

Submitted By

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An internship report submitted to the BRAC Business School in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Bachelor of Business Administration

BRAC Business School

BRAC University

October, 2023

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Declaration

It is hereby declared that

1. The internship report submitted is my/our own original work while completing degree at BRAC University.
2. The report does not contain material previously published 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 have acknowledged all main sources of help.

Student's Full Name & Signature:

Faiza Kabir Shifa
ID 21364020

Supervisor's Full Name & Signature:

Dr. Larry Leung Sau Kei,
Assistant Professor,
BRAC University.

Letter of Transmittal

Dr. Larry Leung Sau Kei,
Assistant Professor,
BRAC University

66 Mohakhali, Dhaka-1212

Subject: Submission of internship report for course completion.

Dear Sir,

I am thrilled to have been given the opportunity to write and turn in a report on the company Sohopathi for the internship programme that I am now participating in.

In addition, the requirements of the BUS699 course will be satisfied by the report.

My internship report was entitled "**Identifying the challenges of families live in rural area while using internet**". I would like to express in a polite manner that I have finished the report for my internship. Working with this company provided both educational and satisfying opportunities.

I sincerely appreciate your assistance, cooperation, and advice while I prepared this report. I finished this internship report using my best efforts and diligent work. I would appreciate it if you would accept this report. I hope you were satisfied with my internship report. It would be my pleasure to answer any queries or issues you may have regarding these cases.

Sincerely yours,

Faiza Kabir Shifa
ID 21364020

BRAC Business School BRAC University

Date: October, 2023.

Non-Disclosure Agreement

Faiza kabir Shifa, a student at BRAC University, have created and entered into this agreement in order to prevent the unlawful disclosure of the company's confidential information. Each party pledges not to disclose or exchange any private information acquired during the internship.

Faiza Kabir Shifa
ID: 21364020
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Executive Summary

In today's modern world, the internet serves as a crucial gateway to education, communication, and opportunities. However, in rural regions such as Keraniganj, Dhaka, Bangladesh, underprivileged children encounter significant challenges in accessing and utilizing online resources effectively. This report presents the findings of a qualitative study aimed at understanding the obstacles faced by disadvantaged children and their families in navigating the digital landscape.

Through interviews with parents, this study reveals key challenges including safety concerns, connectivity issues, financial strain, and limited access to digital devices and educational content. These obstacles highlight the pressing need to bridge the digital gap and ensure equitable access to education for all children, regardless of their socioeconomic background.

Addressing these challenges requires a comprehensive approach involving infrastructure improvement, provision of digital devices, implementation of digital literacy programs, localization of educational content, stable electricity supply, financial support, teacher training, and community engagement. By prioritizing these initiatives, rural communities can empower their children with the necessary tools to succeed in the digital age.

Keywords: rural education, digital access, educational equity, digital literacy, online learning, socioeconomic barriers.

Table of Content

Declaration.....	i
Letter of Transmittal.....	ii
Non Disclosure Agreement.....	iii
Executive Summary.....	iv
Chapter 1: Overview of the internship	8
1.1 Student Information:	8
1.2 Internship Information:	8
1.2.1 Company Name:	8
1.2.2 Supervisor’s Information:	8
1.2.3 Job Scope- Job description/Duties/Responsibilities	9
1.3 Internship Outcomes:	9
1.3.1 Student's contribution to company	10
1.3.2 Benefits to the Student	10
1.3.3 Problems/Difficulties(faced during the internship period)	10
1.3.4 Recommendations (to the company on future internships)	11
Chapter 2: Organization Part	12
	17
2.2.3 Revenue Streams and Growth:	17
2.3 Management Practices	20
2.3.2 Human Resource Planning, Recruitment, and Selection:	22
2.3.3. Compensation System:	22
2.3.4 Training and Development System:	23

2.4 Marketing Practices at Sohopathi:	23
2.6 Operation Management and Information System Practices	25
2.7 Industry and Competitive Analysis	27
2.8 Summary and Conclusion:	28
Recommendation/ Implications: Nurturing Sohopathi's Growth	29
Chapter 3: Project Part	31
3.1 Introduction	31
3.1.1 Research Background	31
3.1.2 Objectives	32
3.1.3 Significance	32
3.2 Methodology	32
3.3 Challenges from the use of internet	33
Connectivity and Accessibility:	34
3.5 Recommendations:	42

Chapter 1: Overview of the internship

1.1 Student Information:

Name: Faiza Kabir Shifa

ID: 21364020

Program and Major/Specialization: MBA, Marketing

1.2 Internship Information:

Period: 3 months

1.2.1 Company Name:

Sohopathi

1.2.2 Supervisor's Information:

Name: Ehsanuzzaman Surid

Position: Vice President of Operations at [Sohopathi - সহপাঠী](#)

1.2.3 Job Scope- Job description/Duties/Responsibilities

As a Marketing Intern at Sohopathi, the role revolves around driving our edtech social learning company's growth through strategic marketing. Your tasks include:

- 1.Content Promotion:** Amplify educational content to engage and educate our diverse student base.
- 2.Social Media:** Manage platforms, craft compelling posts, and interact with learners to foster meaningful discussions.
- 3.Campaigns:** Assist in executing campaigns that highlight our edtech solutions' value and impact.
- 4.Market Insight:** Research audience preferences to tailor marketing strategies effectively.
- 5.Data Insights:** Use analytics to optimize marketing approaches based on user behavior.

Duties and Responsibilities:

- **Audience-Centric Marketing:** Craft content that educates and captivates learners.
- **Social Engagement:** Create posts that spark interest and encourage conversations.
- **Effective Campaigns:** Execute strategies that communicate the benefits of our solutions.
- **Informed Decisions:** Use data to refine strategies and ensure optimal impact.

1.3 Internship Outcomes:

Throughout my time as an intern at Sohopathi, I actively engaged in initiatives aimed at improving the education landscape in Bangladesh. Collaborating closely with the team, I played a role in

developing content that was not only informative but also engaging for learners. Moreover, my involvement in research projects contributed valuable insights that informed the company's strategic decisions. By lending my perspective and expertise, I contributed to Sohopathi's mission of providing high-quality education to students across the nation.

