Report On

Shaping Perceptions Early: How bKash Builds Its Employer Brand Among Undergraduates

By

Tahreen Nubaha Rabbi
21304044

An internship report submitted to the BRAC Business School in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA)

BRAC Business School
Brac University
August 2025

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/We have acknowledged all main sources of help.

Student's Full Name & Signature:

Tahreen Nubaha Rabbi
21304044

Supervisor's Full Name & Signature:

Zaheed Husein Md Al-Din
Senior Lecturer, Brac Business School

Letter of Transmittal

Zaheed Husein Md Al-Din
Senior Lecturer,
BRAC Business School
BRAC University
Kha 224 Pragati Sarani, Merul Badda, Dhaka 1212

Subject: Submission of Internship Report

Dear Sir,

With utmost respect, I am delighted to inform you that I, Tahreen Nubaha Rabbi, ID- 21304044, finished writing my report titled as "Shaping Perceptions Early: How bKash Builds Its Employer Brand Among Undergraduates". At bKash Limited, I had the valuable chance to work within the Organizational Effectiveness and Employer Branding department, under the HR Division. I have made every effort to complete the report in a substantial, concise and thorough manner. I am hoping the report will satisfy the needs.

Sincerely Yours

____

Tahreen Nubaha Rabbi
21304044
BRAC Business School
BRAC University
Date: August 13, 2025

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 bKash Limited and the undersigned student at Brac University

Tahreen Nubaha Rabbi, 21304044

…………………………………….

Acknowledgement

First of all, I am deeply grateful to Almighty Allah for giving me the chance to undertake my internship at bKash Limited, an organization that provides remarkable opportunities for the younger generation in Bangladesh. His guidance has been a constant source of strength throughout my journey.

I feel honored to have been part of the Organizational Effectiveness and Employer Branding department within the Human Resources Division.

Similarly, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to Mr. Fahim Ahmed, Senior Officer, Employer Branding & HR Communications, for his valuable time, mentorship, and unwavering support, which were instrumental in helping me successfully complete my project.

Furthermore, I am deeply appreciative of Mr. Zaheed Husein Md Al-Din, Senior Lecturer at BRAC Business School, for his insightful advice, constructive feedback and consistent encouragement all throughout my internship and report writing process.

Executive Summary

This internship report reflects my experience in the Organizational Effectiveness and Employer Branding department within the Human Resources Division at bKash Limited. It centers on my research project titled "Shaping Perceptions Early: How bKash Builds Its Employer Brand Among Undergraduates." The report begins with a reflection on my personal learning and skill development during the internship, particularly in employer branding and student engagement.

A detailed overview of bKash Limited follows, including its organizational structure and management strategies. The core focus is on bKash's employer branding efforts to engage undergraduate students through campus activities, workshops, and networking events.

Insights from interviews with campus ambassadors, surveys, and focus group discussions reveal student preferences across academic years, highlighting the importance of early and interactive engagement. The report concludes with recommendations to strengthen bKash's employer brand and attract future talent by tailoring engagement strategies to student needs and career priorities.

Keywords: Employer branding; campus engagement; undergraduate students; career development; bKash; student perceptions

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List of Acronyms

MFS	Mobile Financial Services
BRACU	BRAC University
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
IFRS	Financial Reporting Standards
IAS	International Accounting Standards
PPE	Property, Plant and Equipment
GRC	Governance, risk, and compliance
ECAs	Extracurricular activities
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
NSU	North South University
EWU	East West University
RU	University of Rajshahi
DU-FBS	Faculty of Business Studies, University of Dhaka

Chapter 1: Overview of Internship

1.1 Student Information: Name, ID, Program and Major/Specialization

Name	Tahreen Nubaha Rabbi
ID	21304044
Program	Bachelor of Business Administration
Major/ Specialization	Major 1: Finance Major 2: Human Resources Management

1.2 Internship Information:

1.2.1 Period, Company Name, Department/Division, Address

Period	May 26, 2025 to August 25, 2025
Company Name	bKash Limited
Departement	Organizational Effectiveness and Employer Branding
Division	Human Resources Division
Address	Shadhinata Tower, 1, Bir Sreshtha Shaheed Jahangir Gate, Dhaka Cantonment, Dhaka 1206, Bangladesh

1.2.2 Internship Company Supervisor's Information: Name and Position

Name	Fahim Ahmed
Position	Senior Officer, EB & HR Communications, Organizational Effectiveness and Employer Branding, Human Resources Divisions

1.2.3 Job Scope – Job Description/Duties/Responsibilities

Maintaining intern records- As an intern in the Employer Branding team, maintaining and updating intern master databases was one of my main responsibilities. This involved keeping thorough and well-organized records for both bnext and peer interns, monitoring the timely submission of required paperwork, and making sure all data was correct for compliance and operational reasons.

Career page monitoring and query handling- I was given the responsibility of actively monitoring the official career page to address queries from potential candidates and the general public. This involved handling inquiries related to careers and sponsorships and when questions required expertise beyond my scope, I made sure to forward them to my supervisor via email tagging. This approach helped ensure everyone received timely and clear responses.

Social media content creation- To support bKash's goal of enhancing its employer brand, I produced social media reels showcasing important moments from events such as Club Fairs and university seminars at BUP, UIU, NSU, EWU and BRAC University. These reels were created to encourage greater engagement, emphasize our strong involvement with academic institutions, and elevate brand recognition among students.

Intern induction and onboarding support- I actively participated in the intern induction process by providing administrative and logistical assistance during the onboarding procedures. This involved helping with orientations, organizing supplies, and making sure that new interns had a comfortable and easy start to their internship.

Campus outreach representative- I represented bKash Limited at the BUP Career Fair and Education Fest 2025, where I engaged with students and prospective candidates, shared insights about the company's culture and career opportunities, and contributed to strengthening bKash's image as an employer of choice.

Coordinating the bnext flagship internship program- One of my key responsibilities was managing the bnext program for the next cohort. This involved handling candidate queries during the aptitude test phase, preparing scorecards and attendance sheets for the Focus Group Discussion (FGD) stage, welcoming applicants, assigning batch numbers, and ensuring a smooth and positive experience throughout the process.

Contributing to innovative campaigns- I also contributed creative ideas for employer branding efforts such as the Management Trainee program and Campus Buzz. This included designing engaging presentations, developing promotional concepts, and assisting in producing materials that effectively communicated bKash's brand values to the target audience.

1.3 Internship Outcomes

1.3.1 Student's Contribution to the Company

At bKash Limited, I made significant contributions in order to improve internal procedures and increase employer branding. By keeping an accurate intern database, I improved record-keeping efficiency, resulting in smoother HR operations. My proactive participation with candidates on the official career page improved communication and response, which boosted bKash's reputation among job seekers. In addition, I helped construct social media reels and represented the company at university events, which helped raise awareness of bKash as a preferred company to pursue a career. Furthermore, coordinating the bNext program enabled a smooth and professional recruiting process, which reflected positively on the company's hiring processes. Overall, my initiatives helped to simplify processes and strengthen bKash's standing as a preferred employer.

1.3.2 Benefits to the Student

This internship at bKash Limited offered valuable hands-on knowledge in HR operations and employer branding at a leading organization. I gained important skills in data management, communication, event planning, and content development. Engaging with potential candidates and university representatives strengthened my interpersonal skills and increased my confidence. Managing a large-scale recruitment program like bNext helped me develop the ability to handle logistical challenges effectively and adapt to changing circumstances. Overall, this experience connected my academic learning with practical professional requirements.

1.3.3 Problems/Difficulties Faced During the Internship Period

One significant challenge that I encountered was, during the bnext final and FGD rounds. The evaluation procedure went longer than intended, resulting in delays, overcrowding, and limited space, making candidates uncomfortable. I had to immediately reconfigure seats on-site to assure their comfort while also protecting the company's brand. Furthermore, the internship did not include complete training programs, while some IT-related training was offered, structured sessions on data analytics, time management, and leadership development would have better prepared interns and improved their overall performance.

