Report On

"Analyzing Project Management Practices of HerWILL: Grooming Future Leaders by Providing Skill Development Programmes"

By

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An internship report submitted to the **Brac Business School** in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of **Bachelor of Business Administration**

Brac Business School

Brac University

June 2023

Declaration

It is hereby declared that

1. The internship report submitted is my own original work while completing degree at Brac University.
2. The report does not contain material previously or written by a third party, except where this is appropriately cited through full and accurate referencing.
3. The report does not contain material which has been accepted, or submitted, for any other degree or diploma at a university or other institution.
4. I/ We have acknowledged all main sources of help.

Student's Full Name & Signature

_____

Sanjida Sultana

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Supervisor's Full Name & Signature:

_____

Riyashad Ahmed

Assistant Professor of Finance & Director of Programs (MBA & EMBA)

BRAC Business School

Letter of Transmittal

Riyashad Ahmed

Assistant Professor,

BRAC Business School

BRAC University

66 Mohakhali, Dhaka- 1212

Subject: Submission of Internship Report

Dear Sir,

It is my pleasure to present to you my internship report titled "Analyzing Project Management Practices of HerWILL: Grooming Future Leaders by Providing Skill Development Programmes". The report is from my perspective of being a project management intern at HerWILL. I have tried my best to write this report with necessary information alongside provided relevant recommendations in a concise yet meaningful manner. I am grateful for your continuous support throughout this internship timeline. This report could not have been done without your valuable feedback and guidance. Now, I am submitting this report for your kind evaluation.

I would like to extend my gratitude once again; I am sure your evaluation will further enhance my knowledge. I believe that the report will meet your expectations.

Sincerely yours,

Sanjida Sultana

ID: 19104055

BRAC Business School

BRAC University

Date: June 13, 2023

Non- Disclosure Agreement

[This page is for Non- Disclosure Agreement between the Company and The Student]

This agreement is made and entered into by and between HerWILL Inc. and the undersigned student at BRAC University Sanjida Sultana, ID: 19104055.

The information contained in this paper is confidential and cannot be disclosed for this internship purpose.

Acknowledgement

To start off, I would like to show my gratitude to Allah for his blessings in regard to successfully completing this internship report. I would also like to thank my supervisor Mr. Riyashad Ahmed for his constant support and constructive feedbacks. Due to his guidance, I was able to make this internship report more meaningful and informative. Without his help I would have been oblivious to how this internship semester works let alone writing this report which was new to me. Special thanks to my on-sight supervisor Ms. Nurjahan Rupa for providing me with all the company information that was essential to give structure to this report. I have completed this semester virtually- away from my home country Bangladesh, the support from BRACU library, BBS department, and OCSAR office was truly remarkable for making my internship journey more easier. Finally, I am grateful to every individual who supported me, motivated me, and gave feedbacks on my work throughout the whole report writing process.

Executive Summary

For my last semester of undergraduate life, I have done my internship in HerWILL for the role of a project management intern. To explain my role in a sentence: project management is planning, executing, managing resources of a project that has a certain timeline, from start to finish in order to make that project a success. As an intern I observed, supported, and contributed to the company's signature projects one of them being- Generation Equality programme. So, to spread the amazing work of HerWILL I analyzed this project thoroughly. It was a project in collaboration with Scholastica private school for teaching their selected students in becoming generation equality spokesperson by providing necessary 21st century skills- mainly leadership. For that my main source of data is the hands- on experience I had, to analyze three main outcomes. I evaluated the programme itself and how the project management team played their part on it, second is how the students benefited from this project, and lastly how skilled the speakers were to educate the students in becoming a better leader. Overall, I found that the programme helped to enhance student's soft skills that are often ignored in text book curriculum. To back my findings, I have collected relevant research papers that also show the importance of such skill development opportunities that can be considered as extracurricular activities. From my viewpoint of being a project management intern I also shared my insight of how this department plays a vital role in the company's existence. HerWILL being an organization where all the members work virtually is heavily dependent on the project management department in order to hold multiple signature projects each year that resonate with their core values.

Keywords: HerWILL, Project Management, Soft skills, Leadership, Generation Equality.

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List of Acronyms:

PM = Project Management

GEYA = Generation Equality Youth Ambassador

GE = Generation Equality

SDG = Social Development Goals

ECA = Extra Curricular Activities

WOC = Women of Color

UN = United Nations

STEM = Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics

Chapter 1: Overview of Internship

1.1 Student Information

Name: Sanjida Sultana

ID: 19104055

Program: Bachelor of Business Administration

Major: Finance, Minor: Accounting

1.2 Internship Information

1.2.1 Company Details

Company Name: HerWILL Inc. (Women Inspired in Life & Leadership)

Department: Project Management

Address: 1088 Peachtree St., Atlanta, Georgia 30309

Email: support@herwill.org

Figure: HerWILL Logo

1.2.2 Supervisor's Information

Name: Nur Jahan Rupa

Position: Program Manager (GEYA), Talent Acquisition & Creative Lead

1.2.3 Job Scope

HerWILL is a US based non-profit organization that operates globally to educate, elevate, and empower aspiring women to thrive. Additionally, they concentrate on educating youth who are the future leaders to ensure a generation free from prejudices whether it be of gender bias or social stigmas. During my last days of university life, I got the opportunity to work with HerWILL's amazing team and later on got recruited as their regular member. Initially I started my journey as a project management intern. We see companies holding various campaigns and projects but often we underestimate how much hard work is needed behind the stage to execute the final result. As an intern I had the opportunity to get hands-on experience on how a project needs to be executed from start to finish, starting from rigorous planning to the last post- promotional duties. I was accompanied by 6 students from other universities to work as a team who could proactively come up with creative ideas that can add value to the upcoming projects- under the guidance of project managers. I believe working in a team tremendously helped me to practice leadership skills and overall enhance being a good team player. We all learned from each other, shared knowledge by attending daily zoom meetings, and so despite all of us coming from different educational backgrounds we could work smoothly for one common goal. As a PM intern I collaborated with the Designing interns, Communication interns, STEM interns whenever my duties required. All of us were working virtually but that didn't hinder at all due to us being dedicated to successfully completing the projects.

As an intern I was encouraged to speak up whenever I had new ideas. I documented and stored day to day registrations, updates, cleaning data and evaluating them by using excel. At the end of the day, I would send my work to the project manager and get feedback on it. Every week we would hold an all hands meeting via zoom where the members actively running a certain project would attend and give updates to the meeting lead. This encouraged me to complete my tasks on time and I realized how important my duties were to keep the project running smoothly. Throughout the period my supervisor not only guided me but also helped me stay motivated.

