

Institutionalization of Sattriya Dance with Special Reference to Belguri Satra, Narayanpur, Assam

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Abstract

Sattriya dance, one of the eight recognized Indian classical dance forms, originated within the Neo-Vaishnavite Bhakti movement of Assam initiated by Srimanta Sankardeva during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Emerging from the ritual and performative traditions of Satras—Vaishnavite monastic institutions—Sattriya historically functioned as a medium of devotional expression, theological communication, and community participation. Rooted in Ankiya Nat and Bhaona traditions, it incorporates elements of nritya, natya, geeta, badya, abhinaya, mudra, and rasa, conforming to classical principles outlined in the Natya Shastra. Its formal recognition as a classical dance form in 1998 marked a significant phase in its transition from a Satra-bound religious practice to an institutionalized performing art.

This paper examines the process of institutionalization of Sattriya dance with special reference to Belguri Satra and its affiliated training institution, Manikanchan Kala Niketan, located in Narayanpur of Lakhimpur district, Assam. Adopting an anthropological approach, the study investigates how structured pedagogy, examinations, and state-supported cultural initiatives contribute to the preservation, transmission, and contemporary relevance of Sattriya dance. The research is based on primary fieldwork involving interviews with Satra authorities, teachers, parents, and students, supplemented by secondary sources in Assamese and English.

The findings indicate that Belguri Satra functions as a comprehensive cultural institution that integrates religious philosophy, performing arts, and linguistic practices. Manikanchan Kala Niketan plays a pivotal role in formalizing Sattriya training by combining the traditional Guru–Shishya parampara with modern institutional mechanisms such as standardized curricula and examinations. The use of Assamese as the medium of instruction and assessment has emerged as a significant tool for linguistic preservation, particularly in a socio-linguistic context where Assamese speakers constitute a minority at the national level.

The study further highlights the role of government initiatives, including scholarships offered by the Centre for Cultural Resources and Training (CCRT) and the Ministry of Culture, in enhancing accessibility and encouraging sustained participation in Sattriya training. Despite these achievements, challenges such as financial constraints, declining student commitment, and academic pressures from formal schooling persist. The paper concludes that the institutionalization of Sattriya dance at Belguri Satra represents a viable model for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage while reinforcing regional identity in contemporary Assam.

Key Words: Classical Dance, Satra, Sattriya, Neo Vaishnavism, Bhakti movement

Introduction

Classical dance has a long history in India, a country with many different customs and cultural traditions. These dances represent India's history, identity, and spirituality in addition to being creative manifestations. It is now vital to preserve and promote these art forms in light of globalization and the speed of development. Institutionalization is one of the best strategies to do this. Structured learning, research, and international outreach can be aided by incorporating Indian classical dances into formal institutions, guaranteeing their ongoing relevance and development. Assamese society and culture is based on the Brahmaputra valley civilization for a long time. In historical context, the ancient name of the state was Kamrup and Pragjyotishpur, the names were derived from Kamdeva and Astrology (in case of Pragjyotishpur). The classical names in the ancient past prove that the state of Assam was connected to India and Indian culture since ancient times, as the evidence of Assam's King Bhagadatta was the father-in-law of Duryodhana in Mahabharata. In the latter half of the 15th century A.D. or early in the 16th century A.D., the great Vaishnavite saint of Assam, Shrimanta Sankardeva, was the pioneer of a new Vaishnavite Bhakti movement in Assam that followed the medieval new Vaishnavite Bhakti movement in other parts of the nation. His neo-Vaishnavite Bhakti movement mission revived Assamese art, culture, and society. It is reasonable to conclude that his Vaishnavite creations, in the truest sense, not only made his religious movement fruitful but also raised the Assamese *Nritya*, *Geeta*, and *Abhinaya* to a level of standards that is comparable to all of India.

The "*Ankia Nat*," now known as "*Ankia Bhaona*," has all the elements that are characteristic of classical norms, such as *Nritya*, *Natya*, *Geeta*, *Badya*, and *Abhinaya*. The *Nritya* was used primarily for every action a character took, from entering the stage to leaving it, and it was a strange kind of theatrical performance. Therefore, it was a *Nritya-Natya* presentation. Shrimanta Sankardeva himself referred to it as *Nritya*, *Nat*, *Jatra*, and *Anka*, among other places in his many *Nats* (Drama) and other texts. Thus, it can be claimed that the "*Ankia Nat*" is where the Sattriya Dance originated.

