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Research Paper

Urban vs. rural: assessing the living standards of musicians in rajshahi city and shahzadpur, bangladesh

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ABSTRACT

Musicians in Rajshahi and Shahzadpur, Bangladesh, were surveyed to compare their living standards. The descriptive cross-sectional study examines musicians' income, resources, education, health, and living conditions. A stratified random sample of 100 musicians (50 from each region) ensured professional and employment diversity. Result differences are significant across regions. Rajshahi musicians have better incomes, education, healthcare, instruments, and savings. Shahzadpur musicians rely on informal borrowing, lack formal music education, and face economic challenges like fluctuating income and fewer performance opportunities. Shahzadpur musicians benefit from community and cultural support, which helps address institutional issues. Percentage-based analysis shows how urban infrastructure, economic opportunities, and government support affect these disparities. Shahzadpur has rural constraints and limited resources, while Rajshahi has advanced infrastructure and strong economic activity. The research shows that gender, family, and culture affect musicians' careers and lives. This study shows that regional disparities require targeted interventions. The recommendations include expanding music education, providing grants and loans, improving healthcare and infrastructure, and encouraging government-cultural collaboration. These initiatives seek to improve musicians' socioeconomic conditions, particularly in Shahzadpur, and foster fair professional advancement and well-being. The findings help policymakers understand Bangladesh's music industry challenges and take action.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Bangladeshi musicians are essential to cultural preservation and evolution because music expresses and unites the nation. The socioeconomic conditions of musicians in urban and rural areas differ greatly. This study analyzes income sources, resource accessibility, and professional opportunities of musicians in Rajshahi City, an urban area, and Shahzadpur, a rural area, to determine how geography affects their careers.

Cultural identity and self-expression depend on music. [1] Say musicians are vital to culture, entertainment, and education. Bangladeshi music influences social, religious, and celebratory events with local and global influences. The music industry supports individuals and regional economies through live performances and festivals that draw tourists. Despite their cultural importance, musicians face socioeconomic barriers to professional and personal growth.

In South Asia, musicians face income volatility, insufficient institutional support, and limited training and resources [2]. Urban areas in Bangladesh have more opportunities and resources than rural areas, affecting musicians' financial stability and quality of life [3].

Justification for the Study

Although there is a dearth of data on the topic, it is common knowledge that musicians from rural and urban areas of Bangladesh have vastly different living standards. To address this gap, this study compares musicians from Rajshahi City and Shahzadpur.

In order to ascertain the impact of geography on musicians' living standards and any other relevant factors, this research investigates various aspects such as income sources, employment stability, access to resources, and cultural participation. Everyone from lawmakers to cultural groups to the music industry can learn something new from this research.

To improve the lives of rural musicians in Bangladesh, it is important to understand the challenges they face. This knowledge can then be used to create targeted support programs that include training, financial aid, and infrastructure development.

Research Objectives

The major purpose of this research is to compare and contrast the living conditions of musicians in Shahzadpur and Rajshahi City, and to identify the causes of any differences that are found. Goals include:

1. Researching musicians' financial and social standing in the two regions.
2. Analyzing how musicians' careers and financial security are affected by geography.
3. Determining, beyond geographical considerations, other elements influencing musicians' standard of living.

2. RELATED WORK

The performing arts and music influence culture, psychology, and society. These factors have been extensively studied: economic growth, social cohesion, and individual well-being. This paper synthesizes research to understand the field. The music industry has changed its revenue generation due to streaming services.

According to [4], streaming has increased accessibility and industry revenues but also increased income inequality, favoring famous artists. Algorithmic suggestions and playlist inclusions affect artist revenues, so digital music policy must promote equity. Live performance has become a major economic

driver. According to [5], concerts like The Era's Tour boost local economies by boosting tourism and spending. Governments can benefit from subsidizing touring artists, regulating ticket prices, and ensuring event safety. Music festivals boost regional commerce, especially in medium- and small-sized towns, by creating jobs and attracting tourists, according to [6].

The ability to take music classes is strongly correlated with socioeconomic status. [7] Studied the underrepresentation of low-income students in Texas All-State ensembles from 2005 to 2015. While 10% of participants were from low-socioeconomic status backgrounds, 60% were from high-socioeconomic status schools. This inequality shows how systemic barriers prevent low-income students from receiving high-quality music education. Music improves student learning, socialization, and cultural identity. [8] Claims that music preserves cultural narratives and strengthens community, promoting political freedom and national cohesion. Performers have more mental and physical health issues. Stress, malnutrition, and burnout affect adolescent performers' health, according to [9].