1.3.1 Student's contribution to company

During the internship at Sohopathi, I actively participated in various initiatives that aimed to enhance the educational landscape in Bangladesh. I collaborated with the team on content development, contributing insights and ideas that helped create engaging and informative learning materials. Additionally, I assisted in conducting research on educational trends and technologies, providing valuable data that supported the company's strategic decisions. Through my contributions, I played a role in advancing Sohopathi's mission to provide quality education to students across the country.

1.3.2 Benefits to the Student

My internship at Sohopathi was an enriching experience that provided me with hands-on exposure to the dynamic field of Edtech in Bangladesh. I gained insights into content creation, market analysis, and the challenges faced in delivering online education to diverse audiences. This experience broadened my understanding of the intersection between technology and education, equipping me with valuable skills that will be beneficial for my future career endeavors.

1.3.3 Problems/Difficulties(faced during the internship period)

While the internship was immensely rewarding, there were some challenges that I encountered. Adapting to remote work and online collaboration presented initial difficulties in communication and coordination. As a learner, I also faced a learning curve in understanding the intricacies of the

edtech landscape, as well as grappling with the occasional technical glitches that can arise in online platforms. However, with the support of the team, I was able to overcome these challenges and turn them into opportunities for growth.

1.3.4 Recommendations (to the company on future internships)

As Sohopathi continues to engage with interns, there are a few recommendations that could enhance the internship experience further. Providing a structured orientation to new interns could help them acclimate to the company culture and tools more quickly. Additionally, periodic check-ins and feedback sessions would facilitate better communication and mutual understanding. Incorporating more opportunities for cross-functional collaboration could expose interns to different aspects of the company's operations, leading to a more holistic learning experience. Finally, a designated mentorship program could provide interns with personalized guidance, fostering their growth within the organization.

These internship outcomes demonstrate the valuable contributions made by interns to Sohopathi while also shedding light on the benefits reaped by the interns themselves. The challenges faced during the internship period highlight the importance of adaptability and resilience in a dynamic work environment, and the recommendations provided aim to further enhance the internship experience for future students.

Chapter 2: Organization Part

2.1.1 Introduction

Sohopathi is a social learning app that helps teachers create “learning groups”, a place where students can learn from teachers and peers alike. The core idea is to create a classroom like environment where students can act as co-teachers, guided by a principal teacher. Built around the group learning concept, the app facilitates communication not just between teacher and student, but also among students. As a result, students have a richer, more rewarding and more effective learning experience.

Inside the app, the students can join any learning group from a recommended list of groups. Once enrolled, they get access to high quality learning materials (videos and notes) from the teacher. They can also help each other by uploading their own notes and videos.

To ensure the quality of the contents, a peer review system is implemented. The contents of any subject/topic are reviewed by other teachers in the app, having the same subject expertise.

2.1.2 Early Conception and Ideation

Officially launched in 2019, Sohopathi operates an online education platform where students have the opportunity to enroll in live courses offered by mentors for a fee. Additionally, the platform features a free questions and answers section, open for anyone to seek and provide answers. The inception of Sohopathi traces back to a group of BUET and MIST students who founded it. Sohopathi's origins took an unexpected turn when the team participated in the mBillionth app competition around 2017. Their winning entry was an app designed to aid in finding missing persons. Although initially celebrated, the excitement was short-lived as the app garnered zero users post-launch. This realization prompted a shift in focus towards education.

The founders recognized the disparity in educational opportunities between Dhaka and rural/semi-urban areas. They observed that students in regions outside Dhaka often lacked access to skilled teachers, particularly in subjects like physics and chemistry. This gap led to a realization of unmet demand in the education market. While various e-learning platforms and free YouTube video lessons existed, personalized education remained a rarity in the digital realm. The skewed student-teacher ratio in Bangladesh further exacerbated the challenge of individualized attention. This situation prompted the founders to reflect on their own experiences, particularly witnessing capable peers assisting fellow students at BUET. This insight fueled their vision of bridging the teacher shortage by digitally connecting educators and learners. Sohopathi's concept evolved around two key principles: facilitating direct access to expert teachers and promoting peer-to-peer learning.

Sohopathi's journey began with the establishment of a simple Q&A platform, designed to cater to students' queries. The founders aimed to create a space where students from all corners of Bangladesh could receive direct support from both qualified teachers and their peers. This transition marked a pivotal moment for the team, as they pivoted away from their initial missing

persons-focused project. Given their existing reputation as popular educators within various coaching centers, the founders anticipated an easier path to attracting students, rapidly gaining popularity, and generating revenue through advertising.

2.1.3 The pivot into new Business Model

The Co-founders initiated the endeavor in 2017 with the launch of a Q&A platform, initially in the form of a Facebook page and group. The aspiration was to infuse a social dimension into the landscape of online education, envisioning a platform where contributions from diverse participants would foster a vibrant learning environment. This ethos was embodied by students hailing from prestigious universities who formed a team to respond to questions posed on the platform.

Amidst an encouraging response from the student community, the initiative's popularity surged, with a growing influx of questions presenting an escalating challenge to address. A voluntary team of 60 individuals was assembled to tackle the mounting queries, reflecting the substantial need for a platform catering to the myriad challenges faced by students. This phase of growth raised awareness about Sohopathi, resulting in its current status with over 200,000 connected students across various pages and groups.

The evolutionary trajectory next led to the transformation of the initiative into a website, serving as a centralized hub for students to pose questions and obtain answers. This transition spanned two years and culminated in a repository of approximately 15,000 questions, serving students from every corner of the country. However, the initial two years operated without a solid business model or salaried personnel. Approximately eighteen months into the journey, a realization dawned that a new model was requisite for the initiative's sustainability.

This pivotal juncture prompted the exploration of diverse strategies for survival. Experimentation included conducting workshops in educational institutions, effectively gauging students' willingness to pay for learning experiences. The success of a paid programming workshop at DU for a hundred students cemented the notion that the market indeed sought value through financial investment.

