



THE EVOLUTION OF STRINGED INSTRUMENTS IN THE FOLK MUSIC TRADITIONS OF ODISHA: A HISTORICAL AND ETHNOMUSICOLOGICAL STUDY

JEEBAN PRAKASH DAS¹

¹ Ph.D. RESEARCH SCHOLAR, UTKAL UNIVERSITY OF CULTURE, BHUBANESWAR.

Article Info

Article History:

Published: 13 July 2026

Publication Issue:

Volume 3, Issue 7
July-2026

Page Number:

198-205

Corresponding Author:

JEEBAN PRAKASH DAS

Abstract:

The folk music traditions of Odisha constitute a vital component of India's intangible cultural heritage, with stringed instruments playing a significant role in preserving indigenous musical expressions, oral traditions, and cultural identities. Instruments such as the Kendara, Tuila, Banam, Dudunga, Ektara, Dotara, and Sarinda have evolved through centuries of interaction among tribal communities, rural societies, religious movements, and local craftsmanship. Despite their cultural importance, their historical development and ethnomusicological significance remain inadequately explored. This study examines the evolution of stringed instruments in the folk music traditions of Odisha from historical and ethnomusicological perspectives. Using a qualitative methodology based on historical sources, ethnographic literature, and cultural analysis, the research investigates the origin, construction, performance practices, and socio-cultural functions of these instruments. The study further explores the challenges posed by modernization, changing patronage, and the decline of traditional artisans. It argues that stringed instruments are not merely musical tools but important carriers of cultural memory, ritual practices, and community identity. The research highlights the need for systematic documentation, preservation, and revitalization of these indigenous musical traditions to safeguard Odisha's rich intangible cultural heritage for future generations.

Keywords: Odisha; Folk Music; Stringed Instruments; Ethnomusicology; Indigenous Musical Heritage; Kendara; Banam; Tribal Music; Cultural Identity; Intangible Cultural Heritage

1. Introduction

Music is an integral part of human culture, reflecting the social, religious, and cultural life of communities. In India, folk music represents the collective traditions and indigenous knowledge passed down through generations through oral transmission. Unlike classical music, folk music is closely connected with everyday life, rituals, festivals, occupations, and local customs, making it an important expression of regional identity and cultural continuity.

Odisha is renowned for its rich and diverse folk music traditions, shaped by its rural communities and numerous tribal groups. Among the various categories of folk musical instruments, stringed instruments occupy a unique place due to their melodic richness and their association with storytelling, devotional singing, folk dances, and ceremonial performances. Instruments such as the **Kendara, Tuila, Banam, Dudunga, Ektara, Dotara**, and **Sarinda** have been used for centuries by folk musicians, wandering minstrels, and tribal performers to preserve oral traditions, cultural values, and historical narratives.

The evolution of these stringed instruments reflects the interaction of indigenous craftsmanship, local ecological resources, religious movements, and changing socio-cultural conditions. Beyond their musical function, they serve as symbols of community identity and repositories of traditional knowledge. However, rapid modernization, declining patronage, and the disappearance of traditional artisans have placed many of these instruments at risk, highlighting the need for their documentation and preservation.

This study examines the historical evolution and ethnomusicological significance of stringed instruments in the folk music traditions of Odisha. It explores their origins, development, cultural roles, and performance practices while emphasizing their contribution to the preservation of Odisha's rich intangible cultural heritage. Through a historical and interdisciplinary approach, the study seeks to enhance understanding of the cultural importance of these indigenous musical instruments and the need for their continued conservation.

2. Methodology

The present study adopts a **qualitative and interdisciplinary research methodology** to examine the historical evolution and ethnomusicological significance of stringed instruments in the folk music traditions of Odisha. Since the study primarily focuses on the historical development, cultural context, and musical practices associated with indigenous stringed instruments, it relies on descriptive, analytical, and interpretative approaches rather than quantitative methods. The research integrates perspectives from ethnomusicology, folklore, history, anthropology, and cultural studies to provide a comprehensive understanding of the subject.