1.3.4 Recommendations to the Company on Future Internships

In order to make the internship experience much more valuable and to improve the entire program, I suggest offering more thorough training sessions tailored specifically for interns, especially focusing on IT tools and asset management. This would help them feel more prepared and confident in their roles. It’s also important to enhance the planning for recruitment programs like bnext by making sure there’s enough seating and that assessment schedules run more smoothly, reducing waiting times for candidates. On top of that, setting up a clear and simple way for interns to share their feedback in regards to the work environment and their supervisors would provide helpful insights to keep improving the program. Taking these steps will not only boost bKash’s employer brand but also create a positive experience for both interns and candidates alike.

Chapter 2: Organization Part

2.1.1 Introduction

bKash Limited, currently the leading MFS provider in Bangladesh has revolutionized the country's financial ecosystem and earned the distinction of being its first tech unicorn. Since its inception in 2011, bKash has established itself as a symbol of development, financial inclusion, and socio-economic progress in Bangladesh. Building on a strong foundation and driven by a mission to make financial services accessible to the unbanked population, bKash has grown steadily through strategic partnerships, a widespread agent network and continuous expansion of its services. With innovation at heart, the company has prioritized practical, user-focused solutions that address real-life needs, ensuring everyday digital financial transactions are both secure and smooth. (Future Startup Team, 2025)

Over the years, bKash has established an extensive network with nearly 550,000 merchants and 330,000 agents throughout the country. Through collaborations with banks, service providers and financial institutions it has contributed remarkably to creating a more integrated and cashless ecosystem. Currently operating under the regulation of Bangladesh Bank, bKash is a trusted platform catering to nearly 80 million users across the country and has earned international recognition as well. (Future Startup Team, 2025)

2.1.2 Objective(s)

- To provide an overview of bKash Limited, concentrating on the structure of the organization, their mission, vision, user friendly services and history.
- To examine the organization's leadership style and analyze its significant contributions to achieving the strategic goals.
- To explore the human resource management practices of bKash Limited, focusing on training and development, performance appraisal, recruitment and selection and compensation.
- To analyze the marketing strategies, focusing on branding and promotional activities, with importance on digital and social media marketing.
- To assess the financial performance and have a clear understanding of its accounting practices.
- To analyze the competitiveness of the mobile financial services industry using Porter's Five Forces.
- To provide an integrated understanding of how each division collectively contributes to bKash's growth, innovation, and market leadership in the market.

2.1.3 Scope of Study

This report centers on the operational practices and organizational activities of bKash Limited, based on direct observations during the internship period of 3-months. The scope includes:

- A general overview of bKash as a company, focusing on its mission, vision, and the range of services it offers to its target customers.
- Observations on the workflow dynamics and team structure within the specific departments and the daily operations within those departments reflect the strategic goals of the organization.
- Insights into key challenges faced and innovative solutions implemented in the department where the internship was carried out.

The study is limited to the time frame and access provided during the internship period.

2.1.4 Methodology

This report covers a combination of both primary and secondary research.

Primary Data:

- Firsthand observations during the internship period.
- Informal interactions with the current employees and supervisors.
- Active engagement in the department's regular operational activities.

Secondary Data:

- Company website and annual reports.
- Relevant online articles, journals, and publications on bKash accessed through Google Scholar.

- Academic research papers, industry reports, and journals focusing on the country's mobile financial services.

2.1.5 Significance of Study

The reasons why this study is significant because,

- It provides practical insights into how one of Bangladesh's most prominent digital financial platforms in the market functions on a daily basis.
- It highlights the important role digital financial services play in emerging markets and their significant impact on the country's unbanked population.
- It serves as a useful resource for students and researchers seeking to comprehend the organizational structure and the management practices of a leading fintech company.
- It emphasizes how digital innovation is reshaping and modernizing how the traditional banking system operates in the country.

2.1.6 Limitations

During its preparation, several limitations were experienced:

- Limited time impacted the ability to explore all the cross-departmental activities in depth.
- Certain internal data and strategic details were confidential and therefore unavailable to the interns.

- The findings are mainly based on observations within one specific department, which may not fully capture the bigger picture of the entire company.
- Feedback gathered during the internship may reflect individual perspectives rather than any specific departmental consensus.
- Access to senior management was limited, which constrained a broader understanding of how high-level strategic decisions are taken to achieve organizational goals.

2.2.1 Background and History

The journey of bKash began in 2010, and it was officially launched in 2011. Since then, it has steadily grown to become the most trusted name in Bangladesh's mobile financial industry. Over the years, bKash has maintained its leading position by consistently focusing on the immediate needs of its customers and adapting to their evolving expectations.

The story of bKash began with an aim to to make financial services more accessible across the country. Kamal Qaudir and Iqbal Quadir, the two brothers got their inspiration by the transformative impact of mobile money in countries like Kenya and the Philippines. At that time, the majority of the country's population, especially those in rural regions had little to no access to traditional banking, despite a rapid increase in mobile phone penetration. This mismatch created a unique opportunity and the Quadir brothers envisioned a way to utilise it using technology by reaching the unbanked through simple mobile solutions. To bring their idea to life, in 2010 they joined forces with mobile finance pioneers Nick Hughes and Arun Gore and formed Money in Motion LLC. However, they knew that meaningful change required deep local insight and that's when BRAC Bank stepped in. Known for empowering small businesses and communities, BRAC Bank brought the trust and the knowledge the venture needed. Thus, when bKash was officially launched on July 21, 2011, it introduced three core services: Cash Out, Cash In and Send Money. These initial features directly addressed the most essential financial needs, offering a solution that was both practical and easy to use even on basic mobile phones. As a result, the service soon gained popularity, particularly among city workers looking for a dependable means to send money home to their rural family. This early success laid the foundation for bKash's rapid growth and widespread adoption. (Future Startup Team, 2025)

Moreover, having a strong leadership was instrumental in driving bKash's early growth. Kamal Quadir, the company's founding CEO, brought valuable entrepreneurial insight from his previous venture, CellBazaar which was an early e-commerce platform in Bangladesh. His knowledge of the local tech landscape helped shape bKash's strategic direction. Likewise, bKash's partnership with BRAC Bank not only fulfilled regulatory requirements set by Bangladesh Bank since mobile financial services had to be operated by banks or their subsidiaries, but also added an extra layer of credibility. Thus, with BRAC's widespread presence and trusted reputation in rural communities, bKash was able to quickly gain the confidence of users who were already familiar with BRAC's development work. This trust played a key role in expanding the service across the country and allowed bKash to break barriers in financial inclusion where others failed. (Future Startup Team, 2025)

2.2.2 Key Partners

Its key partners include BRAC Bank, Money in Motion LLC from the US, the Gates Foundation, the International Finance Corporation of the World Bank Group, Ant International and SoftBank, all of which have played a vital role in supporting bKash's growth and development.

2.2.3 bKash's Growth Journey: Key Milestones (2011–2024)

2011–2012: Laying the Foundation

bKash launched its services back in the year 2011 on the Robi network, offering simple financial transactions to the unbanked population of the country. Just a year later, 2 million customers were using bKash, signaling strong early adoption. That same year, bKash teamed up with BRAC Bank to introduce a new feature called ATM Cash Out, making money withdrawals even easier for its customers. (Future Startup Team, 2025)

2013–2014: bKash's Rapid Expansion

By 2013, bKash had built a nationwide agent network of 50,000 locations, making its services more accessible in the rural areas.The user base immediately surpassed 10 million. That year, the International Finance Corporation (IFC) came on board as an investor, bringing in both capital and credibility. In 2014, bKash attracted another major investor, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and surpassed 15 million registered users. (Future Startup Team, 2025)

2015–2016: Regulatory Growth & Global Recognition

In 2015, the company reached 20 million registered users. The central bank then required the company to spread customer deposits across multiple banks, in order to improve financial safety of everyone. In 2016, bKash gained global recognition as the top mobile financial service provider worldwide and they introduced another feature called international remittance services, making it easier for overseas Bangladeshis to send money home.(Future Startup Team, 2025)