The Sattriya dance may be considered as a form of art and identity of the Assamese people through dance, as along with Bihu dance; the folk culture of Assam. As it was started in the Satra (a kind of religious institution of Assam promoting monotheism), the name Sattriya has been derived from it. Today, it is one of the eight classical dances of India (the other seven being Bharatnatyam, Kathak, Kuchipudi, Odissi, Kathakali, Manipuri and Mohiniyattam). Indian classical dance is a highly refined and traditional art form that has evolved over centuries in India. It is deeply rooted in the country's cultural, spiritual, and historical traditions. Here are the defining features that make a dance form "classical" in the Indian context. The Sattriya dance is considered as part of the classical dance since 1998, due to the concept of Vyakarana (mudra or grammar) being used in it. As a result, the dance form of

Sattriya is now considered as classical dance. This paper is based on the fieldwork conducted in Belguri Satra of Narayanpur town, situated in Lakhimpur district of Assam, where they have a classical dance training school named as Manikanchan Kala Niketan. The school and the Satra has institutionalized the Sattriya dance and also have shaped the cultural dimension of the area as a whole, due to which, many performing artists and students are able to carry on the scholarship of the Centre for Cultural Resources and Training (CCRT) under Ministry of Culture, Government of India, and this institutionalization has led to the glorification of the Sattriya dance among the Assamese people at present. (<https://ccrtindia.gov.in/sattriya-dance/>).

Institutionalization is there in Assam right from the days of Srimanta Sankardev. Kamalabari Satra founded by Badal Ata or Badula Padma Ata in 1673 at Majuli. Badula Padma Ata was born in 1468 A.D. at Narayanpur in Assam. The dance treasure of Kamalabari Satra is rich. Sattriya Dance is practice as a medium of devotion in Kamalabari Satra. Dance numbers of Sattriya dance, which is a medium of devotion in the Kamalabari Satra, has been playing a big role in the entire filed of Sattriya dance. In Kamalabari Satra, Sattriya dance has been practice and preserved by daily and occasional observation known as Nritta-Naimitik Prasanga.

At Kamalabari Satra, Vaishnava bhakats or devotees have been practicing Sattriya dance through the Guru-Shishya tradition as part of their daily observances known as Nitta Prasanga. The entire Sattriya dance has been trained and also preserved by Adhyapak or gurus as part of their practices for centuries through the guru-shishya tradition.

Kamalabari Satra celebrated lots of festivals like- Guru Kirtan, Rasleela, Bihu Festival, Hari Kirtan, Pal Naam etc. as a part of their occasional observance known as Naimitik Prasanga. Guru Kirtan, Rasleela and Hari Kirtan are the major festivals of Kamalabari Satras, where entire Sattriya Dance is practiced and performed by Vaishnava bhakats or devotees as a part of their rituals for several centuries. (Baishya, 2024: 171-177)

CCRT provides scholarships like Cultural Talent Search Scholarship Scheme (CTSSS) since 1982 at National level. The Scheme is aimed at providing facilities to outstanding talented children selected in the age group of 10 to 14 years studying either in recognised schools or belonging to families practicing traditional performing arts for getting specialised training in various cultural fields such as traditional forms of music, dance, and drama as well as painting, sculpture, crafts and literary activities. Every year 650 scholarships are provided to the students from all over the country based on their merit and performances.

In addition to this the Ministry of Culture, Government of India also provides scholarships and fellowships for promotion of Indian Art and Culture like the Scheme for Scholarships to Young Artistes in Different Cultural Fields (SYA) in the age group of 18 to 25 years of age. This Scheme seeks to give assistance to young artistes of outstanding promise for advanced training within India in the field of Indian Classical Music, Indian Classical Dance, Theatre, Mime, Visual art, Folk, Traditional and Indigenous Arts and Light Classical Music. Under

this scheme 400 young and budding artisans of the nations is selected based on their merit. The process of selection and awarding the scholarships goes through rigorous selection criteria like formation of various committees at national called as Central Selection Committee, where experts from all the art forms will scrutinize the applications received and based on that the list of art form wise shortlisted candidates is prepared and they are invited for the interview (performance). The shortlisted candidates are then accessed based on their merit and talent by the experts at different regional level selection committee known as Regional Selection Committee. Finally, the list of selected candidates is prepared by the institution based on the marks obtained by each candidate given by the experts. After the approval of the experts of different art forms the final merit or selected list is released. However, the allotment of the scholarships to different art forms is done in a ration of number of applications received in that particular art form and the number of states representing it, this process is a bit tricky.

