of pedagogy, based upon long term interpersonal interaction, observation, imitation, and embodied discipline. Learning is achieved. Folklores, even folk music has been understood as a living folk storehouse of indigenous knowledge in this greater paradigm. Ethnomusicological pieces have portrayed how folk music could be considered as cultural memory not only that histories, ecological settings, moralities, and even social structures are inscribed onto tunes, rhythms, and tales [14, 15]. This is unlike written archives where such musical cultures are reenacted through repetition, variation as well as social interactions thus guaranteed continuation and more so contextual reinterpretation is facilitated [4]. The musicians are also not only artists but the knowledge agents: historians, educators, commentators on social life [16, 17]. History shows that oral traditions have played a pivotal role in preserving age-old cultures and transmitting knowledge across many generations. In this regard, many scholars argue that these traditional practices not only act as repositories of cultural narratives but also as a medium through which communities decipher ecological wisdom, ethical values, and historical experiences [18, 19].

The folk music that has been depicted in the Indian case is the inscription of the experiential knowledge in terms of agriculture, seasons, rituals, kinship, and gender relations. It is established that oral histories in forms of songs have been inclined towards the conservation of views that are not documented in the history books, especially those of women and subalterns [20, 21]. The musical cultures are in contradiction with a dominant epistemology of writing to a decenter and community-based system of knowledge.

The folk music of Rajasthan can be an example, and the relationship between this music and the desert landscape and social structure is quite close. As the Maand and Phad folk music scholars testify, the music tradition is a continuation of the local history and heroic descent using a narrative function of music [22, 23]. In the same manner, the Panihari songs of Rajasthan, which were sung when women were taking water, have some information regarding the ecology of scarcity of water, toil and survival in the desert, which demonstrates that every-day practice is a place of knowledge production [24, 21]. The communities of hereditary musicians, such as Manganiyars and Langas, are well-researched as an example of oral traditions founded on lineage. Patronage systems, religious pluralism and traditional inter-community relationships that are syncretic images of the cultural terrain of Rajasthan patronize their music [25, 26]. These music traditions are learned in an apprenticeship and immersion way, thus the focus of IKS on embodied cognition and knowledge. These traditions, according to researchers, are a kind of decentralized archive, neither supported by institutional frameworks, but instead by social memory as well as social responsibility. Geographical studies also fulfill this knowledge by putting folk music in geographical and spatial contexts. The soundscape concept draws attention to the fact that the process of music is a human environment interaction [27, 15]. The song texts of Rajasthan, Desert, seasonal river, dunes and grazing trails are all components of the geography that are converted to story and sound. Folk music becomes a verbal map that may guide people in ecological circles and spatial literacy [28]. This follows the native systems of knowledge which are based on living in harmony with nature, adaptable, and environmental ethics [29]. However, these systems are now under attack in modern society. Urbanization, erosion of traditional support, new livelihood aspirations, formal structures of educational systems that place emphasis and focus on text-based literacy have weakened the community-based knowledge systems [30]. Scientists have observed that oral traditions tend to be reduced into fossil forms of practices in contrast with living practices in case they lose their social and performative contexts [31]. The field research on the topic in Rajasthan found out that the young generation tends to forsake hereditary occupations, which displeases the process of apprenticeship and transfer of generations [32]. Ethnomusicological research often sheds light on how folk music traditions and communities are closely connected to regional geography. The interconnection among music, landscape, and cultural identity is particularly evident in regions such as Rajasthan, where the songs' narratives reflect stories of migration, seasonal changes, and strategies of survival in harsh climatic conditions [33, 34]. Musical traditions that preserve local ideologies serve as cultural archives while strengthening collective identities [35].

