

# Engaging Communities in Research: Applied Ethnomusicology, Shared Knowledge production, and Cultural Empowerment in the Nepalese Diaspora Community of Edmonton, Canada

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**Abstract.** In the last two decades, a significant amount of research has been carried out in the field of ethnomusicology on engaging communities as an active collaborator and indispensable partner. These studies have been primarily informed and guided by the principle of applied ethnomusicology that focuses on the use of ethnomusicological scholarship, knowledge, and understanding for societal benefits, the betterment of humankind, and the engenderment of positive change in a society. There is an ongoing discourse in the ethnomusicology discipline on this kind of community-engaged research that is often conducted out of the common practice of theory and method in mainstream ethnomusicology, including some imperative questions on the validity of such research and the scientific process in the production of academic knowledge. This article attempts to contribute to this ongoing inquiry of community-engaged or community-collaborative research in applied ethnomusicology and posits that ethnomusicological knowledge and understanding can be employed in the production of scientific knowledge by including the researched group; scholarship guided by the principle of applied ethnomusicology can use theoretical knowledge in practical applications to solve cultural issue by empowering a minority community; and a community-engaged approach in research can produce reciprocal and tangible results. These ideas are grounded in the specific examples of two community-engaged research projects conducted with the collaboration and active involvement of the minority Nepalese diaspora community of Edmonton, Alberta, Canada.

## Introduction

In social sciences, specifically in the discipline of ethnomusicology, the production of scientific knowledge for the last 50-60 years has been practiced in the conventional and reflexive modes of ethnographies that are traditionally centered around analysis and the ethnographic representation of music cultures (Barz & Cooley, 2008). In recent decades, some ethnomusicologists have argued that this theory of neutrality in ethnomusicology is rooted in academic authority and lacks reciprocity in power relationships, egalitarian involvement, and intercultural dialogue in producing academic knowledge (Araújo, 2008; Hofman, 2010; Mackinlay, 2015). At several points in time, scholars have called for the reconsideration of the current theory and methodology of ethnomusicology. They argue that the current theoretical and methodological paradigm operates within a colonial framework that creates a distinction between researcher and researched, academic and non-academic, theorist and practitioner, insider and outsider, and native and neutral foreign observer, taking power from the researched community by disallowing that community participation,

access, collaboration, and decision-making at every stage of the research process (Araújo, 2008, 2009, 2021; Hofman, 2010; Dirksen, 2012; Mackinlay, 2015).

The purpose of this essay is to contribute to this ongoing discussion of engaging communities, particularly researched communities, in ethnomusicological research. To assist this discussion, I present two music-centered community engaged projects—1) a community music teaching and 2) an annual heritage festival—that I conducted in collaboration with the Nepalese diaspora community of Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. The projects involved the Nepalese diaspora community, including community members, local organization, cultural leaders, community representatives, community musicians, youth, and children. The first project was carried out from May 2017 to October 2017 and the second project was carried out from December 2017 to August 2018. I have used a combined method of participant observation, musical ethnography, semi-structured interviews, and an open-ended survey in this study. On many occasions, I have also personally interacted with the community members, representatives, cultural leaders, artists, and performers before, during, and after the projects.

I delineate the effectiveness of those two projects in strengthening cultural identity, fostering social cohesion, and transmitting the cultural heritage of the Nepalese diaspora community of Edmonton. Further, I discuss how applied ethnomusicological knowledge and understanding can be employed to produce scientific knowledge by including the researched group/people/community; how scholarship guided by the principle of applied ethnomusicology can use theoretical knowledge in practical applications to solve a concrete cultural issue by empowering a minority community; and how an approach of engaging the researched community in ethnomusicological research can produce reciprocal and tangible results (Alviso, 2003; Titon, 2015a).

### **Applied Ethnomusicology and community-engaged research**

In the last two decades, applied ethnomusicology has acquired specific and internationally shared meanings. It is increasingly popular and a growing trend across the humanities, arts, and social sciences disciplines, which all use ethnomusicological scholarship, knowledge, and understanding for societal usefulness (Harrison, 2016; Pettan, 2015). Scholars trace its historical context back to the late 1800s and early 1900s in the research of Native Americans and argue against some scholars' presumption of applied ethnomusicology as a new brand (Dirksen, 2012; Titon, 2015b). As significant interest grows, many scholars have called for the reconsideration of the current theory and practice in the field of ethnomusicology (Araújo, 2008; Barz & Cooley, 2008; Mackinlay, 2015). Some scholars have called for the deconstruction of the binaries of academic vs non-academic, theoretical vs atheoretical, and pure vs impure which have previously been used to distinguish applied and mainstream ethnomusicology (Dirksen, 2012; Harrison, 2016; Hofman, 2010; Seeger, 2008). There has likewise been a push to extend the use of ethnomusicological knowledge to solve issues of conflict, forced migration, violence against minorities, poverty, disease, and war (Rice, 2014).

