

THE IMPACT OF CONTEMPORARY CAPITALIST SOCIETY ON THE DECLINE OF MUSICAL IDENTITY IN A CHANGING SOCIETY: *PANCHE BAJA* MUSICIANS OF RUPA RURAL MUNICIPALITY NEPAL

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Abstract

The purpose of this ethnographic study is to investigate the factors that have influenced the transmission of indigenous knowledge from generation to generation among Pariyar musicians of Rupa Rural Municipality, Mulpani & Saaldada, Kaski District, Gandaki Province of Nepal, especially in the context of Panche baja. It examines the current situation of challenges in passing on this knowledge and skills to the next generation. Additionally, taking into account the three main Panche baja instruments—Sahana, Narsingha, and Dholaki—this study recounts the indigenous knowledge system that was passed down from the ancestors and is now in use. In order to examine the phenomena from an insider's perspective, this anthropological study offers case studies. These findings, particularly when considering the system of knowledge transmission from the past to the future, could serve as the basis for education, conservation efforts, and innovation as well as attributes to enhance local knowledge and its transfer system, not just in Rupa but also in other societies of Nepal.

Keywords: Local knowledge, Panche Paja, Ethnomusicology, Identity, Capitalism.

Introduction

“Panche baja is a mixed ensemble of wind instruments (*Sahanai, Narsingha, Karnal*), drums (*Damaha, Dholaki, Tyamko*), and cymbals (*Jhyali or Jhyamta*)”, (Tingey, 1990). *Baja* literally means musical instrument, while *Pancha* literally means five. Played in Nepali, particularly in folk music, *Panche baja* is essentially a set of five classic Nepali folk instruments: the *Sahana, Dholakhi, Narsingha, Damaha, and Jhyali (Jhyamta/Jhurma)*. The two *Dholakhi*, two *Damaha*, two *Narsingha*, two *Sahana*, and a *Tyamko*

are all parts of the same set of instruments used in *Naumati baja* where *Naumati* literally means nine. “*Panchai baja* is played exclusively by a caste of professional musicians – the *Damai* – whose name is taken from the large kettledrum which characterizes the band, the *Damaha*” (Tingey, 1990). In Nepal, *Panche baja* is frequently performed, particularly during public events like weddings, *Bratamandha* (the ritual of donning holy thread), and special worship sessions like worshipping clan deities.

“The *Muluki Ain* of 1854 divides society into five strata: the ‘sacred thread wearers’, the ‘non-enslavable’ and ‘enslavable alcohol drinkers’ being pure castes, with group four being ‘impure but touchable’, and finally, the untouchable castes (*Pani nacaunya choi chito halnuparnya*). The sub-strata of the last group are ranked as mentioned below:

Kami	(blacksmiths)
Sarki	(tanners, shoemakers)
Kadara	(stemming from unions between Kami and Sarki)
Damai	(tailors and musicians)
Gaine	(minstrels)
Badi	(musicians)
Pore	(Newar skinnners and fishermen)
Chyame	(Newar scavengers)”

Source: Hofer, 1979, P. 45

“In Nepali society, hierarchy is reflected in the designation of occupation and assigned position, among other things that stay constant. Traditionally the *Damai* do not play for the *Gaine* weddings, but these days they do so for an appropriate fee, but they don’t accept food of the wedding feast. Similarly, if they play for a Muslim wedding, they will not accept cooked food”, (Tingey, 1990:98). It is difficult to unravel the intricate web that connects caste discrimination in Nepal. Despite legal remedies like as the Caste-Based Discrimination and Untouchability Act, cultural attitudes and traditional practices frequently reinforce inequality. Dalits, traditionally stigmatized as "untouchables," continue to endure exclusion in areas including as education, employment, and even access to public spaces.

“Case study is a qualitative approach in which investigator explores a real life contemporary bounded system (a case) or multiple bounded systems (cases) over time, through detailed in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information (e.g., observations, interviews, audio visual materials, and documents and reports), and reports a case descriptions and case themes”, (Creswell & Poth, 2018). These

case studies are of members of the Pariyar community who have engaged in playing *Panche baja* professionally since their ancestors till date. Rupa Rural Municipality Mulpani & Saaldada, Kaski District, Gandaki Province of Nepal, served as the site of the case study. The informants have been playing music for over three decades. They have played *Panche baja* at the majority of the villagers' weddings. They are among the few players in the community and its surrounding area.

