

Hindustani Classical Music and Music Economics: A Study of the Challenges leading to Marginalisation of the Traditional Art Form



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Abstract

Music in any era has been one of the most affected art forms that has faced the wrath of the economy and the funding means and ways. Hindustani classical music is no exception. Even countries in places as developed as Europe has witnessed issues pertaining to patronage and media economics that has led to the loss of popularity of their indigenous art forms. Hindustani classical music has undergone many phases and testing times. When India gained independence, the princely states lost a lot of autonomy and with the arrival of the elimination and sidelining of the privy purse, the royal houses in India not only lost their prestige but also their financial and political might. This meant lack of financial prowess further leading to loss to the Hindustani classical music which was thriving on the patronage of the royal courts. This study aims to explore that how the lack of an effective financial and economic model led to the decline of the popularity of this musical form. Based on the exploratory interviews of the musicologists, this study aims to explore the probable economic and financial models that the Hindustani Indian classical music art form can adopt for its sustainability. This would be a useful study considering many music enthusiasts looking forward to explore means and ways to keep the art form alive. This study would consider the means and ways adopted by even the other civilisations and societies to keep their art forms alive. The findings suggest that an alternative financial model that would be applicable to domain beyond music and would offer help to other artistic domains.

Keyword: Music Economy, Sustainability, Economic Model, Patronage, Qualitative Analysis

Research Paper

Introduction

Hindustani Classical Music has always been heavily plagued by a lack of financial support, a situation that has only become more acute in recent times. Historically, this financial foundation was deeply rooted in the royal patronage ecosystem, where music, in both vocal and instrumental forms, was treated as a prestigious and uncommon art. It was limited to the elite, primarily those at the top of the societal hierarchy, including the royal courts of different dynasties. It was not an art form of the masses but of the classes (Gupta, 2004; Bakhle, 2005). Royal courts across India, particularly in princely states like Gwalior, Jaipur and Baroda, became prominent

cultural hubs, supporting Hindustani Classical Music as a key component of Indian heritage. At that time, court poets, musicians and even spiritual guides heavily relied on the patronage of these courts for financial support (Soneji, 2011). This period established a tradition of Hindustani Classical Music as an art form intimately tied to Indian traditions, mythology and spirituality, reflecting the rich cultural values that shaped Indian society.

The political environment changed dramatically with the arrival of the British. As British control expanded, the autonomy once enjoyed by the Kings and Princes waned and the previously flourishing system of

patronage weakened. Music continued to find protection under these royal courts, but the engagement was now on a lesser scale, with reduced support in some cases. Eventually, British rule led to the institutionalization of universities where music was introduced as an academic subject, marking a shift away from the court-based patronage model (Manuel, 1993).

Following India's independence in 1947, the princely state framework collapsed, leading to the end of this patronage system. The situation worsened in 1971 with the abolition of the Privy Purse, a financial grant given to former royals, further diminishing the financial security of classical musicians (Pathak, 2007). This decline in patronage left a lasting impact and issues of financial and social security for classical musicians became increasingly prominent. The challenges facing Hindustani Classical Music were compounded by the economic and social upheavals post-independence, including the turbulence of partition and the broader transformation required to rebuild society and the economy. As India navigated these changes, Hindustani Classical Music was similarly affected, with funding issues becoming more chronic (Knight, 2010). Even with the commercialization and opening of the economy, the domain of Hindustani Classical Music struggled to become self-reliant.

Today, as a vital component of Indian heritage, Hindustani Classical Music embodies the spirit of Indian culture and has served as an ambassador of Indian artistic values globally. However, with the emergence of technology and the rapid commercialization of the economy, the financial constraints on classical musicians have become even more pronounced (Sundar, 2022). This research paper explores the various contributing factors to this issue, examining potential solutions and lessons from global models to address the financial challenges faced by Hindustani Classical Music today.

Review of Literature

Traditional art forms worldwide face similar economic issues. European classical music, Japanese Noh and Kabuki, African tribal music and other similar musical forms struggle with declining patronage, reduced funding and competition with modern entertainment (Tomlinson, 2008; Soneji, 2011). Various studies suggest that arts have been preserved in many societies through a combination of public and private funding. The literature indicates that music has historically relied on a mix of government grants, private sponsorships

and individual patronage (Bakhle, 2005; Gupta, 2004). However, contemporary economic models must adapt to the new realities of digital media and audience segmentation.