[10] Examined artists' well-being issues like occupational stress, lack of recognition, and inadequate support networks. [11] Interviewed Turkish musicians and found that the COVID-19 pandemic worsened existing issues, making the industry financially unstable and uncertain. Artists must be flexible in the ever-changing music industry. [12] Examined portfolio careers, where artists work multiple jobs to make money. University curricula increasingly include wellness, digital literacy, and entrepreneurship. According to [13], many Australian artists work outside the arts, with women facing even greater domestic constraints. Culture and geography shape artists' paths.

According to [14], established artists benefit from rural communities and resources, while emerging artists thrive in urban isolation. [15] Examined Dalit and devadasi music traditions in India and found that performance practices reflect social identity and cultural reclamation. Music and performing arts boost economic growth, social cohesion, and well-being. Artists' economic instability, mental health issues, and systemic injustices require targeted solutions. Governments, institutions, and societies must support music and performing arts ecosystems for their cultural and economic vitality [16].

3. METHODOLOGY

This study compares musicians' income, education, resources, and social conditions in Rajshahi and Shahzadpur using primary data. Structured surveys were used to gather data on musicians' livelihoods and challenges in these two regions. The following sections describe this study's research design, sampling, data collection, and analysis methods.

Research Design

The study employs a descriptive cross-sectional design, facilitating an assessment of the living standards of musicians in Rajshahi and Shahzadpur at a particular moment. This design is suitable for comparing the attributes of musicians in two different locations and determining the factors affecting their quality of life [17].

Sampling Technique

This study used stratified random sampling to select a representative sample of musicians from both regions [18]. Musical roles (vocalists, instrumentalists) and professional status (full-time or part-time) differentiated the musicians. It ensures that the study represents different types of musicians and can be generalized to the population [19].

- Survey sample size: 50 musicians from Rajshahi and Shahzadpur were chosen. 100 musicians were studied, providing enough data for analysis [20].
- Inclusion Criteria: The study included Rajshahi or Shahzadpur-based musicians who actively practice music as a primary or secondary occupation [21].
- Exclusion Criteria: Non-musicians or non-residents of the two regions were excluded from the study.

Data Collection Method

To gather numerical data on demographics, wages, jobs, assets, and living conditions, structured questionnaires were sent out either in-person or over the phone [22]. Questions on the survey were either closed-ended or used a Likert scale. Topics such as demographics (gender, age, education, experience), employment and income (status and sources), education (instruments, opportunities), health (check-ups, chronic conditions), and living standards (housing, utilities, satisfaction) were important [23].

Data Analysis

A percentage-based study summarized survey results, stressing notable variations between Rajshahi and Shahzadpur musicians. The study went as follows:

- Percentages and frequency distributions caught demographics, income, and resources.
- Income, work, education, health, and living standards were compared [24].
- Shahzadpur had more part-time musicians, second-hand instrument use, and less formal music education and healthcare access.
- Economic inequality, government assistance, and infrastructure access were among possible causes under consideration [25].
- This methodical study shows differences in income stability, resource access, and general satisfaction, therefore providing ideas for policy changes in study areas.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Demographic Statistics of Musicians

Demographic Factor	Rajshahi City	Shahzadpur
Sample Size	50	50
Average Age	28	32
Gender Distribution	92% Male, 8% Female	98% Male, 2% Female
Education Level		
- No Formal Education	10%	24%
- Primary Education	20%	30%
- Secondary Education	40%	30%
- Higher Education	30%	16%
Average Income per Function (Vocal)	6500BDT	2800BDT
Average Income per Function (Instruments)	3000BDT	1500BDT
Average Years of Professional Experience	08	05

By age, gender, education, income, and experience, Table 1 contrasts Rajshahi City and Shahzadpur musicians. Each site had 50 samples. While Shahzadpur musicians average 32, Rajshahi musicians average 28. Shahzadpur has 98% male/2% female musicians; Rajshahi 92% male/8% female. This implies Shahzadpur women encounter cultural obstacles. Of Rajshahi musicians, 30% are more educated than 16% in Shahzadpur. Shahzadpur's 24% more uneducated musicians than Rajshahi (10%) points to bad rural education. While Rajshahi singers make 6500 BDT, Shahzadpur singers make 2800 BDT. Rajshahi musicians make 3000 BDT, twice Shahzadpur's 1500. Urban areas have better jobs and wealthier audiences. Rajshahi musicians have eight years of experience against five in Shahzadpur, probably because of improved job prospects and earlier entrance into the profession in cities [26]. Demand and resources help urban Rajshahi musicians earn more, study better, and gain experience. Rural limitations cause Shahzadpur to have less income, education, and gender diversity [27]. The urban-rural split of the professional music business is clear [28].