Statement of the problem and research gap

“Change within the sociocultural realm of music can take several basic forms. One of these is *rise and fall*: in some way a music tradition gets established, expands, reaches its zenith (in terms of number of performers, status, cultural importance, *etc.*), and then declines and vanishes”, (Grandin, 2011). To conserve music or the musical identity of a caste-based community embedded in a specific culture of music, one must be conscious of the changing nature of society and the various dynamics that change alongside it in the past, present, and future. These kinds of studies are critical because they assist to determine the exact and right method for conserving local assets, with music being one of the most crucial rooted in the community and providing them with a strong identity in society. This study endeavor may assist people or new researchers in making contributions that will aid in the preservation of a community's musical identity, leading to future shifts. This research can't be generalized because it's limited to only Rupa Rural Municipality (Mulpani & Saaldada), Nepal.

As I began study on this specific topic, I explored publications of experts who conducted research in the field of music, particularly in connection to Nepali society like Carol Tingey, Ingemar Grandin, Kathryn S. March, Pirkko Moisala, Anna Marie Stirr, and so on. But I thought them lacking in this particular topic and attempted to add some more based upon the case studies. I didn't find any researches that underwent at Rupa Rural Municipality regarding the impact of contemporary capitalist society specially youth divergence on the decline of musical identity in a changing society. I hope this fixes the missing connections.

The primary objective of this ethnographic study is to investigate the elements that have affected the transmission of indigenous knowledge in *Panche baja*. It examines the current difficulties of passing on information and competence to the next generation. Additionally, this study explores the reasons why young people are diverted from the *Panche baja*.

Methodology and research design

Because this is ethnomusicological research, the approach used is ethnography. To understand what music is and what it means to its practitioners and listeners, ethnomusicology investigates music as a social interaction. Fieldwork is an important practice in ethnomusicology since it requires spending a significant amount of time immersed in the musical culture being studied. Because ethnography functions with the cultural setting, it proves to be the most important research method here. "Ethno" means people, and "musicology" means the study of music. In general, ethnomusicology can be defined as a comprehensive study of music within its cultural settings. The field of ethnomusicology is very multidisciplinary. "Thus, ethnography is description of the culture and way of life understanding that stems from the views of its people", (McIntyre, 2008). The area of anthropology known as ethnography focuses on the scientific depiction of peoples and cultures, including their cultural values and habits. "As both process and outcome of the research, ethnography is a way of studying a culture sharing group as well as the final, return product of that research", (Agar, 1980). Ethnography is a learning process for researchers (Gautam, 2024) and qualitative social research, which looks at how individuals behave in a particular social setting and how the society interprets it. Participant observation is a key component of ethnography as a method of inquiry, in which the researcher dedicates moments with surroundings or with the subjects of the study, in order to meticulously document social interaction patterns and participant viewpoints and to comprehend them within their native environments. "Research designs are plans and procedures for research that span the decisions from broad assumptions to detailed methods of data collection and analysis", (Creswell, 2012).

The study deployed a descriptive and analytical research design. In this study, primary data were gathered by personally administered semi-structured interviews and closed-ended questionnaires. Interviews and oral histories offer useful insights into the personal experiences, meanings, and cultural relevance of music for individuals and groups. Qualitative observations are those in which the researcher takes field notes on the behavior and activities of individuals at the research sites. Qualitative observation is a research method in which the researcher observes and notes the features or aspects of an event, with a focus on understanding the "why" and "how" rather than the "what" or "how many". Also, in qualitative interviews, the researcher conducts face-to-face interviews with participants, interviews participants by telephone, or engages in focus group interviews, with six to eight interviewees in each group. "A final category of qualitative data consists of qualitative audio and visual materials in the form of photographs, art objects, videotapes, or any forms of sound", (Creswell, 2012).