1.3 Internship Outcome

1.3.1 My Contribution to HerWILL

HerWILL works towards following **SDG 4** (Quality Education),**5** (Gender Equality), & **8** (Decent Work & Economic Growth) that combining helps to establish a gender equal world. All their projects are targeted to make an impact on our communities mainly to break free from societal barriers that interrupt progress. I was privileged to actively participate in two grand projects of HerWILL while working as an intern-

- GEYA (Generation Equality Youth Ambassadors)

- This is their summer internship programme for school going children, Scholastica Private School for the year 2022 to be exact. My role was to firstly help pre- plan the project timeline, understand the importance of following that timeline, and help to design the program structure. The essence of PM is to strictly follow the tentative timeline where a well-structured blueprint is needed to track the progress of a certain project. This way we managed to touch upon every planned session, get feedback to improve upcoming performance, and finish the project within the deadline. I was also responsible for tracking the activity of the students in terms of how well they promoted their involvement with GEYA sessions in social media accounts such as- LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram. In a shared spreadsheet I updated their daily activity which my supervisor would need to make important next steps. I distributed and evaluated the response sheet that the students would fill up to track their participation which directly affected the decision if they would get the project certificate or not.

- Datathon 2022

- HerWILL specifically organized this event for women of color (WOC) in the US and tech women in Bangladesh for the year 2022. It is a rigorous 48-hour competition to solve a real-world problem. I was given the task to record daily registration responses, clean and sort the data, analyze the data in excel by using pivot graphs and tables which will

ultimately be used to present insights to HerWILL's stakeholders. My job, although very basic, had a direct significance to strategic decision making. I was also responsible for sharing my knowledge to the other interns to also keep them updated via zoom meetings. Thus, I not only had a good relationship with my supervisor but also with other interns and we all learned from each other. This cross-department communication also helped me to understand how the whole project is running, everyone trying their best to follow the tentative timeline. During the 48-hour competition I was assigned to be a bridge between the respected judges and competition teams, whenever a team needed assistance, I quickly called in the judges to them. There were ten data scientists from five different time zones so my role helped me save unnecessary waiting for the judges. Overall, the learnings I got from this project will undoubtedly help me in my future career.

1.3.2 Benefits to Students

Students reading this internship report can acquire the following benefits:

- **Better understanding of work life**: Work life is different from the student life we used to live. In this report the students get exposed to real life work experience that can be implemented in future job setting. For example- the work etiquettes, internal communication, daily requirement of finishing tasks, with or without guidelines because sometimes you have to use your common sense to do it. A student will understand how a not-for-profit organization runs, how to prioritize his/ her responsibilities which will give an edge in their future career endeavors.

- **Understanding how Virtual Internship Works**: I did my internship online as well as conducted all my meetings virtually via zoom or Microsoft office teams. Despite everything being virtual the learnings I got is undoubtedly a hands-on experience. My supervisor entrusted me with responsibilities that added value to the already running projects. We conducted multiple virtual meetings each day to keep our communication

smooth. My internship experience teaches if everyone diligently performs their respective tasks then physical absence is not at all a matter to execute successful events.

- **Knowledge of Project Management**: For similar companies like HerWILL who hold major projects throughout the year, a well unified PM team is needed. From rigorous planning to making sure those planned steps are executed on time, PM team members have all the updates of every department to make sure they are coordinated. Students will get a multi perspective view because they are required to understand other department's concerns as well as theirs.

- **Importance of being Proactive**: This internship experience really taught me to be proactive and I tried my best to showcase that in this report. By being proactive you always have to be attentive to every output and how they will affect it in the future. Keeping that in mind a PM intern plans their current tasks so that the consequence of their work is always being measured. Ultimately, this helps to follow the envisioned project schedule.

1.3.3 Difficulties faced during the internship period:

Although working for HerWILL has been a great journey, it was sometimes tough to keep up with the different time zones because the members are all floating in different countries. I had to keep up with four different time zones initially that were completely new to me so I got overwhelmed. Adding to my learning curve was balancing priorities because my supervisor gave me complete autonomy in choosing my responsibilities to see how much I can handle. To prove my worth, I took more tasks than I could execute and failed to follow the deadline. Eventually I acknowledged my ability and with my supervisor's continuous support I was able to prioritize my responsibilities.

Chapter 2: Organization Part

2.1 Introduction

HerWILL- Women Inspired in Life & Leadership, primarily works for women's empowerment. Adding voice to UN SDG 5, their goal is to reach true gender equality by 2030 which can be done through education, discussions, advocacy, and innovative technology. It is a 501(c)(3) organization based in Atlanta, Georgia, USA. HerWILL also focuses on increasing women's participation in STEM areas and provides opportunities for women of color because statistically they have the most fallout risk. In a broader perspective they are trying to merge STEM training with gender equality to create a better world for the next generation.

2.1.1 Objective

The objective is to understand the structure of the company and how they operate. As HerWILL is a relatively new company so many might not know about them in detail. So, the organogram of the company, different departments, and their practices are all discussed thoroughly. I have also done SWOT analysis, Porter's five forces so the reader can comprehend its industry stand point. Overall, I wanted to point out the company's unique offerings that can bring a revolution in Bangladesh's non- profit operations.

2.1.2 Methodology:

I have collected information from various sources to write down this section. For my primary data: I mainly took the help of my onsite supervisor. As there is not much public data available and the company is also cautious of giving out internal information, my supervisor guided me by sharing valuable insights. From her I learned the company's management, marketing, information systems practices.

For my secondary data I was heavily dependent on the company website and their social media platforms to learn more about the offerings. In order to analyze the company's industry presence, I had to take the help of many online articles and journals as well.

2.1.3 Scope:

The scope of this report is comprehensive. The report presents in depth project management functions of the company. The company's competitive situation, areas of strength and weaknesses are elaborated in case comparison is required for similar industries. It will also enlighten the reader about different initiatives of HerWILL. In future research, this report might work as a reference point for qualitative analysis of HerWILL's other programmes.

