

Music Industry on Digital Platform: A Study on Five Major Music Labels of Bangladesh

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Abstract

This study investigates the state of Bangladeshi music industry in terms of its operations on digital platforms such as social media, audio streaming platforms, and over-the-top (OTT) platforms. Five significant Bangladeshi music labels were analyzed. This study focuses on how they operate on digital platforms, generate revenue, and how they deal with copyright issues. In order to understand their business practices on digital platforms, a qualitative research approach was adopted. In-depth interviews and document analysis were used to analyze the situation. The activities of five music labels on *Facebook*, *YouTube*, *Instagram*, *TikTok*, and *Twitter* are examined in this research. The study reveals that music labels in Bangladesh have fully embraced the digital apparatus in all aspects. The selected music labels are now fully operational on social media channels, particularly on *YouTube*. This social networking site is their sole source of income. Other platforms aren't currently profitable for them. Physical musical product production and sales have been completely halted because there is no business in Bangladesh that offers physical items such as record discs, audio cassettes, CDs, or DVDs. It is also found that in the mid-1990s, Bangladeshi music labels were threatened by piracy of their products. However, there is no risk of piracy while doing business on digital platforms.

Key words: Digital platform, social media, label, piracy, streaming platform, OTT platform.

1.0 Introduction

Prior to the 20th century, music was just an art form that was mostly enjoyed and performed in the private realm. In certain instances, it was done in front of a large crowd in an open area. But at the time, it was impossible to reproduce music for a large audience. Music lovers used to employ singers for their homes or for various programs. The music industry began its journey in its real form following the development of the first mechanical sound recording technology utilizing wax rolls by renowned American inventor Thomas Alva Edison in the last decade of the nineteenth century.¹

From then the music industry has a long and eventful history all around the world. Vinyl record, audio cassette, CD, DVD, Blue Ray Disc- one after another music reproduction technology were invented and music distribution and consumption patterns changed. Thus it has seen a lot of changes over the years as a result of globalization and technological advancements, both in terms of corporate operations and basic industry characteristics. Following the 1990s, the global music industry had to adapt nearly all of the changes brought by the internet and modern technological breakthroughs. Since then, the music industry has been changed by digital revolutions in the way how people gather, purchase, consume, listen to, compose, read, and learn music.²

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Different internet-based platforms, such as music streaming platforms and online music store services (such as *Amazon Music*, *Apple Music*, *Spotify*, *SoundCloud*, *Tidal*, and others), as well as social media (such as *Facebook*, *YouTube*, *Twitter*, *Instagram*, *TikTok*, and others), have created a plethora of distribution opportunities for musicians, listeners, and producers of music.

The music industry was forced to shift from analog to digital in the new millennium due to internet-based technologies. The music industry's conventional business structures were altered into a new form, and the sector was destined to be outfitted with modern digital technologies. It allowed them to quickly broadcast their music across borders, but it also caused the music industry to suffer greatly as a result of piracy. Bangladesh's music industry, like that of many countries, has undergone changes as a result of internet-based technological advancements. Bangladesh's music industry, despite its small size, was also impacted by digital revolutions in some way. Copyright infringements of its musical items were also a problem. This research will look into how the Bangladeshi music business is establishing itself on digital platforms such as social media and online music platforms, how they operate their activities like distribution and consumption of musical products, revenue generation, and copyright issues.

The introduction of digital music systems appears to have kicked off the transformation of the international music industry in the 1990s. Since then, internet-based music consumption has received a lot easier and more common practice.³ Music fans were increasingly streaming, sharing, and discovering new music on various digital platforms throughout the world. This new phenomenon has had a significant impact on the dynamics of the global music industry, both in terms of record sales and music consumption. Unfortunately, the availability of music in digital format fueled the rise of illegal file-sharing sites such as Napster, putting the music industry at risk. However, legal internet music purchasing platforms like Apple's iTunes and online streaming like *Spotify* and *Pandora* have quickly transformed the landscape. The recorded music industry has had to adapt new economic models for digital platforms since the turn of the millennium. They moved away from selling only physical CDs and towards online subscription models that give customers access to large libraries of musical content on digital platforms. Giant computer technology companies, such as *Apple*, *Sony*, and *Columbia* were early leaders in pushing other music labels to reclaim control of the industry. After a while, the music industry welcomed the new economic model for digital platforms, and the model benefited them in terms of sales, even though it wasn't enough to compensate for the loss of profit from the physical music market. The international music industry has seen substantial economic, technological, and cultural changes as a result of this transition from analog to digital platforms.⁴

The objective of the study is to look into the operational changes that have occurred in Bangladeshi music companies as a result of advances in digital technology. It investigates to explore how Bangladeshi music labels are operating their businesses during digital era, how music labels are making their presence on different digital platforms, how music labels of Bangladesh are making revenue on digital platforms and the procedure how they deal with the copyright violation issues of their musical products.

2.0 Concept of music industry, non-digital and digital platform

In comparison to other industries, the music industry is rather unique. Music is produced by team where people such as lyricists, music composers, vocalists, instrument players, and organizations such as recording studios, sound system businesses, manufacturers of vinyl record disks, audio cassettes, CDs, and DVDs, as well as music publishing corporations are involved. Music labels are companies that operate as publishers of musical products in the recorded music industry. While a songwriter writes lyrics, a music composer composes and arranges it, an artist performs it live on stage, or a record company records and distributes it to the public, then it becomes a single piece of music. These activities are the foundation and framework of the whole music industry. As a result, it is known that the music industry is not a single industry, but rather a collection of at least three industries those are closely related but operate in various settings and ways. Music recording, music licensing, and live music are three of these industries.⁵ In traditional music industry a song creator needs a music label, i.e. music recording company to reach his/her music to listeners. In the format of digital music industry it is not necessary to find a music label, as he/she can record his musical creation by his/her own and publish it to online platform.

