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Suno Rights Governance and Vernacular Copyright Literacy: An Ethnomusicological Analysis of the Relationship Between Generative Music Practices and Media Ecologies in Turkey

Suno Hak Yönetişimi ve Yerel Telif Okuryazarlığı: Türkiye'deki Üretici Müzik Pratikleri ile Medya Ekolojileri Arasındaki İlişkiye Dair Etnomüzikolojik Bir Analiz

ABSTRACT

Written from an ethnomusicological perspective, this article examines a common assumption that copyright constrains generative music only after production, and it argues that platform rules shape legitimacy, circulation, attribution, and monetization at the moment of creation. Focusing on Suno, it shows that subscription tiers, policy documents, and contractual arrangements function as constitutive elements of governance rather than external boundaries. The study situates Turkey as a media ecology in which creator focused explanatory content circulates widely across platforms. Instead of statistical generalization, it synthesizes recurring patterns in this discourse in order to trace practical interpretive pathways. The analysis proceeds in two phases. First, it interprets the explanatory discourse as a vernacular rights pedagogy that renders platform documents usable for everyday decision making. Second, it compares this synthesis with Suno's official rule texts to identify points of alignment and tension. The findings indicate that subscription status at the time of creation operates as the primary threshold for commercial use, while free tier outputs remain in a default noncommercial domain. Because Suno does not provide a default pathway for retroactive monetization after subscribing, creators are pushed toward advance planning as a form of risk management. Remix outputs encourage creative variation while restricting channels of economic circulation. The article thus argues that, on generative music platforms, copyright literacy functions as a practical framework that links timing, subscription choices, and distribution strategies.

Keywords: Suno, generative music, platform governance, copyright literacy, ethnomusicology.

ÖZET

Etnomüzikolojik bir perspektif dâhilinde kaleme alınan bu makale, üretici müzik pratiklerinde telif meselesinin çoğu kez üretim sonrasında devreye giren dışsal bir kısıt gibi düşünülmesi nedeniyle, üretim anında işleyen abonelik temelli sözleşme kurallarının gündelik pratikte nasıl görünmezleşebildiğini tartışmaktadır. Makalenin nihai amacı, abonelik seviyelerinin, politika ve sözleşme belgeleriyle birlikte, Suno özelinde üretim faaliyetlerinin meşruiyetini, dağıtım ve atf sistemini ve ticarileştirilmesini belirleyen temel koşulları nasıl oluşturduğunu analiz etmektir. Araştırma, Türkiye'deki içerik üreticilerini araştırma yoluyla açıklamaya odaklanmaktadır. Makale, istatistiksel genelleme yapmadan ifadelerin nasıl işlediğini izleyen, kalıba dayalı sentez yoluyla doğrudan kaynak atıfları oluşturmaktadır. Makale, metodolojik çerçevesine göre çalışan iki farklı araştırma yolunu sunmaktadır. Araştırmanın ilk aşaması, açıklayıcı ifadeleri, insanların günlük aktivitelerinde platform belgelerini anlamalarına yardımcı olan yerel bir öğrenme yöntemi olarak yorumlamaktadır. Araştırmanın ikinci aşaması, Suno'nun resmi kural belgeleriyle eşleştirerek materyali sentezlemekte ve böylece doğrulama süreçlerini oluştururken çatışma alanlarını şeffaf hale getirmektedir. Sonuçlar, üretim anındaki abonelik durumunun ticari kullanımı belirleyen ana eşiği oluşturduğunu, ücretsiz üretimlerin varsayılan yapılandırılmalarında kişisel ve ticari olmayan kullanıma atandığını ve sektörün geriye dönük ticarileştirmeyi planlı bir risk yönetimi prosedürü olarak ele aldığını, remix üretimlerinin ise ekonomik bir kısıtlama yaratan yaratıcı varyasyonlar geliştirdiğini göstermektedir. Makale, insanların haklar konusunda bilinçli olmayı, üretim zamanlamasına ve içerik dağıtımında kullanılan yöntemlere bağlı olan işlevsel bir rasyonellik olarak anlamaları gerektiğini savunmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Suno, üretici müzik, platform yönetişimi, telif okuryazarlığı, etnomüzikoloji.