2017–2018: Digital Shift & Major Partnerships

By the year 2017, customer numbers soared past 30 million. That same year, bKash earned a spot on Fortune's 'Change the World' list and partnered with IDEO.org to begin designing its first app. In 2018, the bKash app officially launched with a more intuitive design. The company also partnered with Ant Financial (of Alibaba Group), bringing in global fintech expertise and investment. (Future Startup Team, 2025)

2021–2022: Becoming a Unicorn

In 2021, bKash Limited got funds from SoftBank Vision Fund II, valuing the company at over $2 billion and officially making it the country's first unicorn. In 2022, after years of expansion, bKash reported its first pre-tax profit in over three years. (Future Startup Team, 2025)

2023–2024: Profit Surge and Market Leadership

By 2023, the company saw a massive 504% increase in its profit and grew its agent network to

364,000. In 2024, it reached over 75 million users, with profits in the first nine months hitting Tk218 crore, which is a 147% increase from the previous year.(Future Startup Team, 2025)

Late 2024-early 2025: Current Market Position

bKash has firmly established itself as the industry leader in the country's MFS sector holding an impressive 75% share of total transaction volume. The platform serves more than 75 million registered users and is supported by a widespread network of approximately 379,000 agents and 800,000 merchants throughout the country. Following years of focused investment in its technology and expansion of services, bKash has now reached profitability, reflecting a stable and sustainable growth path for the future. (Future Startup Team, 2025)

bKash's impressive growth stems from a series of smart, strategic choices. From the start, it focused on building a wide-reaching agent network and partnering with all major mobile operators to ensure accessibility across the country. The company steadily expanded its services beyond just sending money, introduced an easy-to-use mobile app, and formed strong partnerships with banks, financial institutions, and merchants. Its consistent branding efforts helped build public trust, while its ability to adapt to regulatory changes kept it ahead. To sum up, together with the above stated moves combined with a focus on consumer needs and innovation, played a key role in bKash's continued success. (Future Startup Team, 2025)

2.2.4 The values that uphold bKash

Customer Centric

bKash places their customers at the center of everything since they are in this industry for them. The company strives to fully understand and prioritize the needs of their customer, ensuring that every solution delivered is affordable, reliable and convenient. By consistently focusing on creating real value for its users, bKash aims to strengthen trust and long-term relationships with its target customer base.

Innovative

Innovation is an integral part of bKash's culture. To better serve its clients, the business aggressively promotes new concepts and welcomes change. Through continuous exploration and a mindset driven by creativity and curiosity, bKash is fully committed to bringing dynamic customer-focused solutions that can address emerging needs.

Collaborative

bKash promotes a collaborative culture where respect and unity are fundamental. Employees are encouraged to share resources and co-create to achieve collective success as a team. By fostering a transparent and open environment, bKash makes sure that teamwork and cooperation lead to better outcomes for every stakeholder.

Agile

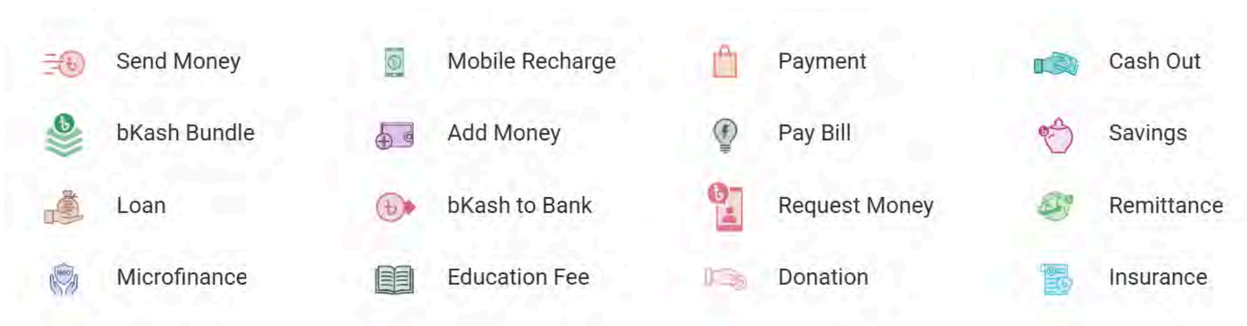
Agility is essential for bKash in order to stay relevant in a fast-changing dynamic surrounding. The company's main goal is to react quickly to changing market conditions and consumer needs.

With a willingness to learn, adapt and stay flexible in the industry, bKash aims to empower its teams to fulfill the company's purpose by delivering meaningful results.

<u>Ethical</u>

By promoting fairness and consistency in all of its dealings, bKash maintains a strong commitment to being ethical. Employees are required to maintain the greatest standards of conduct as integrity can never be compromised. To further demonstrate its commitment to conducting business ethically, bKash also makes sure that all applicable laws and its Code of Conduct are followed.

2.2.5 Services of bKash



2.2.6 Achievements and Recognitions

Throughout its journey, it has received numerous prestigious awards, including the Fintech Pioneer Award at Bangladesh Startup Summit 2023 and was recognized by the National Board of Revenue as the highest VAT payer for the 2020-2021 fiscal year, in the service sector. Similarly, the company received the country's Best Brand title for five years (2019–2023) by the

Bangladesh Brand Forum and was ranked 23rd on Fortune Magazine's 2017 "Change the World" list for its impactful social contributions. Additionally, bKash was named the top 'Employer of Choice' for three consecutive years (2020–2022) by NielsenIQ's Campus Track Survey B-School, and has been honored as the Best Financial Institution of 2021 by DHL-The Daily Star Bangladesh Business Awards. Likewise, it has been given the name as the Best for Digital Solutions in Bangladesh by Asiamoney in both 2023 and 2022. These awards showcase bKash Limited's dedication to driving innovation, promoting financial inclusion, and contributing to social development.

2.2.7 bKash's CSR Activities

By actively participating in several CSR projects, bKash is dedicated to having a good influence outside of its core financial services. Enhancing education, encouraging cleanliness and health, and aiding communities impacted by natural catastrophes are the main objectives of its CSR initiatives.

bKash provided the government with more than 950,000 medical items and 350 ventilators supplied by Alibaba in response to the COVID-19 outbreak. Additionally, the Diabetic Hospital established an oxygen plant and supported 30 ventilators for large hospitals. Moreover, bKash supplied food through Sena Kalyan Sangstha and other NGOs and partnered with the Bidyanondo Foundation to construct a hospital in Chittagong. In recognition of these initiatives, CEO Kamal Quadir received the 2021 Global Business CSR Award. (bKash wins 'Best CSR in Education' award, 2022)

The Daily Star and CSR Window Bangladesh presented bKash Limited with the award in Best CSR in Education in November 2022 for its longtime educational initiatives, which focused on scientific festivals for schoolchildren and nationwide book reading programs. In addition to organizing science festivals with BigganChinta since 2019, the company has distributed 263,700 books to nearly 2,900 institutions since 2014, helping 2.7 million readers. Furthermore, in February 2024, bKash hoped to collect around 100,000 books for underprivileged children at the Ekushey Book Fair, building on the 147,000 volumes collected during the previous four years. Seven donation booths and bKash centers nationwide supported the drive, with books distributed through Prothom Alo Trust. (CSR Window News Desk, 2024)

2.3 Management Practices

2.3.1 Leadership style

Work culture at bKash Limited promotes a participative and collaborative leadership style, encouraging all the employees to engage actively in decision-making and contribute innovative ideas, whether openly or through channels that are anonymous. This inclusive culture encourages mutual respect, teamwork and open communication, which fosters creativity and responsibility. By emphasizing integrity and promoting varied opinions, bKash keeps its operations and working environment in line with its purpose and fundamental principles.

2.3.2 Recruitment & Selection

bKash Limited’s recruitment strategy combines external hiring with strong campus engagement and internal talent sourcing from its flagship internship program. Flagship programs such as bnext, GenNext (Management Trainee Program), and b-techwiz (for tech enthusiasts) are tailored to attract high-potential freshers. Here, each program incorporates multiple stages to evaluate a candidate’s critical thinking, problem-solving, and teamwork skills, preparing them for the corporate environment.