In order to find patterns, themes, and insights that may help researchers better understand human experiences and behaviors, qualitative data analysis entails methodically analyzing non-numerical data, such as observations or interview transcripts. Here narrative analysis is used where stories and personal accounts are examined to understand experiences.

Ethical consideration

During the research procedure, participants were thoroughly informed about the study's goal, procedures, potential risks, and benefits whereas confidentiality and anonymity were protected. Furthermore, harm was minimized and honesty, integrity as well as transparency were maintained to the greatest extent possible. Social responsibility was considered and intellectual property was well respected as per the regulations. Moreover, conflicts of interest were all disclosed, and researcher behavior and neutrality were taken into account. By adhering to these ethical considerations, researchers ensured that the research process was conducted responsibly, ethically, and with regard for the rights and well-being of all participants. The images and identities of the case study's informants have been revealed with informed consent.

Geographical setting of the study area

Rupa is a Rural Municipality, which is located in Kaski District, Gandaki Province of Nepal. Mulpani and Saaldada were selected as the case study site. One of Nepal's 753 local units is Rupa. Rupa is divided into seven wards. The seven wards that make up Rupa are dispersed in a 95 square kilometer region. Rupa is bordered to the east by Lamjung, to the west by Pokhara Metropolitan City, to the north by Madi Rural Municipality, and to the south by Tanahu district. 14,891 people live in Rupa as of the 2021 census. The Brahmin-Hill caste makes up the majority of the population in Rupa Rural Municipality. Gurung, Chhetri, Kami, Newar, Magar, Damai/Dholi, Thakuri, Kumal, Sarki, Muslim, Gharti/Bhujel, Sanyasi/Dashnami, Khawas, Dalit Others, Tamang, Bote, Rai, Dura, Badi, and others are among the other castes who reside in Rupa.

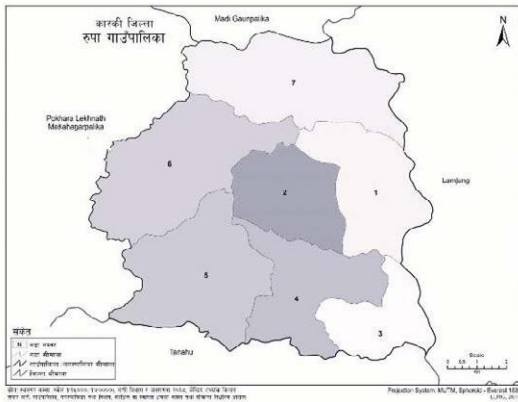


Figure A: Field Map of Rupa Rural Municipality.



Figure B: Aerial view of Mulpani and Saaldada in the backdrop.

Theoretical aspect

“The notion of a feudal order (or feodalite) emerged within European thought from the sixteenth century onwards, first within legal and then political discourse”, (Pocock, 1957; Kelley, 1970). Feudalism is a complicated network of connections based on land ownership and reciprocal responsibilities between lords and vassals. A capitalistic economic system is one in which private enterprises own and control the means of production, such as land, capital, and labor, with the purpose of profiting. As a result, dependence on land for production has been lessened, and earning and accumulating wealth has proven to be the most potent vehicle for gaining control over land and production.

“In the other route, the old landlord economy bound as it is by thousands of threads to serfdom is retained and turns slowly into a purely capitalist Junker economy”, (Lenin, 1905, p. 32). When the old landlord economy crumbled during the feudal period, the status of serf or feudal laborer eventually came to an end. After then, the concept of labor was permanently altered, giving workers thousands of unrestricted and free routes.

“Technology discloses man's mode of dealing with Nature, the process of production by which he sustains his life, and thereby also lays bare the mode of formation of his social relations, and of the mental conceptions that flow from them”, (Marx, 1867, p.372, n3). In contrast to capitalism, technology was less advanced during the feudal regime. The foundation of the industry, which finally gave rise to the cutting-edge technologies that eventually transferred the production pattern of the society, was the

main accomplishment at the beginning of the capitalist era. At last, the conventional landlord economy fell apart.