It is noteworthy that the marginalization of traditional forms is not limited to Hindustani Classical Music. Case studies of European and African music traditions show that economic pressures prioritize commercially viable forms over traditional music, thus necessitating community-driven or state-backed funding for the preservation of traditional music (Knight, 2010; Borges, 2016). Furthermore, globalization has introduced Western music and Bollywood into Indian mainstream media, leading to the overshadowing of Hindustani Classical Music. Audiences have increasingly started to prefer modern, accessible forms of music, resulting in a decline in demand for classical performances (Manuel, 1993).

Research Questions and Methodology

This study seeks to identify and analyze the economic challenges leading to the marginalization of Hindustani Classical Music. Through interviews and case studies, it explores potential financial models that could support the sustainability of this traditional art form. Some pertinent questions being explored are as follows:

- How has the shift from traditional patronage impacted Hindustani Classical Music?
- What are the economic constraints facing classical musicians today?
- Are there alternative financial models that could be adopted for sustainability?

The methodology involves a qualitative analysis of data collected through expert interviews. These interviews involve in-depth discussions with musicologists, performers and cultural historians providing insights into the financial and cultural pressures facing Hindustani Classical Music. Additionally, a comparative analysis evaluates economic models from traditional music economies worldwide, suggesting viable financial practices that could be applied to Hindustani Classical Music. Data collection focusses on gathering qualitative information on revenue sources, financial models, audience engagement and the impact of digital media.

Data Analysis and Findings

The themes emerging from the thematic analysis of data collected from the interviews include the role of Gharanas, economic challenges and shifts in music economics, the

limitations of current economic models and the potential sustainability of future models. The royal court, known for its musical sophistication, patronized the Gharana system, which is foundational to Hindustani Classical Music. The court's support enabled artists to practice and perform without financial worry. While some continue till date, many found sustainability difficult due to loss of patronage and it led to subsequent struggles in maintaining audience engagement and attracting students. Most if it happened after independence, an event that altered the political landscape. With the elimination of princely states, patronage ceased and ballooned into an economic vacuum. Musicians who depended on royal courts were left without sustainable income. This marked a fall in the patronage system but there was an emergence of urban elites. The wealthy and elite classes were growing in number and found joy in elitism, which was further amplified by their increased involvement with Hindustani Classical Music. They became the new saviours of the classical musicians. Apart from this, private institutions emerged as the neo-support system and the time witnessed emergence of music organizations. However, without structured support, these sources proved insufficient to provide consistent financial stability.

Economic Challenges and the Shift in Media Economics

The changing media landscape, commercialization pressures and limited institutional support have created substantial challenges for Hindustani Classical Music. The rise of Bollywood and Western music has significantly influenced audience preferences, shifting attention away from classical forms. These genres dominate the airwaves and digital platforms, which prioritize content with high viewership potential. As a result, Hindustani Classical Music receives minimal airtime, pushing it further into a niche category and limiting its accessibility to broader audiences.

Commercialization has also affected the funding landscape. Unlike popular genres, classical music attracts little investment from advertisers who tend to focus on mainstream music with a larger fanbase. Advertisers prioritize visibility and return on investment, leading them to fund popular genres over traditional art forms. This creates a funding gap, as classical musicians and organizations struggle to secure the financial resources necessary for growth and promotion. While popular music benefits from robust advertising support and promotional budgets, Hindustani Classical Music is left

with minimal funding, further restricting its reach and sustainability.

Western classical music has encountered similar challenges, yet it has managed to build a support structure that sustains its presence. Through a combination of endowments, public funding and strong cultural institutions, Western classical music remains a prominent art form in many parts of the world. Endowments from private foundations provide ongoing financial support, while public funding ensures accessibility and cultural preservation. Institutions like orchestras, opera houses and conservatories offer structured support, providing Western classical musicians with platforms for training, performance and career growth. These strategies offer valuable insights into how Hindustani Classical Music could adapt, emphasizing the importance of sustained funding, public support and institutional backing to survive in a competitive cultural landscape.

An example of an organization working to address these challenges is SPIC MACAY (Society for the Promotion of Indian Classical Music and Culture Amongst Youth), which aims to promote Indian classical music and culture among young audiences. SPIC MACAY organizes concerts, workshops and interactive sessions in schools and colleges, providing young people with exposure to classical music. While the organization has succeeded in creating awareness and appreciation for traditional music among students, it faces significant funding limitations. SPIC MACAY relies heavily on donations and limited grants, which restrict its capacity to expand its reach. Without substantial, consistent funding, the organization struggles to achieve broader impact and reach more diverse audiences.