For millions of people throughout the world, digital platforms have become an integral part of their daily lives. Our social, cultural, political, and economic interactions and exchanges, as well as our family life, are made easier by digital platforms.⁶

Reuver and colleagues investigated digital platforms, focusing on the distinctions between non-digital and digital platforms. According to them, a (non-digital) platform can be divided into three categories based on the extent of its manufacturing process. Internal platforms allow for the recombination of sub-units within the company; supply-chain platforms coordinate external suppliers around an assembler; and industry platforms pool external skills from partners. Citing Boudreau and Hagiu (2009) Reuver et al. say, a platform mediates diverse categories of users, such as buyers and vendors.⁷

Upon the thoughts of Sanchez and Mahoney (1996), Baldwin and Clark (2000), Tiwana et al. (2010), Ghazawneh and Henfridsson (2015), Reuver et al. defined digital platforms as *“software-based external platforms consisting of the extensible codebase of a software-based system that provides core functionality shared by the modules that interoperate with it and the interfaces through which they interoperate”*.⁸

In an entry of Wikipedia *digital platform* is defined as *“a software-based online infrastructure that facilitates interactions and transactions between users”*.⁹

Stephen Watts, an American IT related writer and expert defines digital platform in business enterprise terms as *“it can be thought of as the sum total of a place for exchanges of information, goods, or services to occur between producers and consumers as well as the community that interacts with said platform. It’s imperative to understand that the community itself is an essential piece of the digital platform—without that community, the digital platform has very little inherent value.”*¹⁰

According to Stephen Watts there are some successful digital platforms as social media platforms like *Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, Tiktok* etc., knowledge platforms like *StackOverflow, Quora, Yahoo! Answers* etc., media sharing platforms like *YouTube, Spotify, Vimeo* etc., service-oriented platforms like *Uber, Airbnb, GrubHub* etc.¹¹

Websites and applications (app) for personal computer or mobile phones are also part of these digital platforms.

3.0 Literature review: Operation and Development of Music Industry

There is a plethora of information available on the global music industry. Some of them reflect the evolution of the music industry, while others depict the changes brought about by advances in digital technology. Some studies look at how music listeners use technology to enhance their listening experience. Some are concerned with music labels' operational changes, while others are concerned with institutional and governmental responses. Some studies look at how the music industry's business model is developing in the digital age, while others focus on copyright infringement.

3.1 Global context

Poryali et al., Fly, and Uli worked on the history of world music industry. Their research indicated that the professional music industry began with the success of US inventor Thomas Alva Edison's development of sound recording technology, the Phonograph or Gramophone, in 1877. When German-American scientist Emile Berliner invented vinyl record technology in 1887, it became more usable. Columbia Records published the first extended play album after WWII. This was eventually referred to be an album.¹²

Philips Eindhoven, a Dutch corporation, presented the Audio Cassette to the European market in 1963 and the American market in 1964. Later on, it became the most popular and widely used form of music media.¹³

According to Poryali et al., audio cassettes became extremely popular as a recording medium in the late 1960s. On July 1, 1979, Sony Music released the Walkman, a compact cassette tape portable player that quickly became popular. It allows people to listen to music even when they are on the move. Portable pocket recorders helped make audio cassettes more popular in the 1980s.¹⁴

In the first decade of the new millennium, the internet-based music distribution and consumption paradigm was launched. Online broadcasters, file-sharing networks, media players, and online music businesses all played important role in this paradigm. Listeners have become increasingly accustomed to using the internet to get music in both legal and illicit ways, sometimes through peer-to-peer systems and other times through piracy and purchase, as internet technology has advanced. After the year 2000, the global music industry began to run its business on digital channels alongside its physical operations.¹⁵

In a paper titled "Co-evolutionary dynamics in the music industry," Uli analyses the scenario at the 15th Annual Conference of the European Academy of Management in Warsaw, Poland in 2015. He divides the music industry's digital era into three periods. First period covered the years 1999-2003, second period covered the years 2004-2008, and third period covered the years 2009-2013. According to Uli, first period of the digital era began in 1999 with the launch of Napster, an MP3 music file sharing website.¹⁶

The path of digital operation of music industry was created by the invention of CD, DVD and MP3 in 1980s and 1990s. Giant in music industry *Philips* and *Sony* launched Compact Disc or CD in 1982.¹⁷ In 1984, Sony released the first portable CD player. Recordable CDs became available in the year of 1999 which created significant modernization of music distribution system. After short time, CDs turned into the highest selling music media which took the place of vinyl records.¹⁸

By the CD technology, 1980s created the most impassioned boom in recorded music industry. People replaced their vinyl collections with CD. Traditional long play record era was about to finish. Selling of CD players also increased and within three years the electronic industry sold one million CD players.¹⁹

Dolata examines how internet technology significantly changed the world music industry. His research focuses that CDs and DVDs were introduced to the market without any form of copy protection.²⁰ Though CD was digital in format, but till then it was an offline music distribution system. The actual digital distribution era started after invention of MP3, a digital compression technique for audio files. Internet platforms such as *MP3.com*, *Napster*, *Gnutella* and specialized MP3 search engines facilitated the posting, collecting and trading MP3 files.²¹

In their research article Poryalı et al. argue that within 1999, the MP3 technology became a great change maker. It was the main troublesome factor in the music industry by changing the way the music is distributed and consumed. It created the situation about to end the long decade habit of listener's collecting physical copies of music, e.g. vinyl records, audio cassettes or CD, DVD.²²

Echoing to Poryalı et al. Uli focuses on the rapid development of internet technology and the invention of MP3, which jointly changed the world of music industry in terms of positive and negative way. *Napster* and MP3 posed a great threat to the world music industry. *Napster* was software, used to share music content in the MP3 format. It was introduced in June 1999 in USA.²³ *Napster* became a brand and got more than 60 million users worldwide within less than two years. A report of the music industry newsletter *Music and Copyright* in May 2000 suggests that 9.2% of all American college students use *Napster* daily and more than 70% of them use it at least once a month.²⁴

Napster created the way to violet copyright of music owners and piracy became the common phenomenon. This digital platform enabled the sharing of music files between individual listeners and downloading of files directly from each others' computers without giving royalty to music owners. Becoming familiar with *Napster*, young listeners have started to think spending money on physical music as wastage. This music consumption model was actually centered on illegal, unauthorized music sharing system.²⁵

A study done by the *Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA)* suggests that the music industry reached its peak during the period 1994-1999 with 5.5 albums sold per capita. *RIAAA* has estimated that if *Napster* had not been introduced, the music market would have reached 7 units per head in 2009, when albums actually sold were just over 2.²⁶

To stop *Napster* and save music industry, *RIAA* filed a lawsuit against the company in December 1999. Under pressure, *Napster* had to change its business model. But meanwhile *Napster* changed the perception of its users about copyright. To investigate the situation, *Pew Internet Project* conducted a study between March and April of 2003 in USA. It estimated that 35 million American adults downloaded music files illegally, and 67% of them claimed not to be interested in copyright infringement for the content downloaded.²⁷

A study conducted by Patrik Wikstrom reveals that after *Napster*-era, music industry entered into digital market. But it was not by a music industry rather by *Apple*, a leading computer manufacturer company of that time. *Apple* successfully created an online service for legal sales and distribution of music. *Apple* convinced major music labels that listeners of music will buy music from online platform if they were offered a simple way to download at the cost of less than a dollar per track.²⁸ In 2003, *Apple* launched first legal online music platform *iTunes*, and sold 70 million songs at \$0.99 per song in its first year, creating nearly \$70 million in legal internet music sales.²⁹ Inspired by *iTunes*, a number of competitors have entered the digital download music market using more or less the same business model.³⁰