2.1.4 Limitations:

In the process of writing this report the challenges I faced are:

-   Public information about the company's accounting and financial performance were unavailable. As an intern I had no authority to get that data so I couldn't do any quantitative analysis.
-   The company's different departmental practices were not clearly stated in the website. They were also cautious of their privacy so in many sections I could only write down a certain amount of information that the company allowed.
-   It was my first exposure to working in a non- profit organization, in a position that was new to me so it took a while to get used to the whole process.

2.1.5 Significance of the report:

The report presents how HerWILL operates, their values, and what goals they want to reach. As a global non- profit organization their activity is worth looking into as they have the potential to influence other charitable organizations in Bangladesh. The company's unique initiatives, their functions, project execution can be a learning opportunity for readers that is beneficial for similar company settings.

2.2 Overview of the Company:

HerWIll started their journey from April, 2020. Although the company is based in the USA, they have employees spread all across the globe. Other than the USA currently they have members working from- Bangladesh, Malaysia, Russia, Germany, France, Australia so it is a floating organization. In order to reach generation equality, the company deliverables are as followed:

- Educate with unconventional learning sessions
- Empower with Financial literacy and leadership programs
- Elevate with better opportunities

HerWILL's Vision:

An equal opportunity world where women have the freedom to reach their true potentials.

HerWILL's Mission:

To educate, empower, and elevate women and girls to accelerate their economic empowerment and leadership by providing a global platform of resources for mentorships, financial literacy, STEM training, personal- branding, and entrepreneurship.

Generation Equality Stakeholders:

- HerWILL Leads   - Highly Accomplished Leaders

- Subject- matter Experts   - Young Adults (Age group- 18 to 30)

HerWILL mainly works in alignment with United Nations Social Development Goals (SDG) 4, 5, & 8. The topics covered in these points are:

- Equal Pay & Economic Justice and Rights – Financial Literacy
- Education and Training (Technology and innovation for Gender Equality)

- Leadership Training: Online Resources+ Session on (Leadership, Communication, Content creation, STEM)
- Sexual Harassment & all forms of Violence against Women – Legal & Human Right Education (Safe guarding policy for women in work place)
- Bodily autonomy and sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) – Sex education and reproductive health
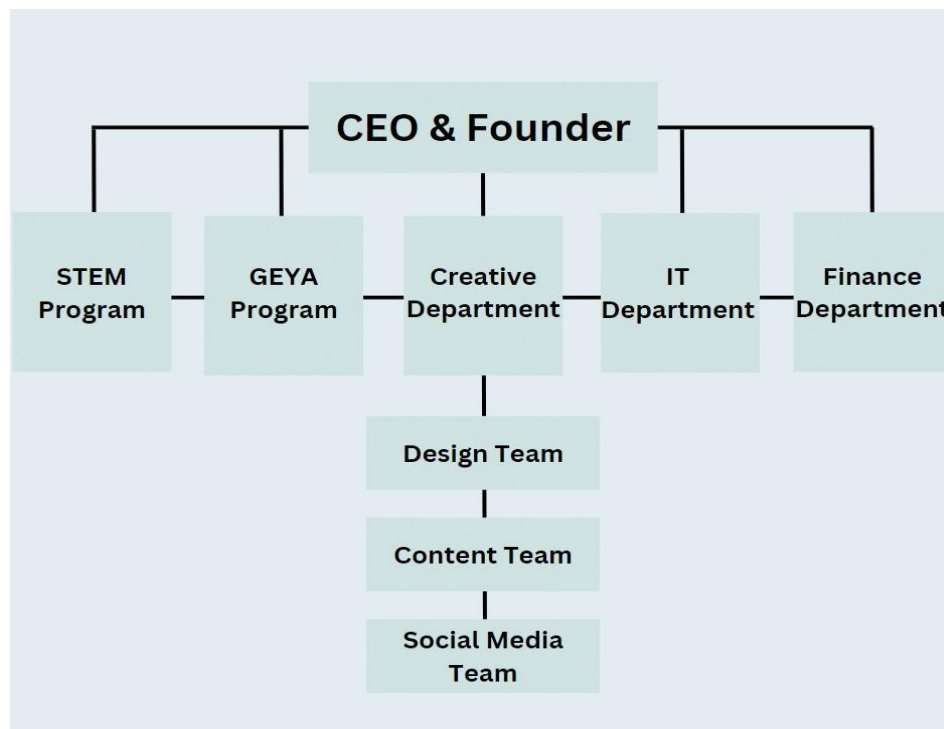
Organogram of HerWILL:

Figure: Company Organogram

Figure: Company Offerings

2.3 Management Practices

2.3.1 HR & Recruitment:

HerWILL is growing as a company so their management team has to be efficient to hire, to manage, to motivate their employees. From my experience, they encourage reference hiring. In case of external hiring, they first post job offers in social platforms mainly in LinkedIn and Facebook. Candidates take initial registration where they have to explain why they want to join the company, what skills they have, how that can add value to the company, some situational questions and more. Once he/ she passes the written test then they are called for an interview where alongside CV screening they try to find unique talents. For example, their student ambassador programme where 15 students all over Bangladesh was chosen and their goal was to spread what

HerWILL does in their campus. Out of the 15 students the best performers would then be hired to work permanently.

2.3.2 Work Life Balance:

The new employees are assigned to supervisors that guides them till they acquire enough experience. The working hours are flexible and each member gets paid on how many hours they worked per week. So, one can choose how much they want to earn by deciding how many hours they will be working for that week. As all the members are floating and have different time zones, the management also encourages them to choose suitable work hours as they like. Once the timing is chosen though, it is preferred to stay committed to your words.

Figure: Company Work Motto

2.3.3 Leadership Style:

For HerWILL they follow a mixture of democratic and strategic leadership style. As it is a tight-knit organization democratic leadership works for day-to-day activities. For example- a new project will take place in the coming 6 months, then the project lead will ask for opinions from all the active members even if they are not part of the project group. Each suggestion is heard with great attention and if it is impactful enough then it's given priority in the execution of that project. As a result, all the members feel valued by being involved in the decision- making process while coming up with great ideas to make the project more effective. Strategic leadership brings the best out of people or scenarios. This plays a vital role in sticking to the company's long-term goals. The project leads mainly to practice this to influence other members of their teams.

2.3.4 Employee Training & Development:

HerWILL is very mindful of the growth of their employees because if they grow then the company will grow with them. So, they try to give opportunities based on their academic background or interest. They have connections and partnerships with other organizations. Recently they collaborated with TAAGA for 2 of the employees in order to be a participant for Young Professionals Award 2023. They also give opportunities to get scholarships through their connections like at Harvard Kennedy School, Georgia Institute of Technology. The project that the company holds also falls under training sessions. There is one- on- one mentorship opportunity, and group coaching sessions especially for interns to properly understand how the company work environment is, what roles they would play, and who to approach after designated task completion.