For both fresh graduates and experienced professionals, the recruitment process follows a structured approach: first identifying departmental needs and developing detailed job descriptions, followed by posting vacancies on platforms like LinkedIn, Bdjobs, and the company’s official career pages on Facebook and Instagram. Candidates then go through a series of assessments, including screening tests, group discussions, case study assignments and panel interviews, ensuring that only the most qualified and talented individuals join the organization.

2.3.3 Compensation System

By matching industry norms and aligning with the organization's objectives, bKash Limited provides competitive compensation to its employees. Employees get gratuity benefits, provident fund payments, and festival bonuses in addition to their normal wage. In order to create a well-rounded and engaging work atmosphere, they also take use of a number of non-monetary benefits, such as discounted meals, access to an on-site café and gym, and indoor sports facilities.

i. Leave Benefits: Time off given to employees for several personal reasons like maternity, paternity, illness, or other purposes.

ii. Provident Fund (PF): A retirement savings plan where a portion of one's salary is saved and grows over time, accessible after a set number of years.

iii. Gratuity: Employees who have worked for the firm for a long time are rewarded with a lump sum payout.

iv. Leave Encashment: After meeting certain service requirements, an option to convert unused leave days into cash.

v. Additional Compensation: Extra financial rewards such as festival bonuses, salary increment and bonuses based on job performance or performance appraisal.

2.3.4 Training and Development

bKash places a significant importance on its employee development through its b.Academy, which hosts programs like "Learning Fest" covering things such as project management, data analytics, innovation, communication and workplace ethics. These programs not only build employee skills and boost the organization's adaptability but also demonstrate bKash's dedication to the personal and professional growth of its workforce.

2.4 Marketing Practices

2.4.1 Marketing Strategy

The marketing strategy is designed to make mobile financial services affordable, easy and accessible for everyone across the country. The company mixes mass-market outreach with customized initiatives for particular demographics. It offers targeted programs for groups like students and healthcare users in addition to its extensive seasonal promotions and marketing campaigns, covering a wider range of target consumers. By focusing on the right product, pricing, distribution, and promotion, bKash has placed itself as the most trusted leader in the MFS market.

Product:Simple and safe mobile banking services that satisfy a variety of customer needs, including bill payment, merchant payment, and money transfer.

Price: Reasonable and competitive price to ensure accessibility for all, particularly the underprivileged communities.

Place: Extensive agent network and agreements with banks, telecommunications companies and enterprises to make services available nationally, particularly in remote locations.

Promotion: Increased brand recognition through television, internet commercials and initiatives aimed at educating and developing trust within customers.

2.4.2 Target Customers, Targeting & Positioning Strategy

The company tailors its campaigns by targeting different demographic groups and by focusing on psychographic, behavioral and usage based segmentation.

- Students (age range from 14 to 18 years): The bKash Student Account encourages young users to begin their digital finance journey early, supported by a lively influencer campaign featuring popular creators. (Dhaka Tribune, 2024)
- Consumers (Category- General): Seasonal promotions like Ramadan and Eid cashback drive more spending, with exclusive coupons for major stores and lifestyle brands. (Dhaka Tribune, 2025)
- Buyers chasing offers online: Ongoing cashback offers make paying digitally for online purchases more rewarding. (bKash Offer on Online Shopping, 2025)
- Health & Wellness: The Shukhee-bKash campaign provides 20% instant cashback on health-related payments, promoting wellbeing. (Brand Practioners Bangladesh, 2025)
- Lifestyle & Dining: Special festive discounts help users save at restaurants and fashion outlets.

2.4.3 Marketing Channels

bKash leverages several mediums to reach its audience effectively:

- Digital & Social Media: Campaigns aimed at young users, especially those promoting the student account, heavily use influencer marketing and online platforms.

- In-App Promotions: Special offers and coupon codes are directly featured within the bKash app, making them easily accessible during transactions.
- Traditional Media & CSR: Mass media campaigns like ‘Eid er Chand Akashe, Salami Din bKash-A’ use music and widespread advertising to encourage sending Eid greetings and promote cashless payments.

2.4.4 Product / New Development & Competitive Practices

bKash continuously comes up with innovative products in order to meet customer needs and maintain a competitive edge. The Student Account, designed for minors with minimal paperwork and parental control, helps onboard young users early and build lasting loyalty. At the same time, initiatives like the Shukhee cashback promote digital payments for health-related services, encouraging financial inclusion and more frequent app use. These targeted products reflect bKash’s focus on creating tailored solutions that drive growth and engagement.

2.4.5 Critical marketing issues and gaps

The digital gap, which keeps offline and rural users out of many digital efforts and low awareness among students in places with inadequate connectivity are some of the issues that bKash faces. Excessive usage of promotions may also weaken the brand's appeal and make consumers overly reliant on sales.

Innovative fintech firms like Pathao Pay and Revolut are becoming a bigger threat, therefore bKash must use creative marketing strategies to engage and keep its devoted clientele. Keeping a lead in the quickly evolving fintech market will require concentrating on fostering trust via improved security, enhancing the user experience, and expanding offline outreach.

2.5.1 Accounting Practices

2.5.1.1 Accounting Framework and Basis of Preparation

Bkash Limited uses several key accounting practices that fall in line with the International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRSs) and International Accounting Standards (IASs). Their financial statements are made under the historical cost convention, which indicates that the company assumes it will keep on operating and records its assets at their original purchase price. Additionally, the financial statements also follow the principles of materiality and aggregation. This helps them present each material class of similar items separately while combining dissimilar or immaterial items. The company's financial statements are audited by independent firms that assure that they are true and fair under the accounting standards with consistency.

2.5.1.2 Revenue and Expense Recognition: Accrual Accounting

Bkash follows the accrual basis of accounting. This is evident in how it recognizes revenue and expenses. Revenue is reported when earned and expenses are recognized when incurred and not when they are paid. The cash flow statement provides the reconciliation between the net income from the accrual basis and the actual cash flow, which is a standard practice for companies following the accrual method.

2.5.1.3 Accounting Cycle and Financial Statement Preparation

The accounting cycle used is not directly visible in the final reports, as the published statements are the end product of the cycle. The presence of specific items and disclosures indicates that they prepare a full set of financial statements with proper adjusting entries and closing entries.

2.5.1.4 Depreciation and Amortization Policies

Based on the notes of the financial statements found online, it can be seen that BKash uses the straight line method for depreciating its assets. Depreciation is calculated and written off against the asset’s cost, deducting its anticipated residual value from the asset's expected useful life. Depreciation starts the month the assets are bought and for disposal. Intangible assets, such as software, are amortized using the same depreciation method. The financial statement’s notes provide information on the useful life of different assets.

2.5.1.5 Notes to Financial Statements and Disclosure Practices

Bkash provides an extensive disclosure in the notes of its financial statements, which can be considered as a key part of the full disclosure principle. The notes provide detailed information on the different accounting principles and policies used, such as revenue recognition, employee benefits, and financial instruments. They also provide detailed breakdowns of financial statement items like property, plant and equipment (PPE), intangible assets and various liabilities. bKash also discloses information on financial risks like credit, liquidity, and also includes currency and interest rate risk. The company also discloses any related party transactions and commitments for future capital expenditures in the notes section.

2.5.2 Financial Performance

The following data has been collected from the annual financial statements for the years 2021 to 2024 and used to compare key ratios across these four years, providing insights into the company's financial performance.

