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Cultural Echoes: Navigating the Legacy and Evolution of Bangla Musical Instruments or, Resonance through Time: A Journey into the History and Future of Bangla Musical Instruments

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The result is fascinating. Half of the respondents believe Western musical instruments have increased in modern and folk music. Nearly all respondents think acoustic and electric musical instruments are used more in our country. The majority feel that using electric and Western musical instruments has positively changed Bengali music, and the majority believe Western instruments have influenced Bengali songs.

The research aims to explore the history and future of Bangla musical instruments, utilizing a triangulation approach for credibility. The study provides a holistic understanding of the multifaceted music industry landscape, incorporating diverse perspectives and sources. This artefact explores the journey of instrumental music in Bangladesh from ancient civilizations to the present. It traces the roots of musical instruments, details their evolution from simple percussion to complex string and wind instruments, and highlights their diverse roles in cultural identity, rituals, social bonding, emotional expression, communication, education, entertainment, and cross-cultural exchange. The article emphasizes musical instruments' integral role in shaping diverse societies and cultural, social, and emotional landscapes.

I. Introduction

Music is an essential element in the history of human civilization. It is yet to be known when the first musical instrument was invented, but our prehistoric archaeology found traces of musical instruments. As Dallman, L. (2022) explains, "No historical evidence exists to tell us exactly who sang the first song, or whistled the first tune, or made the first rhythmic sounds that resembled what we know today as music (Dallman, 2022)". Musical instruments are essential elements of music. They play an important role in developing and preserving cultural identity worldwide. They carry deep historical, social, and symbolic meanings in different cultures, just as they create the melody of music.

Furthermore, they often have deep historical, social, and symbolic meanings in different cultures. Globally, key issues such as cultural identity, emotional and narrative expression, ceremonial and ritual functions, social cohesion, heritage preservation, cultural globalization, a global fusion of musical styles, tourism and cultural exchange, symbolism, and spirituality highlight the importance of music in artistic expression. They are closely tied to the cultural identity of the community and society. They often reflect a particular population's unique traditions, values, customs, and a tangible representation of their heritage. In addition, various musical instruments express a wide range of emotions in the storyteller's historical context. Human beings started to play early musical instruments in the Neanderthal age (Turk et al., 2020, p. 1), which helps us understand music's importance for the world. In the present time, other than music, they are related to physics. To describe the relationship between Physics and Instruments, Tronchin (2020) explains, "The sound characteristics of musical instruments, as well as their vibrational behavior, represent one of the most important and fascinating fields of acoustics, or even of applied physics (Tronchin, 2020)."

The definition of a musical instrument is broad. It is defined as a device (such as a violin, piano, or Flute) used to produce music ("Musical Instrument," 2024). Grove's online dictionary states, "Musical instrument' is a self-explanatory term for an observer in his society; it is less easy to apply on a worldwide scale because the notion of music itself in such a broad context escapes definition (2008)." Musical instruments interact dialectically with surrounding physical and cultural realities, and as such, they perpetually negotiate or renegotiate their roles, physical structures, performance modes, sound ideals, and symbolic meanings (Racy, 1994, p. 38). Chadabe (2002) defines a musical instrument: "At the rightmost extreme, an in-

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deterministic instrument outputs a substantial amount of unpredictable information relative to a performer's controls. In working with such an instrument, a performer shares control of the music with algorithms as virtual co-performers. The instrument generates unpredictable information to which the performer reacts, the performer generates control information to which the instrument reacts, and the performer and instrument seem to engage in a conversation. Interaction means 'mutually influential.' Since the performer's controls influence the instrument, and the instrument's output influences the performer, Chadabe called such instruments' interactive instruments' (Chadabe, 2002, p.2).

Group performance and communal music-making strengthen social bonds, promote a sense of belonging, and facilitate communication between individuals within a cultural context (Tarr et al., 2014; Klingelhoefer, n.d.). The use of traditional musical instruments helps preserve cultural traditions and practices. Passing down the knowledge of playing specific instruments from one generation to another ensures the continuity of cultural traditions. Whether it is a traditional Drum used in concerts, a string instrument carrying a sad melody, or a wind instrument expressing joy, musical instruments are powerful tools for emotional expression, and storytelling (Trendvin, 2023). Many cultures incorporate specific musical instruments into ceremonial and ritual practices. These instruments contribute to the sanctity of religious ceremonies, rites of passage, and other significant events, enhancing the cultural, and spiritual experience. They often play an essential role in fostering social cohesion within communities. They also act as cultural ambassadors, attracting tourists and facilitating cultural exchange. Traditional music performances and instrument crafts can become a source of economic and cultural exchange. Some musical instruments hold symbolic significance and are associated with spiritual beliefs (Chaudhuri N., 1973, pp. 14-27). The sounds produced by specific instruments are believed to have healing properties or connect individuals to the divine, reinforcing their role in cultural and religious contexts.

Bangladesh has a rich history of musical instruments as carriers of tradition, emotion, and artistic expression (Barua, Sneha, 2017). As Samit, A., and Ranjana S. (2022) say, "With a culture as rich and complex, the music made and delivered in Bengal is just about as rich and varied as others on the planet. From traditional to shake and society to reflection alongside a wide scope of feelings, anxiety, tension, love, holy and spiritual that goes inseparably with it, music in Bengal envelops and outperforms each sort (Samit & Ranjana, 2022)". The country boasts a rich and diverse history of musical instruments, serving as carriers of tradition, emotion, and creative expression. These instruments have played a crucial role (Observatoire du Mont-Mégantic, n.d.) in shaping the region's cultural fabric, reflecting the depth and diversity of its artistic heritage.

In the Indian subcontinent, the history of musical devices can be traced back to prehistoric times. Classical texts mention various instruments, such as the Natyashastra, a treatise on performing arts from the 2nd century BC. Indian classical music traditions, such as Hindustani (North Indian) and Carnatic (South Indian), have many traditional instruments. Instruments like sitar, Tabla, Sarod, Veena, and Mridangam have preserved and propagated classical musical forms for centuries. Indian musical instruments are known for expressing a wide range of emotions. The sitar, for example, can evoke deep emotion with its complex melodic patterns, while the Tabla, with its rhythmic complexity, adds different layers of expression to the music. Many Indian instruments carry cultural and religious significance. For example, the Veena is associated with the Hindu goddess Saraswati, the god of knowledge and arts. Shehnai is a traditional wind instrument often played during auspicious occasions and weddings. Musical traditions are characterized by regional diversity. Different regions and communities have various types of musical instruments. They essentially contribute to the mosaic of musical expression - for example, Sarangi percussion instruments (Ranjana, 2022)).