1. INTRODUCTION

The rise of generative music platforms shows that they accelerate music creation, yet their production services operate under established rules that become accessible to the public through product design (Poell et al., 2019, p. 1). Suno exemplifies this tendency through an unusually explicit governance layer. Suno's Knowledge Base requires users to determine ownership by checking subscription status at the time of song creation. It separates paid tier creations, which users own with commercial use rights, from free tier creations, which Suno owns with noncommercial use restrictions (Suno, 2026b). Suno thereby uses a temporal test to evaluate outputs and to transform original creation conditions into a standard for validating distribution rights, revenue sharing, and author recognition.

The platform establishes rights literacy as a necessary component of musical skills from an ethnomusicological perspective. The operational rules of earlier governance systems which controlled recording and distribution networks failed to provide usable guidelines for common practitioners who needed to make daily decisions about ownership and copyright and royalty issues which emerged during their operations (Library of Congress, n.d.; Feld, 1996, pp. 13-14). Platformization, by contrast, makes rule texts and enforcement mechanisms salient to cultural production and obliges creators to grapple with shifting standards of access and platform governance (Nieborg & Poell, 2018, p. 4275; Poell et al., 2019, p. 1). Suno's documentation is analytically useful because it distinguishes contractual permission to commercialize outputs from institutional criteria for copyright protection. It also cautions that standards vary across jurisdictions and that the platform does not guarantee copyright protection for outputs even when commercial use rights are granted (Suno, 2025d; Suno, 2026a). This framing aligns with U.S. Copyright Office guidance that treats human authorship as a baseline requirement for registration (U.S. Copyright Office, 2023, p. 3; U.S. Copyright Office, 2025, p. 3) and with recent judicial developments in which the Supreme Court declined review of Thaler's petition (Reuters, 2026).

The Terms of Service created by Suno establish an ethical dimension that people usually describe in simpler terms. The agreement gives Suno a comprehensive license to all user content, which users submit together with the users' explicit release of all their moral rights (Suno, 2025c). The need for author attribution rights, which protect an author's identity and specific rights to their work constitutes essential legal language that shows the significance of their rights (Feld, 1996, pp. 13-14). The article investigates rights governance through an ethnomusicological lens to examine how platform rule texts create safe and typical musical practices for determining legitimacy. The clause's practical impact differs between legal systems because different jurisdictions handle moral rights waivers, but the clause establishes a governance framework that prevents attribution and integrity claims from restricting platform internal operations.

2. METHODOLOGY

This article uses a documentary demonstration and discourse synthesis method, which applies to platform based cultural production systems where rule documents and community interpretations determine operational procedures (Nieborg & Poell, 2018, p. 4286; Poell et al., 2019, p. 1). The first analytic layer combines all creator identification systems that operate within Turkish media ecosystems. This discourse functions as a common language teaching material that uses governance systems to create repeatable decision-making processes and alert systems, particularly for the subscription at creation test and the statement that monetization permission does not provide copyright protection.

The second layer is Suno's Knowledge Base, treated as a formal governance program that supplies operational definitions and decision rules. It defines noncommercial use as a prohibition against monetization and distribution to earning platforms (Suno, 2025f). It defines commercial use as the ability to earn money from music made while subscribed (Suno, 2025e) and it describes paid tier commercial use rights (Suno, 2025g). It also specifies a nonretroactivity rule for free tier songs (Suno, 2025b) and it sets constraints on remix monetization (Suno, 2025a). The third layer is Suno's Terms of Service, treated as the highest-level articulation of contractual control because it specifies the scope of rights granted to Suno over user submissions and includes a waiver of moral rights (Suno, 2025c).