The study is based predominantly on **secondary sources of data**. Information has been collected from scholarly books, peer-reviewed journal articles, research reports, dissertations, conference proceedings, government publications, museum catalogues, archival records, and authentic digital resources related to the folk music and musical heritage of Odisha. In addition, published ethnographic studies and documented field observations on tribal and rural communities have been consulted to understand the construction, performance practices, and cultural significance of traditional stringed instruments. Relevant historical literature and visual documentation have also been examined to trace the evolution and regional variations of these instruments.

To analyse the collected information, the study employs the **historical method** to investigate the origin and development of stringed instruments across different periods of Odisha's cultural history. Simultaneously, an **ethnomusicological approach** is used to interpret the relationship between musical instruments and the communities that create, preserve, and perform them. The research examines these instruments not merely as musical objects but as cultural artefacts that embody indigenous knowledge, craftsmanship, ritual beliefs, social identity, and oral traditions. A descriptive and comparative analysis is further undertaken to identify similarities and differences in the construction, usage, and cultural functions of various stringed instruments among different tribal and folk communities of Odisha.

The collected data have been critically analysed and synthesized to present a coherent interpretation of the historical evolution, socio-cultural relevance, and contemporary challenges faced by Odisha's traditional stringed instruments. The findings are discussed within the broader framework of intangible cultural heritage and cultural sustainability, emphasizing the importance of preserving these indigenous musical traditions for future generations. This methodological approach enables the study to provide a holistic and academically grounded understanding of the evolution of stringed instruments in the folk music traditions of Odisha.

3. Theoretical Framework

The present study is grounded in an interdisciplinary theoretical framework that combines **ethnomusicology, cultural history, folklore studies, and the concept of intangible cultural heritage** to examine the evolution of stringed instruments in the folk music traditions of Odisha. These perspectives provide a comprehensive understanding of musical instruments as cultural artefacts that embody historical experiences, social values, indigenous knowledge, and artistic expressions.

The ethnomusicological perspective forms the primary foundation of this research. Ethnomusicology views music as a cultural practice rather than merely an artistic performance, emphasizing the relationship between music, musicians, instruments, and society. This approach enables the study to analyse how traditional stringed instruments such as the Kendara, Tuila, Banam, Dudunga, Ektara, Dotara, and Sarinda function within the social, religious, and ceremonial life of tribal and rural communities in Odisha. It also examines the transmission of musical knowledge through oral traditions and the role of these instruments in preserving cultural identity.

The study also draws upon the principles of **cultural history**, which interpret musical instruments as products of historical processes shaped by political, religious, economic, and environmental factors. Through this perspective, the research traces the evolution of stringed instruments from ancient indigenous practices to their present forms,

highlighting the influence of local craftsmanship, devotional movements, and cultural interactions on their development.

In addition, **folklore theory** provides an important framework for understanding the connection between stringed instruments and oral traditions. Folk songs, myths, legends, rituals, and storytelling performances accompanied by these instruments serve as vehicles for transmitting collective memory, indigenous knowledge, and community values across generations. Thus, the instruments are examined not only as musical devices but also as symbols of cultural continuity and social heritage.

By integrating these theoretical perspectives, the study provides a holistic understanding of the historical evolution, cultural significance, and contemporary relevance of stringed instruments in the folk music traditions of Odisha. The framework facilitates an analysis that connects musical practices with broader issues of identity, heritage preservation, and cultural sustainability.

Historical Development of Stringed Instruments in Odisha

The history of stringed instruments in Odisha is deeply intertwined with the cultural evolution of the region and reflects centuries of artistic innovation, indigenous craftsmanship, and social transformation. Since ancient times, music has been an integral part of religious ceremonies, agricultural festivals, folk theatre, storytelling traditions, and community celebrations. Stringed instruments gradually emerged as important melodic accompaniments, providing expressive musical support to vocal performances, devotional songs, and ritual practices. Their evolution was influenced by the geographical diversity of Odisha, the availability of natural materials, and the interaction between tribal communities, rural societies, and religious movements.