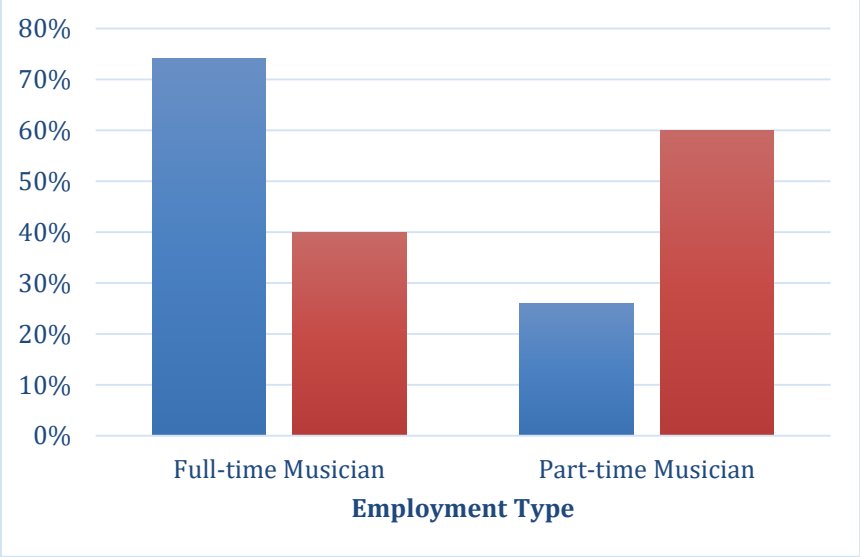


Figure 1. Employment Status of Musicians

Figure 1 shows Rajshahi and Shahzadpur musician employment. Rajshahi has 74% full-time musicians, while Shahzadpur has 40% and 60% part-time. This indicates better financial opportunities and music demand in Rajshahi's urban area. Shahzadpur musicians need extra work due to economic issues. These differences show how urban-rural economic disparities affect musicians' careers.

Table 2. Household Income Contribution

Primary Income Earner	Rajshahi City	Shahzadpur
Musician as Main Earner	86%	34%
Other Household Members	14%	66%

Table 2 reveals that 86% of Rajshahi musicians are the main earners as opposed to just 34% in Shahzadpur. Reflecting musicians' restricted financial possibilities in rural areas compared to the urban environment of Rajshahi, 66% of households in Shahzadpur depend on other members for income.

Table 3. Music Industry Income Sources

Income Source	Rajshahi City	Shahzadpur
Live Performances	72%	88%
Teaching Music	20%	10%
Recording/Studio Work	4%	0%
Royalties from Music Sales/Streaming/Youtube	2%	0%
Government/Cultural Grants	2%	2%

According to Table 3, live events make up 72% of Rajshahi's income and 88% of Shahzadpur's. In Rajshahi, music education makes 20%; in Shahzadpur, 10%. Low recording work and royalties restrict job prospects. Just two percent of cultural and government grants go to both areas.

Table 4. Influence of Family Background on Career Choice

Family Influence	Rajshahi City	Shahzadpur
Comes from a Family of Musicians	40%	60%
Family Encourages Music Career	54%	70%
Family Discourages Music Career	46%	30%
Family Support(s/ed) Music Financially	64%	66%

Table 4 reveals that 60% of Shahzadpur musicians come from musical families, while 40% in Rajshahi. Shahzadpur (70%) promotes families more than Rajshahi (54%), suggesting a more supportive environment. Rajshahi (46%) has more family discouragement than Shahzadpur (30%) perhaps because of urban rivalry or other job pressures. In both regions, family financial assistance is 64 to 66%.