Such initiatives of the Government of India have provided an ample opportunity to preserve the culture along with ethnic identity as Assamese language speakers are very less in India, little bit more than 1 crore, which is below 1% of the Republic of India. Now, with reference to this theoretical concept, the fieldwork was conducted in Belguri Satra along with Manikanchan Kala Niketan of Narayanpur and the details have been provided in the section of findings after methodology and objectives.

Features of Indian Classical Dance

1. **Spiritual and Mythological Foundations:** Indian classical dance is often connected to religious and spiritual practices, particularly Hinduism. The themes are typically inspired by mythology, epics like the *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*, and devotional poetry.
2. **Natya Shastra Influence:** Classical dance forms are guided by the principles laid down in the *Natya Shastra*, an ancient Sanskrit text by Bharata, considered the foundational treatise on performing arts. Elements like *Nritta* (pure dance), *Nritya* (expressive dance), and *Natya* (dramatic storytelling) come from this text.
3. **Mudras (Hand Gestures):** Each classical dance form employs a vocabulary of specific hand gestures or *mudras*, used to convey emotions, tell stories, or represent objects and ideas.
4. **Abhinaya (Expressive Techniques):** *Abhinaya* refers to the art of expression, including facial expressions, body movements, and gestures, which are integral to storytelling.
5. **Rasa and Bhava (Emotions and Sentiments):** The dance conveys a wide range of emotions (*rasas*) and corresponding expressions (*bhavas*) to engage and evoke specific feelings in the audience.
6. **Structured Training and Codified Movements:** Classical dance forms have rigorous training methods and well-defined rules for posture, movement, rhythm, and expression.

7. **Accompaniment with Classical Music:** Indian classical dances are typically performed to Indian classical music, featuring instruments like the veena, mridangam, tabla, or flute. The rhythms and melodies complement the dance movements.
8. **Costumes and Makeup:** Classical dances feature elaborate costumes, intricate jewelry, and traditional makeup, including eye enhancement to highlight expressions.
9. **Regional and Cultural Identity:** Each classical dance form originates from a specific region and reflects the local cultural and linguistic heritage. It was observed that all these forms of mudras are observed while training the students in Sattriya dance, and hence, Sattriya dance can be well defined as a classical dance in Indian form, as it follows the concept of grammar and expression in it.

Methodology:

As part of the work of anthropology, the work was done in the field of performing art from the perspective of anthropology, where the concept of performing art is studied with reference to its impact on the society and culture, and vice versa. So, the data collection was done from primary data and then it was verified with secondary sources of data which are available in various literatures of Satras available in Assamese language, along with English. We met the teachers of the music school, also the Chief of the Satra, and also a number of parents regarding the concept of the school, the dance and its impact in their daily life. The following questions were asked to the parents of the children getting trained up in the music school:

1. Why you have sent your children to learn Sattriya dance here?
2. Does your socio-cultural belief have made you to choose this direction?
3. Do you think that this training will help in the identity of ethnicity?
4. Does this training will lead to any benefit? Do you think so?

On the other hand, while meeting the religious Head of the Institution, and the teachers, the questions were asked mostly from the technical perspectives of the Sattriya dance, in relation to the points why this dance is considered as classical dance. The teachers replied that Sattriya dance has qualified to be considered as classical dance because of its concept of vyakarana (grammar), mudra, and the concept of religious belief associated with it.

Objectives:

The primary objectives of this work were as follows:

1. To find out the socio-cultural norms associated with Sattriya dance in Assamese society.
2. To understand the importance of Belguri Satra in preserving and promoting the classical dance form in the region.
3. To find out the change with time at present in relation to the institutionalization and change of UGC rules, if any.