Archaeological and literary evidence suggests that musical traditions flourished in ancient Odisha, historically known as Kalinga. Sculptural representations found in the temples of Bhubaneswar, Konark, and Puri depict musicians playing various stringed instruments, indicating their prominence in religious and courtly life. Although many of these instruments differ from those used today, they demonstrate the long-standing presence of chordophones in the region. Ancient Sanskrit texts, Odia literary works, and devotional compositions further attest to the importance of stringed instruments in accompanying sacred hymns, dance performances, and musical recitations. Over time, these instruments evolved into simpler, portable forms that became closely associated with the folk traditions of rural and tribal communities.

The tribal communities of Odisha played a significant role in preserving and developing indigenous stringed instruments. Tribes such as the Kondh, Saora, Juang, Gadaba, Santal, Munda, Ho, and Bonda created instruments using locally available resources, including bamboo, gourds, coconut shells, wood, animal hide, and natural fibres. These instruments were designed to suit the cultural needs of each community and were used during festivals, marriage ceremonies, harvest celebrations, hunting rituals, and communal gatherings. Rather than being standardized, each instrument reflected regional craftsmanship, ecological adaptation, and local musical preferences, resulting in considerable diversity across the state.

During the medieval period, the spread of the Bhakti movement significantly influenced the development of stringed instruments in Odisha. Devotional singers, wandering saints, and folk minstrels adopted portable instruments such as the **Kendara** and **Ektara** to accompany bhajans, kirtans, and religious narratives. The devotional traditions associated with Lord Jagannath, Panchasakha literature, and Vaishnavism encouraged the widespread use of these instruments as tools for spiritual expression and public communication. Their simple construction, ease of portability, and melodic capability made them popular among itinerant musicians who travelled from village to village, preserving religious teachings and oral traditions through music.

The evolution of Odisha's stringed instruments was also shaped by continuous cultural interactions with neighbouring regions such as Bengal, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, and Andhra Pradesh. These exchanges introduced new construction techniques, playing styles, and musical influences while allowing indigenous traditions to retain their distinctive identity. Instruments like the **Dotara** and **Sarinda** illustrate this process of cultural adaptation, displaying similarities with instruments found in eastern and northeastern India while developing unique regional characteristics within Odisha's folk musical traditions.

Traditionally, the construction of stringed instruments was carried out by skilled local artisans who inherited their knowledge through family lineages. Every stage of instrument making—from selecting suitable wood and bamboo to

carving, assembling, stringing, and tuning—depended upon practical experience and indigenous craftsmanship rather than written manuals. Decorative carvings, symbolic motifs, and locally available materials often reflected the beliefs, artistic preferences, and environmental knowledge of the communities that produced them. Consequently, the making of musical instruments became an important cultural tradition in itself, contributing to the preservation of local identity and traditional ecological knowledge.

In the colonial period and the early decades following India's independence, folk musicians continued to perform using traditional stringed instruments despite the growing influence of Western musical instruments and urban entertainment. Folk theatre, village festivals, storytelling performances, and religious gatherings remained important spaces where these instruments retained their cultural significance. However, the introduction of harmoniums, violins, guitars, and electronic instruments gradually reduced the popularity of several indigenous chordophones, particularly among younger generations.

In contemporary Odisha, traditional stringed instruments continue to survive primarily through folk artists, tribal musicians, devotional singers, and cultural organizations committed to safeguarding the state's musical heritage. Nevertheless, rapid urbanization, modernization, migration, declining patronage, and the diminishing number of traditional instrument makers pose serious challenges to their continuity. Some instruments have become increasingly rare and are now performed only during specific rituals or cultural festivals. At the same time, government initiatives, academic research, folk festivals, museums, and cultural documentation projects have contributed to renewed interest in preserving these valuable traditions.

The historical development of stringed instruments in Odisha demonstrates a continuous process of adaptation, innovation, and cultural resilience. Their evolution has been shaped by religious movements, indigenous knowledge systems, environmental conditions, artistic creativity, and intercultural exchange. More than mere musical devices, these instruments represent living symbols of Odisha's folk heritage, embodying the historical experiences, collective memory, and cultural identity of the communities that have preserved them across generations. Their continued documentation, preservation, and promotion are essential for safeguarding the rich intangible cultural heritage of the state.