The institutional doctrine functions as the fourth triangulation layer of the analysis. The U.S. Copyright Office's policy statement on works containing AI generated material clarifies examination and registration practices under the human authorship requirement (U.S. Copyright Office, 2023, p. 3), and its Part 2 report elaborates how human contribution, selection, and arrangement may bear on copyrightability in generative contexts (U.S. Copyright Office, 2025, p. 24). The study includes recent judicial developments, which only

serve to define the limits of doctrinal research through its use of Reuters' coverage about the Supreme Court's decision to decline review of Thaler's petition for certiorari (Reuters, 2026).

2.1 Corpus and Selection Logic

The vernacular discourse layer uses Turkish language creator oriented explainers, which explain Suno's rules for noncommercial and commercial use, ownership claims, retroactivity, remix monetization, and submission licensing. Items were included when they articulated at least one operational heuristic that could be mapped to a specific clause or entry in Suno documentation. The study excluded items that displayed results without ownership assertions or that duplicated materials through reposting, except for substantial new content.

The corpus functioned as spoken dialogue that lacked any official judicial authority. This study does not treat individual posts as proper bibliographic references. It assesses creator expertise through recurring phrases and repeated rule summaries that function as a translation framework to teach platform governance skills in standard production settings.

2.2 Analytic Procedure

The analysis used iterative coding and mapping. First, it coded the discourse corpus to identify recurring rules, alerts, and common assertions about what kinds of circulation and monetization activities qualify as legitimate. Second, Suno's rule texts were coded for explicit definitions, permissions, constraints, and jurisdictional disclaimers. It then mapped each vernacular heuristic to its corresponding entry in either the Knowledge Base or the Terms of Service in order to identify points of connection, simplification, and omission. Finally, it read the mapped results alongside institutional doctrine, focusing on how the human authorship threshold shapes what platform permission can accomplish.

2.3 Limitations and Ethics

The analysis has two limitations that relate to its fundamental framework. It should be understood as a historical record that depends on the specific rule texts and retrieval dates that appear in the reference list. The study centers on particular sections of the discourse corpus that it selected for examination. It tracks dominant heuristics, but it does not attempt to assess how common they are among the entire population.

3. RESULTS

3.1 Subscription Temporality as the Dominant Legitimacy Checkpoint

The findings indicate that subscription status at the moment of creation operates as the dominant practical test for commercial legitimacy. By translating rights into a single temporal checkpoint, the platform makes governance repeatable within creator communities and reorients creative planning toward tiered access.

Suno's governance system handles rights management through a single process, which verifies user subscription status during the time of song creation. The Knowledge Base presents this temporal checkpoint as the simplest method to establish user progress, while the platform creates different paid tier paths that separate from Basic tier paths through their creation times, which function as a standard boundary between what users can monetize and what they must use for personal purposes (Suno, 2026b). The design creates an ethnomusicological effect because it needs less social existence of creative work for its validation, and it uses platform-controlled time periods, which users can confirm through learning. Users who learn through vernacular pedagogies will see their authorship rights replaced by their subscription timing, which defines governance as a system that informs them about their daily activities.

The essential characteristic of this temporal dimension establishes access as the only form of proof. Two users working within the same platform environment will produce outputs that look extremely alike, while a single user will create outputs that maintain continuous conceptual development throughout their work. The legal system determines economic value through subscription status at creation, which both users and the system view as their exclusive, distinctive characteristic (Suno, 2026b). The cultural practice of precommitment emerges from this discontinuity because it creates a situation that requires users to establish their commitment before participating in any future acts. Users who project themselves into prospective periods when monetization becomes important learn to treat subscription not as a convenience but as a prior condition that must be secured before engaging in production, thereby reshaping the temporal organization of creativity into a planning practice aligned with the platform's business model.

The temporal checkpoint serves as an uncertainty distribution tool, which operates as a commercial permission rule, while copyrightability assessment needs jurisdictional institutions and legal doctrine outside the platform. The temporal checkpoint functions as a user governing method that stabilizes subscription usage patterns while all other platform operational uncertainties remain uncertain. The platform controls subscription time as its main mechanism, which enables economic decision making and ethical validation, and platform rules to create a system that measures users' understanding of their rights through their knowledge of time and subscription levels.