Together with the growing number of voices demanding the decolonization of theory and method in ethnomusicology, significant numbers of scholars have undertaken applied ethnomusicology as a theoretical and methodological approach. Their research is driven by social responsibility, ethical and moral questions, and the goal of engendering positive change for the mutual benefit of a society. Their work engages communities as indispensable partners. For example, Samuel Araújo, Vincenzo Cambria, and members of the Grupo Musicultura's (2006; 2009; 2013) work on a favela area of Maré, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil engaged the local community organization and residents of Maré to understand and find solutions to the conflict and violence in that area. Svanibor Pettan's (2010) project of Azra—conducted in the 1990s among the eleven thousand refugee immigrants from the war-torn homeland of Bosnia and Herzegovina who were residing temporarily in Norway—involved the refugees in different musical activities, involved both Norwegian and Bosnians in cultural education, and created the Azra ensemble that strengthened the Bosnian cultural identity among the refugees and built a mutual and cross-cultural communication between Bosnians and Norwegians. Michael Frishkopf's (2017; 2018) research on the Buduburam Liberian refugee camp near Ghana's capital, Accra, engaged musicians of the refugee camp, including individuals, government and non-government organizations, academics, and students from the United States and Canada in a public health promotion on sanitation and raised global awareness about conflict and forced migration.

Another internet-based digital multimedia research project—one that houses social and cultural resources in the form of digital and interactive multimedia, including online exhibits, curriculum material, a living repository, and a virtual musical world—initiated by Marcia Ostaszewski (2012; 2014) in 2012 in Cape Breton, Nova Scotia, Canada involved scholars, students, professionals, technology experts, and different communities and partner organizations; it served as a space to re-create and interconnect the histories and homelands of the Eastern and Central European communities of Cape Breton. In a similar manner, Tan Sooi Beng's (2015) two cultural projects—annual heritage celebrations and a children's music advocacy program in George Town, Penang—engaged the city and its residents by using a type of theatre that includes music, drama, visual arts, photography, or video for self-representation, the recovering of multiethnic histories, and peace-building in the city.

Other notable works include those by Dan Bendrups (2015), who worked on two projects—1) a digital music archive project in Rapanui Island in Chile, and 2) a CD production project in a Latvian migrant community in Christchurch, New Zealand—that involved both of these communities, benefited them culturally, and helped to transcend the barriers between him (a researcher) and the community (researched group). Similarly, Jeffery A. Summit (2015) worked on two advocacy projects in Uganda—raising funds and collaborating with community leadership to support education and produce a CD of the music of the Jewish, Christian, and Muslim coffee farmers to promote interfaith cooperation. One of the field's most prominent ethnomusicologists, Anthony Seeger (2008), worked with the indigenous

Brazilian tribe called Suyá in Mato Grosso, Brazil, in a music recording project that recorded Suyá music, speech, myth, and curing invocations. Later, he published the recording with an independent record label with the title *Indian Music: Suyá Vocal Art* and transferred all the royalties for their recording to the Suyá people. In the case of local immigrant minorities in Rostock, Germany, Britta Sweers (2015) initiated a CD and CD-ROM production project titled “*Polyphonie der Kulturen (Polyphony of Cultures)*” in collaboration with the Rostock-based civil initiative *Bunt statt braun (Colourful instead of brown)*, involving the immigrants, which brought many positive benefits to the immigrant population. The inclusion of the CD in the nation-wide world music contest CREOLE, participation in different regional and national contests, and exposure of the local world music artists increased their visibility.

A large amount of community-engaged research carried out by various ethnomusicologists and a growing interest in community-engaged research within the theoretical and methodological framework of applied ethnomusicology over the past two decades have stressed community-engaged research as a valid method of scientific knowledge production in the field of ethnomusicology. All of the projects discussed above engaged researched communities in the research. These ethnomusicologists underscored the importance of including the informants/participants with whom ethnomusicologists work in their research. Ethnomusicologists have argued that the approach provided them with an understanding of a community’s core problems, allowed them to share authority with the researched group, encouraged participants to contribute to and be a partner with a research project from the start to the finish, and transformed pilot projects into sustainable and long-term initiatives.