Traditional and modern musical instruments have heavily influenced the country's film music. The use of Flute, harmonium, and various percussion instruments is a defining element of the film score, adding emotional depth to the cinematic narrative. In contemporary times, there is a growing trend of fusion and experimentation with traditional instruments. Across the country and beyond, musicians blend classical instruments with modern genres, creating innovative sounds that resonate worldwide. Musical craft is an art form in this country. Master artisans carefully handcraft the Instrument, ensuring that each piece is a functional instrument for music and a work of art that reflects the region's cultural heritage (Malik, 1973, p. 218; Mitra, 1973, pp. 219-220).

The rich history of musical instruments in the Indian subcontinent is a testament to the region's cultural diversity and artistic legacy. These instruments symbolize tradition, passion, and creative expression, playing a fundamental role in shaping the country's musical landscape for centuries. Dandekar (2016) drew a captivating parallel between the instruments' melodies and the rivers' soulful songs. He eloquently described, "Rivers, definitely, but something more: a serenity, a lament, a contemplation. No chorus marred the beauty of this lonely questioning down the river. The notes were muted, starting with initial high notes, descending and meandering into low notes on which the songs were based" (Dandekar, 2016).

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This study explores the history and future of musical instruments in Bengali music, which resonates with cultural echoes in Bangladesh. A variety of Bangla songs are currently being combined with foreign musical instruments. This study also explores the thoughts of music managers, composers, lyricists, and directors.

II. Materials and Methods

Interviews were accompanied by different stakeholders in the music industry, comprising 20 renowned artists, 20 musicologists, 20 lyricists, 20 tuners, 20 music instrumentalists, and 20 media personnel. The selection of participants aims to provide comprehensive and multifaceted ideas and experiences for capturing diverse perspectives in music production. They can understand the music industry, incorporating various perspectives and expertise. A thorough exploration of existing knowledge was undertaken through an extensive literature review. It encompassed books, journals, articles, periodicals, and newspapers related to the subject matter. The literature review assisted as a basis for contextualizing the findings and discussions within the broader scope of the music industry. Having an established presence in a government-owned radio organization, the researcher leveraged personal observations gained through years of experience within the industry. This insider perspective provided nuanced insights into the music scene's day-to-day workings, challenges, and dynamics. These observations contribute a practical dimension to the study, complementing the theoretical framework.

Structured and semi-structured consultations were employed to collect primary data from the selected participants. Open-ended questions were considered to reassure participants to share their experiences, opinions, and insights. The interviews were conducted in person or through virtual platforms, ensuring flexibility and convenience for the participants. Qualitative facts study methods were smeared to the interview transcripts, incorporating thematic coding and content analysis. This systematic approach facilitated the identification of recurring patterns, key themes, and divergent viewpoints, enriching the depth of the study.

Moral strategies and principles were strictly followed throughout the research practice. Knowledgeable consent has been obtained from all people, ensuring their intended contribution and concealment. It involved cross-verifying information from discussions with insights from the literature review and personal observations.

This study combines diverse data sources and methodological approaches to comprehensively and robustly understand the music industry's multifaceted landscape.

III. Journey of Musical Instrument from Ancient Times to Date

It is believed that before people spoke, their voices had melody. Humans could make and play musical instruments using natural materials. Musical instruments in Bangladesh have a mysterious history. The glorious experience of musical instruments in Bangladesh is described below.

a) Musical instruments in ancient civilizations

Musical instruments have roots in ancient civilizations. Numerous archaeological finds and texts provide evidence of these instruments. Ancient cultures, including ancient civilizations such as Mesopotamia, Egypt, China, and the Indus Valley, developed a variety of instruments, laying the foundation for the global musical tradition as we know it today. These instruments served cultural, religious, and social purposes, reflecting the creativity and ingenuity of early civilizations in expressing emotions and traditions through music.

Encyclopaedia Britannica explains, "Musical instruments are almost universal components of human culture: archaeology has revealed pipes and whistles in the Paleolithic Period and clay Drums and shell trumpets in the Neolithic period. It has been firmly established that the ancient city cultures of Mesopotamia, the Mediterranean, India, East Asia, and the Americas all possessed diverse and well-developed assortments of musical instruments, indicating that a long previous development must have existed. However, there can be only conjecture as to the origin of musical instruments. Some scholars have speculated that the first instruments were derived from such utilitarian objects as cooking pots (Drums) and hunting bows (musical bows); others have argued that instruments of music might well have preceded pots and bows, while in the myth of cultures throughout the world, the origin of music has frequently been attributed to the gods, especially in areas where the music seems to have been regarded as an essential component of the ritual believed necessary for spiritual survival (Westrup & Grame, 2024)." Musical Instruments produce melodic sounds and may accompany vocal music.

Here are some examples of musical instruments from ancient civilizations.

i. Mesopotamia - lyre - a small harp-like stringed instrument widely used in ancient Mesopotamian art. Drums- Various drums, including cylindrical and frame drums, are often played during religious ceremonies and festive events.

ii. Egyptian sistrum—a metal rattling instrument with a U-shaped frame and metal crossbar, used in religious ceremonies and associated with the goddess Hathor. The Oud (Lute)—an early precursor to the Guitar, with a pear-shaped body

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and fretless neck, commonly played in ancient Egyptian music.

iii. In China, the guqin- a seven-stringed zither with a history dating back more than 3,000 years is often associated with scholarly and contemplative pursuits (Yan, A., 2018). Moreover, Bianzhong- a set of framed bronze bells used in ceremonial music during the Zhou dynasty.

iv. In the Indus Valley, Harappan Seal Instruments - Archaeological findings indicate images of musicians playing instruments such as Drums, Flutes, and stringed instruments on ancient Harappan seals. In the Indian subcontinent, archaeological excavations and ancient texts reveal a highly developed musical culture. The use of the banshi or venu, veena, and mridanga was known to the Indus-Valley Civilization. Apart from the vina, the Vedas refer to other instruments such as the dundubhi and bhumi-dundubhi (*Musical Instruments - Banglapedia*, n.d.).