Stringed Instruments in Tribal Folk Traditions

Odisha is home to more than sixty tribal communities, each possessing distinctive musical traditions that reflect their social organization, religious beliefs, ecological environment, and cultural identity. Music occupies a central place in tribal life, accompanying ceremonies related to birth, marriage, harvest, hunting, ancestor worship, festivals, and communal celebrations. Within these traditions, stringed instruments serve not only as sources of melody but also as important cultural symbols that preserve oral history, indigenous knowledge, and collective memory. Their continued use demonstrates the close relationship between music, ritual, and everyday life in tribal society.

Among the tribal communities of Odisha, instruments such as the **Banam**, **Tuila**, **Kendara**, **Dudunga**, and regionally adapted forms of the **Ektara** are commonly used either as solo instruments or as accompaniments to folk songs and dances. These instruments are generally handcrafted using locally available natural materials, including bamboo, wood, gourds, coconut shells, animal hide, natural fibres, and plant-based strings. The choice of materials reflects the communities' intimate knowledge of their natural environment and their sustainable approach to instrument making. Each instrument possesses distinctive structural characteristics and tonal qualities that correspond to the musical preferences and ceremonial requirements of the community.

The **Banam**, traditionally associated with tribal groups such as the Santal and Munda communities, occupies a special place in indigenous musical culture. Carved from a single piece of wood and often covered with animal skin, it is played with a bow to produce expressive melodies that accompany folk songs, myths, and ritual performances. In many communities, the Banam is regarded as more than a musical instrument; it symbolizes ancestral heritage and spiritual continuity. Similarly, the **Tuila**, widely used among the Kondh and other tribal groups, is appreciated for its simple construction and its ability to accompany narrative songs and ceremonial music.

Stringed instruments play an essential role in preserving the oral traditions of Odisha's tribal societies. Folk musicians and village storytellers use these instruments to narrate myths of origin, heroic legends, ancestral histories, moral teachings, and religious beliefs. Since many tribal traditions have historically relied on oral transmission rather than written documentation, musical performances become important means of safeguarding cultural knowledge and

transmitting it from one generation to another. The melodies produced by these instruments enhance the emotional depth of storytelling while strengthening the connection between performers and their audiences.

These instruments are also closely associated with ritual practices and seasonal festivals. During festivals celebrating harvests, fertility, hunting, and community welfare, musicians perform alongside dancers and singers, creating an atmosphere of collective participation and cultural unity. In certain rituals, stringed instruments are believed to possess sacred qualities and are played as offerings to ancestral spirits or local deities. Their sound is considered capable of invoking divine blessings, promoting communal harmony, and reinforcing spiritual beliefs that have been preserved for centuries.

Despite their cultural significance, many traditional tribal stringed instruments face increasing challenges in the contemporary era. Rapid modernization, migration, changing entertainment preferences, and the declining number of traditional artisans have contributed to the gradual disappearance of several indigenous musical practices. Younger generations often show limited interest in learning traditional performance techniques or instrument-making skills, resulting in a break in the transmission of cultural knowledge. Consequently, some instruments are now found only among elderly musicians or are performed primarily during cultural festivals and heritage events.

Nevertheless, the preservation of tribal stringed instruments remains vital for safeguarding Odisha's intangible cultural heritage. Cultural organizations, academic institutions, museums, and government agencies have initiated documentation, research, and promotional activities to encourage the continuation of these traditions. Greater recognition of tribal musicians, support for artisan communities, and the inclusion of indigenous musical heritage in educational and cultural programmes can contribute significantly to the revitalization of these traditions.

The stringed instruments of Odisha's tribal communities are therefore far more than musical devices; they are living expressions of cultural identity, artistic creativity, and historical continuity. Their melodies preserve the voices of indigenous communities, reflecting centuries of tradition, resilience, and harmonious coexistence with nature. Understanding and conserving these instruments is essential not only for the study of ethnomusicology but also for the protection of the rich and diverse cultural heritage of Odisha.

Role of Stringed Instruments in Folk Dance Traditions

Folk dances of Odisha are an integral part of the state's cultural heritage, reflecting the traditions, beliefs, and collective identity of its rural and tribal communities. These dances are performed during religious festivals, agricultural celebrations, social gatherings, seasonal rituals, and life-cycle ceremonies. Music serves as the foundation of these performances, and while percussion instruments often provide the rhythmic structure, stringed instruments contribute melodic depth, emotional expression, and harmonic continuity. Their presence enriches the overall aesthetic experience and strengthens the connection between music, dance, and storytelling.