“Of all the instruments of production, the greatest productive power is the revolutionary class itself”, (Marx, 1847, p. 151). The foundation of the production system is made up of peasants, who are low-income smallholders or agricultural workers of low social standing who work in subsistence farming yet are invariably the ones who suffer the most and regarded as the sweated labors. However, the undercut revolutionary class, which has consistently opposed authoritarian regimes, has always been a key driver of historical change.

Discussion

The *Bali ghar bista* system of employment is an unfair barter system or discriminatory professional relationships between the ruling caste elite and the Dalits. Dalits rely heavily on their traditional caste occupation to assist their landlords and clients, who are primarily high caste elite Hindu. Dalits are mostly compensated with grains and other necessities in exchange for their labor rather than cash. In Terai, *Balighare* dalits include *Dhobi*, *Badi*, and *Hajam*. “Today amongst the hill-dwellers, the *Bali Ghar Bista* system still embraces the occupational castes of *Damai*, *Kami* and *Sarki*, although in many parts of Nepal the last group have virtually lost their traditional occupation of tanning and shoemaking, due to the influx of cheap ready-made shoes and sandals from China and India. Consequently, they have lost their patrons and rely on cash payments for seasonal agricultural work and portering as their primary source of income. *Damai* and *Kami* too, have had some of their work taken from them by imported ready-made garments and utensils”, (Tingey, 1994).

Case study

Society transition from feudal to capitalism

I. Kul Bahadur Pariyar: 69 years old *Damaha* player's son, Kul Bahadur Pariyar, relocated from Marjhyangkot Kaski to Rupa Rural Municipality (RRM)-4, Mulpani, Kaski District, Gandaki Province, Nepal. He first played *Narsingha* at the age of 25. When he was younger, he participated in a wedding with his older brothers and learned to play *Narsingha*. He used to be a passive member of the squad at first, but he eventually learned how to play *Tyamko* and, finally started playing *Narsingha* in the



Figure 1: Kul Bahadur Pariyar playing *Narsingha*.

later days which he bought from Tanahun for Rs. 400. He now owns a *Narsingha* that he purchased in 2078 BS for Rs. 10,000. He has never received any official training in playing an instrument. In the village, his father played *Narsingha* as well. He didn't receive *Damaha* during the asset division with his brothers as it didn't belong to his portion. Even if he wishes they did, his children have traveled to India and the Gulf countries in search of job opportunities and seem not to be interested in playing *Panche baja*. This indicates that the society has changed its method of production ever since it transitioned from a feudal to a capital society. As opposed to the feudal system, which restricted income making to the land, capitalism transformed it via globalization and technology into the accumulation of wealth, which may be done in an abundance of manners. Marx's account of the developmental trend of nineteenth-century European society is founded on the notion of the capitalist mode of production. "This notion, as represented in Marx's central theoretical work *Das Kapital*, involves a significant shift of emphasis away from the Smithian discussion of exchange relations within commercial society", (Holton, 1985). "The period from 1540-1640 has been identified by Nef as a phase of revolutionary change in the technical basis of the English economy, creating a decisive thrust towards capitalism", (Nef, 1934). Even though his instrument hasn't given him much, he is content with what he has and delighted to continue his musical career in the same way as his forefathers

Impact of modernization and globalization on local musicians

II. Suk Bahadur Pariyar: Suk Bahadur Pariyar, 63, a *Narsingha* player, has relocated to Rupa-4, Mulpani, from Maudada Kaski. He had no official experience in learning



Figure 2: Suk Bahadur Pariyar shows his first *Narsingha*.

music. He has been playing *Narsingha* for about 40 years, dating back to his father's time. He was eighteen when he first played *Narsingha*, which he bought for Rs. 800. He explains that the purpose of playing *Narsingha* in the wedding is to alert everyone about the wedding procession. His father was the son of *Damaha* player, who passed away at the age of 63. He has two sons who have gone overseas and have shown little interest in playing *Panche baja* or pursuing a career in it. Modernization has also had an impact on society, as local musicians have adopted new and modern methods of making money that are more efficient and relevant to the present scene and contemporary setting, allowing them to replace previous traditions. Globalization refers to

the rising interconnection and interdependence of nations throughout the world, which is fueled by the cross-border movement of commodities, services, information, and people. It simply indicates that the globe is growing more and more interconnected and dependent on one another. So, in today modernized and globalized world, it is apparent that individuals move from a region of the world to another in search of job and employment opportunities rather than clinging to old and conventional professions. He hopes they did, but they do not show any interest. But he is content with performing what his predecessors have done for centuries, which has given him a sense of identity in the society, and he hopes to continue playing *Narsingha* till his final days.