This revelation prompted a series of model adaptations, culminating in the introduction of a premium tier for personalized assistance in the midst of 2019. This innovation allowed students to receive tailored support for a fee, while the Q&A platform continued to function as an open resource. This personalized mentorship service enabled individual or small group learning sessions led by mentors encompassing students from DU or BUET to proficient peers.

Initially underpinned by a commission-based framework, the model subsequently evolved to accommodate changing dynamics. The introduction of this premium service was met with enthusiastic responses, marking a notable milestone with the first enrolled student hailing from outside Dhaka. While this approach generated revenue, the volume remained insufficient for sustainable operations.

2.2 Overview of the company

Sohopathi stands as a pioneering force in the realm of education, leading the charge in reshaping the learning landscape in Bangladesh. Addressing a glaring disparity in educational opportunities, Sohopathi introduces an innovative approach to learning - peer-to-peer education - where individuals simultaneously learn and teach, fostering a cycle of knowledge sharing and growth.

In Bangladesh, a stark reality persists: out of every 100 high school students, a mere 20 progress to college, and from there, only 7 secure university placements. A significant factor contributing

to this challenge is the overwhelming 1:60 teacher-student ratio prevalent in schools, coupled with the concentration of 80% of proficient teachers in urban areas.

This is where the transformative power of Sohopathi comes into play.

At its core, Sohopathi is a dynamic social learning platform, a sanctuary for learners and mentors alike. The platform defies geographical barriers, enabling students to engage with their ideal mentors from all corners of the nation. Through a user-friendly interface, mentors can seamlessly share a myriad of academic resources, cultivating a vibrant student community. Guided by an ingenious AI-based recommendation system, students are matched with personalized content and mentors that cater to their unique learning journey.

But Sohopathi's impact doesn't stop there. Going beyond free learning materials, students can enroll in tailor-made 1-1 sessions or access recorded sessions from mentors ideally suited to their needs. This is made possible by a meticulous content review process, upholding unwavering quality standards.

In essence, Sohopathi isn't just a platform; it's a revolutionary response to the dire shortage of educators. By creating a digital haven where learning knows no bounds, Sohopathi is redefining education in Bangladesh, ensuring that each student has the opportunity to thrive, guided by the best mentors the nation has to offer.

2.2.1 Current Reach and User Engagement:

Sohopathi has successfully cultivated a substantial user base, encompassing more than 200,000 active learners across their social media channels, including Facebook and YouTube, as well as their dedicated app. This community has engaged with the platform's learning content at least once, reflecting a promising level of traction. This endeavor has been amplified by the presence of 85

esteemed educators proficient in over 20 subjects, enhancing the educational diversity and quality for the learners.

2.2.2 Monetization Strategy:

The company employs a freemium model wherein 70% of the available content is accessible for free, while the remaining 30% is offered through paid subscriptions. The model has garnered tangible results, with a notable segment of the user base opting for the premium offerings. Currently, over 2,000 users maintain regular monthly subscriptions, generating consistent revenue for Sohopathi.

2.2.3 Revenue Streams and Growth:

The revenue streams primarily stem from the app's integrated paid courses, designed by teachers within their respective learning groups. These courses, priced between \$5 to \$40, cater to varying study levels and instructor expertise, offering users diverse options. Revenue statistics reflect a consistent growth trend, as evidenced by the revenue figures for the past months, with approximately 20% monthly growth in active app users.

2.2.4 Strategic Partnerships:

A significant milestone in the revenue trajectory is the strategic collaboration with Banglalink, a prominent telecom operator with a substantial customer base. This partnership involves integrating Sohopathi's offerings into the Banglalink app, thus tapping into a broader user segment and

expanding the platform's reach. This partnership, characterized by a 50% revenue share, marks an astute avenue for future revenue generation.

2.2.5 User Behavior and Conversion:

Sohopathi's growth is also substantiated by user behavior patterns. The company identifies a subset of "super-users," those who dedicate more than 60 minutes per week to the platform. Impressively, 85% of these engaged super-users transition into paid course subscribers. This robust conversion rate underscores the value proposition offered by Sohopathi's offerings.

2.2.6 Driving Factors and Unique Selling Points:

A profound understanding of user needs is evident in Sohopathi's strategic positioning. Users are drawn to the platform due to its distinctive offline classroom experience, facilitated by seamless interactions with educators and peers. Additionally, a sophisticated recommendation engine directs users to the most pertinent "learning groups," enhancing the personalized learning experience.

Sohopathi's continuous evolution, resonating with the diverse needs of learners, showcases its commitment to innovative educational approaches while demonstrating a proactive effort to achieve sustainable growth and financial viability.

2.2.7 Company operation prior investment

An equity investment was secured by Sohopathi from Tiger IT Foundation, marking a significant step in their journey. The decision to shift to full-time engagement soon followed, leading to the acquisition of an office space and the integration of additional team members, primarily composed of students, into the company's payroll structure. Despite an enthusiastic start, the subsequent year

posed substantial challenges. Unaware of the time investment processes typically entail, the team underwent a transitional phase. One key member left their job in January 2020 to dedicate themselves fully to Sohopathi, and this commitment necessitated an additional six-month period for all the necessary arrangements to be in place. This interval, while demanding, emerged as a crucible for the company, fostering both intense challenges and remarkable productivity. Although revenue streams were in existence, they remained insufficient to meet the burgeoning demands of the endeavor.

However, this adversity catalyzed a transformative phase for Sohopathi. Focused introspection into their product and exploration of avenues for expansion became the focal point. A strategic blend of cost-cutting measures, personal investments, and revenue generation strategies were employed to navigate through the exigent six-month span. Notably, this period of resourceful survival facilitated a maturation process for the company. Subsequent to these trials, an investment infusion materialized after the elapsed six months, coinciding with the company's establishment of a comprehensive roadmap for future growth.