In conclusion, the changing media landscape and commercialization pressures have marginalized Hindustani Classical Music, making it difficult to maintain visibility and secure funding. Comparisons with Western classical music reveal the value of endowments, public support and structured institutional backing, which could provide a pathway to greater sustainability for Hindustani Classical Music. Initiatives like SPIC MACAY highlight the efforts being made to preserve this art form, but without significant financial support, these efforts remain limited in scope. Addressing these challenges will require a concerted effort to establish dedicated funding, broaden audience engagement and promote the value of Hindustani Classical Music in modern society.



Current Economic Models and their Limitations

In the current landscape, Hindustani Classical Music relies on several economic models that, while helpful, often fail to provide sustained financial security for artists. Traditional forms of support, such as government grants, ticket sales and revenue from recordings, face several limitations. The following sections explore these models and their drawbacks in detail, highlighting the challenges that classical musicians encounter.

Government Grants and Awards

Government support for Hindustani Classical Music is primarily available through grants and awards given to artists by institutions at the national and state levels. While these grants are valuable, they are typically limited in scope and frequency, making them unreliable for long-term financial stability. The funding usually targets short-term projects—such as specific performances, workshops, or festivals—rather than providing a consistent income that would allow artists to sustain themselves over time. Additionally, the selection process for grants and awards can be highly competitive, with only a small portion of applicants receiving support. Even when funding is granted, the allocation often focuses on established artists, leaving emerging musicians with limited access to resources. This sporadic nature of government grants emphasizes short-term visibility for classical music without creating a supportive ecosystem for artists' ongoing livelihoods.

Public Performances and Ticket Sales

Public performances have traditionally been a core source of income for classical musicians, as concerts provide a platform for artists to showcase their talent and engage directly with audiences. However, ticket sales for classical music concerts have been declining in recent years due to factors such as limited audience interest, high costs of hosting events and competition with popular music genres. Hindustani Classical Music, often perceived as a niche art form, struggles to attract large, paying audiences, making live performances financially unsustainable without supplementary funding. Many classical music events now rely on corporate sponsorships or government funding to cover expenses. However, even with these sources, the pressure to sell tickets limits how often musicians can perform and the income from ticket sales is often insufficient to support their livelihoods. This decline in concert revenue has created a significant gap in income

for classical musicians, especially those who lack strong sponsorship or institutional backing.

Recording Revenue and Digital Media

In the digital age, many artists rely on streaming platforms and digital media for additional revenue. However, streaming platforms often generate minimal income for classical musicians due to royalty structures that prioritize high-streaming genres over niche music. Classical musicians receive lower revenue per stream, making it difficult to rely on these platforms for steady income. Additionally, Hindustani Classical Music, with its lengthy compositions and complex structure, does not easily align with the brief, high-turnover streaming model that tends to favor pop music. The digital divide has left classical musicians with fewer opportunities for revenue, as they cannot compete with the streaming volume that more mainstream music enjoys. Furthermore, the shift from physical album sales to digital streaming has reduced another income stream that classical musicians once relied upon, exacerbating financial pressures.

Case Study: Sangeet Natak Akademi

The Sangeet Natak Akademi, India's national institution for performing arts, provides awards and recognition for outstanding classical musicians. While the Akademi's efforts to promote traditional music are valuable, its approach has faced criticism for being primarily award-focused, without a structured plan to support musicians continuously. The awards often bring prestige but do not guarantee financial stability, as they are one-time honors with limited monetary benefits. Moreover, the Akademi lacks programs that would create a sustainable income stream or consistent support system for artists. For example, the focus is often on awarding individual achievements rather than developing community-based initiatives that could benefit a broader group of artists. This case illustrates a gap in institutional support, highlighting the need for policies that go beyond awards and focus on building a stable framework for long-term artist support.

In summary, the current economic models for Hindustani Classical Music, from government grants and public performances to digital revenue and institutional awards, all face significant limitations in ensuring steady, sustainable income for artists. The sporadic and often inadequate nature of these funding sources emphasizes the need for a more holistic and reliable approach to support Hindustani Classical Music.

Potential Economic Models for Sustainability

To ensure the financial sustainability of Hindustani Classical Music, various economic models can be adapted to provide stable support while increasing visibility and engagement. These models include subscription-based platforms, government and NGO partnerships, community-based patronage and corporate sponsorships. Each approach offers unique advantages for creating a stable income stream for artists and preserving traditional music in India.