III. Lal Bahadur Pariyar: Lal Bahadur Pariyar, an 80-year-old *Narsingha* player is a resident of Mulpani. He formerly served as a Tailor Master in the Indian army for eleven years and six months, but he is now paralyzed and he spends his time at home, idle. In the beginning, he resided in the house he bought with Ganesh Bahadur Thapa for 4500 Nepali rupees. Aside from *Narsingha*, he played *Damaha* and *Jhurma* as well. In addition to playing *Panche baja*, he did some sewing. As a payment for sewing garments for the villagers, he would receive cereals and food grains, which he would gladly accept. Because they had no land to cultivate, the food grain they received was a good bargain for them. He learned to play *Narsingha* from his brother, *Maney*. Aside from this, he had no institutional or formal schooling through any other means. He recalls playing *Narsingha* for five rupees as payment. "*Taka muri dhaan*" was a frequent phrase at that period, with *Takka* representing one rupee, which could buy one *Muri* of rice grain which was supposed to be a very inexpensive purchase. So, he recalls the days when they had enough to eat thanks to their earnings from playing *Panche baja* or making garments.

He has three daughters and four boys, one of who died. They have a profession but do not play *Panche baja*. However, his grandchildren expressed an interest in it, and he purchased *Sahana* and *Jhurma* for them. Singha Bahadur Thapa, a member of the same village, bought him his first *Narsingha* in Kathmandu about 50 years ago, which he still keeps with care. He claims that, according to his elder uncle, *Narsingha* is on set of *Panche baja* to inform the bride's family about a joyful wedding procession where family and friends accompany the groom to meet his bride. He is really saddened by the Nepali community, for whom they performed the priceless *Panche baja* at the wedding ceremony but received hatred and caste discrimination in

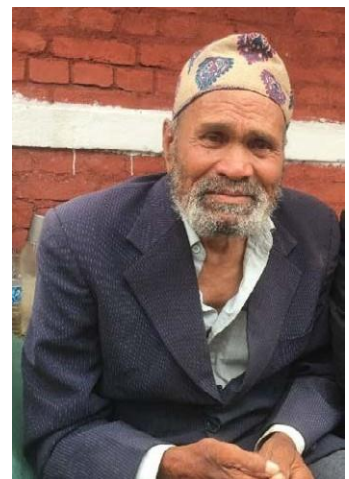


Figure 3: Lal Bahadur Pariyar at his house.

return. He recalls incident at Maudada attending a wedding as a *Panche baja* playing team and being subjected to caste discrimination just because they had a conflict with so-called upper caste inhabitants, for which he later paid a fine of fifteen hundred rupees.

Lack of formal institution in the production, transfer and application of knowledge

IV. Suraj Bahadur Pariyar: Suraj Bahadru Pariyar, a 56-year-old *Sahana* player is a resident of Rupa-4 Saaldada for quite some time. He traveled to India when he was 14 years old and worked there for 21 years before returning. He first learned breathing method (locally known as *Pawan fernu*) in *Sahana* and then learned to play the music by blowing leaves from the plant *Chai Chui*, which he subsequently integrated into *Sahana*. Later, he began to attend *Bhailo* and weddings with his seniors, where they guided him to maneuver the fingers around *Sahana's* finger holes, and he eventually learned to play it. Despite lacking academic expertise, he can recognize notes such as *Sa, Re, Ga, Ma....* using his ears. He wants to study the instrument technically and understand the scale, so he occasionally watches Zakir Hussain on YouTube but finds it tough. The skills they have inherited from their ancestors are in danger of going extinct since there is no official education or training of any type. Another aspect that shows the disappearance of local expertise is that younger generations are not interested in continuing their ancestral vocation of performing music. For knowledge to persist and