According to Uli and Anja Hagen, by introducing streaming services, music world entered in another digital era. During first decade of new millennium multiple music-streaming services have been launched which established a new digital music distribution and consumption system. Music streaming services are mainly internet applications based on a delivery system that enables ample amount of digital data of music to be stored in the online 'cloud' and the service provider transfers content of music or video files from the cloud to a user via internet connection. To save internet bandwidth, services tend to stream *compressed* audio files. As a result the streaming format is able to make enormous music archives available to users in flexible ways, via internet applications (apps) on both desktops-laptops and mobile phone devices and other operating systems and clients.³¹

There are three categories of online digital music services. Some are smart radio stations such as *Pandora*, *iTunes Radio*, *AccuRadio*, *iHeartRadio*, *Joox*, *LiveXLive*, *MyTuner Radio*, *SiriusXM*, *Stingray Music*, *TuneIn* etc. Some are content-sharing platforms such as *Youtube*, *Instagram*, *Pinterest*, *TikTok* (these are also called social media) and others are directly music streaming services such as *Apple Music*, *Spotify*, *Amazon Music*, *SoundCloud*, *YouTube Music*, *Tidal HiFi*, *Deezer*, *Xbox Music* etc.

International Federation of the Phonographic Industry-IFPI report suggests that in 2014, an estimated 42 million people worldwide were paying for a music subscription service, up from 28 million in 2013 and 8 million in 2010.³² IFPI Global Music Report-2014 says, in 2013 smart radios (online based) reached about \$600 million in the US alone.³³ Growth in world digital music consumption continues in the next decades. IFPI Global Music Report-2021 finds global revenue growth of world music industry is 7.4% in 2020 and streaming share of global revenues of 62.1%. In that period physical music revenue declined 4.7%.³⁴

During the worldwide Covid-19 pandemic listeners were progressively reliant with digital platforms for music. A survey conducted by International Federation of the Phonographic Industry-IFPI in 2019 across 19 leading music markets shows that 89% of

audience listens to music through on-demand streaming. The highest rate of growth for use of streaming services is in the 35-64 age groups. The rate of the people of these age groups who used streaming services to listen music in the past months during survey was 54% which was 8% more from the previous year.³⁵

There is some other research conducted in different countries of the world in which music industry situation of those countries in digital era were revealed. Luis A. Albornoz and J. Ignacio Gallego in a research, performed by a survey on independent record and distribution companies of popular music in Spain tried to know the tendencies of music industry in digital era. The research emphasized mainly the different activities and strategies developed by independent record labels and distribution companies in Spain. The result shows that music industry of Spain has very active presence on the new digital networks and platform services.³⁶

Steininger et al. in Germany conducted a study to carve out similarities and differences between the value propositions and associated financial aspects of electronic and traditional business models in the European music industry. Using an established business model framework and five human coders, they applied content analysis to investigate on business model. Their study result underlines the role of e-business as an incubator for change and innovation.³⁷

Swatman et al.³⁸, Dellyana and Simatupang³⁹, Bustinza et al.⁴⁰, Giannara⁴¹, Hougaard and Tvede⁴², Vaccaro and Cohn⁴³ studied the changes happened in business model of Europe, Australia and USA music industry due to advancement of digital technology. Their studies suggest different changes in the industry and emerging of new paradigms during the presence of music industry on digital platforms.

There are some other studies where social media, especially YouTube, studied as a means of new music business platforms⁴⁴, as a means of consuming, creating and sharing music⁴⁵, studied social media as player of music sales and artists popularity increasing⁴⁶. Some studies like O. Bustinza et al.⁴⁷, Neil A. Morton and Xenophon Koufteros⁴⁸, Ludovica Cesareo and Alberto Pastore⁴⁹ deal with the copyright violation issues.

3.2 Bangladesh context

In Bangladesh, studies related to music industry are rare. There are very few researches which deal issues with music industry of Bangladesh, yet the researches mostly not conducted in Bangladesh. Shams Bin Quader, an MPhil student of Gender and Cultural Studies Department, University of Sydney conducted a research titled 'Headbanging in Dhaka: An exploration of the Bangladeshi Alternative Music Scene' in December 2013. Quader studied the alternative rock music performed by largely middle class, part-time, male youth in Dhaka. He tried to understand the social, cultural and economic conditions of possibility of the alternative music scene in its current form.⁵⁰

Quader did another research on British Bangladeshi professional musicians of London, where he focused on popular music styles of postcolonial migrant peoples. In this paper he investigated whether their compositions, lyrics and music genres have any influence on the musical scenario of London by interviewing five professional British Bangladeshi musicians based in London.⁵¹

Said Siraj and Maruf Allam investigated the situation of copyright infringement in Bangladeshi music industry. This study found that in Bangladesh music piracy is a common reality. They tried to find out the reason and sought possible solutions.⁵² Another study on copyright issues in Bangladesh focuses the intellectual property and music and tried to find the reasons for copyright violations.⁵³

Din Mohammad studied cultural communication between the urban poor and popular music in Dhaka. Objective of his study was to explore how a particular kind of popular music of Dhaka city called 'urban folk' and the cultural identity of the rural migrants have been producing each other in an ongoing process of cultural communication. He used the concept of cultural hybridity given by Homi K. Bhabha and political society by Partha Chaterjee to investigate the situation.⁵⁴

According to above discussion, it is obvious that there is a scope to investigate Bangladeshi music industry to explore how it is doing business in digital platforms and how this industry has accepted the changes happened by advancement of information and communication technologies, especially changes introduced by emerging social media and streaming platforms in Bangladesh.

4.0 Music industry of Bangladesh: From analog to digital

In Bangladesh, recorded music industry acts simultaneously as music record company and licensing authority or publisher. There are some recording studios which record music on demand of recording companies or publisher. Companies, like *Soundtek*, *Sangeeta*, *Laser Vision*, *Sonali Products*, *G Series* etc. are the music labels which act as recording music industry of Bangladesh.

This study deals with the Bangladeshi music labels which are music publishing companies, published music as producer in the form of cassettes, CD/DVDs, and now in music video formats.

There is a scarcity of literature on the history of Bangladesh's music industry. By interviewing owners of Bangladeshi music labels, lyricists, and music composers, I attempted to reflect on the history. Hasan Matiur Rahman, the founder and proprietor of Chena Sur Prakashan, Md. Anwar Hossain, the founder and proprietor of Anupam Recording Media, Md. Mazharul Islam, the co-founder and managing director of Laser Vision, Nazmul Huq Bhuiyan Khaled, the founder and proprietor of G Series, Liakat Ali Bishwas, the lyricist-music Since the 1980s, these individuals have been directly involved in Bangladesh's music industry.