These examples demonstrate the diversity of musical instruments across different ancient civilizations, highlighting their role in religious rituals, cultural events, and everyday life.

b) Musical instruments in the Medieval Age

Describing the Middle Ages, our country has plenty of famous musicians. The Middle Ages saw a mixture of Hindu and Islamic trends when the musical tradition was formalized under the patronage of the Muslim king, sultan, and Nawabs and the powerful Twelve Landlords known as 'baro bhuiyans' (Music of Bengal, 2024). Women were also vibrant Among the musicians. Srivastava, S. K. (1953) says, "In middle age, a middle-aged women's concert featured an accomplished female tantric instrumentalist where four female musicians played the Flute (Srivastava, S. K. 1953)."

Describing the continuous development of musical instruments, Chowdhury, Abul Hasan (2017) says, "Seven tones developed one by one in the Vedic period or earlier. At that time, most Tantra instruments were called veena. Considerably, music has evolved as we move past the Vedic age and into the Gandharva age. Musical instruments have also evolved considerably. Activities such as musical instrument making, playing styles, and various musical instruments show remarkable progress. As folk music has evolved, folk songs have evolved in their way. We have seen that different tribal communities have different styles of music and different types of musical instruments. Their shape, playing style, and sound beauty differ in many respects (Chowdhury, A. H. 2017)." "Many Persian musical instruments arrived in the Middle Ages. Exposure to Indian musical instruments changed them. Under the patronage of the emperors, the practice of music increased a lot. Hazrat Amir Khusrau was one of the greatest musicians of his time. He was a scholar and musician, a disciple of Nizam-ud-din Aulia (1253–1325), and in Sultan Alauddin Khilji's court, who ruled from 1296 to 1316. He is the pioneer of Kheyal-Gan (Chowdhury, 2017)."

It is marked that in the Middle Ages, Mughal emperors patronage music. Schofield, K.R., (2003) discovers, "For several years after this alleged episode, the official Mughal chronicler recorded male and female instrumentalists and dancers dominating the anniversary celebrations of Aurangzeb's coronation, including Rabab, Tanbur and Flute players, and the emperor's notable bestowal of 7000 rupees on his principal musician, Khushal Khan Kalawant. Several classical (dhrupad) composed in Aurangzeb's honor still preserved in oral and written forms bear witness to his active involvement as a patron of music (Schofield, K.R., 2003)". The last segment on this journey of musical instruments would be the idiophonic or autophonic instruments. These types of instruments produce sound without any strings or membranes. The entire instrument body is used to produce sound. These instruments are used mainly to keep pace and add a unique dimension of sounds to the other main instruments in a performance (Iris, Farhana, 2019).

c) Evolution from simple percussion to complex string and wind instruments

The evolution of musical instruments from simple percussion to complex string and wind instruments is a fascinating journey spanning thousands of years. This progress reflects the ingenuity of human creativity and the desire to explore and expand sound possibilities. As illustrated in Britannica, "Conventional Western thinking claimed that the earliest instruments were slightly modified natural objects such as bones, shells, or gourds. They played only one pitch and then evolved into more complex forms. However, it appears that bone Flutes from Neanderthal caves had finger holes. Recent archaeological finds in China included bone Flutes from 7000 BC that not only have seven finger holes but an additional aperture that may have been drilled to correct a poorly placed hole (Westrup & Grame, 2024) (*Musical Instrument | History, Characteristics, Examples, & Facts*, 2024)."

Here is a brief exploration of this evolution: i) Drums became prominent as civilization progressed. Various types of Drums, including frame drums, hand drums, and membranophones, were used for communication, ritual, and emotional expression. Drumming was essential in early society for both practical and ceremonial purposes. ii) Percussion instruments appeared early in the development of musical instruments. Simple handheld objects, such as rocks and logs, can create rhythmic sounds when struck together, which lays the foundation for rhythm in music.

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iii) The invention of the bow allowed the creation of stringed instruments, as seen in the development of bowed lyres and reeds. The bow enables sustained and harmonic sounds, expanding the range of musical expression. Moreover, Plucked Strings: The invention of plucked string instruments like the harp and the lute marked another significant leap. These instruments allow for complex melodies and harmonies, providing a more nuanced musical experience. iv) Using reeds in wind instruments introduced a new dimension. Single-reed and double-reed instruments, such as the Clarinet and oboe, emerged, allowing greater control over pitch and tonal quality. v) Early wind instruments were probably hollow natural objects such as animal horns, conch shells, and bamboo tubes. Musicians discovered that varying the length and shape of these tubes produced different pitches. vi) The development of the Flute involves the formation of tubes through finger holes. Bone and wood Flutes appeared in many cultures, producing tunes by controlling breathing and finger placement. vii) Innovations in keyboard instruments, such as the clavichord and harpsichord, allow for precise control of pitch and dynamics. These instruments paved the way for the further development of the piano. viii) The piano revolutionized music with strings activated by its hammer and keys (Powers, W. 2000, Tyler, J. 2002, Tyler, J. & Paul S. 2002, Chaudhuri, N., 1973b).

d) Bengali musical instruments

Traditional Bengali music is characterized by various musical instruments contributing to the region's cultural heritage. Ranjana, S. (2022) states, "Traditionally, musical instruments in Bengal are categorized into four types, based totally/partially on the material of which they may be made and partly within how they are played. Thus, they will be categorized as string, wind, metal, and disguised devices. Instruments like the Sitar, Sarod, Esraj, Surbahar, Tanpura, Dilruba, and Veena, which produce music through strings, are known as string devices. Instruments like the Flute and Shahnai, which might be performed by blowing, are known as wind Instruments. Metal units, together with Mandira and Kartal, produce sounds by hanging the metal body of the device. Percussion contraptions, including Tabla-banya, Dhol, Khol, Madal, and so on, are called disguise instruments because of animal pores and skin usage in making those instruments (Ranjana, S. 2022; jEducate, 2023)." These traditional instruments contribute to the region's distinctive soundscape. Tofa, Nazrul Islam (2019) argues about culture and folk musical instruments, "In the continuation of human civilization, the history of folk musical instruments is full of tradition, from the prehistoric era through the modern era, as if in the continuity of time, after many transformation cycles, many folk musical instruments have been embellished by the hands of rural people. So, people in every sphere of culture are enlivening rural events using totality (Tofa, 2019).