The complexity of the folk knowledge passing process has also been added with the latest invention of digital media. On the one hand, online archives and social media have enabled more folk musicians to become more visible and available to their performance [36]. On the other hand, researchers have mentioned that digital media tends to break musical traditions into smaller fragments with higher focus on shorter pieces instead of meaning and context [37]. Digital preservation has been put forward as a measure of such issues as a weapon of cultural safeguarding of intangible heritage. Documentation, archiving, and transmission of heritage is one of the aspects of heritage sustainability that has been highlighted by UNESCO [30]. Audio-visual recording has been widely applied in preserving the endangered oral traditions, digitization of manuscripts, and a digital archive. Digitization of folk music and culture is another project that has been given attention in India and has led to the preservation process [38]. Scholars have been closely keeping track of the growing role of digital technologies in safeguarding

and disseminating intangible cultural heritage. This has surged the possibilities and wider accessibility of cultural repositories by storing them on multimedia platforms [39, 40]. Such explorations in technology have facilitated the spatiotemporal documentation of regional artistic forms in a highly systematic manner while enabling future generations to understand cultural engagements [41]. The new studies are concentrated on the application of the highly advanced digital technology, including the AI-aided transcription, metadata-driven storage, and the machine learning to systematize and analyze the huge quantities of oral data [42]. The possible directions of application of such technologies include the area of transcription of the lyrics, language documentation, and the analysis of melodies. As noted by critical researchers, however, there should also be the ethical component of consent, ownership, deceiving, and new problems of AI-generated voice duplication to the digital preservation [43, 44]. In the Indian Knowledge System paradigm, the digital technology may be considered the supplement to the oral pedagogy instead of being the substitute. [13] And [45] explain that an indigenous stewardship, community participation, and culturally appropriate governance should be a part of any preservation project. Community controlled archiving and metadata systems are thought to be significant in cultural integrity and epistemic justice preservation [46]. The scholars' understanding has also cautioned against technological intervention, which must be implemented with awareness and sensitivity to cultural context and community identities. Amid the increased use of digital tools, which has made accessibility just a click away, concerns about authenticity, cultural appropriation, and the loss of contextual meaning stand out, including fears of the detachment of traditions from their original contexts [31, 47]. The emerging trends in the Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning has led the documentation and analysis of indigenous musical data more classified. Studies have indicated that models based on AI-assisted codes can help in cataloguing musical patterns, analyzing the datasets and generating new means of archiving the cultural knowledge [48, 49]. Progress in research highlights the role of AI-generated music and creativity in sustaining vulnerable musical traditions. Researchers stipulate that how AI driven tools and techniques can act as an aid in recollecting the musical notes and patterns, analyzing lyrical structures, and promoting the cultural education initiatives [50, 17].

Overall, the literature indicates the importance of making sure that preservation of the folk music traditions in Rajasthan is not only documented but also in line with the indigenous epistemologies, cultural memory, and traditional pedagogical practices throughout the generations, shielding the unembodied cultural heritage. Applying digital tools on the principles of IKS and oral pedagogy that may be regarded as the living knowledge system, folk music will become an artifact that will be stored in the archives.

Objectives of the Study

To explore folk music traditions of Rajasthan as a constituent of the Indian Knowledge Systems, especially oral pedagogy, Guru- Shishya Parampara and transmission of folk knowledge through the community.

To determine how digital preservation technology including: audio-visual documentation, AI-assisted transcription, and metadata management systems can influence the preservation of orally transmitted folk music traditions.

Methodology

The approach of study has been acquired as a combination of descriptive and phenomenological research framework positioned within the Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) and ethnomusicological studies. This approach has been considered suitable for understanding the oral knowledge which has been over the years ingrained in performance, memory, first-hand experience, and cultural liveliness rather than written in the textual form. The study focuses on Rajasthan's folk music customs and conventions, specifically Maand, Panihari, Phad, and the musical exercise of the Manganiyar and Langa communities. The research is framed around purposive selection of existing repository data, policy and organization's reports and documents, intellectual literary examination, virtually available manuscripts, and audio-visual sources in context to Rajasthan's folk music legacy, endowment and Indian Knowledge Systems. The extent of research in the aspects of geographical location is finite to the state of Rajasthan with significant attention to buffer zones related to the folk music and conservations practices. These sources were considered to analyse the varied and interconnected processes of broadcasting information, novitiate, community wisdom, cultural consistency and stability, and the progressive nature of the technological advancements. A schematic analyzation was followed up with a proposal of a model termed as Community Owned Digital Archive (COAD). Ethical values of research has been kept in mind while marinating the sensitivity of indigenous knowledge, community respect and hierarchical cultural integrity of thousands of years. The methodology, henceforth is adopted to enrich the perspectives of the legacy carried forward be generations across the vast desartic intangible cultural landscape.