In the following sections, I illustrate how I adapted the community-engaged approach within the theoretical framework of applied ethnomusicology in two music-centered community projects in the Nepalese diaspora community of Edmonton, Alberta, Canada.

### **Nepalese diaspora of Edmonton: An introductory vignette**

Today, the term diaspora has a shared meaning (Tölölyan, 2012) and has been extended and more widely applied in academia to include various dispersions and displacements—“expatriates, expellees, political refugees, alien residents, immigrants, and ethnic and racial minorities *tout court*” (Safran, 1991, p. 83). The expansion of this concept has also opened discussion of its sub-categories, such as victim, imperial, labor, trade, and deterritorialized diasporas (Cohen, 2008, p. 16). Despite tremendous proliferation of the term in the humanities and social sciences (and beyond) over the last two decades, Nepalese diaspora studies has received very little attention in academia.

The earliest dispersion movements of the Nepalese diaspora date back to the seventeenth century (to Tibet—Shigatse, Gyantse, and Lhasa cities). The dispersion movement grew after the formation of modern Nepal in the mid to late-eighteenth century, when the Gorkhali king Prithvi Narayan Shah unified the 54 small kingdoms, including Kathmandu valley. A plethora of Nepalese people migrated to Darjeeling, Bhutan, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh,

Thailand, and on to Burma/Myanmar (Gellner, 2013). This dispersion continued in the 1950s to Indian cities such as Delhi and Mumbai for unskilled labor; in the 1960s to Southeast Asian countries for trade; and in the 1980s and 1990s to Gulf countries, Thailand, Malaysia, Taiwan, and South Korea. Many others migrated to Europe, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, and North America (Gellner, 2013; Graner & Gurung, 2003). Some of the imperative reasons for the Nepalese diaspora were the low preference for Nepalese settlement in the government-encouraged, malaria-infected Terai (lowland region); the classification of the caste system from Muluki Ain (the national law code) in 1854; the Anglo-Nepalese war of 1814-1816; the Anglo-Burmese war of 1888; the Japanese occupation of Burma in 1942-1945; the one-party Panchayat system in 1960-1990; and the Nepalese civil war or Maoist insurgency in 1996-2006 and onwards due to its impact on state reconstruction (Haaland, 2008; Stirr, 2017).

The immigration history of the Nepalese in Canada goes back to the 1980s. An “Immigration and Ethnocultural Diversity Highlight Tables, 2016 Census” from Statistics Canada shows a total of 14,390 Nepalese immigrants in Canada who immigrated in different periods between 1981 and 2016 from Nepal. The majority of Nepalese immigrants (7,605) live in Ontario, while Alberta (3,915) and British Columbia (1,035) have the second and third largest population sizes across Canada respectively (Statistics Canada, 2016a).

With respect to the Nepalese diaspora community of Edmonton, their total population is 1,520, according to the Census Profile 2016 (Statistics Canada, 2016b). Members of Edmonton’s Nepalese diaspora are settled mainly in Southeast neighborhoods—Mill Woods, The Meadows, Ellerslie, and Summerside; Southwest neighborhoods—Heritage Valley, Kaskitayo, Riverbend, and Terwillegar Heights; Northwest neighborhoods—Carlton, Cumberland, Hudson; Northeast neighborhoods—Castle Downs; and Downtown neighborhoods. The Nepalese language, an official national language and lingua franca of Nepal (Government of Nepal, 2020), is the most common language spoken among the Nepalese immigrant community of Edmonton. Although Nepalese immigrants residing in Edmonton are from different castes, ethnicities, and parts of Nepal, Hinduism is practiced by the majority of the population. Nepalese language, religion, and national cultural festivals serve as a basis to display a collective identity of the members of the Nepalese diaspora of Edmonton. This collectivity is seen through the social and cultural events organized for the national Hindu festival celebrations (Giri, 2021).