2.5.2.1 Liquidity Ratios

i. Current Ratio = Current Assets ÷ Current Liabilities

(Values in BDT)	31st Dec 2024	31st Dec 2023	31st Dec 2022	31st Dec 2021
Current Assets	120104981154	106519450415	94445349712	88499445819
Current Liabilities	100928937412	86700343883	73831924091	62928023360
Current Ratio	1.19	1.23	1.28	1.41

Source: https://tinyurl.com/5n9az6vh

Interpretation- From 2021 to 2024, liquidity has been declining steadily for bKash Limited. Although in 2024, the ratio is still above 1, hence the company can cover short-term obligations, but the safety margin is declining. This suggests that the company's current liabilities are rising faster than the current assets, indicating increasing liquidity pressure.

ii. Cash Ratio = Cash ÷ Current Liabilities

(Values in BDT)	31st Dec 2024	31st Dec 2023	31st Dec 2022	31st Dec 2021
Cash	7582073082	7432235282	5870995279	6176857884
Current Liabilities	100928937412	86700343883	73831924091	62928023360
Cash Ratio	7.51%	8.57%	7.95%	9.82%

Source: https://tinyurl.com/5n9az6vh

Interpretation: From 2021 to 2024, bKash's cash ratio stayed low, varying between 7% and 10%, which implies a limited amount of cash available to cover short-term liabilities. The slight decline during this period points to decreased immediate liquidity, although this is common since companies usually rely on a combination of assets, not just cash, to meet their obligations.

2.5.2.2 Solvency Ratios

i. Debt-to-equity ratio = Total Debt ÷ Equity

(Values in BDT)	31st Dec 2024	31st Dec 2023	31st Dec 2022	31st Dec 2021
Total Debt	101128664371	87271334100	74982079408	64089766600
Total Equity	34701033110	31542977817	30602346144	30427030067

Debt to equity ratio	2.91	2.77	2.45	2.11

Source: https://tinyurl.com/5n9az6vh

Interpretation- The debt to equity ratio has been rising consistently from 2021 to 2024, implying that bKash is relying more on debt to finance its operations than equity. As of 2024, it has about three times as much debt as equity, indicating increased financial risk and potential strain on sustainability.

ii. Interest Coverage Ratio = EBIT ÷ Interest Expense

(Values in BDT)	31st Dec 2024	31st Dec 2023	31st Dec 2022	31st Dec 2021
EBIT	3415414309	305885339	-766558175	-1594221847
Interest Expense	360399671	418535336	596672131	478043597
Interest coverage ratio	9.48	0.73	-1.28	-3.33

Source: https://tinyurl.com/5n9az6vh

Interpretation: Between 2021 and 2022, bKash had a negative interest coverage ratio due to operating losses, implying that it was not able to meet interest expenses from its operating earnings. In 2023, the ratio improved to 0.73 but remained below 1. However, by 2024, the company achieved a significant recovery, with EBIT increasing substantially indicating a highly sound financial position and a reduced risk profile.

2.5.2.3 Profitability Ratios

i. Return on Assets (ROA) = Net Profit ÷ Total Assets

(Values in BDT)	31st Dec 2024	31st Dec 2023	31st Dec 2022	31st Dec 2021
Net Profit	3158055293	985482973	175316077	-1172858107
Total Assets	135829697481	118814311917	105584425552	94516796667
Return on assets	2.33%	0.83%	0.17%	-1.24%

Source: https://tinyurl.com/5n9az6vh

Interpretation: The company's ROA has steadily improved over the past four years, increasing from –1.24% in 2021 to 2.33% in 2024. This reflects a shift from asset inefficiency to gradually increasing profitability, with assets now contributing positively to earnings. In conclusion, this consistent upward trend indicates enhanced financial management and more effective resource utilization.

ii. Return on Equity (ROE) = Net Profit ÷ Equity

(Values in BDT)	31st Dec 2024	31st Dec 2023	31st Dec 2022	31st Dec 2021
Net Profit	3158055293	985482973	175316077	-1172858107
Total Equity	34701033110	31542977817	30602346144	30427030067
Return on equity	9.10%	3.12%	0.57%	-3.85%

Source: https://tinyurl.com/5n9az6vh

Interpretation: ROE showed a significant improvement from –3.85% to 9.10%. The negative ROE in 2021 implied losses and inefficient use of equity, while gradual increases in 2022 and 2023 indicated a recovery phase. By 2024, the sharp rise in ROE demonstrated strong profitability and a much more effective use of equity to create value for shareholders.

2.5.2.4 Efficiency Ratio

Total Asset Turnover = Net Sales ÷ Total Assets

(Values in BDT)	31st Dec 2024	31st Dec 2023	31st Dec 2022	31st Dec 2021
Net Sales	50582056407	41906986868	34308082701	27945227942
Total Assets	135829697481	118814311917	105584425552	94516796667

Total asset turnover	37.24%	35.27%	32.49%	29.57%

Source: https://tinyurl.com/5n9az6vh

Interpretation: The total asset turnover rose from 29.57% to 37.24% over the course of 4 years, showing improvement in a steady manner in regards to how effectively the company uses its assets to generate sales. This upward trend shows better efficiency and better utilization of resources.

2.6 Operations Management and Information System Practices

The company views information as a valuable asset and places strong emphasis on governance, risk, and compliance (GRC) to safeguard its data. The company adheres to the CIA principles, which focuses on confidentiality, integrity and availability to ensure data is protected from unauthorized access or alteration and is accessible when needed for proper use.

To maintain high standards, bKash follows clear policies, processes, and procedures aligned with international standards like ISO 27701, focusing on data privacy and security management. Information is classified carefully based on access levels: public (for general sharing), restricted (division or team-specific), and confidential (top priority, strictly protected).

For data management, bKash utilizes Oracle's robust database to safely handle and preserve enormous volumes of transactional and client data, ensuring reliability and integrity. Internally, the company uses an intranet platform to facilitate secure communication and information sharing among employees, enhancing collaboration while respecting data access controls.

These combined efforts help bKash maintain standardized, secure and efficient operations, ensuring compliance and trust across its services.

2.7 Industry and Competitive Analysis

2.7.1 Porter's Five Force Analysis

Threat of Substitutes	Remote places with little digital connectivity, cash remains the dominant currency, offering a constant threat to bKash. Furthermore, conventional banks and other mobile banking applications provide alternatives, keeping the threat of substitution at a manageable level.
Bargaining Power of Suppliers	bKash relies on telecom and technology providers for successful operations. While these suppliers have considerable power, bKash's vast size and long-term alliances help keep supplier power under control, assuring steady operations.
Bargaining Power of Buyers	With several finance applications accessible, customers have greater bargaining power than ever before. Nonetheless, bKash's extensive

	agent network, user-friendly platform, and trusted reputation make it a popular choice for many, allowing the firm to retain its clients.
Threat of New Entrants	New entrants such as Pathao Pay and Revolut, pose a threat in the booming fintech landscape in Bangladesh. However, breaking in is difficult due to rigorous restrictions, the requirement for a large agent network, and bKash's strong brand devotion, all of which create high hurdles for new players to swiftly gain ground.
Rivalry	The digital financial services industry is highly competitive in the country, with both developed corporations and new startups continuously developing. bKash leads the pack, but it must continue to evolve and differentiate itself in order to remain competitive in this ever changing industry.

Table 1: Porter’s Five Forces Analysis

2.7.2 SWOT Analysis

STRENGTH

bKash's broad network of over 300,000 agents assures widespread availability, even in rural locations. As a pioneer in mobile financial services, it has established a strong brand value that is characterized by great trust and loyalty among millions of users. Its dedication to social responsibility, demonstrated via numerous activities, contributes to its favorable reputation.

Furthermore, bKash is regarded as a top employer of choice, recruiting and maintaining outstanding employees. Strong collaborations with banks, telecom carriers, and companies help it expand its market presence and service delivery

WEAKNESS

bKash's heavy reliance on its agent network makes it vulnerable to service disruptions. Its focus on digital campaigns often misses rural users with poor internet access, leading to awareness gaps. Frequent promotions may also weaken the brand's perceived value over time.

OPPORTUNITES

With increased smartphone use and internet availability in Bangladesh, bKash has the potential to greatly expand its user base. Embracing technology like AI may improve security, tailor user experiences and expedite customer service. Furthermore, by integrating data analytics and AI-driven insights, bKash can better personalize goods and increase fraud detection, boosting its market position.

THREATS

Threats include increased competition from financial startups like Pathao Pay and established global companies like Revolut. Cash remains the primary payment method in many rural communities, limiting digital growth. Tighter restrictions may also reduce business flexibility and increase compliance expenses.