Result and Discussion

The findings are stated within the spectacles of the Indian Knowledge Systems, which aligns its knowledge which is deeply rooted and embedded in the everyday cultural notions. The significant observation noted the preservations of ecological wisdom, historical memoirs, and community values, performative understanding, hereby presented as living repositories which is not only safeguarding the principles and philosophies rather also maintain the hierarchical structural continuity of the kin.

Rajasthan's Folk Music as Living Knowledge Archives

Maand holds a unique place in the musical traditions of Rajasthan because of its long association with royal courts, nobility, and heroic stories [51, 52]. Maand has always been sung in praise of kings, heroes, and patrons [52]. It is not only a means of entertainment for the elite but also a living oral archive that retains genealogies, politics, territorial histories, and moral codes [31, 53]. In the context of Indian knowledge systems, Maand is a great example of how historical knowledge is retained in the form of performative memory and not written memory [4, 1]. The slow rhythm, stretched notes, and improvisational nature of Maand enable the singer to expand the narrative with contextual information [54]. The singers of Maand also tend to transpose historical events into contemporary social contexts, relating past bravery, loyalty, and morality to the present-day social values of the community [55]. This process of transposing historical events into contemporary contexts is an example of the IKS principle of continuity through reinterpretation, where knowledge becomes relevant by responding to the changing socio-cultural contexts [12, 56]. The results of the field interactions suggest that the singers of Maand consider themselves as the guardians of collective memory [35].

The Panihari songs, which were sung by women during the process of carrying the water to the well and the pond, are a phenomenal exertion of the meeting point of oral pedagogy and environmental knowledge and gender [21, 57]. Those songs, which are part of the everyday activities of carrying water, are an encoding of experiential knowledge regarding the water-scarce conditions, seasons, patterns of drought, and communal cooperation in a survival tactic in the dry Rajasthan environment [7]. The Panihari songs, unlike other systems of knowledge, represent a tool of conveying environmental knowledge by means of rhythm and repetition and participation [18]. Based on the India Knowledge Systems framework, an example of informal but effective pedagogic sites, in which environmental knowledge is constructed through practice, is the Panihari songs [58]. The results of the analysis prove that the songs can also be characterised by some sort of social commentary, during which women could express their worries regarding gender roles, work and social responsibilities [21]. The Panihari songs are, then, one way of maintaining gendered knowledge not normally codified in textual traditions hence the significance of oral traditions as an all-encompassing knowledge system [45].

Phad is a unique compound tradition with the synthesis of visual and musical narration and ritualized performance [23, 59]. Phad shows are based on folk gods such as Pabuji and Devnarayan whereby a painted scroll is slowly rolled and musical narrations made [52]. The multisensory pedagogical impact of this visual and auditory experience of scroll and the musical narration enhances the retention and attention of the story [60]. Phad is a typical or classic example of the whole knowledge transmission in the context of IKS whereby learning is spatial, visual, and auditory as well as performative [61]. Phad scroll is mobile and this feature allows the spread of the narratives to the other villages whereby the public locales become temporary knowledge transfer hubs [Blackburn, 1988]. The performers are the teachers and interpreters of the morals, historical events, and social ideals, and ritualized performances are the means through which it is done [62]. The paper concludes that phad performances are critical in strengthening the collective memory through integrating knowledge to the context of recurring ritual performances, which do not rely on a written text [11].

Manganiyar and Langa are the examples of hereditary lineages of musicians wherein musical knowledge was primarily transmitted through family-based apprenticeship and oral learning [54, 14]. Education occurs at an extremely low age in the form of observation, involvement, and later performance under the guidance of the elder members of the family which is very similar to the Guru Shishya Parampara [58]. Their musical repertoires consist of devotional songs, festive music, ballads and tales of history and these are a manifestation of the syncretic cultural religious activities of Rajasthan [25]. Historically, patron-client relationships have been central towards the sustenance of these musical traditions in which music was integrated into a network of social reciprocity and responsibility [63]. Such performances did not happen on the basis but on the basis of past existing social relations [64]. The research results indicate that musicians perceive their musical activities as a source of livelihood and they have a duty to carry on with it, a factor that makes them good custodians of culture [65]. The disappearance of conventional patronage, however, has threatened these musical collections and this underscores the need of adaptive preservation measures [66].