2.2.8 Company Mode Post Investment

In September 2020, the company's operational structure was not yet well-defined. Subsequent efforts, however, led to the establishment of a robust operational framework characterized by clear role assignments.

On the product front, significant strides were taken, resulting in the full automation of the platform. This evolution enables students to seamlessly enroll in courses, make online payments, and initiate their studies without necessitating direct engagement with the company. Likewise, the process of

remunerating mentors underwent automation, with their earnings being directly channeled to their bank accounts, eliminating the need for manual intervention.

An initial version of the company's app has been successfully launched, laying the foundation for forthcoming developmental stages. The company's trajectory for the coming years is marked by a strategic focus on integrating social elements into the app, in line with earlier discussions.

Turning to the sales facet, the company has crafted an efficient pipeline for the identification, acquisition, and integration of customers. Utilizing an array of communication mediums such as SMS and calls, alongside various acquisition activities, has yielded favorable results. The enlistment of over a thousand campus ambassadors, predominantly composed of school and college students, further bolsters the marketing and sales efforts. This network of ambassadors is incentivized to bring in leads, aligning their interests with the company's growth.

Progress on the content front is evident, particularly in enhancing the content submission process. The platform's inclusive nature allows mentors, students, and the community at large to contribute content. The implementation of dedicated personnel for tasks like illustration and video editing has substantially organized the content library, addressing a prior lack of structure.

Financial success mirrors the company's developmental strides, with revenue surging nearly fivefold since the year 2020. This growth trajectory underscores the efficacy of the company's multifaceted strategy and its responsiveness to evolving market demands.

2.3 Management Practices

2.3.1 The Company Hierarchy

At Sohopathi, the leadership approach is emblematic of inclusivity and active employee involvement. The trio comprising the CEO, CTO, and COO has established a participatory leadership style that prioritizes the valuable input of the team.

The CEO, responsible for administrative oversight, maintains an engaging and receptive stance. While overseeing HR and Admin functions, the CEO doesn't merely dictate decisions; instead, they foster an environment of collaboration. Open to the insights and suggestions of team members, this leader ensures that decisions are made collectively, drawing on the wealth of perspectives within the organization.

In the realm of technology and product development, the CTO takes on the role of a collaborative innovator. Contrary to the conventional notion of a solitary technical expert, the CTO actively solicits and integrates employee suggestions into technological advancements. This approach transforms the tech domain into a collective venture, where every team member contributes to shaping the technological landscape.

The COO, tasked with orchestrating course and program launches, epitomizes the fusion of strategic thinking and collective input. Instead of a top-down strategy imposition, the COO engages the entire team in the decision-making process. Each member's insights are acknowledged, forming a mosaic of ideas that enriches the launch strategies.

This collaborative leadership style fosters an environment in which employee suggestions are not just acknowledged, but actively incorporated into the decision-making framework. It stands as a departure from conventional top-down approaches, and instead, highlights a culture of open communication and collective empowerment. In this context, Sohopathi flourishes, as its leadership not only steers the ship but also empowers the crew.

2.3.2 Human Resource Planning, Recruitment, and Selection:

At Sohopathi, human resource planning aligns meticulously with organizational objectives. The recruitment process is a well-choreographed symphony involving high management and top subject matter experts. The practicality is evident - instructors aren't just chosen based on qualifications; they're assessed through actual class sessions. This immersive approach ensures that the candidates' teaching abilities resonate with the platform's essence.

For roles outside of the teaching domain, such as developers, a rigorous coding interview followed by a live challenge is implemented. Similarly, UX and UI engineers undergo a comprehensive evaluation process. This meticulous selection procedure guarantees that those joining the team embody the skills and mindset that resonate with Sohopathi's dynamic nature.

2.3.3. Compensation System:

The compensation system at Sohopathi mirrors its hierarchical structure. Course instructors, who are the domain experts, occupy the apex of the hierarchy. Product managers overseeing programs stand as another tier, followed by part-time instructors responsible for live classes. This tiered structure signifies the value placed on expertise and responsibility.

Compensation, naturally, reflects this hierarchy. Each role's remuneration corresponds to its place in the organizational structure. This system inherently recognizes and rewards the specialized skills each tier brings to the table. It ensures equitable pay and acknowledges the distinct contributions of each team member.

2.3.4 Training and Development System:

Sohopathi's training and development system is an emblem of continuous growth. Course instructors, the bedrock of educational excellence, undergo a multifaceted process. Subject matter experts review course materials to ensure academic precision. Product managers, orchestrators of program success, receive targeted training to elevate their management skills. For part-time instructors, specialized training enhances their teaching prowess.

This holistic approach doesn't merely end at onboarding. Regular skill-enhancement initiatives are woven into the fabric of the organization. Webinars, workshops, and peer-to-peer interactions foster a culture of ongoing learning. This system not only amplifies employee potential but also contributes to the dynamism of Sohopathi's offerings.

2.4 Marketing Practices at Sohopathi:

1. Marketing Strategy: At Sohopathi, the marketing strategy is a harmonious blend of video content across platforms, Google Ads, and SEO optimization. This multi-faceted approach ensures broad visibility and engagement. Captivating videos on Facebook and other platforms draw learners into the educational universe. Google Ads fine-tune the visibility for those actively seeking such solutions. Meanwhile, SEO optimization propels the platform towards the top of relevant searches.

2. Target Audience: Sohopathi has its sights set on HSC and SSC students in Bangladesh. The focus is razor-sharp, homing in on those at pivotal junctures of their academic journey. These students form the nucleus of the platform's offerings, tailoring solutions to their unique requirements.

3. Marketing Channels: Sohopathi's innovative approach extends to marketing channels. The "Sohopathi Plus" feature, unlocking live classes, transforms learning into a gamified experience. This engagement-focused approach resonates with the audience, driving organic expansion. Within the app, the integration of premium features seamlessly blends with the learning experience.

4. Product Enhancement: Sohopathi's product design marries functionality with user engagement. Facebook-like feeds and groups foster dynamic teacher-student interaction. The in-app tagging feature enhances personalization, while the introduction of paid groups underscores a collaborative learning ecosystem.