Table 5. Financial Savings and Investments

Financial Status	Rajshahi City	Shahzadpur
Has Savings Account	62%	24%
No Savings or Investments	38%	76%
Investments in Music Equipment	60%	68%

Table 5 illustrates notable disparities in savings between musicians from Rajshahi and Shahzadpur. Merely 24% of musicians in Shahzadpur possess savings accounts, whereas 62% of musicians in Rajshahi do. The elevated earnings in Rajshahi may facilitate improved financial planning. As a result of diminished incomes, 76% of musicians in Shahzadpur lack savings or investments. Shahzadpur (68%) allocates a greater investment in music equipment compared to Rajshahi (60%), despite financial limitations, indicating potential career progression.

Table 6. Personal Debt and Financial Obligations

Debt Type	Rajshahi City	Shahzadpur
No Debt	40%	20%
Bank Loans	24%	10%
Borrowing from Informal Sources	20%	50%
Loan for Music-related Purchases	16%	20%

Table 6 contrasts musician debt in Rajshahi and Shahzadpur. Probably because of their greater income, Rajshahi musicians are 40% no debt while Shahzadpur musicians are 20%. Shahzadpur (50%) borrows more from informal sources than Rajshahi (20%), suggesting restricted access to formal financial systems. Rajshahi (24%), which might have better banking services or financial knowledge, relies on bank loans more than Shahzadpur (10%). Though financially constrained, both regions have comparable music-related loan schemes, implying a common concern for career investment.