2.4 Marketing Practices

Today's world is globalized, which takes companies a step further in getting the attention of a global audience. HerWILL uses multiple marketing strategies to reach their target audience as well as tap into potential collaborators in the processes that are discussed below:

2.4.1 Digital Marketing:

- As the company is relatively small so all their promotional activities are done internally meaning they are not associated with any advertising agency. All the marketing is done online specifically in social media (LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram) and in their official website (HerWILL.org). For the last few months, they are focusing more on building their LinkedIn account because of their new target segment. Note that- all their followers gain is organic, only at event time they boost their activity to gain more exposure.
- They also have an exclusive Facebook group where different discussions take place regarding their upcoming events. Their official website is also integral in spreading their service and they have a separate team for website development who works behind the scenes to make it running.
- They keep in touch with their audience and stakeholders via Email. There is a monthly newsletter option that is sent to make everyone know what the company is doing. In terms of a new project occurring, registration for that project, and invitation to attend is also sent out via email to alert them.

2.4.2 Affiliate Marketing:

HerWILL uses different public figures, influencers to promote their activities. In this way it creates more buzz among the public as well as the message is well received. For example- to promote their "Orange the World- end violence against women & girls" campaign they featured actress Mithila Rashid, psychologist Yahia Amin, representative of UN women Bangladesh Shararat Islam, 10 Minute School instructor Sakib Bin Rashid, and Instagram influencer Mehzabeen Ahmad as their spokesperson to talk about this event and spread awareness to their audience.

Figure: Speech of Mithila Rashid

Figure: Speech of Yahia Amin

Figure: Speech of Shararat Islam

2.4.3 Partnerships:

The company is in a five-year visionary partnership with AI4OPT for uplifting underprivileged women to get into a higher paying career. They also have partnerships for different projects such as- BdOSN, SouthBDHub, BRAC, Grow with Google, Delta Community- credit union, Smart biz pay, TRE Visto, and Georgia Institute of Technology.

2.5 Financial Performance and Accounting Practices

HerWILL is a private organization so they don't publish any reports that are available to the public. Thus, due to lack of information I could not analyze their financial statements or evaluate accounting practices. On further attempt to acquire data, the company said it was confidential and the data is only for the founding members and those who fund the company with resources.

2.6 Operations Management and Information System Practices

2.6.1 Operations Management

HerWILL, being a nonprofit organization, conducts many projects each year that echoes their mission and vision to bring a positive change in society. During my internship period I was involved in two of their projects that were led by different project leads. Here operations management is basically project management for HerWILL. It's divided in two sections- Data Science and Generation Equality where they have different teams working to make the projects successful. If the Datathon is arranged from January to June then the GEYA is arranged for the other half of the year. A brief description of their projects under the project management are discussed below:

- **GEYA:** It stands for Generation Equality Youth Ambassador where they aim to create advocates of generation equality for a better future.
- **Datathon:** This is a 48-hour case competition only for women of color. Up until now it was introduced in the USA and Bangladesh.
- **Femina Invicta:** Here they feature accomplishment stories of women overcoming immense struggles to inspire the coming generation.
- **All's Well when Mind's Well:** As the name suggests it is a project of mental wellbeing that was launched during the pandemic to break the taboo around mental issues.
- **Orange the World:** It is a 16 days of campaign to support the end of violence against women and girls around the world.
- **Financial Literacy:** To help in achieving economic independence they partner up with financial organizations to launch programs related to savings, loan/ credit and entrepreneurship.
- **Data Community Meetup:** It is conducted every month where the topic revolves around Data science and AI to encourage more women to explore the technology industry.

All these projects have different project leads and team members. Among them there are projects in priority. For example- during the pandemic the projects related to social issues were getting more focus. Now the company is aiming more with GEYA and Datathon. Projects require fundings that comes from sponsorships, it needs promotion so operations teams collaborate with the social media team, to spread the news they collaborate with different newspapers and partners. Altogether Planning takes majority of the time, then execution, and lastly post promotional activities. In the end the outcome of the project is publicized on their official website.

2.6.2 Information System Practices

In terms of Information systems HerWILL primarily uses Microsoft office teams where there are different groups assigned to different projects. All the general/ day-to-day softcopy, data, files are stored there. Departmental meetings are being scheduled and held primarily in Teams or Zoom. They have a separate team for website management that constantly monitors and updates the website. From my knowledge there they use WhatsApp for daily communication. If any new update needs to be uploaded in the website, then the social media aka design team contacts the IT team on WhatsApp. Google Drive is also being used to store essential documents as backup. All these combined keeps their data private and safe.

2.7 Industry and Competitive Analysis

2.7.1 Porter's Five Forces:

- <u>Threat of Substitutes (Medium):</u> HerWILL's substitutes are other organizations that provide data science related courses as well as youth leadership opportunities. However, what the company does is still unique in Bangladesh's perspective. On the global scale though there are more competitors where similar services are provided. So, the audience cannot jump into other services where they will get all the packages HerWILL is providing, they only will get 1/ 2 similar NGOs that make the threat of substitutes medium.

- <u>Threat of New Entrants (Medium):</u> What the company does is always a trendy topic. When you think about non- profit working for women automatically the idea of women empowerment comes to mind. But the data science factor is unique to HerWILL only. In Bangladesh we often talk about digitalization which is only the base of what the company is aiming towards. The company is also based on the concept of helping underprivileged women of Bangladesh that makes them stand out from global NGOs. So, if put together trendiness and uniqueness, they balance out the overall threat of new entrants as medium.

- <u>Degree of Rivalry (Low):</u> There are not a lot of non- profits/ organizations that offer the same services as HerWILL yet. It is still futuristic in the Bangladeshi scenario where women participation in the workplace is still low let alone aiming towards more higher paying job positions. On a global level- "Women in Data" is an NGO working only towards getting more women involved in tech. field but not the other causes HerWILL strives towards. So, even in global platforms their whole offer package, vision, objectives, target audience are unique thus the degree of rivalry is low.