Within the Indian Knowledge Systems, the example of Manganiyar and Langa traditions demonstrates how music could be a holistic knowledge system, which covers history, ethics, spirituality, and social relations [67, 12]. When introduced within the context of community control and ethical management, digital documentation can prove to be an effective approach in order to create continuity and prevent any compromise in the integrity of knowledge transmission by oral means [37, 43].

Digital Preservation within Indian Knowledge Frameworks

The perception of digital preservation in the light of the Indian Knowledge Systems will not only need to be considered as a technological aspect of intervention, but it will also be the process of knowledge preservation that is coded in a culture [12, 57]. IKS practices are contrasted with the Western mode of archiving that is oriented on fixity and standardization of practice, and oriented on contextuality and flexibility, and on an ethical approach to relating to the knowledge-holders [45, 13]. Thus, oral pedagogy should not be replaced by digital technology but should be extended by it [18]. It is in the audio-visual recording where the musical shades, which cannot be preserved in the text transcription, are assured [68, 42]. Folk music pedagogy involves such items as voice quality, improvisations, rhythmic cycles, body motions, and audience participation among other factors [54, 14]. Since the folk music culture of Rajasthan is based on learning through observation and imitation, the video archives can be applied by the younger generation who may be geographically isolated with the knowledge-bearers [58, 65].

The field work interactions show that musicians find it convenient to record when they are supported in the context in respect to occasion, lineage and ritualistic role of performance [37]. The decontextualized recordings have the potential of killing living traditions into museum objects [69]. In Rajasthan, folk music is mainly of an oral nature, even though some communities also have handwritten genealogies, handwritten songbooks, and ritual literature [31]. Digitization of such materials is how threatened manuscripts are preserved, and such resources are restricted to research and learning materials [70, 71]. The capability to copy the oral recordings, digitized texts can become more interpolated between knowledge systems of memory and text associated with the plural epistemology of IKS [4, 1]. AI-assisted transcription opens the potentials of documentation of the endangered dialects and can be made available beyond the geographical limit [48, 41]. Nevertheless, the consequences also imply the phobias of voice cloning, misattribution, and authorship loss within the musicians [43]. It necessitates that the AI technology be accepted by the community; there should be proper attribution, and demarcation to rule out the commercial exploitation of AI technology [72]. The AI technology should help in documentation and not by replacing human performance [50]. The metadata-based archiving may be compared to the Indian knowledge systems in case the cultural context is to be introduced to it [39]. The inclusion of information to performances concerning region, community, lineage, season, ritual purpose, and other ecological characteristics will ensure that the digital archives possess relational knowledge as opposed to singular objects [37]. It will also result in the interdisciplinary study of music to geography, ecology, and anthropology [28].

The chapter provides the recommendation to incorporate GIS technology to map the geographical dispersion, source, and spread of the tradition of folk music in Rajasthan based on the geographical origin of the researcher [28]. This can be done by cultural mapping which can establish the links between geographical features such as deserts, water bodies, trade routes and music genres, therefore the argument that folk music is coded in the geographical knowledge systems [12].

Institutional Case Studies in Preserving Oral Knowledge Traditions

Case Study 1: Rupayan Sansthan, Jodhpur – Community-Centric Archiving of Folk Traditions in Rajasthan