e) Historical Context of Musical Instrument in Bangladesh

With its rich cultural and historical heritage, Bangladesh has a diverse musical tradition deeply intertwined with its social, religious, and historical context. Musical instruments in Bangladesh are essential in expressing the people's cultural identity. Some key points outline the cultural and historical context of instruments in Bangladesh, such as folk instruments like Dotara, Flute, Drum, etc. Regarding folk instruments, Tofa, N. I. (2019) says, "Today's rural people's music or musical instruments are all folk instruments based on roots. They are Dug Duggi, Dugi Tabla, Jinjhani, Drum, Site Drum, Fulot, Cornet, Kongo, and modern-day instrument Casio. These are inextricably linked with today's folk culture (Tofa, 2019)." Classical Musical Instruments: Sitar, Sarod, Tabla. Tabola adds rhythmic intricacy and complexity to both classical and semi-classical performances. The Bengal Renaissance of the 19th and early 20th centuries profoundly influenced and revived the region's cultural and intellectual life, including Western instruments. With the advent and subsequent influence of colonial rule, Western musical instruments, such as the Piano, Guitar, and Violin, were introduced and integrated into the musical landscape of Bangladesh. This combination has led to the creation of contemporary and popular music genres. Some are central to various cultural and spiritual celebrations, such as weddings, festivals, and religious demonstrations. With its mystical and devotional nature, Sufi music has also left its mark on the musical culture of Bangladesh. Instruments such as harmonium and daf (frame Drum) are commonly used in Sufi musical expression.

We learned about different aspects of musical instruments in ancient and medieval literature, such as Charyagiti, Mangalkavya, Punthisahitya, and other scripts and books. Charyagiti is a type of song with two meanings: verbal and theoretical. Regarding material data, we find 12 different types of folk instruments. Mangalkavya is a type of Vaishnava literature in medieval Bengali literature. It includes resources such as the Ramayana, a translation of the Mahabharata, and a vast list of numerous types of musical instruments. About the folklore of Charyagiti, Ahmad Sharif writes, "Tantric or strung Veena, Sambur, Banish; metal, gourd or bamboo musical instruments, Bansi, Cymbal, and many of them are still alive today (Sharif, 1987, p. 143)". Lawergren Bo (1998) describes the relationship between musical instruments and hunting: "The earliest musical instruments derive from a common source: hunting implements. Loud instruments (percussion instruments, reeds, trumpets) were used to call or repulse the prey and to signal between hunters. Quiet instruments

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(Flutes, musical bows, bullroarers) had alternate uses as hunting tools (dagger edges, hunting bows, and bolas, respectively). It is argued that the "hand song" was another previously overlooked, early instrument used for signaling. Some literary sources from ancient Greece and China, as well as iconographic material from Egypt and Mexico, provide late descriptions of the music/hunt association (Lawergren, 1988, pp. 31-45).

After hunting for subsistence, agriculture played a prominent role in the life of primitive man. During the planting and harvesting of paddy or other crops, there are festivals every season, and the use of musical instruments in those festivals is unsurpassed. Horn was one of the accompanying musical instruments in the early times. Wahab (2008) says, "The indigenous people of our country, such as Chakma, Tipra, Santal, Garo, Murang, Rakhine, Lusai, Marma, Tanchang, Khumi, weave, harvest (including jhum cultivation) and make horn, Flute, Drum, Tabla, begum, bamboo among the accompanying musical instruments during Navanna festival. The main ones include Sitar, Dhudhuk, Behala, Sumur, Sainda, Dumcha, and Tabalchi (Wahab, 2008, pp. 407-08)". In Chapter 28 of the Natyashastra, Bharata discusses sacred musical instruments ('lakshanavitam atodya'). He categorizes musical instruments into four groups: Tata (string), Anddha (covered, such as the drum or Mridanga), Ghana (metal or deep-sounding solid, like cymbals), and Shushi (perforated instruments that produce sound by blowing air, such as flutes).

Many modern instruments have evolved from ancient ones, such as the sitar, which is not isolated from its predecessors. One of the veenas in use since ancient times is the Anurup veena, also known as the chitra veena as described by Bharata. The chitra veena later took the form of the sitar. Abul Fazal mentions several other instruments, such as the Kinnari Veena, Swaraveena, Amriti Veena, Rabab, Sarengi, and Shanai. Pushkar testifies to the use of Murj Pakhawaj in the musical section. Many blind instruments have been used to play with two hands since ancient times, and they were later called Arabic or Persian. Rubber, Shahnai, etc., came from Persia. In the present era, foreign influence influences music, and many musical instruments are imported from the West. However, considering the nature of this country's music, its musical instruments continue to maintain their uniqueness among the instruments of different countries worldwide. Finally, anthropologists value the folk instruments used in folk songs for thousands of years as unique (Wahab, 2008, pp. 409-10, Keda Music Ltd. 2017).

In this connection, we may refer to the table prepared by Sanathkumar Mitra. The table is divided into two categories, which refer to indigenous and incoming musical instruments. Among the indigenous musical instruments, there are four subcategories: i. Tata (string): Gourd, Gopi Vantra, which later evolved into Veena, Tambura; ii. Anddha (covered): Vishamdhaki, Dhamsa, which later evolved into Dhol, Dholak; iii. Shushir (perforated): Singa, Sankha, Banshi, which later evolved into Flute, and iv. Ghan (thick): Kansar, cymbal, which later evolved into Mandira. Among the incoming musical instruments, there are also four subcategories: a. Sitar, Esraj, followed by Violin, Guitar; b. Pakhawaj, Tabla, followed by Kettle Drum, Drum; c. Sanai, followed by Clarinet, and d. Ghungur, followed by Maracas (Mitra, 1985, p13-14). However, learning musical instruments enhances the individual's advantage. Lambert, T. (2024) describes, "Learning to play any musical instrument benefits an individual in all aspects of life, whether academically, socially, physically, or emotionally. Instruments created to make musical sounds are categorized into five main groups: strings, woodwinds, brass, percussion, and keyboards. It takes dedication and admiration to learn how to play an instrument successfully. I believe that musicians who have musical ability have an advantage over other individuals (Lambert, 2024)."

