Conclusion

This research study is mainly focused upon the technical advancement in the field of sound recording, music production and its impact on the growth, in terms of popularization and expansion, of music in Sri Lanka. Sri Lanka is a small Asian country, an island in the Indian Ocean, near the Indian mainland and separated by Palk Strait. It has also been mentioned in ancient Indian literary texts such as ‘Skanda Puran’ and the epic ‘Ramayana’ by Valmiki. Similar to India, Sri Lanka also has a long history of being ruled by Kings, followed by colonization by the Portuguese, the Dutch and lastly the British, before attaining the freedom finally in 1948. Sri Lanka also has an age old tradition of folk and devotional music. Music was associated with religion and was used for worshipping deities in religious rituals. As mentioned earlier, Sri Lanka was colonized for a long period and hence, its music and culture was very much influenced by the Portuguese, Dutch and the Western culture. South Indian music also has been prevalent there in Sri Lanka since 12th century.

As evident from the previous chapters, the evolution of sound recording technologies, subsequent techniques of sound recording, reproduction of sound and the impact and influence of modern techniques and technology on the field of music have been discussed in detail.

‘Recording sound’ implies to write the sound waves on a capable medium with a view to preserve the written data tracks for reproducing the same sound for future listening. On comparing the earlier and modern sound recording techniques and technology, it becomes clear that these have dramatically transformed the field of music globally. The advancement in the field of sound recording has had a great influence on various aspects of music and has gradually transformed the growth and development of various music
genres, music creation and production pattern and also the ways of listening music. It has changed the entertainment industry to a great extent.

Similar to the other countries of the world, emerging sound recording techniques have greatly influenced and impacted Sri Lankan music also. In this thesis, it has been attempted to critically elaborate the transformation in the field of music. As compared to the early sound recording techniques, a growth pattern is visible, both in quality and quantity, in the field of music in Sri Lanka also. Since the invention of Phonautograph, for recording sound, by a French man Leon Scott, in 1855-56, it has resulted in a systematic development in the field of recording and creating music with the continuous technological advancement. Looking upon the historical development in the field of sound recording, many great scientists have contributed with their invaluable theories and inventions. Phonautograph by Leon Scott, Graphophone by Graham Bell, Phonograph by Thomas Edison, Gramophone by Emile Berliner, Telegraphone by Curt Still have been the significant earlier inventions in this field. The four kinds of sound recording technology that is Mechanical or acoustic recording, Electronic recording, Magnetic recording and Digital recording have been developed as an ongoing scientific research and development since late 19th century. Also, various kinds of essential equipment and gadgets like microphones, mixers, sound effects machines etc. have been invented and developed. Though, following and adopting these techniques a little later, Sri Lanka has also progressed and has been a beneficiary of the scientific development. Since the days of Wire recording, up till the latest computerized software based music creation and production, through sampling machines and the sound banks, Sri Lanka has come a long way down in the field of music recording and creativity. The convenience of recording music with the help of available latest technology has enabled and facilitated the expansion and popularization of recorded music to every corner of the country very quickly.
Music has always been an important medium for entertainment, enjoyment and relaxation. For this reason only, now a days, recorded music is being used at various public and commercial places like public transport vehicles, elevators, shopping malls, banks, airports, private hospitals etc. With the shrinking size of the electronic gadgets, capable of playing and storing a large amount of musical data, and increasing affordability of these gadgets, music has become a great companion to the general public everywhere in Sri Lanka. One can enjoy listening to the music of his choice anywhere and anytime he likes. The common people now even have the facility to use the recorded songs or music, of their choice, as the caller tunes or ringtones in their mobile phones. They now have easy and quick access to their chosen songs or variety of music, recorded in any part of the world, through the internet, right there in homes and even on the small electronic gadgets like mobile phones, tablets, i-pads etc. while moving outdoor. Technological progress has made all this possible and very convenient.