Within Turkish creator oriented explanatory discourse, this checkpoint is often translated into short compliance rules that circulate as practical recommendations.

One paraphrase emphasizes subscription timing as the decisive criterion. If it was made while you were subscribed, it can be used commercially, but if it was made on the free plan, it stays noncommercial.

Another paraphrase foregrounds nonretroactivity by shifting attention from intent to timing. Your previous creations retain their original status because upgrading does not change permissions, which attach at the moment of creation.

3.2 Noncommercial Use as the Boundary Between Social Sharing and Economic Circulation

Noncommercial use functions as a monetization boundary which protects privacy rights through its implementation. The new framework establishes credibility for sharing by linking it to revenue systems and platform access rights instead of using local sharing standards.

Suno defines noncommercial use in a manner that is operationally oriented toward monetization and distribution rather than toward the cultural semantics of private and public. The Knowledge Base frames noncommercial use as a prohibition on monetization and distribution to earning platforms, while allowing personal listening and limited sharing as long as the use does not generate revenue. The definitional change establishes permitted and prohibited activities through the boundary that separates social circulation from economic capture. The restriction applies to sharing that takes place within revenue generating systems instead of sharing itself.

The field of ethnomusicology establishes a new method for studying the ethical standards which govern musical distribution. Musical communities establish their ethical standards for sharing and copying and adapting music through social relationships and their particular methods of exchange. Suno's rule text establishes commercial differentiation as the main moral distinction between different elements of the text. The same act, which includes uploading an audio file and integrating it into a video, creates a different category because the distribution channel or distribution method requires payment to access. The platform establishes a circulation system which can be evaluated by three external factors, including platform status and eligibility requirements and revenue streams, instead of being determined through community based recognition.

The rule functions as a compliance mechanism which operates before any actual compliance requirements become necessary. The platform prevents future conflicts which will arise in monetized environments because it prohibits distribution of free tier outputs to services which generate revenue. Noncommercial use functions as a governance system which directs free tier outputs toward low stakes sharing while preventing access to situations which create economically significant copyright disputes and competing claims and attributions.

The educational story that users create about their teaching methods gets shaped by the noncommercial boundary. Users can now describe themselves through personal use because it has become an authorized category that they can use to test new methods without facing legal consequences. Personal use becomes public because the boundary exists between personal use and monetization systems, which control access to public content. The platform era governance system enables organizations to control their public existence through two systems of visibility, which use monetization status as their main basis for classification.

3.3 Commercial Use as a Contractual Permission Regime Rather Than a Guarantee of Exclusive Rights

The contractual right to use the work commercially permits monetization, yet it does not clarify whether the institution holds copyright ownership. The current situation allows creators to earn money from their work, yet they remain unaware of their rights, which would enable them to keep exclusive control over their creations.

Suno defines commercial use as the ability to earn money from music made while subscribed and frames paid tier outputs as granted commercial use permissions, emphasizing that users may monetize while collecting royalties without Suno claiming a share (Suno, 2025e; Suno, 2025g). The platform creates this promise through its business model, which establishes user costs based on a subscription model and prevents users from acquiring ongoing rights through their subscription fee. Users need to pay for their subscription because it operates as a licensing system that provides access to monetization opportunities.

The commercial permission system operates independently from any copyright protection system. Suno's governance documents separate commercial usage rights from copyright ownership rights because they state that different regions have different standards, and the platform cannot confirm whether its generated content is protected by copyright (Suno, 2025d; Suno, 2026a). The separation creates a situation that allows users to earn money through contracts, yet they must wait for official confirmation of their exclusive rights, which they need to protect their rights against takedowns, infringement claims, and similarity disputes.