- <u>Bargaining Power of Buyers (Medium):</u> The buyers are youths, school/ college students, university students, research students, university professors, and social advocates. Because the company and their offerings are virtual it might not suit every individual as they can simply choose physical classes/ seminars from other institutions. On the contrary all the services of HerWILL are free from all costs so for the target group that wants free

knowledge will jump to join in this company's offerings. So, the bargaining power of buyers all together becomes medium.

- Bargaining Power of Suppliers (Low): The suppliers of the company are the contributors of projects, other organizations similar to the events HerWILL holds. As the company has a good reputation so they willingly join in their cause. For example- Moner Bondhu is a mental health related company, if HerWILL decides to hold a month-long course/ session related to their topic then without a doubt Moner Bondhu will lend their help because working with HerWILL gives them more exposure. This is applicable for all other companies so the bargaining power of suppliers is low.

Figure: Porter's 5 Forces Model

In conclusion, all the points of Porter's five forces combined reveals medium to moderately low scale in the attractiveness of the industry of NGOs.

2.7.2 SWOT Analysis:

Recently the talk of AI and its advancement in recent years has been the talk of the town. HerWILL's data science related offerings have become more relevant in this setting where more people are now willing to explore this area. At the same time, the company strives to create a gender equal world where every individual can live freely. By combining the concept of data science and a gender equal world they have the advantage of being distinctive in the NGO industry.

Figure: SWOT Analysis

1. **Strengths:**
   a) HerWILL is a tight- knit community where all the members working for the company can cultivate their passion. For them HerWILL is the passion because every project that the employees are involved with are related to the cause they want to work for.
   b) The work environment is very friendly and working hours are flexible. Everyone feels safe, everybody can speak their mind as the employees have shared purpose, values, and trust.

c) The company's objectives are still unique in the perspective of Bangladesh. With the recent buzz about AI, it will make the company's offerings more attractive. Moreover, all their projects are relevant to improving the skill set of today's youths.

2. **Weaknesses:**

   a) With members working from different time zones there can be difficulty in communication if the employees are not aware of it. So, the project timeline gets delayed that ultimately affects project outcome.

   b) The company launches various projects each year so the project leads need to be constantly active. However, lack of manpower and resources are a constant struggle if it wants to hold physical events, which is a big weakness.

3. **Opportunities:**

   a) They have more room to collaborate with other NGOs and organizations. In this way both the parties get benefited due to shared finance, resources, and manpower.

   b) When it comes to sponsorship the company approaches US based companies but they should also explore Bangladeshi companies and approach them in this matter.

   c) A good opportunity is to approach more university clubs and similar authorities to get more exposure to tertiary level students. In this way they can explore potential members to add to the team.

4. **Threats:**

   a) Other institutions can copy HerWILL's model and become an immediate competitor. Although the company has global support and exposure, the threat of competitors copying their business model is pretty relevant.

   b) What HerWILL does is broad in nature that many audiences might not get the gist of. There's a threat of other NGOs taking a certain topic and specializing in it to become a well- known name while HerWILL is not so popular in the mind of the public.

2.8 Summary and Conclusions:

HerWILL has a good working environment that values their employees well- being at all costs. The company hierarchy is set in a way that everybody feels entitled to share their opinion any time. It has been performing for a good cause that not many organizations are diving into. As every company has opportunities and threats, they should also focus on theirs for the sustainability of their offerings.

2.9 Recommendations:

1. HerWILL should focus more on their customer retention rate. Although they have a loyal customer base, still they should try to expand it.
2. They should focus more on partnerships that can help them with financing and manpower in order to hold physical events.
3. Only focusing on building an online presence is not enough. More conventional publications should be done to make the public aware of their offerings.
4. Although their noble cause gave them a good start, collaborating with more schools/ colleges can give them more exposure and familiarity with the youth.

Chapter 3: Project Part

Analyzing Project Management Practices of HerWILL: Grooming Future Leaders by Providing Skill Development Programmes

3.1 Introduction

In my internship period, I have seen HerWILL designing and providing different categories of programmes for different target groups. However, the programme that I was actively involved in was GE (Generation Equality) that was designed for specific adolescents of an English medium school- Scholastica. This programme was designed to equip the youths with necessary learnings in becoming potential advocates of 'Generation Equality' among their communities. For the students this worked as their extracurricular activity (ECA) and research says that it helps to develop interpersonal competency that ultimately promotes students' educational success after high school (Mahoney et al., 2003). In a case study done by Hisa & Mohiddin (2019) revealed that this type of programme can equip the youths with leadership skills. HerWILL's GE programme gave the students a platform to learn the soft skills to become a changemaker- a leader.

Figure: SDG 4, 5, and 8

3.1.1 Literature Review

HerWILL is a global non- profit organization that acknowledges the importance of today's youth as they hold the world's future in the palm of their hands. So, they initiated a pilot project named GE that was all about grooming the youth with necessary skills that it takes to be an ambassador of equality- to be a leader and lead their peers in creating a future where every individual gets a fair platform, free of biases while working for their life goals.

In an article of UN Women, it is expressed that youths are the epitome at being a changemaker because of their unique thought process which can immensely influence other generations (UN Women- Headquarters, 2022). HerWILL, adding voice to UN's campaign, launched GE as an ECA for youths. In Bangladesh, majority people's viewpoint of ECA is negative thinking it would harm the student's academic results stated by Rahman et al. (2021), but in their research they found the opposite result that is: by being involved in ECA students can improve their communication- leadership- management- and teamwork skills, without negatively affecting academic performance. In another research, it is emphasized that ECA helps one to mature socially through group interaction- making the students self- aware of themselves and their surroundings (A. Jamal, 2012). ECA with a focus of nurturing leadership skills also makes the youth more capable of handling unforeseeable situations (Hisa & Mohiddin, 2019). In another research, the authors presented that there's a positive correlation between personal/ interpersonal development and ECA for youths from disadvantaged schools (Blomfield & Barber, 2011). HerWILL envision that by providing opportunity to the students of Scholastica will bring a trickle-down effect to other schools and institutions.

3.1.2   Objectives

- How ECA like "Generation Equality" can help to develop leadership qualities.
- How the sessions benefited the audience.
- To analyze HerWILL's PM efficiency.

3.1.3 Research Questions

1. To assess if the programme developed leadership qualities amongst the students.
2. Evaluate the program execution: was the programme helpful for today's youth.
3. To comprehend if the programme was interactive so that the participants felt that they were listened to.