Subscription-Based Platforms

Subscription models have proven effective for artists seeking consistent financial support. Platforms like Patreon allow musicians to receive recurring contributions directly from dedicated supporters (Clements, 2012; Davidson, 2017). By subscribing, patrons gain access to exclusive content, such as private performances, behind-the-scenes insights and personalized interactions with the artist. This model fosters a closer connection between artists and their audience, helping to build a loyal fan base. In the classical music world, Medici.tv exemplifies this model's potential. Medici.tv provides subscribers with exclusive access to live concerts, recorded performances and educational workshops, generating a steady revenue stream for artists and ensuring that fans receive high-quality content (Sundar, 2022). Hindustani Classical musicians could benefit from a similar platform, where listeners pay for exclusive performances, thus offering artists financial stability and direct engagement with their audiences.

Government and NGO Partnerships

Government and NGO partnerships are essential in supporting arts and culture. Through consistent funding and promotional support, these partnerships can help preserve traditional art forms and extend their reach to new audiences (Sundar, 2022; Brown, 2011). A notable example is Arts Council England, which provides grants and resources for cultural preservation, supporting a range of artistic endeavors (Knight, 2010). This model could be adapted for Hindustani Classical Music, where government grants and NGO collaborations offer funds for artist training, performances and community outreach (Pathak, 2007). Such partnerships not only secure financial support but also ensure educational outreach, promoting the genre to younger generations and enhancing public appreciation for Hindustani Classical Music. If implemented in India, this model

could include partnerships with cultural NGOs to create grant opportunities, scholarships for young musicians and funding for music festivals celebrating classical Indian art forms.

Community-Based Patronage Models

Community-based patronage is another effective way to sustain traditional music, relying on direct support from local audiences. Japan's Kabuki and Noh theaters are supported by local patron circles and fan-based funding, which help maintain these art forms (Tomlinson, 2008; Soneji, 2011). Similar approaches could benefit Hindustani Classical Music in India, where dedicated fans and cultural enthusiasts can contribute to musicians through crowdfunding platforms or organized patron circles (Gupta, 2004). This model enables communities to take an active role in preserving their cultural heritage and creates direct, grassroots support for artists (Knight, 2010). Community patrons, along with small-scale crowdfunding, can provide musicians with financial security while fostering a deep, enduring connection with their audience.

Corporate Sponsorships and Cultural Endowments

Corporate sponsorships and cultural endowments provide another sustainable model. Many corporations integrate support for the arts into their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives, creating partnerships that benefit both companies and artists (Sundar, 2022). Notable examples include New York's Lincoln Center and Carnegie Hall, which receive corporate sponsorships as part of CSR programs (Gupta, 2004). Corporations fund performances, festivals and events, allowing artists to reach larger audiences without financial strain. Adapting this model for Hindustani Classical Music in India could mean inviting corporations to sponsor festivals, concerts and workshops, creating high-visibility events that draw new audiences and secure funding for artists (Rao, 2003). CSR sponsorships can also support talent development programs, providing resources for young musicians to hone their craft (Kumar, 2004).

Each of these economic models offers pathways to financial sustainability and cultural preservation for Hindustani Classical Music. By blending subscription-based income, government and NGO support, community patronage and corporate sponsorship, India can create a robust support system for its classical artists, ensuring this cherished tradition continues to thrive.



Comparative Analysis of Cultural Preservation Models: Lessons for Hindustani Classical Music

The preservation of traditional art forms often depends on a supportive framework, combining state intervention, community involvement and sustainable funding. Various cultures around the world have created unique models to ensure the survival of their traditional music and performing arts. This section explores the cultural preservation strategies employed by Japan, Africa and Europe, drawing comparisons that can inform a sustainable model for Hindustani Classical Music in India. A hybrid approach, integrating government, community and market-based funding, could provide a foundation for preserving and promoting Hindustani Classical Music.

Japanese Kabuki and Noh: Government-Backed Cultural Initiatives

Japan's Kabuki and Noh theaters are examples of state-supported art forms. Both have deep roots in Japanese culture, representing centuries-old theatrical traditions. Recognizing their cultural significance, the Japanese government declared Kabuki and Noh as "Important Intangible Cultural Properties," ensuring their formal preservation under Japanese law (Tomlinson, 2008). The government actively supports these art forms through subsidies, grants and public institutions, ensuring financial stability for artists and cultural organizations. For instance, Japan's Agency for Cultural Affairs provides regular funding to maintain the traditions of Kabuki and Noh, allowing to produce elaborate performances and the training of new artists (Borges, 2016; personal interview, 2023).