2.8 Summary

bKash benefited from a significant first-mover advantage as an early participant in Bangladesh's mobile financial services sector. As a result, the business was able to establish a good reputation and gain a sizable share of the developing market before many rivals showed up. Its adaptable, practical approach has proved essential in tackling the particular difficulties faced by the industry. Since launching in 2010 with the goal of helping the unbanked, bKash has grown its customer base, offered a wider range of services, and stimulated technical advancement. bKash is in a strong position to continue influencing the nation's digital finance scene in the future and is a role model for companies looking to expand sustainably in developing nations.

2.9 Recommendations

Use AI to Gain a Competitive Advantage: Invest in AI technology to enhance fraud detection, automate risk management, and provide individualized, trustworthy client experiences.

Improve Customer Engagement: To strengthen ties and keep users in spite of growing competition, increase the scope of loyalty programs, interactive campaigns, and localized marketing.

Develop New Service Offerings: To keep bKash ahead of the curve in a market that is changing quickly, introduce new digital financial solutions that are suited to changing consumer demands.

Chapter 3: Project Part

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 Background and Problem Statement

Employer branding initiatives often target recent graduates or final-year students who are actively searching for a job. Early undergraduate students, who are still developing their academic and extracurricular profiles but sometimes lack clear guidance about career preparation, are typically overlooked by this popular method. Many first- and second-year students are unsure about the value of internships, extracurricular activities, and skill development outside of the classroom.

During my internship with bKash's Employer Branding team, I saw this gap firsthand. My responsibilities included representing bKash at different campus activities and job fairs, with an emphasis on engaging students early in their academic careers. This experience highlighted the need for a strategy change toward earlier involvement, allowing students to better understand how to link their career goals with bKash's corporate principles. As a result, the purpose of this research is to look at the issues that early-year undergraduates encounter, as well as the chances for bKash to develop its employer brand among undergraduates.

3.1.2 Objective(s)

This study aims to:

- To explore bKash's employer branding efforts can effectively engage first and second-year university students.
- To understand the challenges and uncertainties faced by students in relation to career planning and development.
- To assess student perceptions in regards to the importance of balancing academics versus extracurricular activities (ECAs).
- To evaluate the impact of tailored events and initiatives designed for early-year students on strengthening the employer brand.
- To provide practical recommendations for improving early campus engagement strategies to build a strong talent pipeline.

3.1.3 Significance

Employers in today's highly competitive job market want graduates to have a combination of both academic achievement and well-rounded skill sets. However, many first-year university students receive little coaching on how to develop these abilities or effectively navigate their professional prospects. This study is crucial because it demonstrates how bKash can position itself as a desired employer beginning with the early phases of students' academic careers. By addressing their concerns and giving focused assistance, bKash can develop stronger trust and loyalty, therefore improving its long-term talent acquisition and retention efforts.

3.1.4 Scope of the Study

The primary aim of this research is to better understand undergraduate students' impressions of bKash's employer branding campaigns throughout all academic years at chosen Bangladeshi institutions. It investigates how students at various stages of their academic journey perceive and interact with the brand, including their views toward academics, extracurricular activity, and career preparedness. The study assesses bKash's engagement methods in the early, middle, and late undergraduate years to identify potential for improving and expanding employer branding initiatives across the undergraduate experience.

3.2 Literature Review

3.2.1 Overview of Employer Branding

The concept of employer branding is derived from the broader principles of branding, which is treated as a strategic tool to position a company as an appealing employer. Organizations use this strategy to highlight their unique attributes and set themselves apart from other employers in the market. This in turn encourages dedication and loyalty among current employees while drawing in fresh talent. A strong employer brand ultimately gives the company a significant competitive edge that helps it stand out and maintain a solid reputation in the labor market. (Zaware, 2020)

3.2.2 Relevance in a Competitive Job Market

Nowadays, the job market is competitive and dynamic and managing a company's employer brand is not just important but it is essential. More importantly, companies should proactively nurture it and consistently influence it, regardless of current market conditions. In addition, Glassdoor data states that 92% of employees would consider switching their current jobs without an increment, even if the new role were of a company with an excellent reputation. Similarly, 86% of job seekers have said that they would refuse to work for a company with a poor public image. (Windley, 2022)

3.2.3 Influence on Talent Attraction and Retention

Recruiters routinely seek out top talent, offering them a variety of possibilities for shaping their careers. When an organization's employer brand does not represent its fundamental values and goals, these professionals are less likely to commit. This is especially important considering that candidates frequently establish perceptions of a company long before they have any direct encounter with a recruiter, emphasizing the necessity of firms taking control of their brand story. An organization's success is dependent on great leadership and the talent that propels it ahead. Companies that execute a well-planned and targeted employer branding approach may increase employee loyalty, attract top-tier talent, minimize attrition, and lower recruiting expenses. Thus, a strong employer brand not only delivers a competitive advantage, but also lays the groundwork for long-term organizational success. (Windley, 2022)

3.2.4 Career Development Learning as a Brand Enhancer

Furthermore, career development learning strengthens the effect of employer branding by guiding individuals in clarifying career objectives, selecting suitable education or training, and gaining experiences that promote career growth. It has been demonstrated to improve academic performance, promote student retention, and raise knowledge of organizational opportunities. When combined with access to job-related resources and academic facilities, it increases self-employability and influences how students judge future employers. As a result, career development learning becomes an important mediator, increasing the link between employer branding and business attractiveness. (Hossain et al., 2024)

3.3 Methodology

3.3.1 Research Design

This research focuses on a combination of quantitative surveys with qualitative interviews, focus group discussions (FGDs) and observational data. This complete design allows for a thorough knowledge of undergraduate students' perspectives, as well as bKash's employer branding campaigns.

3.3.2 Data Collection Methods

- Interviews: Semi-structured interviews with bKash's Campus Ambassadors will be conducted to gain insights into existing engagement strategies and assess their effectiveness from an insider's perspective.
- Surveys: A structured questionnaire will be administered exclusively to students of BRAC University (BRACU) across all academic years (from 1st to 4th year) to evaluate their awareness, perceptions, and priorities related to career development.
- Focus Group Discussions (FGDs): FGDs held with 1st and 2nd year students from various universities to explore their perceptions of career-related sessions and the significance they attribute to such programs in advancing their professional growth.
- Observation: Drawing from my direct experience as an intern, observations made during career fair, campus events and student interactions will be incorporated to add practical context to the findings.

3.3.3 Sampling

The survey will target BRAC University students from all years (1st through 4th year), ensuring a diverse representation of academic levels within the institution. Participants for interviews and FGDs will be selected purposely to include those actively involved in or affected by employer branding activities and career development sessions.

3.3.4 Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics will be used to evaluate quantitative data obtained from surveys in order to find trends and patterns in the priorities and opinions of students. Qualitative data from interviews and FGDs will be subjected to thematic analysis to extract key themes related to employer branding practices and the challenges faced by students. Observational notes will serve as supplementary data to triangulate and validate the results.

3.4 Findings and Analysis

3.4.1 Primary Data: bKash campus ambassadors' interview insights

Two campus ambassadors from BRAC University were interviewed in order to obtain firsthand insights on how bKash cultivates its employer brand among undergraduates. Due to their leadership roles in active student organizations and their direct involvement in planning and promoting career-related events, both ambassadors have a unique perspective on the trends in student participation and the efficacy of employer branding initiatives.

3.4.1.1 Student Engagement Patterns Across Academic Years

Both ambassadors noticed a steady improvement in the way students from various academic years react to sessions about careers:

- First-year students: Incredibly passionate about campus shows, frequently going out of curiosity or to support their clubs. Their motivation is less career-oriented and more focused on exploring and enjoying their time.
- Second-year students:Getting serious about their career development, attending events to gain relevant knowledge and explore opportunities, though still in an exploratory phase.
- Third & final-year students: Strongly career-focused, actively seeking skill development, networking opportunities, and industry connections as they prepare to enter the job market.

From an employer branding perspective, this progression suggests the need for segmented engagement strategies like lighter, introductory sessions for early-year students and targeted, skill-based programs for final-year cohorts.