Ethnomusicology studies this transformation, which shifts authorship from a moral economic system into a practical system that requires permission to create works. Authorship rights give social recognition, but they also grant rights to control which activities require permission and how works receive evaluation. Suno's governance system permits the platform to distribute content with broad permissions, while its internal evidence systems and controlling authority treatment remain in doubt. The user base of the platform now follows a practice that values quick results and public exposure more than maintaining exclusive access to their content. Users who want to compete for attention need to publish their work before anyone else, and they should focus on making money first because their exclusive rights stay unprotected.

Organizations require institutional doctrine because it provides them with their core values. The U.S. Copyright Office requires authorship by human creators to make works eligible for copyright registration, which includes AI generated content according to its guidelines (U.S. Copyright Office, 2023, p. 3). The Office's Part 2 report demonstrates that human involvement through both selection and arrangement processes impacts copyrightability in generative contexts (U.S. Copyright Office, 2025, p. 24). Suno's commercial permission regime operates alongside the institutional framework that establishes copyrightability rules. It enables monetization through contractual permission while doctrinal rules define which elements creators can protect, forcing creators to manage their rights independently.

3.4 Retroactive Licensing as a Governance Cliff That Reorganizes Creative Planning

The nonretroactivity rule functions as a governance cliff that stratifies catalogs by subscription history. The rule pressures creators to subscribe because their future earnings rely on their initial subscription status at the time of creation rather than their subsequent business plans.

Suno's retroactivity rule clarifies that subscribing does not provide retroactive commercial licensing for songs created under the free plan by default (Suno, 2025b). The rule creates a decisive break in the user's artistic development because it determines a song's economic value through historical user status rather than their plans and the song's actual performance. Users cannot obtain rights to monetizable assets through subscription deals after the fact because free tier songs that gain unexpected value do not become monetizable assets unless users purchase a subscription.

The retroactivity cliff creates an ethnomusicological boundary that determines how creators perceive their chances to succeed and their chances to fail. The platform requires creators to develop their output through prepaid subscription payments because it demands that creators first estimate their future value before they create any content. This regime requires artists to adopt a business model that focuses on risk management instead of developing their ideas through testing. The platform's rule text establishes a time based regime that directs users to engage in specific activities that match subscription based rewards.

The retroactivity cliff enables the platform to simplify its enforcement processes because it establishes definite boundaries for revenue generation, which eliminates disputes about subscription based rights to previous work. The existence of retroactive laws functions as a tool to maintain transparent governance systems, which are verified after specific points in time. The cultural obligation demonstrates that it creates breaks that change how artists tell their stories about their entire body of work. A user establishes two time periods for their archive, which he can use to generate revenue from their subscribed content because their subscription history determines which time periods contain revenue generating content.

The retroactivity rule interacts with the platform's distinction between permission and copyrightability as its main regulatory mechanism. Copyrightability remains an institutional threshold that exists separately from retroactivity rights. The platform establishes monetization permission through its subscription model because it denies users access to retroactive rights that belong to other institutions. The governance structure of Suno controls the platform's administrative functions and it assigns everything else to external parties.

3.5 The Conceptual Separation of Ownership, Copyright, and Copyrightability

Suno uses ownership language which it defines as different from the legal test which determines whether a work can receive copyright protection. The separation leads to searching for proof of human authorship and platform evidence which includes subscription data and access logs.

Suno's governance texts show that ownership rights and copyright rights exist as separate concepts while copyright standards differ between geographical regions, and the platform does not provide copyright protection for its generated content (Suno, 2025d). Suno argues that users lack copyright ownership over platform created songs because writing prompts do not meet the United States human authorship requirements for song creation (Suno, 2026a). The main point of this argument establishes a conceptual divide which most creators fail to recognize in their daily practice.

The separation exists as both doctrinal and epistemological boundaries according to ethnomusicological standards. The language of ownership rights is designed to make users perceive ownership as their right to control and possess the content. Copyrightability doctrine requires assessment of the work according to established institutional criteria that define authorship standards. Suno provides users with platform ownership rights but it clearly states that institutional copyrightability standards will not be applicable. The platform thus establishes two levels of legitimacy that permit creators to own their work for platform access and distribution, yet they need official rights to protect their work.