5. Branding Activities: The brand ethos extends to "Your Study Guide," encapsulating the personalized touch. The universally relatable "S" logo effortlessly bridges generational gaps, inviting the younger audience into a space of learning. Human-centered design materials bolster the emotional connection, aligning the brand with the users' aspirations.

6. Advertising and Promotion: Facebook Ads constitute a substantial component of the advertising strategy. The dynamic nature of the platform aligns well with Facebook's interactive environment, drawing users into the learning journey. The platform's vibrancy finds resonance in this strategic channel.

7. Marketing Gaps: While Sohopathi's marketing is comprehensive, there's room for expansion into other social media avenues. Exploring platforms beyond Facebook could further amplify the platform's reach. Additionally, synergizing social media efforts with influencer collaborations might provide an organic avenue for enhanced engagement.

Sohopathi's marketing practices are a dynamic blend of strategic innovation and user-centricity. By fostering an engaging brand persona, aligning marketing channels with user preferences, and identifying areas for further expansion, the platform ensures its resonance within the educational landscape.

2.6 Operation Management and Information System Practices

Operational management and information systems are critical pillars that propel Sohopathi's efficiency and effectiveness in delivering top-notch education. These practices lay the foundation for seamless operations, enabling the company to navigate the complexities of the edtech landscape.

Operational Management:

At Sohopathi, operational management is the art of orchestrating various elements to deliver a cohesive educational experience. From content creation and curation to mentor-student interactions, every facet is meticulously planned and executed. This ensures that the learning journey remains consistent, engaging, and beneficial for all parties involved.

Furthermore, operational management extends to optimizing resource allocation. The distribution of mentors, content, and technical support is streamlined to cater to diverse learning needs. This

approach guarantees that students receive the right guidance at the right time, enhancing their overall learning outcomes.

Information System Practices:

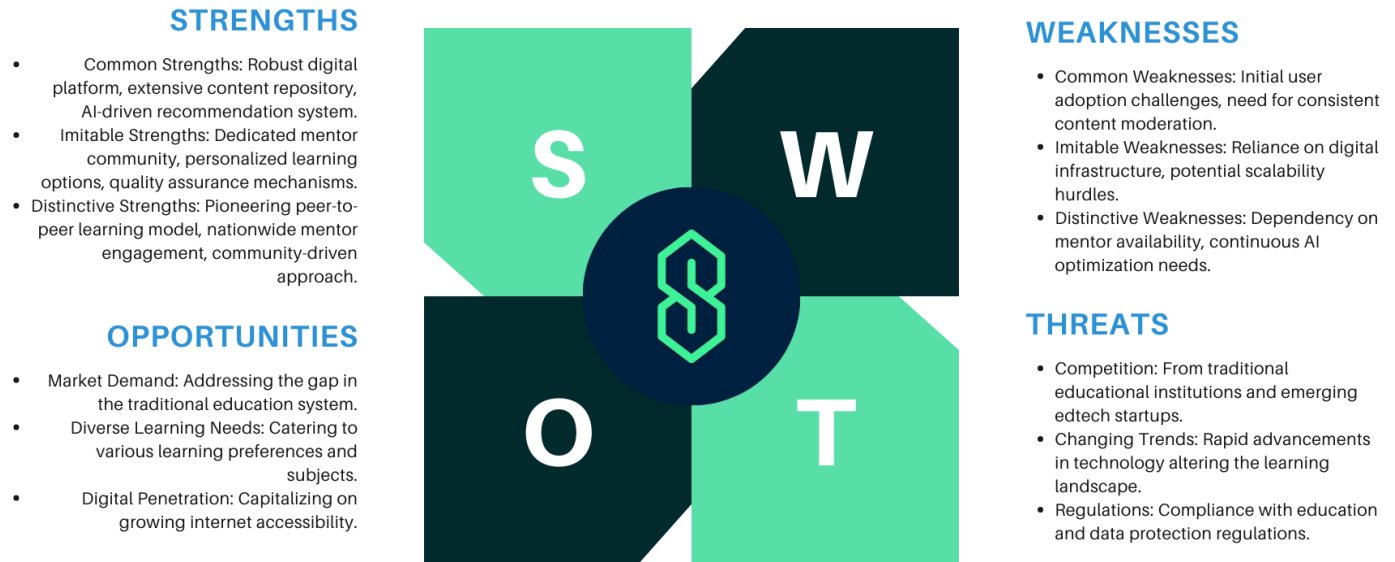
Sohopathi's information system practices form the backbone of its operations. A robust digital infrastructure facilitates the seamless flow of data, enabling real-time interaction between mentors and students. This system not only supports personalized learning recommendations but also aids in maintaining content quality and monitoring user engagement.

Moreover, Sohopathi's information system practices extend to data analysis. Insights garnered from user behavior and content performance guide decision-making processes. This data-driven approach empowers the company to continually refine its strategies, ensuring that learners receive the most relevant and impactful educational content.

In essence, operational management and information system practices are integral to Sohopathi's commitment to delivering quality education. By harmonizing various elements and harnessing the power of data, the company maintains operational excellence and consistently evolves to meet the ever-changing demands of the education landscape.

2.7 Industry and Competitive Analysis

SWOT Analysis



Porter's Five Forces

Bargaining Power of Suppliers: Moderate - Sohopathi collaborates with mentors, whose influence and knowledge enrich the platform.

Bargaining Power of Customers: High - With numerous learning alternatives, students have choices, putting pressure on Sohopathi to provide value.

Threat of New Entrants: Moderate - The tech-driven nature requires significant investment and expertise, acting as a barrier.

Threat of Substitutes: Moderate - Traditional education methods and other online learning platforms are potential substitutes.

Competitive Rivalry: High - The education sector witnesses intense competition from both traditional institutions and emerging edtech companies.

Identifying Competitive Advantages:

Common Strengths: These are attributes shared with other players in the market, like a strong digital presence and AI recommendations. These provide foundational competence.