3.4.1.2 The impact of employer-hosted sessions

Both ambassadors confirmed that high-quality, employer-led events significantly boost student's clarity and confidence in their career planning. Real-life career stories such as industry leaders sharing unconventional or cross-disciplinary career paths were cited as especially impactful, as they help students visualize multiple possible career trajectories. This aligns with the experiential branding approach, where authentic, relatable narratives strengthen the emotional connection between employer and potential candidates.

3.4.1.3 Preferred programs

Ambassadors identified several formats that consistently attract high student participation:

- CV-building workshops and skill-development sessions (e.g., Excel, digital marketing).
- Networking events and industry talks with opportunities to interact directly with professionals, exchange contacts and connect via LinkedIn.
- Competitions and mentorship programs that allow students to showcase their skills and receive guidance from industry experts.
- Industry visits that provide practical exposure beyond classroom learning.

These formats not only enhance employability but also strengthen the employer brand by associating the company with valuable skill development and career readiness.

3.4.1.4 Factors driving brand recall

Both ambassadors agreed that consistent and creative campus engagement is critical for brand memorability. Effective strategies include-

- Sponsoring case competitions or innovative challenges.
- Bringing interactive games, giveaways and prizes to events.
- Featuring relatable, dynamic speakers instead of overly formal, scripted presentations.
- Leveraging “social buzz” through peer-to-peer sharing after events, which extends brand reach.

3.4.1.5 Recommendations from the Ambassadors

The ambassadors jointly recommended that employers aiming to strengthen their brand presence among undergraduates should:

- Engage students from the first year onward to build early familiarity.
- Customize event formats for each academic year's needs and motivations.
- Work closely with campus ambassadors to stay informed about current trends and student interests.
- Sponsor creative and skill-focused competitions that align with student aspirations.
- Incorporate motivational elements such as food, prizes, and gamified sessions to boost participation.

3.4.1.6 Employer Branding Implications

By strategically tailoring outreach and providing valuable, memorable experiences, bKash can maintain high visibility, foster goodwill, and ultimately position itself as an employer of choice among future graduates.

3.4.2 Survey Analysis

To learn how bKash establishes their employer brand among undergraduates, 59 students participated in a structured survey.The findings indicate student preferences, motives, and views, which help to inspire effective company branding campaigns on campus.

3.4.2.1 Academic Year of Respondents

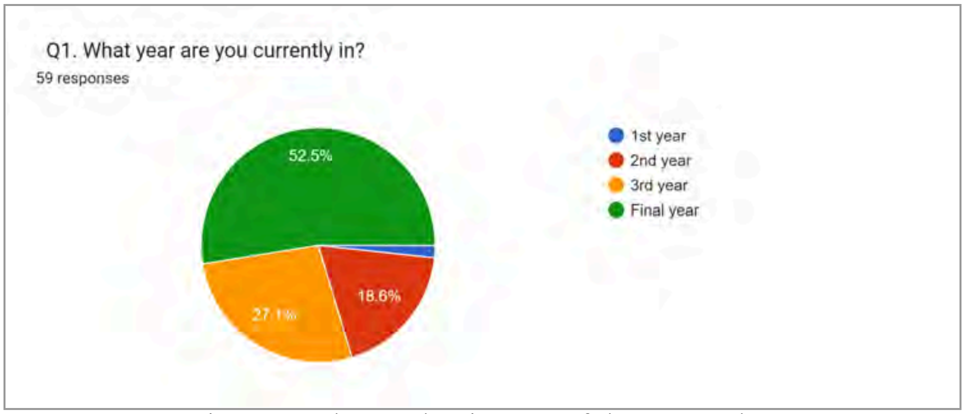


Figure 1: The academic year of the respondents

Most participants were in their final year, which indicates that the majority of responses come from students who are actively preparing for their careers.

Interpretation: The survey primarily reflects the views of students close to graduation, who tend to be more focused on career planning and job search activities. Understanding this helps tailor employer branding efforts to meet the needs of these groups. However, including more first-year perspectives in future research could offer insights into early engagement strategies.

3.4.2.2 Interest in Learning About Companies Early

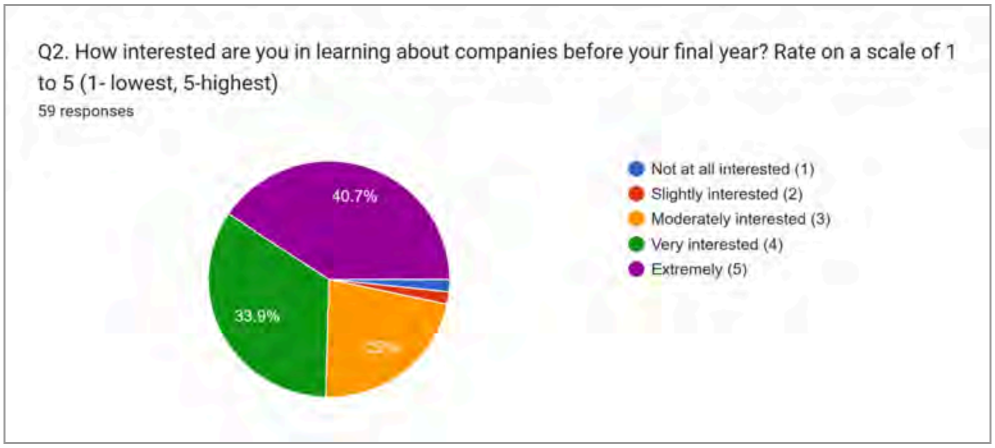


Figure 2: Response ratio in regards to learning about companies early

About 75% of respondents expressed being very or extremely interested in learning about companies before their final year, reflecting a strong desire for early career awareness and preparation.

Interpretation: Students show strong enthusiasm for starting career exploration early, which encourages companies to initiate campus engagement activities well before students reach their final year. Early exposure helps students make informed career decisions and builds longer-lasting connections with potential employers.

3.4.2.3 Preferred Early Engagement Activities

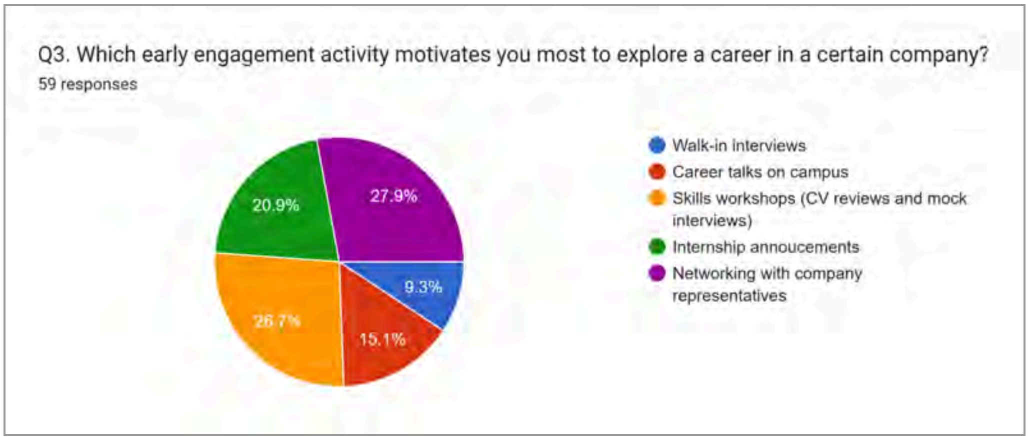


Figure 3: Preferred early engagement activities ratio of the responses

Here, walk-in interviews were the least motivating, only 9.3 % of the respondents chose this factor.

<u>Interpretation:</u> Students prefer interactive and skill-focused activities that allow them to build professional networks and gain practical knowledge. Traditional recruitment formats like walk-in interviews are less appealing, suggesting that companies should focus on engaging, educational, and relationship-building events.