Among the so-called quadruple instruments, the instruments are divided into two: civil and rural. Each of the tripartite instruments is again divided into three, namely drawing room instruments, outdoor instruments, and pastoral instruments. The civilized instruments are used in two ways- solo or accompanied. All the instruments played independently are called solos, such as Veena, Tritantri or Setar, Rabab, Sarod, Ranjani, Kanun, Suratranga, Svarveena, and Sursringa all these stringed instruments are considered solo instruments. Among the Shushi instruments, there is no form other than the Flute, which is of great use in the self-evident culture.

As a Public service broadcaster, Bangladesh Betar backs the artists in Bangladesh. Several musicologists express the following thoughts regarding Bangladeshi musical instruments. They are: i) Anand Lahri, which is used in Baul songs. It is also called Gurguri or Khamak; ii) Ektara- ancient name Ektantri Veena; iii) Esraj- popular in the seventeenth century and used in music; iv) Kartal- used in kirtan and kirtan-like music. Also known as Shashtali, Shashtoli, and Khahtali; v) Kamsar- like a giant plate mixed with metal; vi) Khanjani- also called khunjuri in folk music; vii) Gopiyantra- beggars are seen playing Gopiyantra and singing. Ekta is round. Gopi Yantra is longer in shape; viii) Watch/Ghanta- made of metal, used in schools and colleges; ix) Ghanta- both small and large are common and are used in royal temples. Ghanta is also used in launches; x) Jaltaranga- played with the help of bamboo sticks tuned with a metallic or earthen pot of water; xi) Dough- wooden or metal high fences, leather canopy fences, dovetails, or small pieces of metal are used—the tambourine analogy of the West; xii) Damru- used in snake charmer and monkey dance; xiii) Dhak- generally used in worship; xiv) Drums- very

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well-known instrument; xv) Bangla Dhol- Folk music of Bengal; xvi) Tabla; xvii) Taus- Esraj analogy, also called Mayuri Veena; xviii) tanjura; xix) Dotara or Dotora; xx) Pakhwaj/Pakhawaj: Dhaka genre (Badhan, Strail); xxi) Clarionet- a Western instrument, widely used in Bangladesh; xxii) Koned or Trumppad- very common in Bangladesh; xxiii) Flute- made of bamboo, wood, bronze (kasa), silver, and gold. The Flute is played in different styles. Straight, upright, oblique. It also played as a solo instrument and accompaniment. Flute, Bendu, and Murali are the names of Flutes; xxiv) Bugle is a flute-like Western musical instrument widely played by the law enforcement forces of Bangladesh.; xxv) Veena- there are at least 50 types of Veena, but none are found in Bangladesh; xxvi) Bagpipe- played at band parties in Bangladesh, not in vogue now; xxvii) Violin- came to India through Western traders. xxviii) Mandira- like a small bowl; xxiv) Madal- used among Santals; xxv) Mandolin- an oval-shaped Western Guitar-like instrument; xxvi) Horn- made of buffalo horn. Nowadays, it is also made of metal; xxvi) Sarod; xxvii) Sanai-Manglikvadya wedding festival, puja performed at Parvan Raj Sabha. From folk to classical music, they are found everywhere. xxviii) Sarengi- ancient Indian musical instrument; xxiv) Sarinda- widely practiced in the rural areas of Bangladesh; xxx) Sur-Mandal- also called Tantriveena or Katyayani Veena; xxxi) Sur Bahar- also in vogue in Bangladesh; xxxii) Sitar- xxxiii) Chimta- a musical instrument used by the Baul of Bengal; xxxv) Srikhol- also known as Khol. It is used in kirtan music (Banerjee, J. 2024; Khan, S. 2024; Roy, 2024; Mintu, 2024; Wikipedia contributors, 2024, and jEducate., 2023).

Scholars assume that interactions with the Mughal emperors influenced musical instrument development in the Ancient and Middle Ages. Mondal, D. (2021) says, "The integration and assimilation of the two ancient cultures was completed at the court of the Mughal Emperor Akbar. One of the gems was Mia Tansen (1500–1586), who even today symbolizes the height of talent and skill in Indian classical music (Mondal, 2021)." The first major uprising in music in a liberated Bangladesh was the Swadhin Bangla Betar Kendra (Free Bengal Radio Centre), the radio broadcasting center of Bengali forces during the Liberation War in 1971. Renowned artists dedicated themselves to increasing people's confidence with their songs and fundraising activities. After nine long months of war, an independent nation came into being, and people were greedy about the essence of liberty in their lives. In short, Bangladesh's musical instruments reflect its various cultural, historical, and religious influences. From traditional folk instruments rooted in rural life to classical instruments influenced by the Bengal Renaissance and cross-cultural exchanges, the musical landscape of Bangladesh is a testament to the country's dynamic and evolving cultural identity.

f) Integration of technology and innovation in music creation and performance

The creation and performance of music in Bangladesh, integrating technology and innovation, has been a transformative journey, contributing to the modernization, and globalization of the country's music landscape (Mauwa, 2020). Here are several aspects to consider:

i. *Digital Recording and Production:* Digital recording technology has revolutionized music production. Recording studios equipped with state-of-the-art technology allow musicians to produce high-quality tracks more efficiently. "As a result of the advancement of modern technology during the British period, various advancements in music and culture also took place. Recording starts a new chapter of mass promotion and preservation of music, and music begins. In 1904, the first solo musical sitar was recorded by Imdad Khan (CeGrams, 2020)". Moreover, home recording – affordable recording equipment and software have empowered artists to create music from the comfort of their homes. This democratization of recording equipment has led to the growth of independent and self-produced music. "In 1906, the first Sarod played by the Sarod's master Chhoonnu Khan (1857-1912) was recorded (Pokri Poki. 2020)."

ii. *Digital Distribution and Streaming Platforms:* The emergence of digital platforms like YouTube, Spotify, and other streaming services has facilitated the global promotion of Bangladeshi music. "Artists can now reach international audiences without the traditional barriers of distribution. In today's digital age, social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok have become integral to our daily lives. These platforms offer a space for self-expression, connection, and entertainment (Georgy, Julius | Vocal, n.d.-b)." These Social Media Stands are crucial for promoting and sharing music. Singers use these display places to connect with fans, showcase their work, and cooperate with other musicians. The power of social media in the music industry is excellent. It allows artists to reach a wider audience, build a more substantial fan base, become viral, and direct fan feedback ("Ppop and the power of social media: How artists connect with fans," 2024). Recently, musical instruments have flourished to the maximum in history. Magnusson (2010) says, "In the twenty-first century, we have witnessed an extraordinary boom in the research and development of digital musical instruments. This explosion is grounded in the ubiquitous availability of cheap computer hardware, but also partly caused by advances in