In 2009, record labels of Bangladesh came under an umbrella named *Music Industries Owners Association of Bangladesh (MIB)* with 144 registered record lables. President of this organization and Co-Founder of *Laser Vision* A K M Arefur Rahman told that, now the enlisted members of MIB is 87. Amongst them only 20-25 are active in music business.⁵⁵ In 1980s-1990s most of these companies were located at Patuatuli and some in Nababpur, near Sadar Ghat area of Old Town of capital city Dhaka. Now they are scattered in different areas of Dhaka. Some companies like *Chena Sur Prakashan*,

Anupam Recording Media, *CMV* are situated in Maghbazar area, *Laser Vision* is in Banglamotor, *G Series* is in Elephant Road area. Some tiny music labels like *Silicon Entertainment* have no office of their own. They are operating fully on digital platform.

Hasan Matiur Rahman and Anwar Hossain both started their journey in music industry during beginning of 1980s. Then they were engaged to arrange record some musical albums in the format of vinyl discs. They told that, during that time it was not a common scenario in Bangladesh where musical albums were released in audio cassette format. According to them, availability of vinyl records in Bangladeshi music industry extended to mid 1980s. There was only one company named *Bangladesh Gramophone Company* which was engaged in recording vinyl discs. After mid 1980s, this company was compelled to stop recording vinyls gradually⁵⁶, and after 1994 it was totally shut down.⁵⁷

According to them, from mid 1980s to middle of the first decade of new millennium, there was a golden era of audio cassettes business in Bangladeshi music industry. Mr. Shahin Rahman, owner of *Disco Recording* was the pioneer of full local audio cassette production in Bangladesh. He produced first song audio cassettes which were written, tuned and sung by Bangladeshi lyricists, music composers and singers.⁵⁸ From the beginning of 2000s, era of audio CD was started by importing some CDs from Singapore. After some years, Video CD and DVD era was started. From the starting of second decade of new millennium, i.e. 2010, music in VCD, DVD format was also became a rare scenario in Bangladesh. Bangladeshi music industry then started to witness their music in digital platform like website copied illegally by others from the CDs published by their companies.⁵⁹

As an aftereffect of worldwide *Napster*-era illegal musical file sharing practices, Bangladeshi music industry also suffered a lot. Bangladeshi music listeners were also then became habituated to consume music in MP3 file format downloaded illegally from different websites. As a result, selling of audio cassettes, CD/DVDs declined considerably. When social media like *YouTube*, *Facebook* appeared in scenario, listeners jumped to these media. Now music labels of Bangladesh also started their appearance in these social media to get audiences and to run their business. All music labels are now in Bangladesh operating their business on digital platforms like social media and streaming websites or apps. Owner of *Chena Sur Prakashan* and Senior Vice President of *Music Industries Owners Association of Bangladesh (MIB)* Hasan Matiur Rahman says, "right now in Dhaka there is no one company to record music in cassettes or audio/video CDs or DVDs. Previously, CD/VCD/DVDs of music item produced by music labels of Bangladesh were copied from a company named *Worldcom* located at Dhaka. This company served 70-80% of record market of Bangladesh. Now this company is closed and none of the record labels of Bangladesh are producing physical musical products like Cassettes, CDs, VCDs and DVDs."⁶⁰

In terms of business model in music industry, Bangladeshi music labels follow the model where some times the company hires a music director or composer, or a lyricist or someone who arranges the whole procedures of creating musical products. The procedure is: collecting lyrics, tunes and making contacts with singers, booking recording studios and finally transferring the finished product of music to the publisher company.

Sometimes owners of record labels or their representatives manage all activities. From analog to digital era, this business model is being followed by record labels of Bangladesh. Hasan Matiur Rahman, who himself a lyricist and music composer, and owner of *Soundtek* Sultan Mahmud Babul confirmed it in separate interview to this researcher, taken at their offices at Dhaka on January 2022.

5.0 Method of the study

This study is a qualitative work where mixed method consisting of document analysis and in-depth interview has been used. According to R K Yin, case study research is an empirical inquiry by which researcher can investigate a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used.⁶¹

Case Study research method can be considered a vigorous research method especially when a holistic, in-depth investigation is required. By using case study method, a researcher became capable to go beyond the quantitative statistical results and he or she understand the behavioral conditions through the actor's perspective.⁶²

To conceptualize the study and analyze collected data, document analysis and in-depth interview were used in this study. *Document analysis* can be defined as a form of qualitative research method which is quite effective to analyze documentary evidences and answer specific research questions. It requires review, cross examination and interpretation of the collected data for creating meaning and empirical knowledge of the construct being studied.⁶³

For in-depth interview a structured questionnaire is needed which is composed of some questions, open-ended or close-ended, delivered to participants by post or via online channel like email, messenger, WhatsApp etc. and are asked to fill up. Interviews can be conducted one-to-one basis with that set of questions.⁶⁴ In this study a structured questionnaire was used to collect data from selected five major music labels of Bangladesh.

5.1.0 Sampling

Five major music companies i.e. music labels of Bangladesh were selected as cases using purposive sampling tool. There are 87 record labels are now registered in *Music Industries Owners Association of Bangladesh (MIB)*, the umbrella organization. Among them only 20-25 companies are properly functioning. To select cases from these companies, we have considered those labels that are big in size and had started their business in Bangladeshi music industry with publishing of long play record discs (vinyl record) or audio cassettes, then published audio albums in CD/VCD/DVDs and now operating their business on digital platforms like social media, music streaming services and apps etc.

With consultation of music industry people, like prominent lyricist and music director Milton Khandaker, we have selected five major music labels in this consideration. These companies include *Soundtek*, *G Series*, *Anupam Recording Media*, *Laser Vision* and *Chena Sur Prakashan*. To collect thorough data, we have interviewed the owners of these five music companies. They are Sultan Mahmud Babul (owner of *Soundtek*), Nazmul Huq

Bhuiyan Khaled (owner of *G Series*), A K M Areful Islam and Md. Mazharul Islam (Chairman and Managing Director respectively and founder of *Laser Vision*), Md. Anwar Hossain (owner of *Anupam Recording Media* and Vice President of *Music Industries Owners Association of Bangladesh*) and Hasan Matiur Rahman (owner of *Chena Sur Prakashan* and Senior Vice President of *Music Industry Owners Association of Bangladesh*). Interviews of *Laser Vision* people were taken via Zoom meeting during September 2021-February 2022. Rest interviews were taken to their company offices at Dhaka during the first week of January 2022.