Imitable Strengths: These strengths, such as personalized learning options, can be replicated by competitors. While valuable, they may not be the sole source of differentiation.

Distinctive Strengths: These unique features set Sohopathi apart, including the innovative peer-to-peer model and community-driven approach. These form the core of the company's competitive advantage.

By leveraging common and imitable strengths, Sohopathi ensures competence while focusing on distinctiveness to secure a strong competitive position. Its pioneering approach and commitment to delivering quality education foster a unique place in the edtech landscape.

2.8 Summary and Conclusion:

Advancing Education through Sohopathi's Innovations

In summary, Sohopathi stands out as a pioneering force in the education sector, introducing peer-to-peer learning in Bangladesh. The company's creative approach, backed by a robust digital platform and AI-driven recommendations, offers a unique solution to student challenges. Through content-sharing, personalized sessions, and a dynamic mentor community, Sohopathi is reshaping how education is perceived. As a marketing intern, I've had the privilege of witnessing the

company's unwavering commitment to bridging educational gaps and creating meaningful learning experiences.

In conclusion, Sohopathi's vision encompasses both innovative technology and a deep commitment to quality education. The company serves as a beacon of hope for students navigating traditional constraints. My role as a marketing intern has allowed me to contribute to spreading Sohopathi's message, reaching students far and wide. This experience has enriched my skill set and reaffirmed my belief in education's transformative power. Sohopathi's journey continues to inspire, driven by a passion for learning and a determination to steer education toward a brighter future.

Recommendation/ Implications: Nurturing Sohopathi's Growth

Guided by my experience as a marketing intern, I offer the following recommendations and implications to foster Sohopathi's growth:

Community Engagement: Utilize social media to foster a strong sense of community among learners and mentors. Regular engagement, interactive sessions, and student success stories can cultivate a supportive learning environment.

Influencer Collaborations: Collaborate with influential figures in the education and tech sectors. Their endorsement and involvement can significantly enhance Sohopathi's credibility and reach.

Diverse Content: Broaden the spectrum of learning content to encompass non-traditional subjects and skill sets. This can attract a wider audience and cater to diverse learning needs.

Localized Marketing: Tailor marketing strategies to different regions of Bangladesh, considering cultural nuances and specific educational demands.

Data-Driven Insights: Leverage data analysis to gain insights into user preferences and behaviors, fine-tuning marketing strategies for maximum impact.

Student Stories: Showcase success stories of students who have benefited from Sohopathi's platform. These narratives can resonate with potential users and illustrate real-world impact.

Collaborative Ventures: Partner with educational institutions to integrate Sohopathi's resources into formal education settings, amplifying its influence and reach.

Chapter 3: Project Part

3.1 Introduction

In today's rapidly advancing world, the internet serves as a gateway to knowledge, communication, and opportunities. However, in rural regions, particularly among underprivileged communities, the hurdles in accessing and utilizing the internet can substantially hinder children's growth and prospects. This chapter presents a comprehensive report that delves into the identification of obstacles confronted by disadvantaged children in rural Keraniganj when navigating the internet. The insights for this report were gathered through surveys conducted by Sohopathi, during which parents were engaged in conversations to gain insights into their viewpoints.

3.1.1 Research Background

Extensive research underscores the existence of a "digital divide" between urban and rural locales. Rural areas often grapple with limited internet access due to infrastructural and economic limitations. Furthermore, disadvantaged children encounter heightened challenges in effectively harnessing the internet's potential. Existing literature underscores the urgency of addressing these challenges to ensure equitable opportunities for all young individuals.

3.1.2 Objectives

This study aimed to:

- Gain insight into the daily routines of underprivileged children in rural Keraniganj, Dhaka, Bangladesh in terms of accessing and using the internet.
- Identify the obstacles faced by these children and their families in utilizing the internet.
- Evaluate the repercussions of these challenges on the children's growth and prospects.

3.1.3 Significance

This study holds the potential to illuminate the barriers obstructing underprivileged children's effective internet usage in rural areas. By pinpointing these challenges, appropriate measures can be devised to bridge the digital gap and offer equal prospects for education and personal development.

3.2 Methodology

Participant Selection and Recruitment:

The qualitative study was carried out in Keraniganj, Dhaka, Bangladesh, focusing on understanding the experiences of parents of school-going children who utilize the internet for educational purposes. A purposive sampling method was employed to select 10 participants, ensuring a mix of existing and new customers of internet services in the region. Recruitment was conducted through local schools in Keraniganj, and all participants willingly volunteered to participate in the study without any financial incentives. This method aimed to capture diverse and in-depth perspectives.

Data Collection and Analysis:

The primary data collection method employed in this qualitative study was semi-structured interviews. These interviews were designed to delve into various aspects of participants' lives, particularly the challenges they encountered while using the internet to support their children's education. The interviews explored themes such as the frequency of internet use, their children's awareness of technology, their comfort levels with digital tools, and the perceived impact of these challenges on their children's educational progress. Thematic analysis was the chosen approach to analyze the interview data, involving the systematic identification of recurring themes, patterns, and experiences. The analysis process included data coding, theme development, and verification to enhance the rigor and trustworthiness of the findings.

The qualitative methodology applied in this study conducted in Keraniganj, Bangladesh, prioritized participant selection and recruitment for diverse and in-depth insights. Data collection through semi-structured interviews allowed for a nuanced exploration of the challenges faced by parents in rural areas when using the internet for their children's education. Thematic analysis was employed to uncover key themes and experiences, contributing to a richer understanding of the subject matter.

3.3 Challenges from the use of internet

Safety Concerns with Internet Usage:

Navigating the intricate and often unpredictable terrain of the digital landscape without adequate guidance exposes children to a myriad of potential risks. Safety concerns weigh heavily on the minds of parents, who grapple with the complexities of online security. *"Our knowledge about technology doesn't always equip us to effectively monitor our child's online activities. We're*

constantly apprehensive about them encountering inappropriate content” – shared by a conscious parent. These concerns are not merely theoretical; they are palpable and rooted in the real-world experiences of these families. One parent, expressing their worry with vulnerability stated, “Engaging with unfamiliar individuals in the virtual world while a powerful tool for learning, also presents potential hazards that we struggle to shield our children from.”