One ray of hope of the conservation of folk tradition in Rajasthan is Jodhpur based Rupayan Sansthan. Through this, Rupayan Sansthan has been able to build good rapport with folk musicians, storytellers, puppeteers and traditional performing casts of Manganiyars, Langas among others. It is possible to compare this style of Rupayan Sansthan to the Indian Knowledge Systems one, which pays attention to the oral narrative, the performance situation and the community participation. The work of Rupayan Sansthan in the archiving of performances involves fieldwork and audio-visuality of performances, translation of lyrics into other languages, and the preservation of supportive discourses of rituals, geography, and social processes. Rupayan does not want to talk about the song's texts as separate artworks, but rather be more comprehensive, and this is what portrays the situation of performers. As shown in the case study, community-based archiving practice can ensure that knowledge of sustainability is achieved without interfering with the traditional oral pedagogies. However, resource shortage and sufficient management of digital archives are also an issue that Rupayan Sansthan is experiencing. Despite the digitization extending the accessibility of archives to researchers and educators, the

issues of community rights and permission are present. Rupayan Sansthan is, however, a shining example of the native preservation practice.

Case Study 2: Rajasthan Sangeet Natak Akademi- Institutional Support and Cultural Continuity

Among the institutionalized states in cultural organization is the Rajasthan Sangeet Natak Akademi (RSNA) that protects the folk music of this region, by offering recognition, training and documentation courses. It fosters folk festivals, awards master musicians and workshops as well which are attempting to transfer the wisdom of one generation to another. Such activities institutionalize culture policies in oral traditions. The interface where the community knowledge and institutional support interface is connected is referred to as RSNA according to the Indian Knowledge Systems. Its training sessions often invite the old folk musicians as a resource person and thus attempt to preserve the Guru-Shishya Parampara tradition even in the institutionalized structures. The audio-visual recording of performances preserves the performances too. Nevertheless, in a few cases, the Akademi is over-strategic in favor of institutionalized performances against the contextual learning which is the most striking characteristic of the oral traditions. The case study is eye opening on the collision of standardization as an institution, and oral traditions as something adaptive. Nevertheless, the role that should be played by RSNA cannot be underestimated as far as the creation of awareness and funds concerns folk arts.

Case Study 3: ARCE, New Delhi-Scholarly Digital Preservation of Ethnomusicology

Within the Archives and Research Centre of Ethnomusicology (ARCE) buried in the American Institute of Indian Studies, one of the largest digital repositories of Indian folk and classical music have been developed. It has information about the decades of performances of Rajasthani folk music, field recordings, photographs, and transcriptions. ARCE is an academic preservation that employs metadata-intensive preservation, formal cataloguing, and controlled access. The center preserves endangered musical traditions in the long term by transferring weak recordings of analogs into digital form. At the IKS front, ARCE faces the dilemma of staying academic and at the same time connect to the community because most of these materials have been produced in the setting of a specific social environment which can be very far off the present community. This case study demonstrates the importance of highly designed digital archives, as well as requires development of more active mechanisms that will be participatory and revert to the knowledge that is archived to the communities.

Case Study 4: IGNCA-Integrative Knowledge Frameworks

The Indian Government approach of preserving the intangible cultural heritage in India such as folk music incorporates the interdisciplinary approach by the Indira Gandhi National Centre of Arts (IGNCA). It combines music, anthropology, visual art, and even philosophy in such a manner that it is attractive to IKS to focus on the entire knowledge systems. Some of the digital projects by IGNCA include audio-visual archives, digitized manuscripts, and thematic exhibitions which place folk music in perspective within the bigger cultural narratives. In the example of the folk music traditions of Rajasthan, IGNCA has had a chance to correlate the musical traditions with ritual activities, natural environment, and the history of the land. This holistic practice views folk music as knowledge, and not an art form. Even though it cannot be disputed that constant interaction with performer communities and the threat of over academicization is a challenge, IGNCA is a remarkable instance of how IKS can be incorporated in digital preservation work.