Technical and scientific development has shrunk the world to a smaller place in terms of quick and easy accessibility and widened reach. Evolution of the sound recording techniques and specially, the computer based digital multi-track recording has positive, as well as, negative aspects also. On the positive side are the facility or provision of recording each voice or instrument on a separate individual track with individual sound balance, tone, volume level or added effects like reverb etc., or the convenience of later modifying the tone management, by removing or adding some extra effects, re-dubbing, replacing a section or the whole track etc. This has resulted in getting the best output from the artists as they can record their songs or music piece by piece or section by section. There is no burden of recording the whole song at one go. It is now possible even to record each track at different time which was not possible in earlier times and the whole band or group of musicians had to perform together at the same time to record a song or a piece of music. All of them had to rehearse very hard, in advance, and as there was no post-editing facility, they had to record whole piece or song again, if anyone of them made a mistake in rendering his or her part.
Whereas the recording, aided by computers and sophisticated software, became very convenient and easy, it has drastically and negatively affected the livelihood of accompanying musicians as, in most cases, their services are no longer required, now a days, and the music is created by using the sound banks, comprising of pre-recorded tones and sounds of numerous instruments, through the Midi player. Though, sometimes it doesn’t give a pleasing feel and the melodious effect in absence of the real and actual tonal quality of the instrumental sounds used there in. In this way, improved techniques have driven many accompanying artists and the instrument players out of demand and job. Even for performances in house concerts, or on various other occasions, many vocalist just carry a CD or a small pen drive, containing recorded musical tracks of various popular songs and play that CD or pen drive on a CD player or a Laptop computer and sing along with these tracks, without needing accompanying musicians. It is becoming a trend in other countries like India, Mauritius etc. as, besides being highly convenient to him; the vocalist doesn’t even have to share the remuneration with anyone else.

Also, it has emerged as a trend to re-launch the old popular songs with added new effects, like western rhythmic beats, electronic and metallic sounds and instruments. Computer based recording techniques have made it very conveniently possible to either add one’s own voice with a great singer of yesteryears in a recorded song or to change the beats or the feel of a song altogether. It is called Re-Mixing or Re-Making. For example, one of the popular Indian film song ‘Saawan Ka Mahina, Pawan Kare Sor’ has been cut, mixed and copied in Sinhala language like ‘Midum Selen Pavi Sevanalle Me Sandeva’ in a music album. Such a trend is visible in India also but such practice is not appreciated and approved by all. Most of the audiences, who have heard and liked these original melodies, consider it as distortion and lowering of the musical standard in modern times. Some people believe that the old melodies, with new effects are still better than most of the modern songs, which are highly technically aided but lack the feel and soul of music.
With the affordability of modern technology within the commercial market at a reasonable cost, a bulk of untalented or people with a non-musical background, that is lacking proper training in music, have also entered the field of music and they take advantage of technology for hiding their inabilities and lacking skills. Some of the audience condemn modern recording techniques for the substandard performances and blame it for such output from so-called singers or artists, for they depend largely on the technology only, instead of proper training and hard work, whereas the fault lies with the performers for doing so.

On the positive side, with the use of latest recording technology and procedures, Sri Lankan musicians have also been able to 'musically' interact and present their best creation and performance at the international level. It has helped them to popularize Sri Lankan music around the world. Furthermore, it has made available the opportunity and exposure to the young Sri Lankan musicians in the global music industry.

These developments have also led Sri Lankan musicians to be commercially successful, as well as, earn a good reputation within the society. However, in some cases, due to certain illegal practices like piracy of music, unlawful copying etc., their professional success has been badly hit.

On the other hand, most of the private radio and television channels now appear as the main disseminators and propagators of modern technologically mediated music genres such as ‘Hip-Hop’, ‘R & B’, ‘Dub-Step’ and even the remixed music and songs. As a result of focusing and allocating more air-time, especially for propagating these genres among young audience, the other musical genres in the country have been adversely affected. Consequently, it has made powerful impact on the "balance" of music. It has badly affected those musicians also, who belong to other music genres. Accordingly, as they don’t get enough chances to showcase their art, some artists are now practicing music as a part-time activity, while some others, disappointed or may be disheartened
with the changed scenario, have decided to entirely refrain from practicing and presenting their music.