3.1.4 Significance

This report emphasizes on the effectiveness of soft skill programmes for the youth. To my knowledge, there is no specific research done about this initiative of HerWILL. Therefore, this report will work as a good reference for future research similar to this topic. The reader will also learn how the company, despite after the pandemic, successfully held this virtual programme. Based on the findings, they will get the affirmation on holding more soft skill programmes for the youth as they are the foundation of tomorrow's future and hold great influence.

3.2 Methodology

The information of this report was collected in two ways. For this report the primary data that I have used is Observational Data. My sample is the 14 Scholastica students, their session instructors, and HerWILL team members involved with the project. My secondary data is the response videos submitted by the students after each session regarding what they have learned through this GE project, also different social media posts and HerWILL's official website: herwill.org. To further understand and validate my research topic I also collected research papers from renowned journals, used articles from verified websites. All the sources helped me in conducting my qualitative research and made the output more significant.

3.3 Findings and Analysis

HerWILL has multiple programs for their different target groups for example yearly Datathon for women of color, Mental health/ Reproductive health sessions for teenagers and adults, Femina Invicta where they highlight women's accomplishment stories, Orange the world campaign to end violence against women, monthly data community meetup for technology background audience.

All these programmes are of great importance but in this section, I will talk about their GE programme where I actively participated as an intern and directly analyzed the student's activities. The program GE (Generation Equality) is where HerWILL collaborated with Scholastica (English medium school in Bangladesh), with their O- level students. A total of 18 students from Scholastica enrolled in this program and among them, 14 graduated.

Framework of the Programme:

Session 1	Onboarding Session| About Generation Equality
Session 2	Leadership & Professional Etiquette with HerWILL
Session 3	Unlearning Gender Bias through Storytelling
Session 4	Media Literacy: Tackling Misinformation & Cyber Bullying
Session 5	Management of Mental Breakdown as a Young Adult
Session 6	Grow with Google: Make Better Decisions with Analytics
Session 7	Certificate Giving & Closing Session

Out of the 14 students the top 3 were given special certification due to their outstanding performance. The decision was made by looking at their participation in the sessions, interaction

during the session and spreading word of mouth to their peers through social media such as LinkedIn, Instagram, Facebook.

Figure: HerWILL Top 3 GE Envoy

3.3.1 Analysis of the GE Programme:

All the sessions had different topics that were focused to make the participants become advocates for gender equality. From my hands on experience, I learned:

- The program gave access to safe learning space for the participants where different social issues, problems, and stigmas were discussed. Not only to learn but to unlearn- because to become GE advocate one must have a bias free point of view. So, in a respectful manner the instructors conducted the sessions in a way everyone could speak their mind in a non-judgmental setting.
- It gave a boost to the student's extra- curricular activities. Although the students were young, they got the opportunity to explore and enhance their potential. This is a chance not many students in Bangladesh get, at least not in such an early stage of student life so it definitely gave an edge to them compared to other students.
- The participants got the opportunity to learn professionalism, especially the graduated students, all became an active LinkedIn user that they didn't consider before being involved in the program. From a very early stage in life, they got to learn how to showcase their co-curricular involvement in such a professional social platform.
- Students were familiarized with the concept of networking, where people share information and services to grow a relationship that benefits all the parties involved. This opened the door for them to get involved with HerWILL and their connections in future.
- One of the soft skills that all the students picked up during the program was leadership skill because the essence of the entire project was to make the students a "change maker" in their communities. As GE ambassadors they got the chance to learn something new and spread the knowledge from this program to their peers, friends, in their classroom like a leader.
- The individual assignments were designed in such a way that the students had to brainstorm together and share their learnings from the sessions with each other. Not only it made them more educated during the live sessions but also, they empathized with each other behind the scenes which enhanced the learning process.

At the end of this programme, through the interactive learning model it was able to provide the students with necessary skills, knowledge, and values to be a leader. It proved that the term 'born leader' is not necessarily true. One can master different skills over the time to guide their teams/ followers which this GE initiative substantiated. Lastly, all the participants were provided ample opportunity to share their opinion, agreement, disagreement, concerns at every session so it didn't feel like it was just one way communication but like a group where we all were unified on the basis of learning something new.

3.3.2 Analysis of the Students from the GE Programme:

I was present in all the sessions as a moderator, at times writing down important session learnings so not only I learned with the students but also, I got the opportunity to observe them, how they were responding and performing post event promotions. My insights are given down below:

- There were different categories of students- extroverted, introverted, and in between. However, those who eventually graduated had one thing in common: they were all willing to "Be the Change".
- The students knew that they come from a privileged background so they wanted to use that aspect to spread their learnings in other communities to create a positive ripple effect for future generations.
- Willingness to learn was a common aspect that unified the students. They were attentive and interactive, those who hesitated to speak up performed even better in their individual assignments where they had to make a video presentation about what they learned in the session.

[YouTube link of students sharing their experience of GE: Click Here]

To summarize my observation the students and their attributes enhanced the program accomplishment. With their curious and bright mind state they jumped right into the program from day 1 to get the most out of it. The students who actively participated were all visionary and the

program gave them the knowledge they needed to possess in order to inspire their community, thus they portrayed leadership aspects.

3.3.3 Analysis of the Instructors from the GE Programme:

During the programme duration I was present at every session so I myself got to learn with the students and participants. Due to this I am giving my qualitative review of the instructors below:

Speaker 1: Farhana Hasan

She is the CEO and founder of HerWILL. On day 1 she gave the opening speech, explained how this whole program is dedicated to the youths. Her speech was really inspiring and had an instant motivational effect on everybody present. She made the session environment so welcoming that the students willingly started to express what their expectations were from these sessions, and shared their concerns. Farhana addressed each case with great care, confidently answering all queries one by one. She is a visionary with a keen interest in establishing a world that has achieved generation equality.

Speaker 2: Mitul Mahmud

She is the co- founder of "Swayong" that works towards dissolving gender biases inherent in the mind of Bangladeshi citizens. One interesting fact about this session was combining statistics into the storytelling method. She urged that in order to break free from the stereotype you have to constantly catch yourself whenever you find judgmental thoughts in your head because it all starts with you. An important takeaway was that whether it be man or woman, people of color, people of different ethnicity, nationality- stereotyping is unacceptable. This open-minded approach encouraged the audience to share their intimate stories, to show vulnerability despite them meeting for the first time.