Case Study 5: UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage in India and Policy-Driven Preservation

Indian vision of the protection of the living heritage can be inspired by the Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) strategy of UNESCO through informed documentation, active transmission, and engaging in community. Rajasthan also has folk traditions, which have been positively influenced as an indirect consequence of policy alignment with the ICH strategy of UNESCO which also focuses on the awareness, documentation, and capacity building. UNESCO does not maintain archives, but its policies promote societies and governments to be responsible and active in the community in the preservation. As the present case study demonstrates, the international policy may be considered as supporting local preservation projects, if it is cautious about the local epistemologies and it does not create the impression of one story of the world whilst ignoring the plurality of world histories. The mentioned institutional examples provide a wide range of possibilities to maintain the folk music in Rajasthan; such as ethnography of the community to the patronage of the state and the emergence of digital archives. The institutions that resonate with the Indian knowledge systems of valuing oral transmission, situational integrity and community custodianship are sure to make their folk tradition stay viable in the form of knowledge, not in the form of museum artifacts. Digital technologies are the most effective ones introduced in an

ethical and inclusive manner. Institutions, where helping is more valued than mining and perpetuating more than commercializing, have more long-term strategies to oral knowledge protection in contemporary India.

5.4 CODA Model: A Community-Owned Digital Archive Model for Preservation of Folk Music

On the basis of the outcomes of the research, a conceptual structure designated as Community-Owned Digital Archive (CODA) Model is designed and proposed as a mechanism for the sustenance of Rajasthan's folk music tradition underlying the wide notion of Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) [2, 12]. The model has emerged from the idea that the already prevailing initiatives have been focusing on the documentation and accessibility but are finite to the traditional wisdom of knowledge [37, 45]. The on ground interactions and schematic analysis has signified that the folk artists takeover to the notion of the preservation of the culture not merely just as the archiving of the performances rather enduring a living system of wisdom embodied across community wellbeing, cultural values, ecological interactions, and age old oral pedagogy [1, 18, 73]. The CODA model withstanding the basic principles of Indian Knowledge System, focusing on the belief of community custodianship, practical learning, intergenerational conveying, and morally accountability of knowledge [2, 12, 13]. Unlike the indigenous repository mechanism which has dominantly positioned communities as subjects of documentation, following on the line, the proposed framework caters to the local players, musicians, and knowledge conveyor at the frontline of the preservation process [45, 46]. The functioning of the digital technologies has enabled this model to act as a medium in the documentation, accessibility, and transmission while making sure that ownership and decision making authority remain within the reach of the communities [37, 42, 46].

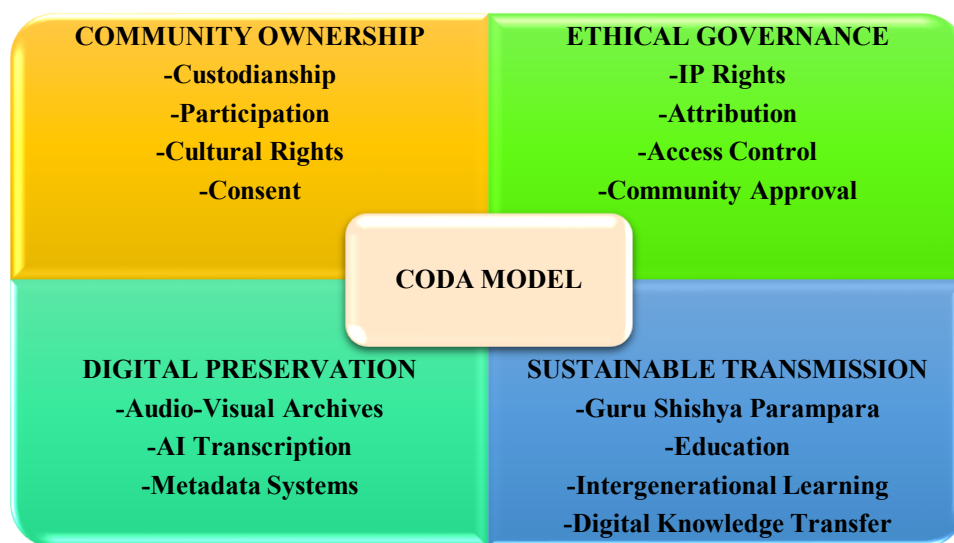
The proposed model comprises of four interconnected dimensions. The foremost dimension talks about

Community ownership, which highlights the indigenous practitioners as the key custodians of the cultural wisdom and provide the necessary sanctions required for the documentation, storage, and interpretation of their embedded cultural expressions and gestures over long time [44, 46]. The second aspect states about the Digital Preservation, which integrate the elements of audio-visual recordings, manuscript automation of manuscripts, classification on the basis of metadata, and AI-assisted encryption as features of protecting the endangered oral traditions [39, 41, 42, 48, 49]. The third direction of model defines Ethical Governance, which draws consent, credit, intellectual property protection, and a guarded access to the culturally sensitive guidelines in order to limit the commoditisation of indigenous knowledge system [43, 44, 72]. The last dimension takes the idea towards the Sustainable Transmission, which brings in notice the belief of strengthening generational learnings via community archival data, educational awareness, and promoting virtually available learning strategies [13, 58, 73].