However, a few of the compositions by modern young artists have added diversity to Sri Lankan music and it has led to re-shape the song structures, the length of the compositions and also the traditional orchestration methods.

In addition to the above points, technical aid and application has resulted in a massive reformation, not only in the case of recorded music, but in the field of live music performance also. Artists or performers usually do a sound check and sound balancing before their performances and the sound engineers or technicians monitor the sound output throughout the concert. This enhances the performance standard and so it has gradually become a compulsory practice to do so. Compared to the past, output quality of the performances has improved in the last couple of decades. In fact, the musicians have become very conscious about the proper use of microphones and sound balancing before and during their performances.

In certain fields like the primary educational institutions, recorded music has made influences in several ways to augment students' language, aesthetic and creative abilities in an unprecedented manner. To enhance artistic abilities of the primary students, a variety of recorded music albums containing rhymes of songs for children have been released by Sri Lankan musicians and several institutions. In case of secondary and tertiary education, (especially in the music education) much importance has not been given to such materials. It is an important issue which needs to be addressed. It is important to inspire and create a liking for music in younger generation.

As far as the Sri Lankan music industry is concerned, it is obvious that the recording technology has been generally utilized to achieve only a selected set of purposes. In the meantime, a variety of light song genres such as drama, filmy and music of
advertisements are recorded only to achieve certain commercial goals. According to my view, the real benefits of modern technology are not properly imported Sri Lanka as in the case of other music cultures in the world. Musicians and other respective authorities should promote releasing extended music compositions via different media not only for the cultivation of a greater appreciation but also for the development of the field of music recording and technology. It seems the above said stagnated recording culture has made the recording culture one-dimensional. More promotion of other music genres such as fusion, jazz and other instrumental music would possibly lead to take maximum advantage of modern techniques.

Also, certain misconceptions and rigid attitude towards use of technology must be diminished. Unawareness of music, musical genres and also the narrow mindedness, on the subject have made such issues. On the other hand, the radical old school mentality has also been another reason behind such rejections of new technologies. As a result, some traditional musicians still tend to follow the age old methods, patterns and consequently the field has been ideologically hegemonized. Compared to the initial stages of computerized techniques and other tools, ideologically established positive attitudes can be observed in the country. As a result, gradual development is taking place. However, modern techniques can be utilized more efficiently.

As far as the usage of Internet and its related aspects are concerned, it is difficult to compare with other nations. Internet is used mostly for emailing and downloading some software programs, movies and songs etc. but in the field of music recording and music performances, internet provides a wide range of facilities transcending the geographical boundaries and time limitations. It is possible now to interact and learn music from musicians sitting in other part of the world, through internet by using various programs like Skype, Yahoo messenger etc. for video conferencing. For the betterment of the music culture in Sri Lanka, the assistance of world renowned artists can be now obtained.
Certain courses pertaining to the broad areas of Sound Management and Acoustics have to be introduced in the school curriculum, as well as, the university education system for in depth study. Even though certain courses have been included in the school curriculum, almost all of them address only the basic topics such as microphone, mixer and historical development in this field. Even the majority of the courses conducted by local universities are also restricted to specific areas. Respective bodies such as the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Cultural Affairs and the Ministry of Journalism have to especially focus on implementing these programs obtaining the expertise of the related personnel. Only one or two courses are being conducted by some institutions with the involvement of the government. A professional course, titled -“Sound Management in Studios and PA systems” - which is conducted by the Engineering division of Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation, is very popular due to its course content.

With a view to make the field of music and the future of Sri Lankan music culture better, all the persons who are in the field of music and other related fields, like the artists, musicians, producers, recordists etc., must adopt, promote and keep on updating and upgrading their knowledge and skills with the latest recording techniques. Employing modern sound recording techniques has inevitably resulted in an unprecedented development and improvement in the field of Sri Lankan music. Sri Lankan musical artistic culture is very rich per se and the efficient use of latest recording technology will certainly add to that richness.