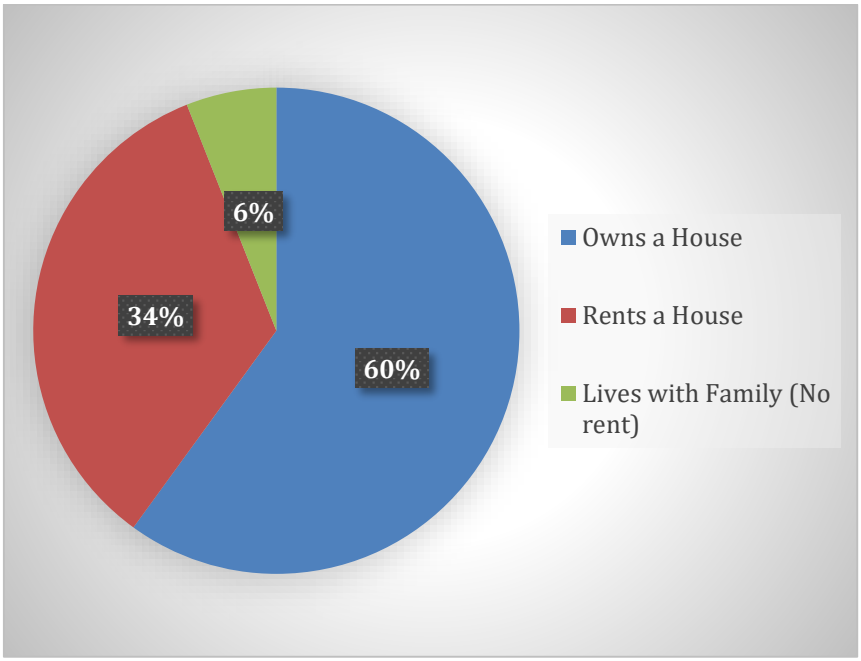


Figure 2. Housing Situation: Rajshahi City

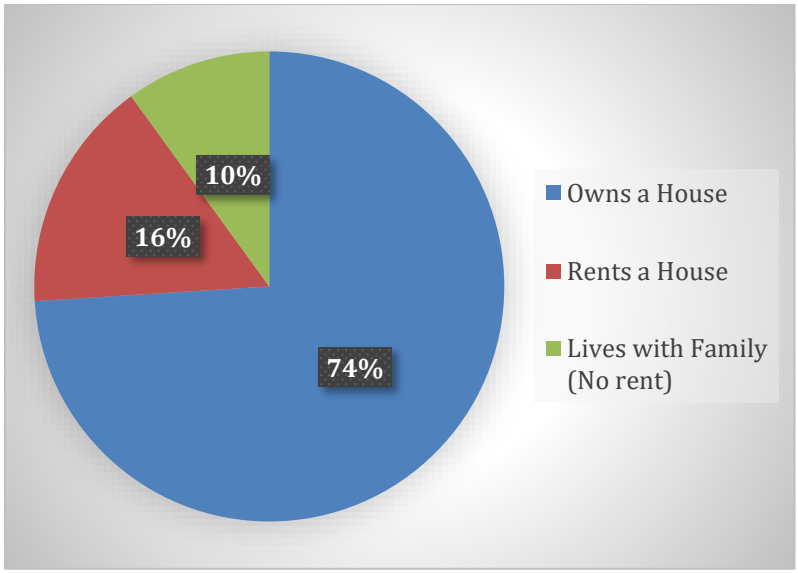


Figure 3. Housing Situation: Shahzadpur

Figure 2, Figure 3 llustrates the housing ownership of musicians in Rajshahi and Shahzadpur. Seventy-four percent of musicians in Shahzadpur own their homes, in contrast to sixty percent of musicians in Rajshahi. The lower cost of living in Shahzadpur enables more musicians to purchase homes. Conversely, 34% of musicians in Rajshahi lease their residences, likely attributable to elevated living expenses. Few musicians reside with family (rent-free) in either region, indicating a pursuit of financial autonomy.

Table 7. Access to Utilities

Utility	Rajshahi City	Shahzadpur
Electricity Access	100%	98%
Clean Water Access	94%	70%
Internet Access	94%	60%
Smart Phone Ownership	98%	74%

Table 7 reveals Rajshahi and Shahzadpur musicians' access to necessary utilities. While Shahzadpur has 98%, Rajshahi has 100% power. While Shahzadpur has 70% clean water and 60% internet, Rajshahi boasts 94% clean water and 94% internet. Rajshahi's urban infrastructure might be better and have more public services, which would explain this. Rajshahi (98%) probably has more smartphone owners than Shahzadpur (74%) because of urban technology adoption, which makes smartphones necessary for business and communication.

Table 8. Access to Resources

Resource	Rajshahi City	Shahzadpur
Access to Education	94%	60%
Access to Healthcare	86%	44%
Access to Music Instruments	86%	54%

Table 8 contrasts the main tools of Rajshahi and Shahzadpur musicians. City With 94% education access, Rajshahi has better educational system than Shahzadpur (60%). Possibly because of more medical facilities and services in the city, Rajshahi musicians have 86% better access to healthcare than Shahzadpur (44%). Shahzadpur (54%), which has fewer music stores, training schools, and professional networks, has less access to music instruments than Rajshahi (86%). While Shahzadpur might have less educational and medical facilities and music tools, Rajshahi could have better infrastructure and resources.

Table 9. Access to Music Equipment and Resources

Music Equipment	Rajshahi City	Shahzadpur
Owns Modern Instruments	50%	20%
Access to High-quality Recording Equipment	40%	14%
Relies on Second-hand Instruments	20%	54%
Receives Equipment through Sponsorships or Grants	14%	4%

Musicians in Rajshahi and Shahzadpur possess disparate access to musical instruments and resources

Table **9**. In Rajshahi, 50% of musicians possess modern instruments, whereas in Shahzadpur, the figure is 20%. The city may provide superior financial prospects and resources, elucidating this disparity. Rajshahi possesses 40% of musicians equipped with high-quality recording apparatus, whereas Shahzadpur has only 14%, suggesting that urban areas are more likely to have professional equipment. Musicians in Shahzadpur utilize 54% second-hand instruments, whereas Rajshahi employs only 20%, potentially attributable to financial limitations or a scarcity of retailers offering new instruments. Ultimately, merely 14% of musicians in Rajshahi obtain equipment via sponsorships or grants, in contrast to 4% in Shahzadpur, indicating a more robust support and funding infrastructure within Rajshahi's more developed music scene.