Example: Japan's National Theatre in Tokyo frequently hosts Kabuki and Noh performances, sponsored by state funds and partially subsidized ticket sales. This enables access to these performances for broader audiences while ensuring a steady income for artists (Brown, 2011). The Japanese model emphasizes state intervention in cultural preservation, with the government assuming a central role in maintaining the arts. The support received by Kabuki and Noh demonstrates the power of consistent public funding in sustaining traditional arts in a modern context (Foster, 2015).

African Tribal Music: Community-Based and Tourism-Driven Preservation

The preservation of African tribal music largely depends on community efforts, supported by NGOs,

cultural foundations and the tourism sector. Traditional African music is often transmitted orally, making it vital for communities to pass down knowledge through generations. In the absence of large-scale government funding, community involvement plays a crucial role in ensuring the continuity of African tribal music (Knight, 2010). Additionally, NGOs contribute by funding educational programs, performances and music festivals that promote traditional African music (Brown, 2011; personal interview, 2023).

Tourism has become an essential revenue stream in this context. African music and dance are central to cultural tourism in countries like Kenya, Ghana and South Africa. Performances for tourists help sustain traditional artists while introducing international audiences to African musical heritage. Tourist interest in African music not only provides direct income for artists but also raises awareness, making traditional music more relevant in the global arena (Borges, 2016).

Example: The Festival of African Culture (FESTAC) in Nigeria attracts tourists and boosts funding for local performers. Similarly, South Africa's Zulu Kingdom cultural performances are popular among tourists, allowing local musicians to earn a living by preserving their musical traditions. African tribal music demonstrates how community-based funding and tourism revenue can create a viable support structure in the absence of strong state intervention.

European Cultural Endowments: Public Funds and Subsidies

In Europe, cultural preservation is often achieved through a combination of public funds, endowments and subsidies. European countries, backed by EU cultural policies, dedicate substantial resources to support traditional music and the arts. For instance, the European Union's Creative Europe program offers grants that fund cross-border cultural projects, supporting the exchange of traditional music across member states (Sundar, 2022). Individual countries also allocate a portion of their budgets to cultural preservation, with national cultural bodies managing funds for music institutions and artists.

Example: Germany's Goethe-Institut and France's Ministry of Culture provide funding for traditional music festivals, ensuring that folk traditions are celebrated and passed down. Likewise, the UK's Arts Council supports folk music, funding artists, festivals and archival projects. The European model demonstrates the benefits

of structured cultural endowments managed at both national and regional levels, with a focus on promoting traditional arts as part of the broader European heritage (Clements, 2012).

Applying Lessons to Hindustani Classical Music

Hindustani Classical Music, with its rich historical and cultural significance, could benefit from a hybrid model that integrates elements from the Japanese, African and European approaches. Such a model could combine government funding, community-based initiatives and market-driven revenue streams to provide stable financial support for artists while promoting the genre (Bakhle, 2005; Soneji, 2011).

- 1. Government Support:** Inspired by Japan's model, the Indian government could establish Hindustani Classical Music as a protected cultural heritage. A government body dedicated to Hindustani Classical Music could provide regular funding for training, performances and research, preserving the art form for future generations (Viswanathan, 1999; Brown, 2011).
- 2. Community and NGO Involvement:** Community-based funding and NGO support, as seen in African tribal music, could supplement government initiatives. Community groups and cultural organizations could organize music festivals, educational workshops and talent development programs to nurture local talent and introduce youth to Hindustani Classical Music (Pathak, 2007; Gupta, 2004).
- 3. Tourism and Market-Based Revenue:** Similar to the African model, India's tourism sector can play a role in preserving Hindustani Classical Music. Cultural tourism could involve curated performances, festivals and music tours, offering tourists an authentic experience while providing an income stream for artists. Additionally, Europe's practice of endowments and subsidies could inspire India to establish cultural endowments, encouraging private investments in the arts (Rao, 2003; Kumar, 2004).

The Sawai Gandharva Bhimsen Mahotsav, a popular Hindustani Classical Music festival in Pune, is an example of community-supported preservation. Government or corporate sponsorship of similar events could be scaled up, combining ticket sales, state grants and corporate sponsorships to ensure the financial sustainability of Hindustani Classical Music (Manuel, 1993; Knight, 2010).

By adopting a hybrid model, India could establish a stable financial foundation for Hindustani Classical Music, similar to the support systems in Japan, Africa and Europe. This approach would allow for a comprehensive framework, blending state support with community involvement and revenue generation, thus ensuring the long-term preservation and growth of this classical tradition.