To investigate their digital platform activities, we have selected five popular social media platforms purposively. These are *YouTube*, *Facebook*, *TikTok*, *Instagram* and *Twitter*. In Bangladesh, *Facebook* and *YouTube* are the most popular social media platforms according to number of their users. According to a report published in February 2021, there are 45 million social media users in Bangladesh, which is equivalent to 27.2 percent of the total population of the country.⁶⁵ A recent statistics shows that in Bangladesh social media users have increased during last one year (2020-2021). The statistics published in a report of *Prothom Alo* online quoting *NapoleonCat*, a Polish-based social media management platform. It suggests that the number of *Facebook* users in Bangladesh is 47.2 million, 28 per cent of the total population of the country. Among the users, 30.9 per cent are women and 69.1 per cent are men and most of them users are between 18 and 24 years old.⁶⁶

On the basis of data of *Social Media Stats* between January 2020 to January 2021, in Bangladesh *Facebook* users are 93.86%, *YouTube* users are 3.6%, *LinkedIn* users are 1.01%, *Pinterest* users are 0.47%, *Twitter* users are 0.43% and *Instagram* users are 0.36%.⁶⁷

We have selected some online streaming platforms or online music stores from home and abroad to study sample music labels. Among local streaming platforms *GP Music*, *Robi Music*, *Banglax*, *Airtel Music*, OTT platforms like *Binge*, *Toffe*, among international streaming platforms *Gaana*, *Soundcloud*, *YouTube Music*, *Amazon Music*, *iTunes Store*, *Apple Music*, and *Spotify* have been selected.

5.1.1 Profile of the labels

5.1.1.1 Soundtek

According to company website, *Soundtek* is one of the oldest record labels in Bangladesh. Its operational area is publishing audio album, video album, music video, video drama etc. It was established by Sultan Mahmud Babul in 1992. *YouTube* channel of *Soundtek* crossed 1 million subscribers within 1 year of opening the channel.⁶⁸ Since 1992, this label published more than 1500 albums with more than 7000 audio songs. Its office is now at 892, Shaheedbagh, Rajarbagh, Dhaka-1217. *Soundtek* is one of the leading music labels in Bangladesh which has enormous contribution in music industry of Bangladesh. So many singers, lyricists, music composers and arrangers were established in this field with the cooperation of *Soundtek*.

5.1.1.2 Anupam Recording Media

Anupam Recording Media basically publishes movie songs collected under financial agreement with the film producers. Besides, they produce non-filmy musical albums, music videos. This company was established by Anwar Hossain in 1984. Till now Mr.

Anwar is the proprietor of this company. Physical address of this company is 21, New Eskaton Road [Media Gali, Huda Lodge- 2nd Floor], Moghbazar, Dhaka-1000. Anupam Recording Media has contributed to popularizing songs used in movies by reaching those to large scale audiences via vinyl discs, cassettes and CD-DVDs.

5.1.1.3 Chena Sur Prakashan

Among the sample music labels, *Chena Sur Prakashan* is the oldest as it was established in 1982 by prominent folk song writer and music director Hasan Matiur Rahman. From then, he is the owner of this company. He basically produced musical albums of different folk forms. Among five sample companies, *YouTube* channel of *Chena Sur Prakashan* is the oldest one, opened in 2015. This label has significant contribution in the music industry of Bangladesh as it has published so many audio albums on folk songs which got mass popularity. So many folk singers like Mamtaz, Kuddus Bayati, Kanganini Sufia became popular folk singers with the help of *Chena Sur Prakashan*.

5.1.1.4 Laser Vision

Laser Vision was established in 1 June 1996 by Mazharul Islam and his brother A K M Arefur Rahman. This is one of the most renowned audio-visual production companies in Bangladesh. It started music business with publishing musical audio CDs. It published VCD, DVD of musical albums which contained more than 1200 songs. They published 100-120 DVDs of classic and current movies of Bangladesh. They have also published video drama counting to 200-250. The physical address of this company is 1205, Hamid Plaza, 300, 5/A/1 Sonargaon Road, Dhaka.

5.1.1.5 G Series

G Series has huge archive of songs counting to 30000. It has published almost 3000 audio albums. This company has published 1500 video drama on their *YouTube* Channel and OTT platforms of other company. 1500 movie song video have been uploaded to its social media platform channels. This company was established by Nazmul Haque Bhuiyan in 1983. He is till now the owner of this company. The physical address of this company is 82/1-2, Science Laboratory Road, Dhaka.

5.2 Data collection and analysis

To collect primary data for this study, the websites, social media accounts/page/groups, accounts in local and international music streaming platforms of selected music labels of Bangladesh have been thoroughly scanned. Their music business activity on digital platform was rigorously investigated. Collected primary data is summarized in three separate tables which have been incorporated in this article. To supplement those findings, secondary data also collected from different websites, newspaper articles and other literatures. In-depth interview of owners of music labels by questionnaire also conducted. Collected qualitative data was cross checked by query to the owners repeatedly.

6.0 Result and discussion

According to research on Bangladesh's music industry, the country's music industry has also shifted from analog to digital platforms. It began gradually in the course of the first decade of the new millennium. After 2010, the majority of music labels stopped

publishing traditional items such as audio cassettes, CDs, and DVDs and focused only on digital platforms. Every active music company will be fully operational on digital platforms by the end of this decade.

6.1 Operational status of music labels on digital platforms

Music production firms, often known as music labels, have been operating in Bangladesh since the early 1980s. At the time, their business consisted of selling Indian and Western musical recordings on Long Play Record discs. *Disco Recording* was the first firm in Bangladesh to record songs created and polished by Bangladeshi lyricists and composers for Bangladeshi vocalists. For this contribution, the label's owner, Shahin Ahmed, became well-known and was dubbed Disco Shahin.⁶⁹ Following Shahin, so many local music labels sprung up, all of which published the work of local musicians. *Chena Sur Prakashan*, *G Series*, *Anupam Recording Media*, *Soundtek*, *Sangeeta*, and *Sonali Products* were all large companies, and the majority of them are still in operation today.