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tangible user interface technologies and new programming paradigms that provide new affordances for musicians, composers, designers and programmers (Magnusson, 2010)."

iii. *Electronic Instruments and Synthesis:* Synthesizers, Drum machines, and electronic effects have become more prevalent in various music genres. This electronic element adds a contemporary flavor to traditional and popular music. Moreover, as DJ culture- the electronic dance music (EDM) scene- has gained popularity, DJs incorporate traditional and modern elements into their performances. This combination of styles appeals to a diverse audience.

iv. *Innovative music styles and cross-genre fusion:* Genre-fusion artists often experiment with combining traditional Bengali music with genres such as rock, jazz, and hip-hop, producing exclusive and groundbreaking sounds that appeal to a broad audience. Collaborations between Bangladeshi musicians and international artists demonstrate the benefits of cross-cultural exchange technology. Virtual cooperation and online connectivity have made it easier for artists to work together despite geographic distance. Artists in the Ancient and Middle Ages also produced Unique and innovative music. Roda, A. (2009) describes the middle age: "New genres of music were formed as well, such as Kheyal and qawwali that combine elements of both Hindu and Muslim musical practice (Roda, 2009)."

v. *Use of Visuals and Multimedia:* Creating visually impressive music videos has become an essential aspect of the music industry. High-quality visuals complement the music and contribute to the overall artistic expression. Furthermore, the advent of live-streaming technology allowed artists to connect with their audiences in real-time. This becomes particularly significant when personal events are limited.

vi. *Educational Resources:* Technology has made music education more accessible. Online tutorials, courses, and virtual workshops enable aspiring musicians to enhance their skills and knowledge. Magnusson (2021) finds, "Music technologies reflect the most advanced human technologies in most historical periods. Examples range from 40 thousand-year-old bone Flutes found in caves in the Swabian Jura, through ancient Greek water organs or medieval Arabic musical automata, to today's electronic and digital instruments with deep learning. Music technologies incorporate the musical ideas of a time and place and disseminate them when other musical cultures adopt them (Magnusson, 2021, pp. 175-183)." In short, technology and innovation have profoundly influenced the creation and performance of music in Bangladesh. These advances have contributed to the dynamic and globalized nature of the country's music scene, from digital recording and distribution to electronic instruments, cross-genre fusion, and online collaboration.

vii. *Emergence of new instruments or adaptation to modern styles:* The emergence of new instruments and adaptation to modern styles in Bangladesh reflects the dynamic evolution of its music scene, blending tradition with contemporary influences. Electronic instruments are often used in fusion genres and even in traditional music. As we live in a globalized village, Bengali music also takes on global and cross-cultural influences. Some artists use unconventional instruments and electronic effects to explore ambient and experimental sounds. This avant-garde approach contributes to the exploration of new musical territory. This dynamic evolution reflects the creative exploration and openness of Bangladeshi musicians to embrace a wide range of musical influences.

IV. Results

Around 100 musicians are currently discussing using musical instruments in Bengali music. According to a recent survey, 50% of the respondents believe that using Western musical instruments has increased in Bengali and indigenous instruments. In addition, 95% of the respondents think that acoustic and electric musical instruments are used more in our country. The analysis also indicated that 40% of the respondents consider the influence of Western music on Bengali music to be positive, while 60% believe its impact is negative. Most respondents felt that using Western instruments did not bring revolutionary changes, and 66% had an opposing view. However, almost half of the respondents thought the arrival of Western musical instruments in Bengali songs was inevitable.

Similarly, 50% of the respondents think electric instruments have influenced Bengali songs. However, 62% of the respondents feel that using electric and Western musical instruments has positively changed Bengali songs. About 50% of the respondents also believe Western instruments have influenced Bengali songs. The survey further revealed that two-thirds of the respondents believe that acoustic and electric musical instruments will significantly impact the development of Bengali music in the coming days. In contrast, only 15% of the respondents think that acoustic instruments will dramatically affect the growth of Bengali music. The survey highlights how Western musical instruments and musicians' opinions on this topic influence Bengali music.

However, when it comes to the challenges of Bengali traditional instruments, around 25% of people

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believe that the employment of instrumentalists is the biggest challenge, while another 25% view training the new generation as a significant hurdle. Government patronage is necessary for 15% of people, and another 15% believe that including music study in different education levels, from primary to higher levels, is a big challenge. There are other challenges as well, including the lack of specialized institutions for training, the undervaluation of artists, the need for the inclusion of ancient instruments in compositions, the recovery of lost instruments, the search for instrumentalists, the cultivation of interest and perseverance in people, the decline in the rate of making, using, and preserving traditional instruments, the need to make Bangla Music accessible from Westernization, and the increasing attraction for Western music among young people. We arranged a meeting for further analysis and invited some singers, composers, instrumentalists, and academics. We asked them some questions and took their feedback.

We discussed the reasons for increasing the use of Western instruments in Bangla music. Around 30% of people view the unavailability of traditional instrumentalists as a significant cause. About 15% of people consider our youngsters more attracted to Western music. Another 15% of people view lack of training and employment as the reasons. 15% more people view change in the taste of people through time. Other people's feedback was as follows: a) People are losing interest as traditional instruments are used less in Bangla music, and b) there is indiscriminate use of satellite media. c) Lack of valuation of these instruments and instrumentalists. d) More commercial use of Bangla songs. e) Increasing love for Western music. f) Lack of remuneration. g) Ease of use of Western instruments as these are ICT-based. h) Low standard in quality. i) Difficult and time-consuming to learn.

Then, we discussed Bangla Music's challenges because of Western music's greater inclusion. Around 30% of respondents view the originality of songs as distorted. Other feedback is like- i) Bangla traditional instruments will be distinguished through time. ii) Rural instrumentalists will lose interest. iii) The instrumentalists will be lost through time.