### **Community music teaching project**

#### *Knowing the Community*

I was fortunate that I received a very warm welcome from one of the families of the Nepalese diaspora community of Edmonton when I arrived at the Edmonton International Airport on the 29<sup>th</sup> of August 2016 for my doctoral study—which focuses on the music and culture of Nepalese diasporic communities in Canada and across the world. I was treated to a week of exceptional hospitality from that family until I found a place to stay. A few months

after I moved and settled into a new place, I met an elderly community member, Dr. Ai Bahadur Gurung, in November 2016. Gurung has been well-known in the community for over a decade for his leadership role and volunteer work. He is also known for his cultural advocacy and his initiatives to encourage the minority Nepalese diasporic community of Edmonton to practice their native music and culture. He is an engineer by profession, but he likes to play the Nepalese flute in his spare time. He introduced me two other local musicians: Bishnu Gyawali—another Nepalese flute player—and Umanath Gaire—a Nepalese cylindric hand drum (*madal*) player. While I was conducting a group interview, Gurung brought up the idea of performing in an upcoming community celebration called *Lhosar*<sup>1</sup> and *Nava Varsha* or *Naya Varsha*.<sup>2</sup> After a few rehearsals, we presented an hour and a half-long cultural show, performing several traditional Nepalese language songs and instrumentals on December 31, 2016, at the Duggan Community Hall, South Edmonton. The event was well-received and well-attended by community members. The event familiarized me with the small Nepalese diaspora community. After the show, people started to invite me to their homes, gatherings, personal functions, and community events. This gave me an opportunity to develop a network and build rapport within the community.

#### *Identifying Needs and Formulation of the Project*

In March 2017, I attended a meeting organized by community members from the Southeast neighborhoods—Mill Woods and Ellerslie; Southwest neighborhoods—Kaskitayo; and Northwest neighborhoods—Carlton, Cumberland, and Hudson. During the meeting, the community members discussed the current situation of their native cultural practices in their new home and the continuity of those practices in the future. They expressed their concern and fear of losing the cultural heritage of their homeland since they were not able, despite several efforts, to transmit it effectively to the children who were born in Canada or brought to Canada when they were very young. They discussed if there was any way to preserve and transmit their native culture and heritage in this new cultural milieu. Since my research is focused on Nepalese diaspora communities in Canada, and I am a scholar of applied ethnomusicology with an interest in community-engaged research, I saw this as an opportunity to work together with this community in addressing their concerns and solving their issues. I expressed my interest in contributing to the community and offered them my ethnomusicological knowledge and expertise in traditional music. While I was in Nepal, I was on the music faculty at Tribhuvan University of Nepal and taught traditional music for seven years (2006-2013). I also proposed to them that I initiate this project as a part of my research in Nepalese Diaspora in Canada. The community members agreed to my proposal. After the meeting, we formed a core team of five members including myself (and several others joined as the project progressed). In three subsequent meetings and discussions as well as phone communications from March to April 2017, the community team formulated

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1. *Lhosar* is a festival celebrated mostly by Gurung, Tamang, Lama, and Sherpa ethnic groups in Nepal.

2. Nepali *Nava Varsha* or *Naya Varsha* is the Nepalese new year celebrated by Nepalese nationals.

the idea of a community music teaching project to teach their native culture to newer generations through the music.

### *Implementation of the Project*

After the project formulation, the community team recruited forty-one children and youth participants. Each of the members in the team shared the roles and duties based on their expertise and availability. My role was to teach the traditional music that is a part of lifecycle rituals, local and national festivals, and the everyday life of the first-generation Nepalese immigrants of Edmonton. The other members of the core team and the parents of the children and youth took on the rest of the responsibilities: bringing the children and youth for training, motivating them to learn and practice, arranging for traditional musical instruments and attires, and handling other logistics. The project was implemented for five months (from May to October 2017). The participants learned to sing and play Nepalese traditional music. At the end of the project, the community organized a performance of those children and youth who participated in the project on October 14, 2017, at Eastwood School Hall, Edmonton (see figure 1 and 2).



**Figure 1.** Minority Nepalese diaspora children and youth performing traditional music with traditional costumes from diverse ethnic and caste groups of Nepal.

The community performance was held on October 14, 2017, at the end of the “Community Music Teaching Project” at the Eastwood School Hall, Edmonton. Photograph by the author, October 14, 2017.





**Figure 2.** Members of the minority Nepalese diaspora community attending the children and youth performance at the Eastwood School Hall, Edmonton. Photograph by the author, October 14, 2017.

### *Project Impact and Outcome*

After the completion of the project, the project organizing team—including me and the participants' parents—had a meeting. During the meeting, the group evaluated the impact of the project and discussed future plans. Following the meeting, I carried out semi-structured interviews with the organizing members of the community as well as with the parents of the children and youth who participated in the project, to get feedback. I also conducted participant observation during the teaching and performance.