Connectivity and Accessibility:

In the remote and underserved corners of rural Keraniganj, the struggle with unreliable internet connectivity presents itself as a formidable barrier. Families residing in these regions grapple with the frustration of inconsistent and often sporadic internet connections. *“This is particularly concerning when it occurs during my child's online classes, impacting their ability to learn effectively; it has a tangible negative impact on their educational progress.”* This unpredictability translates into considerable exasperation for parents and children alike. A parent, voicing their experiences, shared a poignant sentiment, stating, *“Our internet service is a constant source of uncertainty. It can be incredibly frustrating. It often works just well enough but then, at the most inconvenient times, it abruptly fails us..”*

Challenges to their daily life activities :

Financial Strain of Data Costs:

The burden of high data costs places significant financial strain on families with limited resources in Keraniganj. It transcends a mere issue of affordability; it delves into the realm of difficult choices concerning daily necessities. Balancing a tight budget becomes an intricate juggling act for these families. One parent expressed by saying, *“Managing our finances, particularly when it comes to data expenses for our child's education, is an ongoing challenge. It often forces us into a tough position and hard for us”*. While taking a dive to the interview, another parent described

“where we must make choices between allocating our limited resources to purchasing data or ensuring we have enough to cover essential needs like groceries. It's a decision we're compelled to make far more frequently than we'd like, and it adds an extra layer of stress to our daily lives.”

Scarce Access to Digital Devices:

In Keraniganj, the absence of personal devices like smartphones and computers poses a significant hindrance to the educational prospects of children. This challenge transcends mere access; it embodies the missed opportunities that could otherwise enrich their learning experiences. One concerned parent said *“The absence of such devices places my child at a disadvantage, limiting their ability to explore and learn as their peers do”*. For these children, the lack of personal digital devices represents more than just a technological gap; it symbolizes a gateway to knowledge that remains frustratingly out of reach. A parent, deeply concerned about their child's educational opportunities shared, *“Observing their peers confidently utilize laptops and smartphones for their studies, my child often feels excluded. It's not solely about possessing the device itself”*.

Inadequate Technological Infrastructure:

The absence of robust technological infrastructure further compounds the existing challenges, creating a frustrating cycle of limitations. *“Even when our children manage to secure internet access, it often so slow. The frustration of waiting for pages to load, enduring buffering during online classes is really lagging our child behind”*. Slow and unreliable internet access doesn't merely inconvenience; it acts as a formidable barrier to accessing educational resources and engaging in meaningful online learning experiences. Parents and children alike grapple with this harsh reality daily. A parent, reflected by explaining *“dealing with connectivity interruptions is a*

constant source of problem. These technical challenges not only hamper our child's ability to access educational content but also disrupt their focus during lessons”.

Inconsistent Internet Speed:

The daily struggle with inconsistent internet speeds creates a significant disruption in the lives of children attempting to learn. *The problems are not just about slow loading times; they are about disruptions in the flow of knowledge and the interruptions to their educational journey. It's disheartening.*” Shared by a parent. This challenge transcends mere inconvenience; it morphs into a persistent source of frustration. Imagine trying to concentrate on learning when the digital world constantly falters. An interviewee, empathizing with their child's struggles by stating *“For my child, staying engaged in online learning is a genuine challenge when they are constantly contending with lagging internet connections”.*

Limited Availability of Educational Content:

Even with internet access, the scarcity of relevant and high-quality educational content severely restricts children's learning opportunities. It's not merely about the quantity of content available; it's about equitable access to knowledge that matches their specific needs and grade levels. A parent conveyed their experience with a sense of frustration, saying, *“The struggle to discover appropriate online resources that align with my child's grade level often feels like searching for a needle in a haystack. We genuinely need more content that is tailored to our specific educational requirements. It's disheartening to see the potential of the internet, yet not have enough educational materials to harness that potential effectively.”*

Risk of Exposure to Inappropriate Content:

The absence of parental controls and guidance exposes young learners to the perils of unsuitable online content. Shielding children from harm becomes an ongoing and sometimes overwhelming challenge. *The digital landscape is vast, and there are numerous avenues where children can inadvertently stumble upon content that can have a lasting impact on their impressionable minds. We strive to protect them, but it's a constant battle.* A parent articulated their concern, explaining, *"It's a perpetual worry that my child may inadvertently come across content that is not suitable for their age or educational needs. While we do our utmost to supervise and protect them, it remains an arduous task".*

Deficiency in Digital Literacy:

The absence of digital literacy skills among these children constitutes a significant hurdle. It's not just about understanding technology; it represents a lack of empowerment to navigate the digital world effectively. For parents, it's a poignant acknowledgment of the challenges they face in guiding their children through the complexities of the online realm. A parent, candidly admitting their struggle, shared, *"Navigating the digital landscape can be utterly bewildering. I find myself unable to effectively guide my child through the intricacies of online studies. This not only affects their academic confidence but also leaves them feeling uncertain about how to utilize the internet for learning."*

Lack of Support for Online Learning Platforms:

Relying on online learning platforms for education demands consistent support. Unfortunately, the absence of robust support systems leaves both children and parents feeling helpless when confronted with technical issues. *"It's a vexing experience that not only adds stress but also*

hampers their educational journey. We need reliable support systems that can troubleshoot technical problems promptly” said one parent. It's not merely an inconvenience; it's a frustration that can hinder educational progress. An interviewee expressed their exasperation, saying, "When my child encounters issues with online learning, it feels as if we're marooned on a deserted island without any assistance.

By prioritizing these challenges based on their significance they are,

Inadequate Infrastructure:

Weak infrastructure is the most critical hurdle, affecting the entire process of E-learning. This encompasses unreliable internet connections and erratic power supply. In many rural areas, internet access is scarce, slow, or unstable. Frequent power interruptions disrupt online classes, making it difficult for students to access educational materials, engage in real-time lessons, or submit assignments.