The Bangladeshi music labels maintained a dealer-oriented business model at the time. The labels' musical products were sent to dealers all throughout the country for sale. Dealers occasionally visited label offices in Dhaka and took the products they required, either in cash or on the condition of payment after sale. They used to make orders from their neighborhood on occasion. This paradigm has now been completely overtaken by the online business model. In Dhaka, there are now no shops selling only musical CDs or DVDs, and the same situation exists throughout the country. In Bangladesh, no music label is currently producing physical music items. The labels chosen for this investigation do the same effect. They now create single songs, create music videos for them, and upload them to digital sites like as *YouTube*, *Facebook*, *TikTok*, and domestic and international streaming platforms. They've also released past musical albums as Audio Jukebox on digital platform outlets. Previously, record labels were required to hire a music arranger to act as a middleman or manager to publish music. His/her job was to contact lyricists, music directors, musicians, and singers as representative of label. After receiving the finished piece, the arranger turned it over to the label, who then published it. The process of creating musical products has not changed in the digital era; the only difference is the distribution method. In the words of *G Series* owner Nazmul Huq Bhuiyan Khaled, "we repeat the action that occurred previously. We created and sold music. The only thing that has changed is the shop. We then sold it to physical stores, and now it's available in digital stores such as *YouTube* and streaming sites."⁷⁰

Table 1 show that *Soundtek*, *G Series*, *Anupam Recording Media*, and *Laser Vision* are active on *YouTube*, *Facebook*, *TikTok*, *Instagram*, and *Twitter*, among other social media sites. Despite the fact that *Chena Sur Prakashan* is the oldest of these five enterprises and was the first to establish an online business (it joined *YouTube* in 2015 and the rest after that), the label has no accounts on *Instagram*, *TikTok*, or *Twitter*. *G Series* is the *YouTube* label with the most subscribers. It has 6.7 million subscribers. *Soundtek* has 4.14 million subscribers, *Laser Vision* has 2.33 million, and *Chena Sur* has 1.33 million.⁷¹

Anupam Recording Media has two *YouTube* channels: one under the name of its parent company, *Anupam Recording Media*, which has 7.46 million followers, and another under the name of *Anupam Music*, which has only 849K members. *Anupam Recording Media* has the most *YouTube* subscribers of any Bangladeshi record label.⁷²

Table-2 shows that sample label's *YouTube* material consists primarily of music videos, lyrical videos, and musical albums in audio jukebox style, movie songs, artist promos, and trailers for music videos. Aside from them, *Soundtek*, *G Series*, *Laser Vision*, and *Chena Sur* have *YouTube* channels where they post video drama, short film, and comedy films. The *G Series* has the highest level of audience engagement with these materials. The total number of people who have seen the content is more than 171 million. *Soundtek* has a content view of 106 crore, *Laser Vision* has 49 crore, *Anupam Music* 10 crore, and *Chena Sur Prakashan* has a content view of 4.1 crore. Five labels were more or less active on *YouTube* with uploading matters in the last month of the data gathering period. Though *Facebook* users are the most numerous among social media users in Bangladesh, music labels' activity is less noticeable on *Facebook* than on *YouTube*, which is a media file sharing social media network that is more suited for distributing musical content. *Soundtek* was the first company to join *Facebook*, according to Table-1, on January 24, 2016. *G Series* joined *Facebook* on May 8, 2017, *Chena Sur* on July 3, 2018, *Anupam Music* on May 31, 2019 (*Anupam Recording Media* on March 23, 2016), and *Laser Vision* on August 7, 2019

Facebook is a social networking platform that brings people together. *Facebook* users exchange their views, news, images, and videos, among other things. In *Facebook*, there is an option to start a page or a group, and all five labels took advantage of it. The selected labels have their own *Facebook* pages. Contents published on *YouTube* are matched with label's *Facebook* page postings (according to Table-2). Music labels are far more active on *Facebook* than they are on *YouTube*. On their *Facebook* page, *Laser Vision* has posted 58 different posts in the last month, mostly drama. *Anupam Recording Media* has 55 postings on their *Facebook* page, while *Chena Sur* has 11 music videos.

TikTok is a video-sharing platform that allows users to upload short videos with music playing in the background. Despite the fact that this app-based social media is widespread in Bangladesh, *TikTok* activity by certain music firms is less evident. A K M Arifur Rahman, Chairman of *Laser Vision* explained the reason. He said, "it is tough to make money by sharing music on *TikTok* as it allows users to share very short music videos of less than a minute."⁷³ Owners of *G Series*, *Laser Vision*, and *Chena Sur* confirmed this situation during interview.

When it comes to social media platforms, *Instagram* and *Twitter* are the underdogs in Bangladesh. Five music labels have indicated that they are not interested in continuing their haphazard engagement on these two social media platforms. *Chena Sur*, the first Bangladeshi label to appear on a digital platform, does not have accounts on *TikTok*, *Instagram*, or *Twitter*. Though the other four have a *Twitter* account, they haven't posted anything in the recent months. The same thing happened to *Soundtek*, *G Series*, and *Laser Vision's Instagram* accounts.

6.2 Revenue earning of music labels

Music labels previously made money by selling physical music items like record discs, audio cassettes, CDs, and DVDs. Now listeners are less interested in physical musical products as they have the chance to listen to music online in the digital era. As a result,

physical music stores have converted into other types of stores. As a result, selling music in physical markets in Bangladesh is no longer a possibility. Music labels' sole choice is now to generate revenue from social media platforms such as *YouTube* and *Facebook*, as well as audio streaming platforms such as *GP Music*, *Robi Music*, *Amazon Music*, *iTunes Store*, *Gaana*, *Deezer*, and others. Labels can make money on these platforms by using a membership model and profit sharing from advertisements.

All music labels in Bangladesh that operate their businesses on internet platforms earn money from advertising. According to Table-3, revenue is generated from advertisements by the *YouTube* channels of five music labels. Revenue is earned based on the number of subscribers. Labels with a large number of subscribers make more money. This study inquired about the revenue of the owners of the selected five labels. All owners admitted that they are receiving money from the *YouTube* channel. But they did not reveal the actual amount or proportion of earnings, possibly because it is a commercial secret. Owner of Soundtek Sultan Mahmud Babul said, *"we are now getting revenue only from our YouTube channel. We have an app of our company on Google App Store. But, till now it is not revenue generating."*⁷⁴ Though this researcher gets the impression from visiting their headquarters that they are not in a severe financial challenge right now.

Music labels in Bangladesh only make money from *YouTube* channels, not from *Facebook*, *Instagram*, *TikTok*, or *Twitter*. Selected music labels' *Facebook* profiles are 'currently not showing ads,' meaning they are not making money from *Facebook* advertising. They profit from home audio streaming companies such as *GP Music*, *Robi Music*, and others, however the sum is insufficient in the eyes of label owners. They are currently not making money from overseas streaming services. However, the owners of *G Series*, *Laser Vision*, and *Anupam Recording Media* are optimistic that they will be able to make profit from international internet platforms in the near future.

Bangladeshi music labels only dealt with musical goods prior to the digital era. However, in the digital age, most of them are focusing on video drama, short films, comedy videos, and other money-generating contents. They are either creating these goods by themselves or purchasing them in order to gain ownership and conduct commerce with the contents. In this sense, the *G Series* and *Laser Vision* are in the forefront. Other labels are also releasing drama and comedy videos since the public like them. As a result, they are generating more cash on digital platforms, primarily from these materials than musical goods. Owner of *G Series* Nazmul Huq Bhuiyan Khaled said, *"now listeners' test has been changed. They are now not satisfied with only music. They are now looking for drama and other visual contents on virtual platforms. So we are bound to produce those type of contents."*⁷⁵

6.3 Dealings with copyright violations

During the first decade of the new millennium, Bangladesh's music industry was subjected to major copyright infringement. In Bangladesh, copyright infringement took two forms: one, unlawfully producing and selling audio cassettes of labels by those who had no authority to do so. Another method was to download tracks of labels' CDs and share them as MP3 files online without their authorization.