At the beginning of the project, the parents and community members who were directly involved in the project planning and implementation were uncertain about the result of the project. They also had some hesitation concerning whether the children and youth would want to learn their parents' native music and if community members on the team would cooperate and execute the project without any disruption. Remarkably, during the entire project, everyone noticed a tremendous interest among the children and youth for learning their parents' cultural music and instruments. The appreciation they received during their performances added to the young people's excitement in learning about the culture of their parents. The community members were very happy to see their children singing and playing their traditional music. During the interviews, most of them shared experiences of their children regularly playing the music they had learned after the completion of the project, performing in different community events, playing for their grandparents and friends when they connected virtually, and asking further questions about the music and its connection with the festivals they celebrate. There were many community members and their children, other than the project participants, present in the community performance. After watching the children and youth performing, many showed interest in and inquired about the continuation of the project. Overall, the project was effective, and it had a positive impact



on strengthening and transmitting the cultural identity of the minority Nepalese diaspora community of Edmonton.

### **Heritage Festival Project**

#### *Background, Project Initiation, and Identifying Issues*

The second project was a collaborative project with the two Nepalese diaspora community organizations—Nepalese Canadian Community of Edmonton (NECASE) and Gurukul Nepalese Heritage Language School—as well as community leaders, local cultural experts, local musicians, children, youth, and seniors. It was a cultural heritage festival project that was presented to the public on August 4-6, 2018, at Edmonton Heritage Festival. This annual festival is held over the three days of the August long weekend in William Hawrelak Park in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. The festival has been showcasing diverse cultures of different communities of Alberta since 1976 (Edmonton Heritage Festival, 2020). Each community gets a pavilion to display their cultural heritage through music, dance, arts and crafts, and food. The Nepalese diaspora community joined the festival in 2001 (Adhikari, 2010).

Due to my continuing rapport with the community from my previous community music teaching project and my involvement in different cultural activities of the community, in December 2017 the Nepalese diaspora community of Edmonton invited me to initiate the 2018 heritage festival project as a cultural coordinator. With the community, I carried out this initiative as a research project in relation to my doctoral research. The cultural showcase in the heritage festival was planned for August 4 – 6, 2018, and there was still eight months of time remaining to prepare for the festival. I carried out preliminary research with the community, conducting open-ended semi-structured interviews from December 2017 to March 2018 with community representatives, cultural leaders, traditional knowledge keepers, and participants of the previous festivals (community musicians, dancers, and volunteers). I used phone and in-person meetings for the half-hour-long interviews, during which I asked about the history of previous heritage festival showcases and the interviewees' involvement, experience, feedback, specific concerns, and expectations. I also carried out five group meetings to identify their needs in the preparation of the cultural showcase. From those interviews and meetings, I identified two major issues: first, there was always very little involvement from the community in the cultural showcase and the previous cultural committees had never been successful at including a holistic participation of the community; and second, because of the lack of musical and cultural experts to guide them, in the previous years of participation the community was not able to present the diverse and actual music or dance that belongs to a particular ethnic and caste group of Nepalese people.

### *Forming the Group, Recruiting Participants, and Providing Training*

After the identification of the issues, I reached out to the representatives of two community organizations—NECASE and Gurukul Nepalese Heritage Language School. I also connected with the cultural coordinators from previous years, local musicians, and dance experts. A core team of 6 members, including one representative from the two community organizations, one local musician, two community youth dance experts, and one cultural coordinator from a previous year, was formed. The group selected 20 Nepalese ethnic cultures to present at the heritage festival.

For the month of May, several notifications were sent out to community members through the community organization email list and newsletter to recruit the participants. The members of the team also helped to spread the news to the community. At the end of the month, there were 160 registrations. The community organization NECASE provided a space for the training. From June 2017 to the end of July 2018, with the help of local musician, youth dance experts, and my active involvement, we provided the participants (ages 6 to 80) with training for the music ensemble, singing, and dance, based on the 20 ethnic cultures.