The importance of this CODA model stands affirm in its strength to reconnect the age old knowledge structure with the contemporary technological innovations [12, 13]. Correcting the lenses to not to visualise the folk music as a steady cultural artifact, the epistemology of the model makes this visualization more dynamic which is evolving in nature because of the technical means of reinterpretation, community perception and the changing perspective of the performances at global level [4, 18, 31]. The model therefore streamlines the challenges which has been withstanding with the dwindling parameters of the preservation with the technological efficiency over edifying accountability of the technological interventions in the sustenance of the community values and cultural integrity [45, 46, 47]. With a practical outlook, the CODA model can aid in putting up a community-governed digital repositories, local or regional level folk resource base, collective recording projects, and educational framework structured within folk epistemology [38, 71, 78]. The model also dwells around developing opportunities which integrates the evolving hot-spot techniques, including artificial and digital mapping, underneath the ethical code and community guarded guidelines [28, 48, 49, 72]. Henceforth, the model upholds the principles of Rajasthan's folk music traditions while retaining the true legacy in contrast to the prevailing contemporary fusion culture dynamics across the country [1, 2, 12, 18].

The illustration shown in Figure 1, presents the Community Owned Digital Archive (CODA) Model. The layout unifies belongingness of the communities with the desertic landscape, virtual preservation techniques, moral guidelines and principles, and an approach towards sustainable spreading of the roots of folk raags, flowing with the shifting sand dunes. The model seeks to ensure the states regional identity held by the roots of the cultural dynamism throughout the year, giving it a recognition in the Indian Knowledge System.

Fig. 1. Community-Owned Digital Archive (CODA) Model for Sustainable Preservation of Rajasthan's Folk Music within Indian Knowledge Systems



Conclusion

The study looks at the folk music in Rajasthan as a component of Indian Knowledge Systems with a focus on oral tradition, the memory entrenched within the performance, and the community-based knowledge sharing as the pillars to construct knowledge [5, 6]. In the study of the Maand, Panihari, Phad and the folk music of the Manganiyar and Langa societies, it becomes evident that folk music is not only a cultural phenomenon but also a knowledge system that is alive and embodies historical memory, ecological knowledge, moral principles and social organization [7, 8]. The study further has stated that the traditions strengthened the fundamental features of Indian knowledge System through the means of oral transfer of knowledge, existential understanding, enhancing community custodianship and passing of knowledge across varied generations to come in and beyond the boundary. [2, 12, 13, 73]. As a result of this the study aims to secure and protect the unembodied heritage by showcasing how Rajasthan's folk music is functioning as a living archive of emotions which history has noted and the present has not forgotten. [30, 35, 80] These traditions are based on the guru-shishya Parampara and rooted in the experience of living and are not held in text but through embodied practice and involvement [5, 73]. Findings of this study establish the folk music on Rajasthan squarely in the realms of its landscapes and ecosystems, especially the desert where music is an oral record of how the people communicate with their environment, preserve water and conform to seasons [5, 6]. The gendered nature of the indigenous knowledge is evidenced by the musical traditions of women in the country including Panihari songs, which preserve experiential knowledge that does not fit into the knowledge system [7, 8].