Figure 4: Suraj Bahadur Pariyar playing *Sahana*.

be transmitted on to future generations, scientific study and practice are necessary. “Knowledge systems exist through agents, practices and institutions that organize the production, transfer and use of knowledge”, (Cornell et al., 2013). His father was a local master in playing *Narsingha* and *Dholaki*. He has a son and two daughters who have no interest in *Panche baja*. His father wanted him to devote himself to *Panche baja*, and he desires the same for his boys. Even after his death, he wants his offspring to play the instrument left by his forefathers. He feels *Sahana* has given him a unique identity. He is relieved that, unlike in his father's time, there is no cast prejudice in music nowadays. The *Muluki Ain's* legalities have been dissolved since 1963, although only a small percentage of highly educated citizens or

modern city inhabitants disregard caste divisions. Nonetheless, rural residents with low literacy rates continue to hold conventional views about caste. "In an effort to shed the untouchability bias, the names *Damai*, *Sarki*, *Kami*, *Gaine* have been simply substituted by Pariyar, Nepali, Viswa Karma and Gandharva (celestial musician) respectively in Gorkha", (Tingey, 1994:88). He elaborates: "an instrument is just like a book that can be finished in terms of reading but not in terms of learning or mastering."

Capitalism disrupting the *bali ghar bista* system

V. Ramji Pariyar: 60 years old Ramji Pariyar, a permanent resident of Rupa Saaldada, plays *Dholaki*. He began playing at the age of 17. He left Nepal for employment in a foreign nation when he was 20 years old and returned roughly at the age of 45. He subsequently began playing *Dholaki*. His father used to play *Narsingha* and died at the age of 83. He has two sons and four daughters who have no interest in playing *Panche baja*. One of his two sons is currently in Malaysia. *Damai* and the *Bali ghar bista* system:

"In rural Nepal, the majority of *Damai* work within a traditional patronage system – *Bali ghar bista* (*Juga* in Terai) – which is simultaneously an economic organization and an articulation of ritual relationships between castes. Within this economic framework, cash payment normally doesn't feature, but services



Figure 5: Ramji Pariyar playing *Dholaki*.

rendered over the year are remunerated in kind, in crops and grain after each harvest, and traditional ritual gifts given on specific occasions", (Tingey, 1994). Owing to the abolishment of the *Bali ghar bista* system and the societal shift from feudalism to capitalism, the Dalits of Nepal are independent of this system and enjoy unbounded freedoms all over the world. They have a lot of alternative methods to earn money, but the simplest and most straightforward one is to go overseas to work, which eventually brings in a sizable sum of money. They may achieve financial freedom there without even having to deal with issues like caste prejudice and class conflict.

"Within the *Bali ghar bista* system the *Damai*, unlike other Indo-Nepalese occupational castes, has a ritual specialism – to provide auspicious music and blessings for all the religious obligations of his patron – in addition to his purely economic activities. In their capacity as musicians, *Damai* provide auspicious *Panche Baja* music for the life-cycle rites of *Chewar* (tonsure ceremony) and *Vratabandha* (sacred thread investiture

ceremony) for young boys, and marriage, to which may be added funeral processions in Far-West and East Nepal”, (Tingey, 1994). Currently, Ramji Pariyar is having difficulty acquiring a quorum to form a *Panche baja* band in his community since no young people are interested, and Ramji Pariyar and his contemporaries are becoming older. Their deviation from the traditional economic structure of a society is made possible by the fact that they are no longer required to give auspicious music and blessings for all of his patron's religious requirements. He wishes his son will play the instrument, but he has little hope. Because they are not passed down to their next generation, he fears that the skills they possess may eventually go extinct.