The U.S. Copyright Office guidance shows how the Office applies its human authorship requirement to works which contain AI generated content (U.S. Copyright Office, 2023, p. 3). The Part 2 report establishes a framework which enables assessment of human contribution within generative contexts through its examination of selection and arrangement together with human control over expressive elements (U.S. Copyright Office, 2025, p. 24). The documents demonstrate that platform permission systems operate differently from copyrightability standards. The documents show that creators will use hybrid workflows because they want to achieve both aesthetic goals and institutional recognition of their work.

The separation creates a new system which handles conflicts. The disputes will shift from ownership questions to establishing authorship information and which permissions existed during creation. New types of disputes arise from governance which establishes new forms of disagreement. The evidentiary process now includes subscription history and platform logs and human intervention records which replace traditional evidentiary methods that included manuscripts and session logs and studio witness accounts. This change represents a major shift in how people experience music and it serves as a fundamental subject for ethnomusicological research.

3.6 Submission Licensing and Moral Rights Waiver as an Ethical and Political Pivot

The submission license and moral rights waiver constitute the central ethical pivot of the governance regime. They regulate what happens to identity bearing inputs and contextual integrity even when vernacular explanations foreground outputs and monetization.

Suno's Terms of Service grant complete rights to all user generated content which users submit and they require users to give up all moral rights associated with that content (Suno, 2025c). The clause holds both ethical and political importance because it establishes moral rights as the most direct legal framework which connects attribution rights and integrity rights to an author's identity. The platform can use user

content in any way that it wants because it needs users to give up their moral rights which protect their right to attribution and their right to maintain their work's original context and purity. Users who make content submissions will face different consequences from the platform's governing rules which will determine how their identity and reputation assets will be treated through their vocal and recording and text submissions.

The study of music in different cultures examines how moral rights interact with the musical moral economy which evaluates musical credit and reputation and family tradition and proper performance context as equal to musical income. Feld coins the phrase *schizophonic mimesis* to describe extractive practices in which recordings, split from their sources, circulate as commodities that enable recontextualization of people and places and thereby foreground disputes over intellectual property and attribution (Feld, 1996, pp. 13-14). The submission license, together with the moral rights waiver, creates an increased power imbalance in generative environments because the platform can use submitted material both for operational needs and system enhancement, while the user loses legal power to prove their rights to part of their work and rightful credit.

Vernacular rights pedagogy exhibits its most effective results when it operates at its highest level of effectiveness. The community explanation of monetization rights unintentionally shifts focus from execution, which becomes regulated by submission license and moral rights waiver that control what occurs when users upload content. Users must decide between two aspects of copyright for their economic benefit, which consists of copyrighting their work and claiming ownership rights. The question involves consent agreements and representation matters, which affect how cultural workers create their work because certain voices, dialects, and stylistic signatures hold social value that surpasses their market worth.

The governance layer establishes the direction that future paths will follow. Platforms will develop structured consent processes for specific content types because licensing systems will become more common. Such platforms will create distinct categories that separate licensed content users from those whose content undergoes basic platform development processes. The submission license and moral rights waiver function as essential legal instruments for ethnomusicology because they define the relationship between platform control, cultural significance, and individual identity.

4. DISCUSSION

The historical background shows that generative platforms create a governance evolution which goes beyond simple tool improvements. The late nineteenth century saw sound recording technology emerge which enabled performance documentation but also created new market possibilities through sound distribution as an object (Library of Congress, n.d.). The tape era brought enhanced editing abilities which reduced manipulation expenses, thus making postproduction work vital for artistic creation (Computer History Museum, n.d.). Multitrack recording established the studio as a new musical creation space which transformed performance ownership through its layering and overdubbing techniques (Mix, 2005). The workstation period introduced software environments to modular manipulation, which Pro Tools achieved through its complete digital recording and editing system (Mix, 2006). The platform distribution era transformed visibility and value capture through the establishment of extensive infrastructure systems, which YouTube initiated in December 2005 and Spotify developed after its 2008 launch using a subscription-based model (Encyclopaedia Britannica, n.d.; Spotify, n.d.).