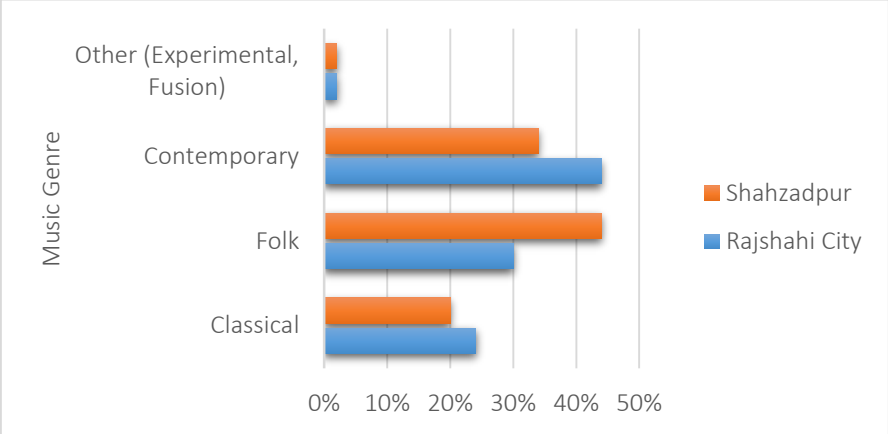


Figure 4. Music Genre Preference and Popularity

Figure 4 reveals that Rajshahi and Shahzadpur musicians have different genre preferences. Of Rajshahi musicians, 44% and of Shahzadpur musicians, 34% prefer modern music. Global trends could have more impact on Rajshahi's urbanized and varied music culture. Shahzadpur (44%) likes folk music more than Rajshahi (30%), probably because the area has more strong traditional and cultural roots, where folk music is more relevant to local identity. Both cities would rather classical (24% in Rajshahi, 20% in Shahzadpur) and experimental or fusion (2% in both) than classical.

Table 10. Sources of Music Education and Skill Development

Music Education Source	Rajshahi City	Shahzadpur
Formal Education (Music School, University)	40%	20%
Private Tutoring	30%	38%
Self-taught	24%	38%
Online Tutorials/Resources	6%	4%

Table 10 enumerates the music education and skill development resources in Rajshahi and Shahzadpur. Forty percent of musicians in Rajshahi are enrolled in music schools or universities, whereas only twenty percent in Shahzadpur participate in similar educational institutions. Rajshahi's superior urban infrastructure facilitates greater accessibility to formal music education institutions. The absence of

formal educational institutions and a preference for informal, community-oriented music education may account for the 38% of Shahzadpur musicians who utilize private tutoring or self-instruction. The utilization of online tutorials is minimal in both cities, with 6% in Rajshahi and 4% in Shahzadpur, indicating a potential scarcity of digital resources for music education in Shahzadpur.

Table 11. Gender Dynamics in Music Industry Participation

Gender Participation	Rajshahi City	Shahzadpur
Male-dominated Music Scene	62%	94%
Female-dominated or Balanced Scene	38%	6%
Gender-based Barriers to Entry	20%	60%
Participation in Women-only Music Initiatives	10%	2%

Table 11 contrasts the gender dynamics of the music industries in Rajshahi and Shahzadpur. Male-dominated music scenes exist in both Rajshahi (62%) and Shahzadpur (94%). Shahzadpur's greater percentage could be attributed to more conservative social norms in rural areas, which might dissuade women's public service like music. Rajshahi's urban environment might provide more gender diversity in music since 38% of musicians say a more balanced or female-dominated scene. While 60% in Shahzadpur do, data reveals that 20% of Rajshahi musicians face gender-based entrance restrictions, indicating greater society pressure on women in smaller, more conventional areas. Though especially in Shahzadpur because of social and cultural constraints, women-only music programs are uncommon in both cities.

Table 12. Musicians' Health Status

Health Indicator	Rajshahi City	Shahzadpur
Good Overall Health	64%	40%
Regular Health Checkups	50%	20%
Experiences Chronic Health Issues	34%	10%

Compared to Shahzadpur, where 40% of musicians are healthy, Rajshahi musicians are 64% healthy, as illustrated in Table 12. This may be due to the superior healthcare system in Rajshahi. In Rajshahi, 50% of residents receive routine checkups, while only 20% do so in Shahzadpur, due to the superior healthcare infrastructure. The lower stress and less demanding lifestyles in rural areas may be the reason why Shahzadpur musicians have 10% chronic health issues, compared to 34% in Rajshahi.

Table 13. Standard of Living Perception

Perceived Standard of Living	Rajshahi City	Shahzadpur
Very Satisfied	40%	30%
Somewhat Satisfied	44%	60%
Dissatisfied	16%	10%

Table 13 reveals that 40% of Rajshahi musicians are very satisfied with their lifestyle, as opposed to 30% in Shahzadpur. While 44% in Rajshahi, 60% in Shahzadpur are somewhat happy. While Shahzadpur has 10%, Rajshahi has 16% unhappy musicians. Rajshahi's improved economy, infrastructure, and services could increase expectations and happiness. Shahzadpur's rural environment might make its musicians more humble but content.