Speaker 3: Sultana Ismet Jerin

She is an instructor at Washington state university and talked about media literacy: tracking misinformation and cyber bullying. By her speech I could tell that she was well prepared for her presentation. As the media is the main source of information, we should be more cautious and only intake information from credible sources was her main point. Because if not then it can create confusion in the society so youths have to practice this if they want to preserve a stable mental health. She urged youths to question the intention while reading/ watching any news, to be aware of our inherent biases because as an intelligent being it is our responsibility to be a smart consumer.

Speaker 4: Tawhida Shiropa

She is the CEO and Founder of "Moner Bondhu". She talked about 'Management of Mental Breakdown as a Young Adult due to Cyber- bullying and Harassment'. Her speech was very encouraging as she always pointed out how she can learn from the participants, appreciating their responses throughout. Shiropa spoke clearly which shows that she has the knowledge about cyber bullying. For today's generation almost everyone has their online presence but if not browsed carefully then it can harm us. She pointed out several preventive steps on how to prevent this, talked about how we can even unknowingly bully someone, and its effect on our mental health. Her calm and collected demeanor were well received by the students and in my opinion, they were the most interactive in this session.

To sum up, all the speakers and their teachings were relevant for today's youth. Instructor selection was ideal, especially in this virtual setup. Overall, they could all connect with the youth and make them feel comfortable so they could come out of their shells to share their point of view.

3.3.4 Analysis of the Project Management Practices:

This whole programme was successfully executed due to the professional project management team. The patterns I have observed are given below:

- In this programme there were three leads who simultaneously worked on communication, content writing and community outreach.
- The outline of the project, what the session learning will be (objectives), what impact it will bring to the students (scopes) were the initial steps where a lot of brainstorming took place.
- They were strict on following the project timeline. Because they promised Scholastica a timeline so they had to uphold that commitment by fulfilling certain milestones in each session.
- Resources such as manpower were thoroughly calculated. Project roster was created and shared to all the project members including the interns where they had to write down available time so that task allocation would become easier.
- In the live session backup presenters, moderators were always present as a part of contingency planning. This flexibility of project members helped a lot on many occasions.
- Project team members always had a change mindset so that with sudden changes of plans they were able to process the change quickly and act accordingly.
- Team meetings were held after every session to measure if they met the project deliverables. If not, then more planning would take place to achieve it in the next sessions.
- At the end there was a closure session where the learnings throughout this project was discussed. It helped everyone to see the holistic outcome of the project as well as submit project deliverables to the stakeholders.