### *Heritage Day*

All 160 participants showcased 40 different group performances of 20 of Nepalese ethnic cultures from August 4 – 6, 2018 at the Edmonton Heritage Festival. The dance performances included *Maruni*; *Tamang Selo*; *Tappa*; *Balan*; *Tharu*; *Bhojpuri*; *Sebru*; *Chandi*; and *Dhime* and *Kumari* (see figure 4). These performances were of the Gurung and Magar; Tamang; Tharu and Thakuri; Brahmin and Chhetri; Tharu; Bojpuri speakers; Sherpa; Rai and Limbu; Nepalese female; and Newar ethnic and caste groups of Nepal, respectively. Specific traditional music accompanied all of the dance performances.

The main attraction of the cultural showcase was the *Panchae Baja*, the traditional instrumental music ensemble of the Damai caste group of Nepal (see figure 3). The ensemble consists of traditional wind instruments *sahanai*, *narsinga*, and *karnal*; drum instruments *damaha*, *dholaki*, and *tyamko*; and cymbal instrument *jyali* or *jhyamta*. The ensemble is played by a particular caste group of professional musicians called Damai, who undertake tailoring as a supplementary profession. The ensemble is played mainly at weddings, festivals, and ritual celebrations. It plays an auspicious role in all these contexts (Tingey, 1990). A group of 10 musicians played traditional instrumental music for almost an hour. Interestingly, none of the musicians were from the Damai caste group. They learned and practiced to represent this ensemble for the heritage festival.



**Figure 3.** Participants in the “Cultural Heritage Festival Project” performing “Panchae Baja” (traditional ensemble) at the Edmonton Heritage Festival 2018. Photograph by the author, August 5, 2018.



**Figure 4.** Participants performing Kumari dance of the Newar ethnic groups of Kathmandu Valley, Nepal at the Edmonton Heritage Festival 2018. Photograph by the author, August 5, 2018.

### *Project Impact and Outcome*

During and after the festival, I carried out in-person and phone surveys with the participants, team members, representatives of the two community organizations, and local community members who visited the cultural showcases. The survey included open ended questions that asked about their experience of attending and participating in the training and performance during the heritage days, its benefits to the participants and community, its impact on building connections with fellow community members, and feedback on being involved in this collaborative project. The surveys can be summarized in the following points: the level and amount of participation that represented ethnic and caste groups of Nepal in

the heritage were far greater than the previous years. Many performances, including the ensemble, were presented for the very first time in the festival and this increased community members' interest in learning about and participating in the showcase. The learning of the traditional dance and music was exciting for the youth and children. The festival helped the participant to increase their connectivity by getting to know other community members and strengthen their social bonding by working together in a team.

### **Conclusion**

Both of the projects presented here engaged the community in all stages of the research—identifying needs, formulating and planning, implementing, and evaluating the effectiveness of the projects. The community music teaching project was small in size, and I worked closely with the parents, children, youth, and several community members. The heritage festival project was broad, and I worked with a wide range of community members, including two organizations, their representatives, community leaders, previous heritage coordinators, local cultural experts, local musicians, and participants and volunteers (children, youth, and seniors). Both of these projects had their specific challenges which arose at different stages of the research, but the community managed to carry on with the available resources and volunteers. I was actively involved in both projects, playing the role of facilitator, and offered my ethnomusicological knowledge to address the cultural concerns of the minority diaspora community. The community took ownership of these projects and executed them successfully with mutual help, cooperation, and understanding. My insider role and knowledge of the language and culture also helped me to communicate well and work together with the community members. However, I maintained all the ethical consideration of research while working with this community. In terms of the impact of the projects, they helped to foster connectivity in the community, empower the community with cultural knowledge and managerial skills, strengthen cultural identity, and transmit the cultural heritage to the newer generation.

As the discipline of ethnomusicology has developed, new epistemological scenarios, new mode of ethnography, and new theoretical and methodological approaches have been emerging in the field, offering ethnomusicologists a wide range of choices in conducting ethnomusicological research. Today, it is not the case that one has to rely only on the neutrality, reflexivity, analysis, and representation of music culture in research. Also, since a range of circumstances, such as war, conflict, forced migration, violence, poverty, pandemic, climate change, and such have tremendously affected music communities, ethnomusicologists have to find ways to address these issues rather than become institutionalized experts on music and culture. In such contexts, the significance of applied ethnomusicology that offers ethnomusicological scholarship, knowledge, and understanding for societal usefulness is highly relevant. As the community collaborative projects presented here demonstrate, community-engaged research in ethnomusicology can both lead to the production of scientific knowledge and address human problems, benefit the community,

and serve needs of humankind through the inclusion of researched groups in symmetrical power relationships, shared goals, mutual dialog, and grassroots participation.

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