Nonetheless, the research also indicates the actual risks in preserving oral knowledge. The problem of urbanization, loss of patronage, new livelihood goals, and education systems focusing on written literacy have compromised on apprenticeship learning [5, 6]. The digital media and social networking tools make performances more visible and available, and can also result in their dispersion and loss of connection with their cultural and educational contexts [8, 73]. These patterns highlight the susceptibility of oral knowledge within the dynamically shifting social and cultural environments [7]. This chapter explores the idea that digital preservation can help to support Indian knowledge systems, not to replace oral knowledge, but as a complement [5, 6]. Endangered repertoires can be preserved through audio-visual recording, digitized manuscripts and lyrical accounts, metadata-driven archiving, as well as AI-based transcription [8, 73]. But they work only in cases of ethical governance, cultural appropriateness, and community engagement [7]. The participatory archiving and context-sensitive documentation projects offer more opportunities to keep folk music alive as a dynamic knowledge system [5, 6].

Finally, the research indicates that the folk music of Rajasthan needs to have a future that is beyond archivalism but rather aiming at making the folk music more of a living epistemology [5, 7]. Folk music can be further developed, pass knowledge, and stay relevant in modern India by adding to it traditional oral pedagogy and a carefully designed digital strategy [6, 8].

7 Suggestions and Way Forward

The findings of the study indicate that the folk music of Rajasthan is seen facing significant counter-challenges over the westernized culture, like gaps in intergenerational transmission of traditional knowledge, skewed accessibility of digital tools for performers, and a strong will amongst the communities to uphold their native heritage practices alive. To bring to light these issues under the Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) framework, a lot of efforts are required in the preservation of the community-rooted practices, sustainable structures, and a policy framework. However, the country is home to over 3.3 million registered NGOs [74]; less than 2% are prominently involved in cultural activities [75], and not as many as 100 organizations must have been working specifically towards the folk arts and intangible heritage [76]; within this narrow range, empirical insights from the study suggest that fewer than one in three of the artists genuinely becomes the part of the inclusive bottom-up approach in decision-making.

The lack of implementation of the agendas of the institutions is clearly visible in the culturally dense districts of Rajasthan such as Barmer, Jaisalmer, and Udaipur, where this rich density is not consultative by prominent organizational support. Therefore, in this view, the study proposes a Community-Owned Digital Archive (CODA) model, which provides artists a platform to sustain intellectual property rights, sustaining the archives which are then being looked after by regional cooperative or self-help groups, followed up by a revenue-sharing mechanism; thus switching over to the platform where community ownership dominates the preservation of their cultural identities. Moreover, a micro-cluster comprehensive planned approach is suggested, noting down the rural cultural epicenters and these centers through annual micro funding of Rs. 10-15 lakh [77], along with the foundation of the Folk Resource Centers, which will be equipped with essential sound technology required for the recording and training facilities, bridging the tempo-spatial inequalities stated in the researched data. To reduce the digital divide, the study recommends the concept of a Digital Capacity Index for Folk Artists (DCIFA), as the primary findings state that around 60-65% of artists can be categorized into neophyte users, signifying the necessity of digital literacy and resource centers. Culminating the pathways of transition also mentions about the intervention with formal and informal system of education by clubbing the regional cultural knowledge with the policy framework such as National education policy 2020 [78], which talks about the idea of local cultural credits, artists-in-residence programs, and digitally prepared bilingual learning modules.

The paper also advocates for the sensible harnessing of the advancements in artificial intelligence while utilizing it for documentation and restoration purposes, along with the sanctioned protocols adhered to by the respective communities. Enhancing the cultural ecosystem through the collaborative efforts between the renowned institutes like the Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage and community-based groups can notably strengthen the accessibility and the efficacy. Besides, stated that a tiny fraction below 1% of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) funding in India is directed toward heritage [79], the policy framework suggests incentives, tax benefits, and the development of a committed National Folk Heritage Fund to guarantee constant financial wisdom and support. Significantly, a gender-inclusive ideology needs a focus, as women despite being the prominent tradition bearers since ancient times are still being undermined and underrepresented at the esteemed cultural platforms [80].

At a comprehensive note, the findings brings a concern that not only documentation appears as a challenge but at the same time the effectiveness of the institutions also stands as a matter of governance and equitable distribution of resources; therefore it is important to scale up the community-centered vision. The sustenance of Rajasthan's Folk Music as a dynamic, living knowledge archive is only possible through the collaborative efforts of the people itself, otherwise it is just a static archive, showcasing the endangered cultural norms.

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