Findings

The Belguri Satra of Assam was established by Srimanta Sankardeva in 1618 in Narayanpur, Assam. The devotees of the Satra remain unmarried for life and eventually, they concentrate on the study of theology and religious philosophy of monotheism and also practice and teach the dance and music of the Satra as well. The traditional dance of the Satra is named as Sattriya Dance, while the music is known as Borgeet. Along with these two, fine art of drawing, guitar and contemporary music, table and *khol* (A two-sided clay or terracotta drum is a traditional percussion instrument that is frequently employed in devotional music) are also taught. In the school, it is observed that there are eight teachers of all the subjects, but Sattriya dance is taught by three teachers, Prabhat Kakoti, who is a member/ devotee of the Belguri Satra, where he performs the duty of Bayon (the musician), Bapuram Saikia, and the 3rd teacher is usually a temporary faculty who is usually a former student of the school, who teaches as part of his/her intern program here. In the Sattriya dance, there are three classes; first class is handled by Bapuram Saikia, which includes the students of entry level, from preprimary to the first three years, while the senior students are dealt by Prabhat Kakoti. Final year students are handled by the 3rd contractual teacher at the time of their cultural program. The monthly fee of two programs per month is Rs 300 only. The majority of the students in Sattriya dance are girls, usually 90%, however, a minor portion of boys are also there. The classes take place twice a week, Saturday and Sunday. The concept is taught from the tender age, and at first, by the time the students get promoted to class III or IV, they are allowed to appear for the examination, either the practical (Prak prathomik) or the written (prathiomik), depending on the medium of instruction they study. Those who study in Assamese medium are fluent in writing in Assamese, so in their cases, these students are allowed at class III to appear for prathomik, but in case of the students of English medium, they're allowed to appear for prak prathomik at first, if they are unable to read and write Assamese. This concept of conducting the examination in Assamese has paved the way of preserving the Assamese language in a much-flourished way, as now in NEP also implemented the concept of mother tongue. Because of this concept, Assamese language is well preserved for the ages, and it is well concentrated among the Assamese people too. So, as a whole, this institutionalization has helped the cultural set up in the following ways:

1. Preservation of culture
2. Preservation and continuation of religion (practices)
3. Preservation of the language
4. Preservation of the ethnic identity

Based on the above findings, all these are described below:

Preservation of culture:

Normally, it was observed in the school and the Belguri Satra that people sending their children to learn the dance of Sattriya belong to the mainstream Assamese Hindu community,

although there are several other religions in Assam, but the students are not from those communities. They usually have surnames of the mainstream Assamese like Bora, Barua, Saikia, Hazarika, Sarma, Das etc. This shows that the concept is based on the basis of the preservation of culture. Although there is no restriction in terms of other communities, but other communities are not that much accepting this training as observed in the fieldwork.

Preservation and continuation of religion:

Satras have important role in the preservation of the religion with reference to culture. In fact, cultural programs through dance and music help to enhance the preservation and continuation of religion from various points, like, general common people usually do not understand the philosophical and theological deep discussions while discussed by the priests and other dignitaries of the religious institutions. Owing to this, Srimanta Sankardeva created the concept of one act play and Sattriya dance along with songs, so that it helps the common people to understand the religion in an easier and better way, through simple manner. This is the main reason why people from the Assamese Hindu community mostly send their children to dance Sattriya.

Preservation of the language:

Another significant contribution of the Sattriya dance in Assam is that its medium of instruction is in Assamese. As Assamese language already has a rich source of history along with literature, hence, the Sattriya Dance has contributed a positive source of enhancing the Assamese language here. Here, there is an examination conducted in theory, where the student has to write the answers in Assamese language, and the total marks in 150 per year. As a result, the students studying Assamese medium are compelled to learn to read and write the Assamese language, and it is helping the Assamese people to learn the language smoothly, especially those who are studying in English medium, or in the neighboring state of Arunachal Pradesh. The Assamese language speakers are linguistic minorities in India, as hardly 1 crore people have their mother tongue is Assamese, out of 140 crores population of India, which is making the Assamese language as less than 1% ever in the country. As a contribution from the Belguri satra school, the contribution is a notable one here for the preservation of the language.

Preservation of Ethnic identity:

The preservation of ethnic identity is well preserved here through the institution of the Manikanchan school run under Belguri Satra. Due to the strong religious and cultural affiliation of the Sattriya dance to Mahapurush Srimanta Sankardeva, and the concept of Lord Krishna in relation to the Assamese culture, the preservation of Ethnic identity is found to be well preserved through the institutionalization of the Sattriya dance.

NEP and Dance forms:

Under NEP (New Education Policy), the degree of Fine Arts is conferred by the Universities and Manikanchan Kala Niketan of Naraynpur is now affiliated to Madhavdev University, a State Government University of Lakhimpur district in Assam.