Below is a summary of the responses to our survey's final open-ended question, "How do you preserve and develop traditional instruments?" Around 60% of respondents believe that the government should take steps to preserve and develop traditional instruments. 30% of people suggest that arranging training would be a solution. 15% of people feel that proper employment opportunities should be created in this field. Another 15% believe instrumental education should be included from primary to higher levels. In addition, respondents provided other suggestions, such as a) Publishing pictures and information about traditional instruments in school books. b) Registering instrumentalists in every sub-district. c) Arranging competitions among instrumentalists. d) Honoring artists who play traditional instruments. e) Researching ancient instruments. f) Having experts train the new generation of musicians. g) Encouraging the use of traditional instruments in new compositions. h) Increasing awareness among cultural institutions about traditional instruments. i) Raising awareness among the general public. j) Introducing traditional instruments to the younger generation.

V. Discussion

Certainly, Chowdhury, A.H. (2017) explains the current situation of Bangladeshi folk music and its geo-cultural impact on our mind, "Once upon a time, in the geographical and cultural environment in which folk thought-philosophies originated, developed and spread the environment- the situation has changed due to the rule of time, the influence of Modern age. At the same time, folk songs also began to be detached from their contextual background. For example, shallow engine boats run in every river, canal, and lake, so it is impossible to sing and listen to Bhatiali's 'Song of the Lonely One' amidst the ear-splitting hum of that engine. Bhayaiyao is no longer the song of Garial vai (cattle cart brother), Maishal's friend (Buffalo Shepherd), or Naiya or sailor of the current of the water river. Because there is no previous cow-buffalo cart, there is no paddle (Baitha) or standing boat (Chowdhury, 2017). Critical issues are pronounced as follows.

Exploring the challenges and opportunities of Bengali instrumental music is very important to know the development of Bengali musical instruments. Navigating modernization, declining interest, and economic constraints pose challenges. However, technological integration, cultural education initiatives, and embracing global collaboration represent opportunities for revival and international appreciation of Bengali instrumental music. Among these, the participant's gender raises another issue. After research, Abeles (2009) concludes, "A comparison of the instruments played by boys and girls across three studies conducted in 1978, 1993, and 2007 showed little difference in the sex (gender)-by-instrument distribution. Girls played predominantly Flutes, violins, and clarinets; most boys played Drums, trumpets, and trombones. There was some evidence that in band settings, girls were more likely to play nonconforming gender instruments than boys (Abeles, 2009)." However, in Bangladesh, primarily boys play Flutes.

Identify the challenges faced by Bengali musical instruments in the modern era. Although Bengali musical instruments have adapted and evolved, they face several challenges in the modern era. These challenges may affect their preservation, popularity, and integration into contemporary music. Some key

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challenges include: - i) Traditional instruments may face competition from electronic analogs and synthesizers, which affects their use in modern music production. ii.) As musical tastes evolve, demand for traditional instruments may decline in favor of those associated with more contemporary genres. iii) Traditional instruments may require more awareness and understanding among new generations, affecting their preservation and continuity. iv) Traditional instrumental education may face challenges due to limited resources, including qualified teachers and accessible learning materials. v) Global music trends can lead to the homogenization of sound, potentially overshadowing traditional Bengali instruments. vi) Commercial pressures may favor instruments that cater to popular genres, potentially marginalizing traditional instruments in the commercial music industry. vii) Production and maintenance of traditional instruments can be expensive, and economic constraints can limit musicians' accessibility to these instruments. viii) Integrating traditional instruments into contemporary music can be challenging, requiring creative approaches to ensure relevance. ix) Rapid social change can lead to a loss of connection between traditional instruments and cultural practices, affecting their role in artistic expression. x) Traditional instruments may get less exposure on mainstream media platforms, limiting their visibility and popularity among larger audiences. xi) The dominance of Western musical styles and instruments may overshadow traditional Bengali instruments, affecting their presentation and use in modern compositions. xii) Traditional sounds can be vulnerable to uncontrolled sampling in modern music production, leading to potential issues of intellectual property and cultural appropriation.

Addressing these challenges requires concerted efforts by musicians, educators, cultural institutions, and policymakers to ensure the continued relevance and preservation of traditional Bengali musical instruments in the modern age. Scope of Bengali Instrumental Music brings us much better Music in Bangladesh. These are: i. The embrace of modern technology can increase the production, recording, and accessibility of instrumental music. ii. Incorporating traditional materials into education programs helps to raise awareness and increase appreciation. iii. Collaborating with international musicians and embracing cross-cultural exchanges opens new avenues for recognition and appreciation. iv. Exploring fusion genres and innovative compositions allows traditional instruments to adapt to the contemporary musical landscape. v. Using online and social media for promotion and distribution expands Bengali instrumental music's reach and audience base. Supporting these initiatives contributes to preserving and promoting Bangladesh's conventional instruments and underscores their cultural, economic, and educational significance. It invests in continuing a unique musical tradition that adds to the nation's cultural richness.

Preserving and promoting traditional materials in Bangladesh involves a multi-pronged approach, including education, cultural initiatives, and community involvement. Here are several ideas for preserving and promoting traditional instruments. a) Introduce traditional materials into the school curriculum to educate students about cultural significance. Include practical lessons and workshops to provide hands-on experience. Establish specialized music academies or courses that teach traditional instrument playing techniques and music theory. b) Organize events and festivals highlighting traditional instruments and allowing musicians to showcase their skills and exposure to diverse audiences. Collaborative Performance – encouraging collaboration between traditional and contemporary musicians during festivals to demonstrate traditional instruments' adaptability and fusion potential. c) Grant researchers and ethnomusicologists the opportunity to study and document traditional instruments, their historical significance, and their associated communities. Digital Archives: Create digital archives for traditional music, including recordings, videos, and educational materials, making them easily accessible to researchers, musicians, and the general public. d) Set up museums dedicated to traditional instruments, giving visitors an insight into their history, craftsmanship, and cultural importance. To develop cultural trails or heritage tours, including visits to communities where traditional instruments are made and played, promoting cultural tourism. e) Organize workshops in local communities to teach traditional instrument making and playing, encouraging cultural pride and a sense of ownership. Encourage community-based concerts featuring traditional instruments to engage residents and promote unity and shared cultural heritage. f) Encourage contemporary musicians to incorporate traditional instruments into their compositions, bridging old and new musical expressions. g) Support recording projects that feature traditional instruments in collaboration with modern recording studios and technology increasing their visibility in the mainstream music scene. h) Collaborate with universities to offer degree programs or courses focusing on traditional music, ensuring continuity of knowledge and skills. Student Ensembles: Form groups dedicated to learning and performing traditional music, providing a platform for young musicians to showcase their talents. i) Provides financial support through grants and funding programs to traditional musicians, instrument makers, and cultural organizations working to preserve traditional instruments. Moreover, Policy Advocacy advocates for policies that recognize and protect the cultural heritage of conventional instruments, emphasizing their importance in national identity and