Suno extends these trajectories by enabling users to produce realistic musical elements through its system and it authenticates content through its subscription-based access control system that uses time-based access agreements as its main authentication method (Suno, 2026b). Platformization scholarship provides a vocabulary for this transformation by conceptualizing platforms as infrastructures, economic processes, and governance frameworks that reorganize cultural practices around platform logics (Nieborg & Poell, 2018, p. 4277; Poell et al., 2019, p. 1). The governance structure of Suno exists in an exceptional state because it uses common language to teach local communities about legal matters that help creators learn to handle unpredictable situations and understand when personal content becomes suitable for commercial use (Suno, 2025f; Suno, 2025e).

The distinction between contractual monetization rights and institutional copyrightability rights creates a clearer definition of ethical boundaries. Suno grants commercial use rights while also emphasizing that it does not guarantee copyright protection and that standards vary by region (Suno, 2025d; Suno, 2026a). The Copyright Office U.S. doctrine defines human authorship as essential for establishing intellectual property rights to hybrid systems that use human selection and arrangement and human created content (U.S.

Copyright Office, 2023, p. 3; U.S. Copyright Office, 2025, p. 3). The Supreme Court's decision to decline review of Thaler's case, as reported by Reuters, leaves intact lower court rulings that reaffirm human authorship as a baseline requirement for U.S. copyright protection (Reuters, 2026). The institutional policy establishes a monetization system that requires artists to obtain platform permissions according to the ethnomusicological perspective because artists must work with uncertain legal rights for their music.

The recent industry settlements show economic and political changes which lead to the development of licensed models that use provenance tracking and distribution limitations. Warner Music Group reached a settlement with Suno that allows Suno to start using licensed AI models in 2026 while the agreement requires download restrictions based on tier status (Reuters, 2025). The partnership announcement by Warner Music Group describes the deal as providing creators with compensation and protection together with their capacity to decide how their musical works and personal information will be used (Warner Music Group, 2025). The current trajectory leads to two separate future paths. The first branch of the project maintains an abundance approach which focuses on creating native platform content that users can easily share according to their contractual rights. The second branch focuses on provenance tracking through licensing systems which require users to opt in while establishing legal protections that ensure stable payment patterns (Reuters, 2025; Warner Music Group, 2025). Ethnomusicology uses permanent methodological implications through its research methods. The primary field materials for our study include Terms of Service documents and Knowledge Base updates and vernacular governance pedagogy except they also create contextual background.

5. CONCLUSION

The article demonstrates that Suno's governance texts and the vernacular pedagogies that translate them create a single set of rules which governs all their common generative activities. The rules establish subscription temporality as the legitimacy checkpoint for commercial use and they define noncommercial restrictions for free tier outputs and they establish nonretroactive monetization permissions and they limit remix monetization (Suno, 2025f; Suno, 2025b; Suno, 2025a; Suno, 2026b). At the same time, the platform's submission licensing and moral rights waiver clauses remain ethically central because they directly implicate attribution, integrity, and reputational personhood, even when simplified community explanations focus mainly on output monetization (Suno, 2025c; Feld, 1996, pp. 13-14).

A future facing ethnomusicology of generative platforms therefore requires an integrated evidentiary chain that reads platform governance documents, community interpretations, and institutional copyright doctrine together, especially under continuing human authorship requirements (U.S. Copyright Office, 2023, p. 3; U.S. Copyright Office, 2025, p. 3; Reuters, 2026). Within that chain, the field's distinctive contribution is not to adjudicate authenticity but to map how legitimacy, audibility, and compensation are reorganized by platform infrastructures and rule texts that increasingly function as institutions of musical life (Nieborg & Poell, 2018, p. 4286; Poell et al., 2019, p. 1).

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