Table 14. Interconnected Factors Influencing Living Standards

Factor	Rajshahi City	Shahzadpur
Urban Infrastructure	High	Low
Economic Opportunities	High	Low
Community Support	Medium	High

Cultural Traditions	Medium	High
Government and Institutional Support	High	Low

Table **14** illustrates that Rajshahi's urban infrastructure and economic opportunities contribute to its elevated standard of living. Shahzadpur's infrastructure and economic prospects are substandard. Community support and cultural traditions are more prevalent in Shahzadpur, which suggests that there are more robust local networks and cultural engagement. Rajshahi, on the other hand, benefits from improved infrastructure and economic prospects as a result of institutional and government support. In contrast, rural regions may depend more on community and cultural resources, while urbanization and government resources have an impact on living standards.

Table 15. Economic Challenges Faced by Musicians

Challenge	**Rajshahi City**	**Shahzadpur**
Unstable Income	44%	86%
Lack of Performance Opportunities	30%	50%
High Cost of Instruments	24%	40%
Limited Music Education Resources	20%	50%
Lack of Financial Support	36%	60%
Lack of Government Support	84%	98%
Limited Access to Audiences	30%	54%

Table 15 reveals the financial difficulties of Rajshahi and Shahzadpur musicians. Indicating a more unstable economy, Shahzadpur musicians say 86% income volatility as opposed to 44% in Rajshahi. In Shahzadpur, performance chances are limited (50%). Shahzadpur musicians are also harmed by the high cost of instruments and lack of financial help. While both cities lack music education resources, Shahzadpur suffers more (50%). Shahzadpur's 98% less government support underlines the institutional help disparity between the two areas.

Discussion

The study looks at Rajshahi and Shahzadpur musicians' social and economic situation. Male-dominated music businesses in both cities offer money for musicians despite economic and living circumstances [29]. Of Rajshahi musicians, 86% use music to support their families; in Shahzadpur, 34% do. While Rajshahi musicians make more on their own, Shahzadpur musicians rely 66% on family. Of Shahzadpur musicians, 86% have irregular income as opposed to 44% of Rajshahi musicians [30]. Rajshahi musicians make 6,500 BDT for vocals as opposed to 2,800 BDT in Shahzadpur and play live 72% more. Musicians from Shahzadpur have no healthcare, education, or tools [31]. Rajshahi musicians have better internet access (94% to 60%), smartphone ownership (98% to 74%), education (94% to 60%), and healthcare (86% to 44%).

Rajshahi has 38% female involvement against 6% in Shahzadpur. The results reveal Shahzadpur musicians' financial difficulties and the need for government and institutional support to enhance their condition [32].

5. CONCLUSION

The research reveals substantial disparities in income, resources, and living conditions between musicians in Rajshahi and Shahzadpur. The financial stability, education, and healthcare of Rajshahi musicians are superior to those of Shahzadpur, who are confronted with limited opportunities and financial instability.

Recommendations

- Provide funding through partnerships and grants.
- Create mobile music education units for rural areas.
- Rural musicians should be included in equipment loan programs.
- Encourage alliances with national music bodies.
- Improve access to healthcare by means of screenings and targeted projects.

These programs can support equity in the music industry and help address the difficulties faced by musicians in rural areas.

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Author Contribution Statement

Name of Author	C	M	So	Va	Fo	I	R	D	O	E	Vi	Su	P	Fu
S.M. Ashraf Hossain	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	
Eyatsingha Shuva		✓				✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
MD. Bulbul Ahamed	✓		✓			✓		✓		✓			✓	

C : **C**onceptualization
M : **M**ethodology
So : **So**ftware
Va : **Va**lidation
Fo : **Fo**rmal analysis
I : **I**nvestigation
R : **R**esources
D : **D**ata Curation
O : Writing - **O**riginal Draft
E : Writing - Review & **E**diting
Vi : **Vi**sualization
Su : **Su**pervision
P : **P**roject administration
Fu : **Fu**nding acquisition

Conflicts of Interest

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

Informed Consent

All authors have noticed and confirmed the submission and possible publishment of the manuscript.

Ethical Approval

Formal ethical approval was not required as the study involved voluntary, non-invasive participation, adhering to ethical research guidelines. This study does not involve any AI generated contents.

Data Availability

The dataset is confidential but may be available upon reasonable request, subject to ethical considerations.

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