Need for Institutionalization:

Although the Guru-Shishya Parampara (teacher-disciple tradition) has historically transmitted these dance traditions, modern lives demand organized institutions for methodical learning and dissemination. Both the dance forms and society as large will benefit from the institutionalization of classical dance. Therefore, it is necessary to institutionalize traditional dance styles like Sattriya, which will benefit the following areas:

- 1. Standardized Training:** By creating a shared curriculum and assessment framework, instructional approaches are guaranteed to be consistent.
- 2. Preservation of Tradition:** By using institutional efforts to document dance moves, styles, and music, authenticity is preserved and dilution is avoided.
- 3. Accessibility and Inclusivity:** Dance education is made accessible to a wider audience outside of inherited practitioners by schools and institutions.
- 4. International Recognition:** International appreciation and cultural interchange are facilitated by accreditation and ties with foreign organizations.
- 5. Career Opportunities:** Academics, researchers, choreographers, and performers can all pursue careers in formal training facilities.

Role of Institutions in Promoting Indian Classical Dances:

During the fieldwork conducted in Jorhat and Lakhimpur district of Assam, it was observed that these 2 districts are the heart cultural scenario of Assam and Jorhat district is itself called as the Cultural Capital of Assam. In this regard, the fieldwork was conducted in the 2 places. So far, the following Satriya dance teachers were consulted and eventually, the following data analyses is done.

Manikanchan Kala Niketan is a cultural and dance training institution based in Narayanpur, Lakhimpur district, Assam, India focused especially on the classical dance form of Sattriya and related performance arts.

- It is a local art school / cultural centre where students learn Sattriya dance, Katha (narrative dance) and likely other aspects of Assamese performing arts.
- It functions as a training space and cultural hub for young dancers and artists from the region, nurturing traditional performing arts that are part of Assam's cultural heritage.

- Dance training: Students receive instruction in Sattriya and related classical forms.
- Scholarships & recognition: Trainees from Manikanchan Kala Niketan have received scholarships for Sattriya dance from the Government of India's cultural agencies, indicating a level of excellence in training.
- Cultural programs: The institution organizes annual cultural events and performances showcasing students' progress and traditional dance repertoires — you can find videos of their annual cultural programmes online.

Manikanchan Kala Niketan play a crucial role in:

- Preserving and transmitting Sattriya dance techniques
- Providing structured training outside major urban centres
- Supporting local youths to pursue classical arts with formal recognition and opportunities

In summary, Manikanchan Kala Niketan is a regional cultural training centre dedicated to classical dance and performing arts, significantly contributing to the continuity and appreciation of Assamese traditional dance forms, especially Sattriya, in and around Narayanpur, Assam.

Challenges in Institutionalization:

Low fees -

It was observed in the school that the fees are very low, only Rs 300 for 2 courses. It is good for the people who are living below poverty line, but when the fees are very low and there is no Government funding, there is a high risk of collapse of such institutes. Hence, personally I feel that per course, it should be Rs 1,000 per month in 2026, so that teachers are paid well and it will lead to a good career growth in dance, music and fine arts.

More enrollment but less students appearing in exam -

Students and parents usually take such courses very casually, just as part time or time pass for the children, without understanding the depth of fine arts. As a result, enrollment number is very high at the time of admission, but at the time of examination, hardly 8-9 students appear per examination. The main reason behind is that people think fine arts is easy and everyone can master it, the biggest misconception among the children and the parents, which we need to remove from the mindset.

School time of the children leading to the problem -

At present, in Assam, other states of India and almost all over the world including USA, school time is usually from 7.30 am to 2 or 2.30 pm, a very long time from class I to XII. Under such hard-working class routine, it becomes very difficult for students to concentrate

in other courses like fine arts (dance and music). Moreover, the career path in such lines have large number of struggles, as the low fees of the school suggests lower payment of the teachers engaged in such schools. As a result, due to the long time of the schools, children don't want to go to these schools on Saturdays and Sundays, rather prefer rest. Hence, through this paper, I request the Government of India and Assam to reduce the school time from 9 am to 12 noon from class I to VI, 9 am to 1 pm from class VII to XII-, and 5-days school per week, with Saturdays and Sundays as holidays. Under this time schedule, children will be able to study and practice properly at home and they will be interested to engage and learn fine arts on Saturdays and Sundays.