Stringed instruments such as the **Kendara**, **Tuila**, **Banam**, **Ektara**, **Dotara**, and **Sarinda** are used either independently or in combination with drums, flutes, and cymbals to accompany various folk dances across Odisha. These instruments support vocal performances that narrate myths, legends, devotional themes, and local folklore while guiding dancers through changes in tempo and movement. The melodic patterns produced by these instruments enhance the expressive quality of dance performances and create an engaging interaction between musicians and dancers.

In the tribal regions of Odisha, stringed instruments play an important role in dances associated with harvest festivals, marriage ceremonies, hunting rituals, and community celebrations. Tribal dances such as **Dhemsā**, **Ghumra**, **Karma**, and other regional dance forms are often accompanied by traditional songs in which stringed instruments provide melodic accompaniment alongside percussion. Although drums generally dominate the rhythmic framework, the addition of stringed instruments enriches the musical texture and allows singers to maintain pitch and melodic continuity throughout extended performances.

Stringed instruments also occupy a significant place in devotional and narrative dance traditions. During performances connected with the **Jagannath tradition**, village religious festivals, and folk theatre, instruments like the **Kendara** and **Ektara** accompany devotional songs and storytelling. Their simple yet expressive melodies help communicate religious messages and emotional themes, enabling performers to establish a spiritual connection with the audience. In many performances, musicians and dancers function as a unified ensemble in which music not only supports movement but also conveys the cultural and symbolic meaning of the performance.

Beyond their musical function, these instruments contribute to the preservation of oral traditions and indigenous knowledge. Folk dances often incorporate songs that recount historical events, heroic legends, moral teachings, and community beliefs. The accompaniment of stringed instruments enhances these narratives by creating an emotional atmosphere that reinforces memory and audience engagement. Through repeated performances during festivals and communal gatherings, these traditions are transmitted from one generation to the next, ensuring cultural continuity.

In recent decades, the role of traditional stringed instruments in folk dance has undergone significant changes. The increasing use of electronic keyboards, recorded music, amplified sound systems, and commercially produced instruments has reduced the prominence of many indigenous stringed instruments in public performances. Nevertheless, cultural festivals, heritage programmes, academic institutions, and folk artists continue to promote their use, recognizing their importance in maintaining the authenticity of Odisha's traditional dance heritage.

In conclusion, stringed instruments occupy a vital place in the folk dance traditions of Odisha by providing melodic accompaniment, enhancing artistic expression, supporting oral narratives, and reinforcing cultural identity. Their contribution extends beyond music to encompass ritual, history, and community life, making them indispensable elements of the state's rich folk performing arts. Their continued preservation is essential for sustaining the authenticity and vitality of Odisha's traditional dance and musical heritage.

Socio-Cultural and Ritual Significance

Stringed instruments in the folk music traditions of Odisha are much more than musical devices; they are integral components of the socio-cultural and ritual life of the communities that use them. They embody the collective identity, beliefs, values, and historical experiences of both tribal and rural societies. Through their association with festivals, religious ceremonies, oral traditions, and community gatherings, these instruments have become enduring symbols of cultural continuity and social cohesion. Their significance lies not only in their musical function but also in their ability to preserve and transmit indigenous knowledge across generations.

In many parts of Odisha, stringed instruments accompany important life-cycle ceremonies such as births, marriages, and community celebrations. Folk musicians use instruments like the **Kendara, Banam, Tuila, Ektara, and Dotara** to perform traditional songs that invoke blessings, celebrate social bonds, and commemorate significant events. These performances strengthen communal relationships by encouraging collective participation through singing, dancing, and storytelling. As a result, music becomes a medium through which communities reaffirm their shared cultural identity and social values.