All things considered; the project management department plays a vital role in the company's performance while they hold virtual projects for the time being. The project leads and internal members all understand the objectives of the company and try to add more initiatives similar to them. In this way team members can work on their desired subject proposals plus execute impactful projects such as GE (Generation Equality).
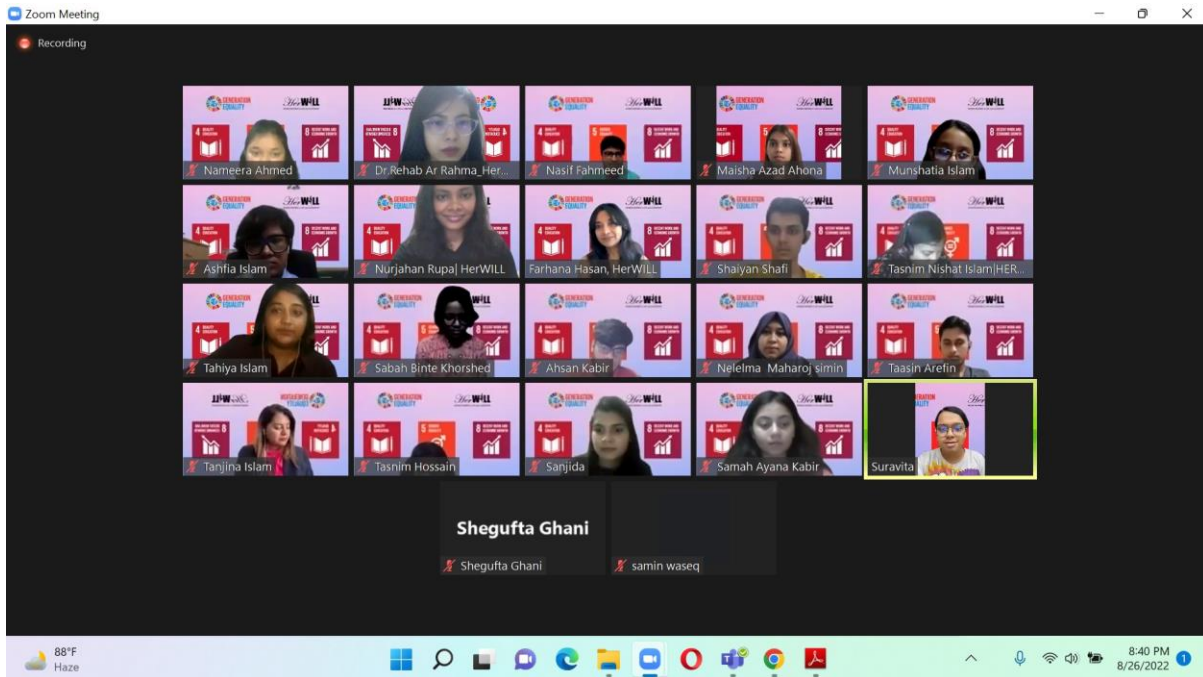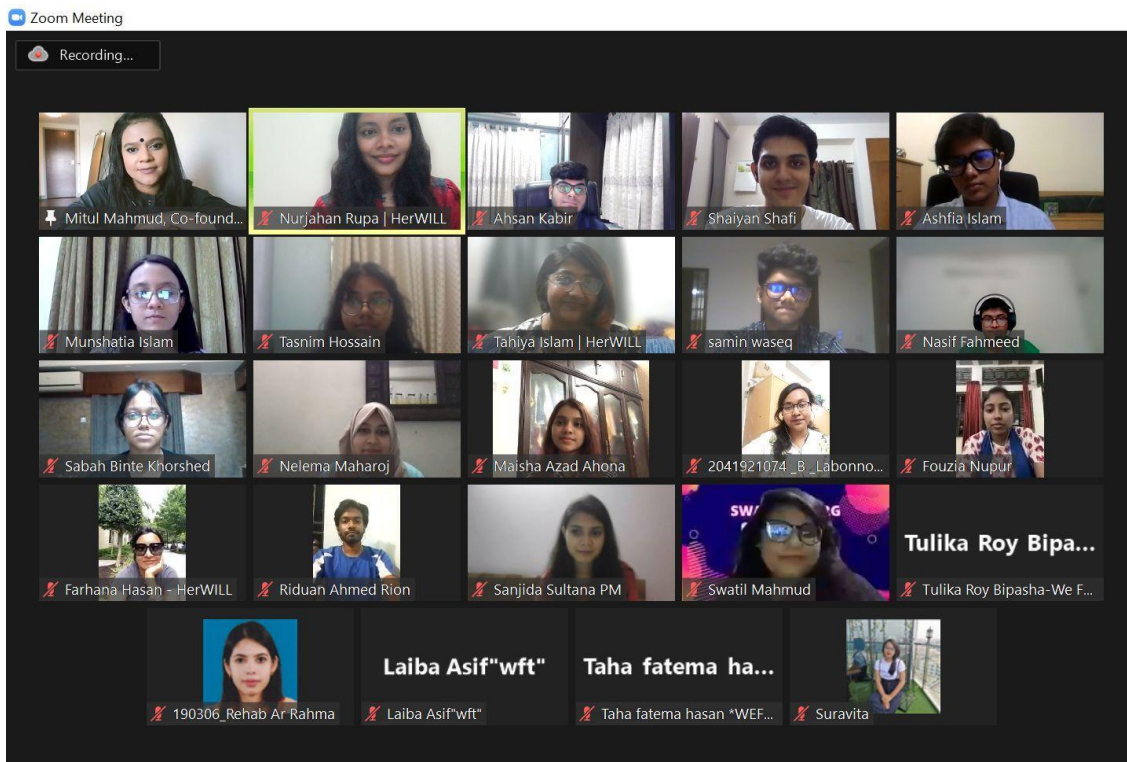
Figure: Closing ceremony session
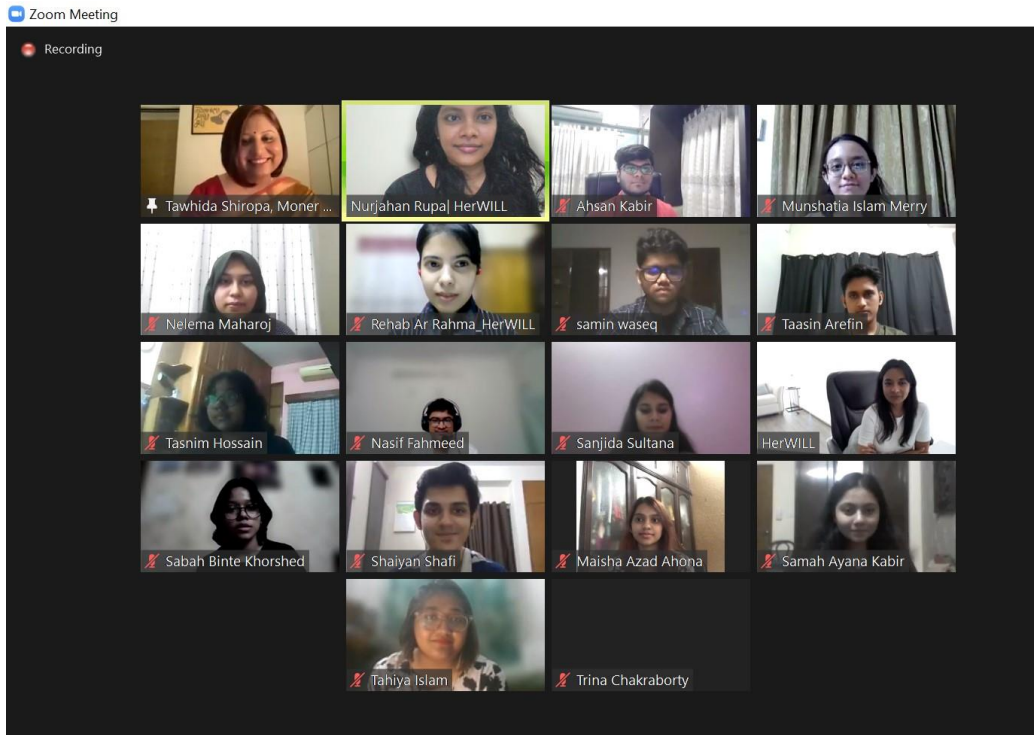

Figure: Session on unlearning gender bias

Figure: Session on tackling cyber bullying

3.4 Summary and Conclusion

In my opinion, the goal of this initiative is not only to teach the youth skills required by today's fast paced economy but also to make them aware and be part of relevant social issues such as gender equality, gender equity, empowerment of ambitious individuals (of any gender) so that they can become advocates themselves. Alongside, they were given expert advice according to their life wishes be it career, family or relationships, taught office etiquettes, learn social- life- people skills through interactive zoom sessions. After the completion of the course the students who graduated were provided with certificates that would add value to their CV, recommendation letters based on their participation and performance throughout the whole cycle to help them move further in better places where they can preach what they have learned.

To sum up, the GE program polished the students minds about what GE truly stands for. It helped them to contribute to their society, community, and lives by advocating for various social issues. After the completion of this it definitely made them more committed to bring a positive change in the society.

3.5 Recommendations

- The program was a pilot project- so although the project timeline, tasks, responsibilities of different moderators were designed in the project outline- it was still prone to last minute changes. This hindered the natural flow of the sessions and sometimes immediate tasks were expected to be executed by the moderators/ interns. So, in future I suggest making a solid project outline and make everyone involved with the project commit to it.

- Another thing to point out is that the lack of manpower- it was understated. To work with 18 students is not a task of 3 to 4 project members. The students were divided into groups, communicated in a group which is fine if the project was physically executed but in an online setting, I believe it didn't give the same effect. If the project continues to this year, then one-on-one interaction made by projects leads to individual students is a must. It showcases that we see the students' activities and appreciate what they are doing. In my opinion, it will also motivate them to perform better, at the same time the project lead can further clear out their concerns that the students couldn't talk about in the live sessions.

- Out of the 18 students- 14 of them actively participated in all the sessions, post activities, and submitted given tasks in time. That is a good number but why the other 4 students were not in tuned needs to be further investigated. The programme would have become more fruitful with the inclusion of those absent 4 students because other participants, even company members, instructors can also learn from them. This was an opportunity missed in my opinion which the PM team has to make a separate plan to address.

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