Device Accessibility Constraints:

Gaining access to devices like smartphones, laptops, or computers presents a pressing issue. Many rural households lack these essential tools for online learning. Students, particularly those from low-income families, may have to share a single device among multiple family members, rendering it challenging to engage effectively in E-learning activities.

Digital Inexperience:

Digital illiteracy is a significant barrier. For many students and their families, using technology is a novel experience. Navigating E-learning platforms, installing applications, troubleshooting technical issues, and understanding how to use digital tools can be bewildering. Overcoming this barrier underscores the necessity for digital literacy training and support.

Language Impediments:

Language poses a critical challenge for rural students. E-learning materials are often presented in English, whereas students' primary language is often Bengali or their local dialect. This language barrier can impede comprehension, engagement, and the overall effectiveness of online learning. Accessible content in native languages is imperative.

Electrical Shortages and Charging Dilemmas:

Frequent power outages and limited access to reliable electricity sources disrupt online learning. Students grapple with keeping their devices charged, which impacts their ability to attend virtual classes and complete assignments. Ensuring a consistent electricity supply and access to charging facilities is paramount.

Financial Limitations:

Financial constraints are widespread in rural areas. Many families are unable to afford data packages, educational materials, or internet services required for online learning. This financial burden restricts students' participation and access to quality E-learning resources. It is imperative to make online education more affordable and accessible.

Absence of Teacher Support:

Online learning often lacks the personal interaction and teacher support found in traditional classrooms. Students may feel isolated and frustrated by the absence of immediate teacher assistance. The inability to ask questions, seek clarification, or engage in discussions can impede their learning experience.

Social and Cultural Norms:

Social and cultural norms can present a significant obstacle to the adoption of E-learning. In some rural communities, there is a preference for traditional education over online methods. Families

and communities may resist digital education, believing that traditional schooling is more effective. Overcoming these norms requires community education and awareness campaigns.

Addressing these multifaceted challenges in rural areas of Bangladesh requires a comprehensive approach involving government support, infrastructure development, community engagement, and the adaptation of educational institutions. To effectively prioritize and mitigate these issues, a strategy should encompass the following:

- ❖ Infrastructure Improvement: Invest in expanding and strengthening internet connectivity and power supply in rural areas.
- ❖ Device Provision: Facilitate affordable access to devices, such as low-cost laptops or tablets.
- ❖ Digital Literacy Programs: Implement training initiatives to improve digital literacy among students and their families.
- ❖ Language Localization: Develop and provide educational content in native languages.
- ❖ Stable Electricity Supply: Address power supply issues to ensure a consistent learning environment.
- ❖ Financial Support: Offer subsidies or scholarships to make online education more affordable.
- ❖ Teacher Training: Equip educators to deliver effective online teaching and support students in the digital realm.
- ❖ Community Engagement: Raise awareness about the benefits of E-learning and challenge traditional education norms through community programs.

By taking a comprehensive and prioritized approach, these challenges can be addressed more effectively, ensuring that rural students in Keraniganj, Bangladesh have equitable access to quality education through E-learning platforms.

3.4 Summary and Conclusions:

The research took place in the rural area of Keraniganj, Dhaka, Bangladesh where we engaged with parents through carefully designed surveys. Our approach was rooted in ethical considerations, prioritizing the security of data and the anonymity of participants. I was committed to conducting the research with the utmost integrity.

To gather valuable insights, I conducted interviews with parents. These interviews were thoughtfully structured around five pivotal questions. These questions covered a wide spectrum of topics related to how their children interact with the internet, the challenges they face, and the subsequent effects on them.

Throughout this data collection process, our foremost concern was the well-being of the participants. We took the necessary steps to ensure their comfort and privacy. The interviews were scheduled at times that suited the participants' convenience. Additionally, we ensured that the participants had the freedom to withdraw from the study at any point if they wished to do so.

Our approach was guided by a deep sense of respect for the participants' rights and experiences. By upholding ethical principles and creating a comfortable environment, we aimed to gather authentic and meaningful insights that contribute to a comprehensive understanding of the challenges faced by disadvantaged children in the rural areas of Keraniganj, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

3.5 Recommendations:

Based on the revelations, the following recommendations emerge:

Infrastructure Enhancement: Endeavors should be channeled toward bolstering internet infrastructure in rural localities to ensure consistent connectivity.

Subsidized Data: Introducing initiatives for subsidized or cost-free data packages could alleviate the burden of exorbitant data expenses. This could be done by collaborating with Mobile operators such as Grameenphone, Banglalink and rest, they could be providing different sim cards that can only be availed by rural areas and they would have these free/subsidized packages.

Digital Literacy Initiatives: Initiatives aimed at educating parents and children about judicious and safe internet utilization can empower them to make well-informed decisions. We from Sohopathi have devised a plan to conduct such campaigns to provide awareness and encourage digital study in rural areas within Dhaka by next year, November.

Community Centers: Establishing centers within communities that provide internet access can offer children a space to tap into online resources.

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Questionnaire Consent Form

I [respondent's name] hereby give my permission to Faiza Kabir Shifa(researcher) who is a student of BRAC University to allow me to respond to a questionnaire and quote my responses to conduct research and gather data internship report. I understand that her work is for academic purposes in order to collect valuable insights and feedback.

My participation in this questionnaire is entirely voluntary and I have the right to refuse or withdraw my consent at any time without any negative consequences. Also all responses provided in the questionnaire must be kept strictly confidential and will only be accessed by myself, researcher academic supervisor and any authorized personnel involved in the evaluation process.

Also my personal information, including name and contact details, will maintain anonymity, and any identifying information will be removed or replaced with pseudonyms.

Also I understand the data collected from this questionnaire will be stored securely. Only authorized individuals involved in the research process will have access to the data. Upon completion of the report, the data will be securely stored for a period of 3 months. After the specified period, the data will be permanently deleted from all electronic and physical storage devices.

By signing below, confirm that you have read and understood the information provided above

Sincerely,

Signature

Date