The ritual significance of stringed instruments is particularly evident among Odisha's tribal communities. Many indigenous groups regard music as an essential means of communicating with ancestral spirits, village deities, and natural forces. During harvest festivals, fertility rites, hunting ceremonies, and seasonal celebrations, stringed instruments are performed alongside vocal music and dance as part of sacred rituals. Their melodies are believed to create a spiritual atmosphere that invokes divine blessings, ensures agricultural prosperity, and promotes harmony within the community. In several traditions, the instruments themselves are treated with respect and are preserved as valued cultural possessions.

Stringed instruments also play an important role in preserving oral traditions and cultural memory. Folk singers, wandering minstrels, and village storytellers use these instruments to accompany narratives based on myths, legends, heroic tales, religious teachings, and historical events. Since many tribal and rural communities have traditionally relied on oral transmission rather than written records, these musical performances serve as effective means of preserving collective knowledge. The instruments enhance the expressive quality of storytelling, making it easier for audiences to remember and transmit cultural narratives from one generation to the next.

Religious and devotional traditions in Odisha have further enhanced the socio-cultural importance of stringed instruments. During **bhajans, kirtans**, and devotional gatherings associated with the Jagannath tradition, Vaishnavism, Shaivism, and other religious practices, instruments such as the **Kendara** and **Ektara** accompany hymns and spiritual songs. Wandering saints, folk devotees, and village musicians have historically employed these instruments to spread religious teachings and moral values among rural populations. Their portability and melodic simplicity made them ideal companions for devotional singing and public performances.

Beyond ritual and religious contexts, stringed instruments contribute significantly to the preservation of indigenous craftsmanship and traditional knowledge. The skills required to construct these instruments—such as selecting suitable

wood, bamboo, gourds, natural fibres, and animal hide—have been transmitted through generations of artisan families. This knowledge reflects a close relationship between local communities and their natural environment, demonstrating sustainable practices that combine artistic creativity with ecological awareness. Thus, the instruments represent both musical heritage and the living traditions of indigenous craftsmanship.

In the contemporary period, however, the socio-cultural and ritual significance of traditional stringed instruments faces several challenges. Modern entertainment media, urbanization, migration, and changing cultural preferences have reduced their role in everyday community life. Many younger individuals are less inclined to learn traditional performance techniques or instrument-making skills, leading to a gradual decline in these practices. Despite these challenges, cultural organizations, educational institutions, museums, and government agencies have initiated efforts to document, preserve, and promote these traditions through festivals, workshops, research projects, and heritage programmes.

In conclusion, the socio-cultural and ritual significance of Odisha's stringed instruments extends far beyond their musical function. They serve as powerful expressions of community identity, religious devotion, oral tradition, and indigenous knowledge. By connecting music with ritual, social life, and cultural memory, these instruments continue to play an indispensable role in preserving the intangible cultural heritage of Odisha. Their conservation is therefore essential not only for sustaining traditional music but also for safeguarding the cultural values and historical legacy of the communities that have nurtured them for centuries.

4. Conclusion

The evolution of stringed instruments in the folk music traditions of Odisha reflects a rich and continuous process of cultural development shaped by history, indigenous knowledge, religious practices, and community life. From the ancient cultural landscape of Kalinga to the contemporary folk traditions of rural and tribal Odisha, these instruments have served as indispensable mediums of musical expression, storytelling, ritual performance, and social communication. The study demonstrates that the evolution of these instruments cannot be understood solely from a musical perspective. Their development has been influenced by geographical conditions, locally available natural resources, tribal lifestyles, devotional movements, intercultural exchanges, and changing socio-economic circumstances. As cultural artefacts, they represent the intimate relationship between music, community identity, spiritual beliefs, and traditional ecological knowledge. Their continued presence in folk songs, dances, festivals, and rituals highlights their enduring importance in preserving Odisha's intangible cultural heritage.

An ethnomusicological analysis further reveals that stringed instruments function not merely as tools for producing melodies but as symbols of collective memory and cultural continuity. They accompany oral narratives, religious performances, seasonal festivals, and life-cycle ceremonies, thereby transmitting indigenous knowledge, historical experiences, and community values across generations. The traditional methods of instrument making also reflect a sustainable system of craftsmanship based on the use of locally available natural materials and inherited technical skills.