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artistic preservation. j) Implement initiatives to support traditional instrument artisans and provide training, resources, and market access to sustain their craft. Moreover, in handicrafts exhibitions, organize exhibitions showcasing traditional instruments' artistry and craftsmanship, creating public awareness and appreciation. k) Create and disseminate online tutorials for playing traditional instruments, making them accessible to a global audience and encouraging a more comprehensive appreciation. Use social media platforms to share stories, performances, and educational content related to traditional instruments, creating a sense of community and interest. By combining these initiatives, Bangladesh can work towards preserving and promoting the rich heritage of musical instruments, ensuring their continued relevance and appreciation in the modern age.

Advocacy for instrument makers and musicians and initiatives supporting documentation in Bangladesh are crucial to conserving and endorsing the rich musical culture. Here is an advocacy framework highlighting the importance of these initiatives and emphasizing the role of traditional instruments in shaping Bangladesh's cultural identity. These are musical instruments and bearers of cultural narratives and historical significance. Furthermore, symbols of tradition position the making and playing of conventional instruments as symbols of continuity relating past, present, and future generations. Conservation of these crafts is needed to preserve cultural diversity.

They are highlighting the economic importance of supporting materials manufacturers. These artisans contribute to the economy by creating unique, handcrafted instruments. The initiatives they support directly impact the local economy. Advocate for programs facilitating market access for traditional instrument manufacturers. It may include exhibitions, collaborations with modern music producers, and platforms on which to sell their products.

The younger generation needs to transfer traditional instrument-making skills. Educational initiatives may include apprenticeships, workshops, and training programs to ensure technical continuity. Integration into School Curricula: Advocate for integrating traditional instrument making and playing into the school curriculum. It ensures that future generations appreciate and understand these instruments' cultural and artistic significance. Advocate for recognition and support of traditional musicians. It creates platforms for Performance, competition, and collaboration to showcase their talents. Training and mentorship programs- support initiatives that provide training and mentoring for musicians, enabling them to master traditional instruments and explore innovative ways of incorporating them into contemporary music. Wang et al. (2022) say, "The accuracy of musical instrument recognition in the mother tongue group is 15% higher than that in the foreign language group, and the average recognition rates of oboe, trumpet, and xylophone in the foreign language group are lower than those in the mother tongue group, the recognition rate of oboe and trumpet in wind instruments was low in both groups, and the recognition rate of oboe and trumpet in foreign language group was (Wang et al., 2022)."

Cultural conservation through research stresses the importance of documenting traditional instruments, their history, and their associated communities. Vaiedelich and Fritz (2017) say, "An old musical instrument cannot just be perceived as a simple music tool as it happens to be the vector of cultural, esthetical, technical, historical values, which are invisible to visual inspection (Vaiedelich & Fritz, 2017)."

Research serves as the basis for cultural preservation and educational initiatives. Moreover, it advocates for increased funding for ethnomusicological research. It helps researchers and scholars delve deep into the roots of traditional music, ensuring accurate documentation and understanding. Encourage the creation of digital archives for conventional instruments. It preserves valuable information and makes it accessible to a wider audience locally and internationally. Moreover, promote the development of digital learning resources - online learning resources, including tutorials, videos, and interactive platforms, making traditional instruments more accessible to enthusiastic and aspiring musicians.

Advocate for the inclusion of the preservation of traditional music and instruments in national cultural policy. It ensures that there is government support for initiatives and programs. Moreover, incentives for artisans—propose policy measures that provide incentives for traditional materials makers, such as tax breaks, subsidies, and recognition of outstanding craftsmanship. Support traditional instruments to highlight the potential for global cooperation. International partnerships bring skills, resources, and diverse perspectives that contribute to the growth and preservation of musical heritage. To emphasize the importance of intercultural exchange, fostering mutual understanding and appreciation is essential. Collaboration with musicians and scholars from diverse cultural backgrounds can enrich the traditional music scene.

VI. Conclusion

Preserving Bengali musical instruments is essential to protect cultural identity and artistic heritage, enhance educational value, contribute to the economy, and maintain spiritual and ritual significance. These instruments represent a unique heritage linking past and present, and their preservation is integral to celebrating Bangladesh's rich cultural heritage.

Preserving the rich heritage of Bengali musical instruments is not just about safeguarding artifacts; it is

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a significant effort to keep a cultural legacy that transcends generations. The importance of these conservation efforts spans several dimensions, each highlighting the significance of maintaining and celebrating Bangladesh's unique musical heritage.

Bengali musical instruments symbolize the cultural identity of Bengalis. They carry echoes of centuries-old traditions, reflecting the essence of the region's history, spirituality, and artistic expression. Preserving these instruments ensures the continuity of cultural practices, providing a link between past, present, and future generations. They serve as a tangible expression of the artistic sensibility that has defined Bangladeshi culture. Each traditional Bengali instrument contributes a unique resonance and tone to the musical landscape. Preserving those means preserving the distinctive sounds integral to classic compositions, which add depth and richness to musical expression. Conventional instruments are made with precision and artistic skill. Keeping them honors the craftsmanship and skill of the artisans who have dedicated their lives to perfecting these age-old traditions.

A concerted effort is crucial to ensure Bengali musical instruments' continued vibrancy and relevance. By joining forces in preservation, education, and promotion, we can preserve this rich heritage, foster a cultural legacy that resonates across generations, and sustain Bangladesh's dynamic musical heritage.

The conclusion emphasizes the multifaceted significance of preserving these instruments for cultural identity, artistic enrichment, education, economy, and spirituality. In conclusion, local instruments are unlimited to the handful mentioned here. Even a simple desk or a piece of brass can be an instrument for expert musicians if used in harmony with a complete ensemble! All in all, musical instruments signify how culturally interconnected humanity is. As of now, organologists around the globe have yet to agree on the chronological origin of musical instruments, but the lack of history cannot be a factor in not enjoying and even practicing an instrument. It is, after all, through playing and creating music that makes an instrument thrive through the ages.

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