In an interview with this researcher, Hasan Matiur Rahman, the owner of *Chena Sur Prakashan* said, “when our music business was doing well at the end of the 1990s, illicit dealers outside of Dhaka began to replicate our records and sell them on their own. We were completely oblivious of it at first. We became aware of the situation when we noted a decline in tape sales outside of Dhaka.”⁷⁶ He explained that when several cassette copier machines in Dhaka became obsolete, the owners sold them to merchants from outside the city. These merchants took advantage of the situation. They were at risk of copyright infringement as a result of this. Thus, primarily music copyright violations in Bangladesh were occurred.

Another copyright breach occurred when the MP3 file format was established. According to Mr. Mazharul Islam, Managing Director and Co-Founder of *Laser Vision* some audio listeners downloaded music or songs from label-released CDs and posted them on various web platforms at random. Mr. Islam said, “as a result, sales of CDs published by labels plummeted, and the labels lost money.”⁷⁷ It was a result of the *Napster*-era behavior, which began in the United States.

In Bangladesh, during first decade of new millennium music labels had to deal with a new type of copyright violation when the mobile phone operators started to use published music of different labels as Ring Tones, Caller Tunes without permission of the right owners. Using these musical products *Grameen Phone*, *Banglalink* and other cell phone operators made profits but they did not share profit with rights owners. Prominent music composer and director Alauddin Ali (now late) was a powerful voice against it in news media and social media. Mazharul Islam, Managing Director of *Laser Vision* said, “we were totally unaware of the situation in the beginning. When we noticed it and contacted to cell phone operators, we discovered that some third party companies had contract with cell phone operators about using our music. After submission our legal documents operators cancelled prior contracts and the made new contracts with us.”⁷⁸

Another copyright violation in Bangladesh occurred when digital platform era began. This time, instead of the original proprietors of the song, the musical items published by labels were posted to *YouTube* Channels by others who received the benefit of commercialization and revenue. Mr. Mazhar stated that the issue has now been resolved. He said, “we now submit the documents to prove our product's proper ownership to Google, YouTube's parent company, and unique numbers are assigned to our products. As a result, if someone uploads our contents without our permission, Google either prohibits it or refuses to monetize it.”⁷⁹ He admits that copyright infringement is no longer a concern in the digital platform era. Owner of *G Series*, *Soundtek*, *Chena Sur* echoed with *Laser Vision* owner.

Table-1: Five Major Music Labels of Bangladesh on Digital Platform

Name of Music Labels	Social Media Platform (1 st Appearance/No. and name of channels/Pages/Profiles/Accounts, Subscribers/Followers/Likes/Revenue earning)				
	YouTube	Facebook	Tiktok	Instagram	Twitter
Soundtek	Soundtek; Joined Mar 31, 2016; Verified Channel; 4.14 Million Subscribers; Monetization Running	Soundtek; Joined January 24, 2016; Like: No; Follower: 493K; Page Not Verified, No Monetization	<i>soundtekbd</i> ; 1 st post 15 October 2020; Like: 2307; Follower: 468; Verified Account	<i>soundtek_bd</i> ; 1 st Post 26 June 2016; Follower: 1411; Account Not Verified	SoundTek @soundtekbd; Joined April, 2016; Follower: 65 Not Verified
G Series	G Series Music, Joined Feb 16, 2016; Verified Channel; 6.7M subscribers; Monetization Running	G Series; Joined May 8, 2017; Like: 1,32,819; Follower: 2,22,061; Page Verified, No Monetization	<i>gseriesmusic</i> ; 1 st post 18 October 2020; Like: 9052; Follower: 3297; Verified Account	<i>gseries.officialbd</i> ; 1 st Post 29 August 2019; Follower: 255; Account Not Verified	G Series @GSeries58620975; Joined September, 2019; Follower: 112; Not Verified
Laser Vision	Laser Vision; Joined Apr 21, 2017; Verified Channel; 2.33M subscribers; Monetization Running	Laser Vision Music; Joined August 7, 2019; Like: 26,669; Follower: 76,358; Page Not Verified, No Monetization	<i>laservisionbd</i> ; 1 st post 24 October 2020; Like: 58.9K; Follower: 11.5K; Verified Account	<i>laservisionbd</i> ; 1 st Post 13 October 2018; Follower: 5557; Account Not Verified	Laser Vision Limited @laservisionbd; Joined December, 2012; Follower: 365; Not Verified
Anupam Recording Media	1. Anupam Music; Joined Jan 9, 2019; Verified Channel; 849K subscribers; Monetization Running 2. Anupam Movie Songs; Joined Feb 5, 2018; Verified Channel; 7.46 M Subscriber, Monetization Running	1. Anupam Music; Joined May 31, 2019; Like: 505,677; Follower: 1,179,552; Not Verified, No Monetization 2. Anupam Recording Media; Joined March 23, 2016; Like: No; Follower: 1.5 M; Page Verified, No Monetization	<i>anupamrm</i> ; 1 st post 5 October 2020; Like: 410.1K; Follower: 90.9K; Verified Account	<i>anupamrm</i> ; 1 st Post 8 September 2020; Follower: 26.1K; Account Not Verified	Anupam Recording Media @anupamrm; Joined February, 2018; Follower: 70; Not Verified
Chena Sur Prakashan	Chena Sur ; Joined Aug 15, 2015; Verified Channel; 1.33M Subscribers; Monetization Running	Chenasur †Pbvmyi; Joined July 3, 2018; Like: 38,767; Follower: 38,943; Not Verified, No Monetization	No Account in TikTok	No Account in Instagram	No Account in Twitter

Source: Data collected from website, social media account, streaming platform account, interview, September-October 2021 and January-February 2022.