Absence of formal trainers in the present to generate future trainers

VI. Basanta Maya Damai: Sixty years old Basanta Maya Damai is the wife of the late *Sahana* player Dev Bahadur Damai, who passed away at the age of 60. After getting married at the age of twelve in Tanahu, Basanta Maya Damai, who was born in 2008 BS, moved to Mulpani. Her spouse, Dev, was about eighteen. When she married, she saw him playing *Sahana*. Dev's father played the *Dholaki*. He didn't know anything about playing *Sahana*. When Basanta Maya witnessed her husband making *Sahana* himself, he used guava tree wood and a brass bowl from a jeweler to make *Fuli* (the metal bell or sound funnel that flares at the instrument's larger end). She has two sons and three daughters. The younger son is in Saudi Arabia, while the older is in



Figure 6: Basanta Maya Damai displays remnants of her husband's *Sahana*.

India. At one point, elder one attempted to play *Sahana* during the rally march but was unable to continue. *Panche baja* did not pique their curiosity. My spouse played *Sahana* all of his life, and I'm so happy for him. She says, “*Baja bajhaunu thik ho*”. However, my child didn't play it, even if I wish they had. Her spouse could play it on the spur of the moment, but he lacked any formal training or understanding. The remainings of the *Sahana* that her husband used to play is still with her. She hopes that future generations will also pursue *Panche baja*, but the issue is that they lack qualified instructors who might instruct their child or grandchild in order to pursue a profession in *Panche baja* in the future. “Indigenous Knowledge is defined as a systematic body of knowledge acquired by local people through the accumulation of

experiences, informal experiments and intimate understanding of the environment in a given culture”, (Rajasekan, 1992).

Dhan Bahadur Gurung from Gorkha has been a professional flute player for decades. For a decade, he has also played *Sahana* alongside others. He instructs youngsters in *Sahana* playing skills and has been performing *Sahana* at the recording studio. According to Dhan Bdr. Gurung, the Pariyar community, which has been performing *Sahana* for decades, lacks scientific information about it. They randomly play the tunes and discover the notes as they hear in the audio, but they have no concept about *Sa, Re, Ga, Ma...* or any other fundamental knowledge of the instrument. "Indigenous information must be acquired, arranged, and transmitted in the same organized manner as contemporary knowledge since it is crucial to progress", (Agrawal, 1995). This indicates that, with the aid of unofficial experiments conducted in the local environment, local knowledge is first gathered from the ancestors, then organized, and eventually passed on to the following generations. According to Dhan Bdr. Gurung, the primary cause of the Pariyar community musicians' incapacity to pass on their traditional instrument-playing skills is a lack of scientific understanding of the instruments. Resham Pariyar, a disciple of Dhan Bahadur Gurung, has learned the *Sahana* locally from his elders and aspires to learn the instrument formally. In order to further safeguard the identity that the Pariyar community has held, Resham wishes to acquire the instrument scientifically and impart it to the next generation in his place.

Conclusion

This study attempts to identify and examine the elements behind the decline of a musical identity in a changing culture. Citations are made from the mentioned experts' works so that the study can be more reliably documented for future reference. The research was mostly hypothesized using the notion of social evolution. The inquiry is made more analytical by examining the transitional era of a society from feudalism to capitalism, during which the structure encountered challenges, mainly in the manner of production. During the social shift, capital, sometimes known as money, became the most prominent element of a community, rather than land. As a result, the reliance on land for production has decreased, and earning and collecting wealth has shown to be the most effective means of acquiring control over land and production. The research draws on Karl Marx's theory of social evolution, often known as historical materialism, which states that civilizations go through multiple stages based on their modes of production, which are powered by internal contradictions and class struggles.

As disputes occur and are addressed through revolutionary upheaval, societal changes become inescapable. Each stage is differentiated by a certain mode of production and a corresponding class structure. Another theoretical description is the *Bali ghar bista* system of employment, which refers to an unfair barter system or discriminatory professional ties between the ruling caste elite and Dalits. Dalits rely significantly on their traditional caste occupations to support their landlords and patrons, who are mostly high caste privileged Hindus. However, the surge of inexpensive ready-made shoes and sandals from China and India has almost eliminated their traditional occupations of tanning and shoemaking. As a result, they have lost their customers and now rely on cash payments for seasonal agricultural labor and portering as their main source of revenue. Thus, the move from feudalism to capitalism, modernity, and globalization are some of the key factors leading to the decline of a musical identity in a changing society.

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