Future Prospects and Recommendations:

To strengthen the institutionalization of Indian classical dances, certain measures can be taken:

1. Integration into the Curriculum: Including classical dance in the standard curriculum will inspire young students.
2. Digital Platforms and Online Learning: Dance education can become more widely available through online certification programs and virtual classes.
3. Government and Corporate Sponsorships: Institutions can be sustained with more funding from government programs and corporate social responsibility (CSR) activities.
4. International Collaborations: Increasing worldwide awareness can be achieved by collaborating with international academic institutions and cultural institutions.
5. Community Engagement Programs: Schools and institutions can spark interest and appreciation by hosting seminars, festivals, and outreach initiatives.

Conclusion:

The present study has examined the institutionalization of Sattriya dance with special reference to Belguri Satra and its affiliated institution, Manikanchan Kala Niketan, located in Narayanpur of Lakhimpur district, Assam. Based on ethnographic fieldwork, interviews with institutional authorities, teachers, parents, and students, as well as analysis of secondary literature, the paper highlights the manner in which a ritualistic and devotional performance tradition rooted in the Neo-Vaishnavite movement has evolved into a formally institutionalized classical dance form. The recognition of Sattriya as a classical dance in 1998 reflects its long-standing conformity to the principles of vyakarana (codified grammar), mudra, abhinaya, rasa, and structured pedagogy, which align it with the broader canon of Indian classical dance traditions.

The findings indicate that Satras such as Belguri Satra function not merely as religious institutions but as comprehensive cultural systems that facilitate the transmission of dance, music, language, and theological knowledge. The continued practice of Sattriya within the

Satra framework ensures the preservation of its spiritual ethos, preventing its complete secularization or detachment from its philosophical foundations. The integration of dance with Borgeet, Ankiya Bhaona, and devotional narratives demonstrates the holistic cultural vision of Srimanta Sankardeva, where artistic expression serves as a medium for ethical, spiritual, and social communication.

Manikanchan Kala Niketan represents an effective institutional model that bridges the traditional Guru–Shishya parampara with contemporary educational structures. Through a standardized curriculum, examination system, and affiliation with national cultural scholarship schemes such as those administered by the Centre for Cultural Resources and Training (CCRT) and the Ministry of Culture, the institution has expanded access to formal training in Sattriya dance. This has enabled students from diverse socio-economic backgrounds to pursue sustained engagement with the art form while maintaining artistic discipline and technical rigor.

A significant contribution of the institutionalized training system lies in its role in linguistic preservation. The use of Assamese as the medium of instruction and examination reinforces the functional relevance of the language among younger generations, particularly in a socio-linguistic context where Assamese speakers constitute a numerical minority within the national population. From an anthropological standpoint, this linkage between performing arts and language demonstrates how cultural institutions operate as sites of identity reproduction and continuity.

The study also reveals that the institutionalization of Sattriya dance contributes substantially to the preservation of ethnic identity among the Assamese Vaishnavite community. Participation patterns observed during fieldwork suggest that cultural transmission remains closely intertwined with religious belief systems, collective memory, and community affiliation. While the institutional framework does not formally restrict participation, the predominance of students from mainstream Assamese Hindu households indicates that Satras continue to function as custodians of community-specific cultural traditions. This observation highlights the need for further inquiry into questions of cultural accessibility and inter-community engagement.

Despite these strengths, the research identifies several structural challenges affecting the sustainability of Sattriya institutions. Low fee structures, limited financial support, fluctuating student commitment, and increasing academic pressures within formal schooling systems constrain long-term institutional viability. These challenges point toward the necessity of policy-level interventions, including enhanced public funding, integration of performing arts into mainstream education under the National Education Policy (NEP), and greater institutional recognition of traditional arts as legitimate professional domains.

In conclusion, the institutionalization of Sattriya dance at Belguri Satra illustrates a dynamic process through which a traditional devotional art form has adapted to modern educational

and cultural frameworks while retaining its core aesthetic and spiritual values. The study underscores the importance of localized cultural institutions in safeguarding intangible cultural heritage and demonstrates that institutionalization, when grounded in tradition, can serve as a powerful mechanism for cultural sustainability. Strengthening such institutions through coordinated academic, policy, and community-based initiatives is essential for ensuring the continued relevance and vitality of Indian classical dance traditions in contemporary society.

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