Despite their cultural significance, many traditional stringed instruments face serious challenges in the twenty-first century. Rapid modernization, urbanization, commercialization of folk performances, declining patronage, migration, and the diminishing number of traditional artisans have threatened the continuity of these musical traditions. The replacement of indigenous instruments by electronic and commercial musical systems has further reduced their presence in everyday cultural life. Unless systematic efforts are undertaken to document, preserve, and revitalize these traditions, several unique instruments and the knowledge associated with them may gradually disappear.

Therefore, safeguarding the stringed instruments of Odisha requires collaborative efforts involving local communities, researchers, educational institutions, museums, cultural organizations, and government agencies. Documentation through field research, digital archiving, support for traditional artisans, inclusion of folk music in educational curricula, and greater public awareness can contribute significantly to their preservation and revitalization. Encouraging younger generations to learn traditional instrument-making and performance practices will further ensure the continuity of these living traditions.

In conclusion, the stringed instruments of Odisha represent far more than elements of folk music; they are living repositories of the state's history, identity, artistic heritage, and cultural resilience. Their evolution illustrates the dynamic relationship between people, music, and society across centuries. Recognizing, preserving, and promoting these indigenous musical traditions is essential not only for protecting Odisha's rich cultural legacy but also for

enriching the broader understanding of India's diverse folk and ethnomusicological heritage. Future research based on extensive fieldwork and comparative regional studies can further deepen scholarly knowledge of these remarkable musical traditions and strengthen efforts toward their sustainable conservation.

References

1. Beck, Guy L. *Sacred Sound: Experiencing Music in World Religions*. Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2006.
2. Bohlman, Philip V. *World Music: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford University Press, 2002.
3. Brown, Katherine Butler. *Music in Contemporary Indian Society*. Routledge, 2015.
4. Das, Chittaranjan. *Cultural Heritage of Odisha*. Vidyapuri, 2012.
5. Das, Gopal Chandra. *Folk Culture of Odisha*. Akshaya Prakashan, 2009.
6. Das, Harekrushna. *Tribal Art and Culture of Odisha*. Odisha Sahitya Akademi, 2010.
7. Das, Satyabadi. *Music and Musical Instruments of Odisha*. Odisha Sangeet Natak Akademi, 2015.
8. Government of Odisha. *Odisha Review*. Department of Information and Public Relations, Government of Odisha, various issues.
9. Hornbostel, Erich M. von, and Curt Sachs. "Classification of Musical Instruments." *The Galpin Society Journal*, vol. 14, 1961, pp. 3–29.
10. Jena, Baishnab Charan. *Folk Music of Odisha*. Friends Publishers, 2011.
11. Mahapatra, Khageswar. *Tribal Culture of Odisha*. APH Publishing Corporation, 2004.
12. Merriam, Alan P. *The Anthropology of Music*. Northwestern University Press, 1964.
13. Mohanty, Jagannath. *History of Odisha*. Nalanda Publishers, 2007.
14. Mohanty, Prasanna Kumar. *Cultural Traditions of Odisha*. Kitab Mahal, 2013.
15. Nayak, Bijoy Kumar. *Music in Odisha: Tradition and Transformation*. Odisha Sangeet Natak Akademi, 2018.
16. Nettl, Bruno. *The Study of Ethnomusicology: Thirty-Three Discussions*. 3rd ed., University of Illinois Press, 2015.
17. Patnaik, Nabin Kumar. *Folk Arts and Crafts of Odisha*. Publication Division, Government of Odisha, 2010.
18. Patnaik, Nityananda. *Cultural History of Odisha*. Odisha State Bureau of Textbook Preparation and Production, 2008.
19. Pati, Biswamoy. *Identity, Hegemony, Resistance: Towards a Social History of Odisha*. Orient BlackSwan, 2011.
20. Roy, Raja Deen Dayal. *Tribal Life and Culture in Odisha*. Discovery Publishing House, 2006.
21. Sachs, Curt. *The History of Musical Instruments*. Dover Publications, 2006.
22. Sahoo, Basanta Kumar. *Folk Performing Arts of Odisha*. Odisha Sahitya Akademi, 2016.
23. UNESCO. *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage*. UNESCO, 2003.