Across the globe, unique initiatives have successfully balanced the preservation of traditional arts with economic sustainability, each approach tailored to the cultural landscape it supports. For example, South Korea has established a "Living National Treasures" designation, recognizing certain artists and craftsmen as essential to Korean heritage. These artists receive government support, enabling them to devote themselves fully to their craft and to pass on their skills to future generations (Foster, 2015).

This government-driven model of preservation has inspired similar efforts elsewhere, like in China, where "Cultural and Creative Parks" in cities like Beijing and Shanghai offer spaces for traditional artists to collaborate with modern creatives. These parks generate revenue through art sales, workshops and tourism, effectively blending heritage with contemporary business models (Tomlinson, 2008; Desai, 2006).

Norway's Cultural Schoolbag program, meanwhile, highlights the role of education in preservation. This initiative funds traditional musicians, folk dancers and other artists to perform for students in schools. By introducing young people to these art forms, the program not only provides artists with financial support but also fosters cultural appreciation from an early age (Davidson, 2017).

New Zealand has taken a similar approach to preservation but with a focus on tourism. The government collaborates with Maori communities to promote Maori cultural tourism, where traditional performers and craftsmen showcase their work to international audiences. This model generates income for artists and helps sustain community development, using tourism to keep culture alive and relevant (Borges, 2016).

In Mexico, artisan markets operate with government subsidies, providing traditional craftsmen with regular venues in both cities and tourist areas. These markets ensure that artisans have a steady source of income, creating a sustainable link between their crafts and the broader economy (Bhargava, 2002).



In the United States, the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) supports a similar goal through grants that fund traditional arts, particularly within indigenous and immigrant communities. These grants support festivals, apprenticeships and documentation projects, preserving cultural practices while providing financial stability for artists and their communities (Brown, 2011).

Bhutan's approach is embedded in its unique measure of progress known as "Gross National Happiness" (GNH), which emphasizes cultural preservation as integral to well-being. Through GNH, the Bhutanese government actively funds traditional arts and integrates them into education, tourism and community life, ensuring that cultural heritage remains an essential part of everyday life (Tomlinson, 2008).

In Europe, Italy's "Adopt a Monument" program shows how cultural heritage can also involve community participation. Through this program, citizens, businesses and schools can maintain and promote historic sites, often creating spaces for artists to hold workshops and teach their craft within historic settings. This approach blends preservation with public engagement and tourism, enhancing cultural heritage's economic value (Clements, 2012).

India's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) framework has also been effectively used for cultural preservation. Companies like Tata and Infosys sponsor events and programs that celebrate traditional music and dance, allowing corporations to support the arts while meeting CSR goals. This partnership between companies and cultural organizations creates awareness and provides income for artists (Sundar, 2022).

In Australia, Indigenous media channels take a modern approach by broadcasting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander traditional music, storytelling and events. These channels provide artists with recognition and income, preserving indigenous culture through modern media (Desai, 2006).

Each of these initiatives combines cultural preservation with financial support, adapting traditional art forms to contemporary contexts. By supporting artists through various revenue streams and integrating heritage into public life, these models demonstrate how tradition can thrive within a sustainable economic framework.

Findings and Conclusion

Musicians in Hindustani Classical Music face ongoing financial instability, as economic hardships persist with

limited financial opportunities and few sustainable support systems. Compounding these challenges is a decline in audience engagement, with younger generations increasingly drawn to digital and popular music. This shift in preferences makes it difficult for classical music to maintain its relevance, posing a critical threat to its long-term sustainability. The study explores viable financial models that could help address these issues, identifying subscription-based platforms, corporate social responsibility (CSR) sponsorships and community-driven patronage as promising solutions. These models offer scalable and sustainable support mechanisms, aligning well with current digital trends and community interests. The potential success of such models in supporting Hindustani Classical Music also points to broader implications for arts economics in India. Insights from this study suggest that a comprehensive policy approach, integrating government, corporate and community funding, could benefit not only classical music but other traditional Indian art forms as well. In conclusion, Hindustani Classical Music faces a combination of economic, cultural and media-related challenges. The absence of sustainable financial models, combined with its marginalization in digital media, restricts both its reach and financial viability. To ensure the future of Hindustani Classical Music, this study recommends the establishment of a hybrid funding model that combines government support, corporate sponsorships and subscription-based platforms. For this to be effective, policymakers, corporations and cultural advocates must collaborate to build an economic ecosystem that supports and celebrates India's musical heritage.

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