Table-2: Activities of Five Major Music Labels on Social Media Platform

Name of Music Labels	Social Media Platform [Types of Content (TC), Total Videos (TVd)/Total Posts (TP)/Total Tweets (TT)/ Total Views of Contents (TVC)/ Last Month's Activities (LMA)]				
	YouTube	Facebook	Tiktok	Instagram	Twitter
Soundtek	TC= Music Videos, Lyrical Video, Audio Jukebox, Drama TVC= 106 Crore+ LMA=Liking a video of 593 K	TC= As of YouTube+Live+Posters+ Drama scenes+ Birthday wishes+Events LMA=11 posts	TC=Short Drama; music video TP= 76 LMA=13 posts	TC= Poster of music videos, TV dramas, birthday wish TP= 143 LMA= No post in last month	TC= Audio Album Music Video (Linked to YouTube) TT=2530 LMA= No tweet
G Series	TC= Music Videos, Drama, Telefilm amd Movie Song, Lyrical video, Artist Promo and Trailers, Audio Jukebox TVC=171 Crore+ LMA= 20 Videos up, Highest view 89K	TC= Drama scene+ Movie Scene LMA=No post on Music	TC= Short music video, drama song TP= 250 LMA=5 posts	TC= Poster of TV drama, music video, lyrical video, song of drama, TP= 89 LMA= No post in last month	TC= TV Drama, Lyrical Video Music Video, Music Album, Bangla Movie, Movie Song, Poetry Recitation TT=75 LMA= No tweet
Laser Vision	TC= Music Videos, Lyrical video, Audio Jukebox, Drama TVC= 106 Crore+ LMA=5 music videos	TC= Music videos, Movie video songs, Event of music video premiere LMA=58 posts	TC= Short music video, drama scene, Movie song, drama song TP= 319; LMA= 20	TC= Poster of Music Videos, Lyrical videos, TV Drama, Clip of TV, Drama/ Film TP= 98; LMA= No post	TC= TV Drama, Drama serial, Movie song (Linked to YouTube) TT=2661 LMA= No tweet
Anupam Recording Media	TC= Music Video, Lyrical Video, Audio Song, Movie Song TVC= 10 Crore+ LMA=One music video	TC= Movie video song, Lyrical song video, Music Video, Posters, birthday wish LMA=55 posts	TC= Short music videos, Movie songs TP= 28 LMA= 1	TC= Movie song, music videos, Stage music program video, Posters TP= 26 LMA= 3 post	TC= Movie scene, song, Music Video, Other company's audio album TT=1888 LMA= No tweet
Chena Sur Prakashan	TC= Music Video, Lyrical Video, Audio, Song, Comedy Video TVC= 410,734,867 views LMA= Two music videos	TC= Music video LMA= 11 Music video, 10 Photos	No account	No account	No account

Source: Data collected from website, social media account, streaming platform account, interview, September-October 2021 and January-February 2022.

Table-3: Five Major Music Labels of Bangladesh on Digital Platform
(Appearance and Revenue earning)

Name of Music Labels	Online Streaming Platforms/Online Music Stores											Other Platforms			
	Home Platforms					International Platforms						Own Music Store	Website	App	
	GP Music	Robi Music	BanglafiX	Airtel Music	OTT (Binge/Tofee)	Gaana	Soundcloud	YouTube Music	Amazon Music	iTunes	Apple Music				Soptify
Soundtek	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes, but on own Website, by YouTube Link	https://soundtek.com.bd/	Yes
G Series	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Binge, Tofee	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	Upcoming as OTT	Not Active	No
Laser Vision	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Anupam Recording Media	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	http://www.anupamm.com	
Chena Sur Prakashan	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No

Source: Data collected from website, social media account, streaming platform account, interview, September-October 2021 and January-February 2022.

7.0 Limitations of the study

Music business comprises not only the matters of music distribution by producers, but also music consumption by audiences and the activities by artists i.e. singers, lyricist and composers. In this study we have examined only the business model followed by music labels in Bangladesh in the era of digital platform. We discussed about how music labels are operating their business activities on digital platforms. If we could have examined the music consumption patterns on the digital platform there was a chance to get a new scenario in the music industry of Bangladesh. Accordingly, due to transformation of music business model in Bangladesh music artists have also been affected. They are also now using social media platforms to portray their music, sometimes with the help of music labels, sometimes by their own. If this study could have expanded its area to cover this issue also, we could reveal the situation of singers and other artists during the digital era. But it was not possible to cover all these areas in one single article. Researchers in the future can concentrate on these issues.

8.0 Conclusion

We are now a part of the virtual world, connected to it via the internet, particularly through various social media platforms. Virtual connections exist between people who live in different parts of the world. This virtual world has become a part of our daily lives. We use internet-based technologies to gather information, buy things, view movies, and listen to music. Among all areas of the virtual world, social media platforms such as *Facebook*, *YouTube*, *Instagram*, and *Twitter*, as well as streaming platforms such as *Amazon Music* and *iTunes*, and over-the-top (OTT) platforms such as *Netflix*, have become the primary source of our entertainment. People now have the opportunity to choose their preferred media for any type of entertainment. They may project themselves using these channels without relying on anyone or any institution.

The international music system has become increasingly reliant on internet-based digital platforms as a result of this situation. People from all corners of the globe can now listen to the music of any country or culture thanks to social media platforms. They have the opportunity to perform in front of audiences from all around the world. There have been cases where talented people who were previously unknown rose to fame overnight as a result of social media. The best examples are Kolkata's Ranu Mandal and Sri Lanka's Yohani Diloka de Silva. A video of music sung by Ranu Mandal, a mentally ill woman, in a Kolkata train station went viral on social media, and she was praised and became renowned overnight. When the song 'Manike Mange Hite' became viral on social media, it made Yohani famous all over the world.

Bangladesh's music business, like that of other countries, has become evident in the virtual world. Bangladeshi music labels were similarly affected by digital technical advancements in the 1990s. When social media platforms became prominent in the end of 2000s, and music lovers got increasingly interested on social media platforms, Bangladeshi music labels responded. Bangladeshi music labels have entirely switched their business model from analog to digital after one and a half decades of introducing social media, streaming platforms, and OTT platforms.

The purpose of this research is to look at how Bangladeshi music labels operate on digital platforms. Five Bangladeshi music labels- *Soundtek*, *Laser Vision*, *Chena Sur Prakashan*, *G Series*, and *Anupam Recording Media*, were chosen using a hybrid method of case study, document analysis, and in-depth interview. This article examines how major music labels are currently conducting business on *Facebook*, *YouTube*, *Instagram*, *TikTok*, and *Twitter*, among other social media sites. This paper also looks at how these labels cope with local streaming sites like *GP Music*, *Robi Music*, *Banglafx*, and *Airtel Music*, as well as foreign music platforms like *Gaana*, *SoundCloud*, *Apple Music*, *Amazon Music*, and *iTunes*.

The findings of this study demonstrate that the majority of Bangladesh's selected music labels are represented on those five digital platforms. On *YouTube*, they have a lot of activity. The majority of the revenue they generate from digital channels comes from *YouTube*. They have activities on four other social media platforms, but none of them generate revenue.

Some of the chosen labels do business with local audio streaming services, and others do business with worldwide platforms, although not in substantial quantities. It also does not generate sufficient revenue. None of the selected music labels have their own audio streaming or over-the-top (OTT) platforms. *G Series*, the only exception, is about to establish its own OTT platform.

Notes

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