3.4.2.4 Likelihood of Post-Event Actions

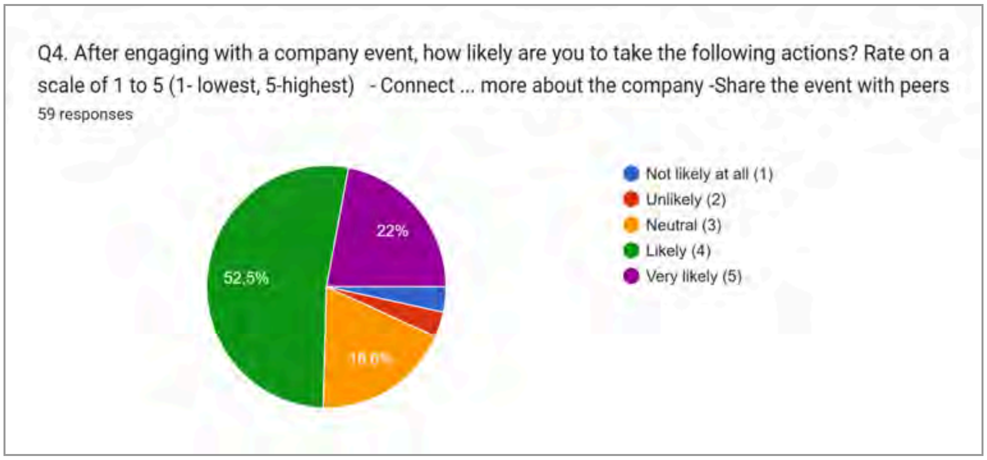


Figure 4: Response ratio in regards to post-event actions

After attending any career related sessions, most students are likely or very likely to connect with company representatives on LinkedIn, research more about the company and share the event with peers. This shows that events often create lasting engagement beyond the session itself.

Interpretation: Effective campus events do more than just inform, they encourage ongoing interaction between students and companies. This continued engagement strengthens employer branding and increases the chances that students will consider these companies for internships or jobs in the future.

3.4.2.5 Confidence in Skill Development

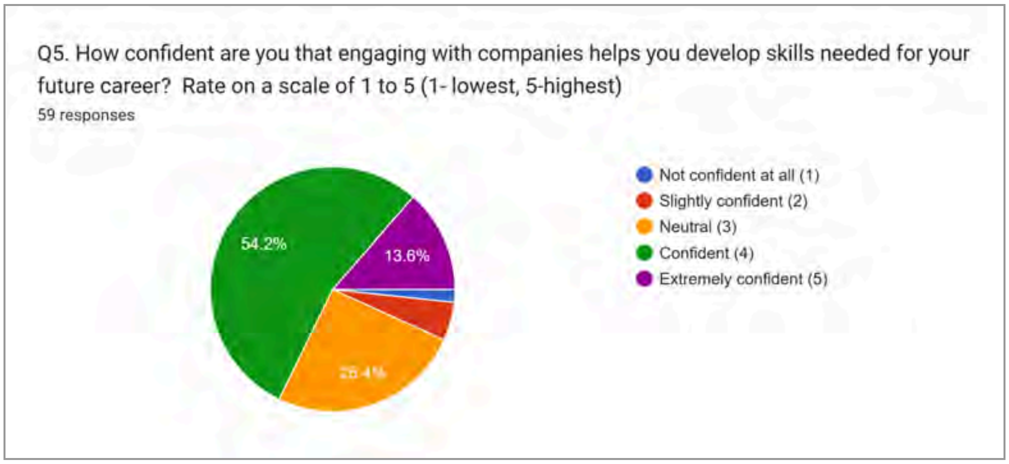


Figure 5: Response ratio in regards to confidence level

67.8% of students are confident or extremely confident that engaging with companies helps develop skills needed for their future careers, while about 25% were neutral, and a small minority were less confident.

Interpretation: Most students recognize the value of company engagements in developing relevant skills, but a notable neutral group indicates room for improvement. Companies can enhance impact by offering more hands-on learning and practical experiences that clearly connect with career success.

3.4.2.6 Top Factors Influencing Event Attendance

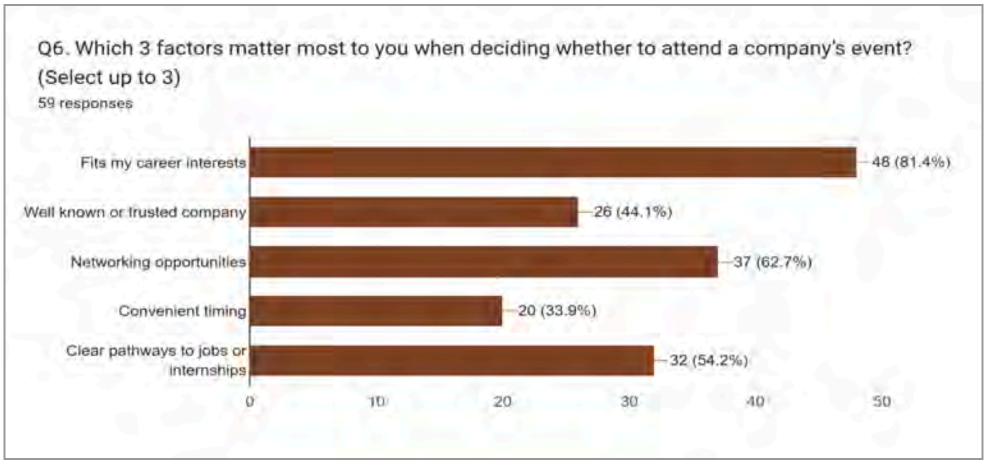


Figure 6: Ratio of the factors that sparks interest within students

Here, we can see what are few things undergraduates tend to prioritize when they decide to attend any sort of career related session.

Interpretation: Career alignment and networking are the strongest motivators for student participation. Employers should design events that clearly demonstrate how attending will advance students' career goals and provide opportunities to build meaningful professional relationships.

3.4.2.7 Channels

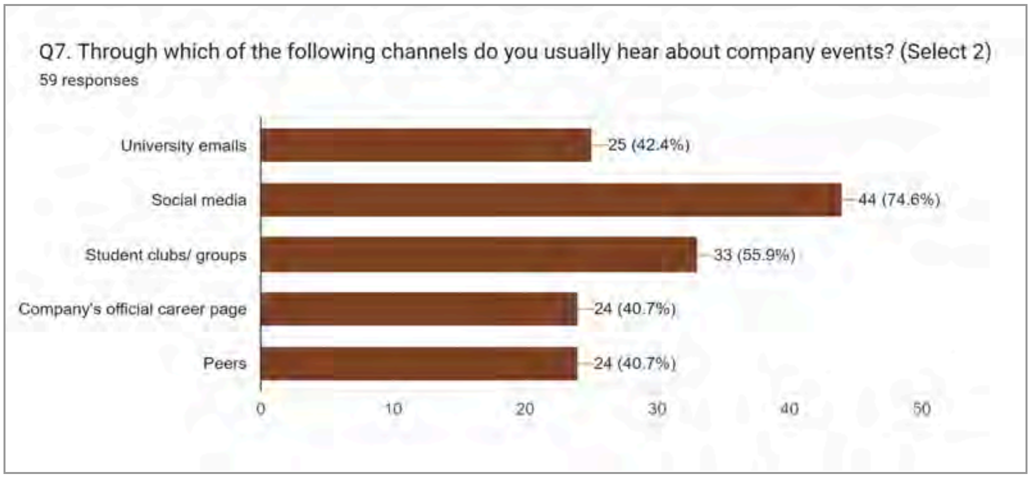


Figure 7: Ratio of the most preferred channels

This question highlights the importance of multi-channel communication strategies to reach students effectively.

Interpretation: Social media and student clubs are key to spreading awareness about company events. Employers should maintain a strong online presence and collaborate with campus organizations to maximize outreach and attract diverse student participation.

3.4.3 FGD Findings

As part of my internship project, I reviewed and analyzed the results of a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) held in December 2024 with first- and second-year students from five universities: BRAC University (BRACU), North South University (NSU), East West University (EWU), University of Dhaka - Faculty of Business Studies (DU FBS), and University of Rajshahi. This secondary study aimed at studying how early-stage undergraduates view corporate participation in their academic and extracurricular activities, as well as how such involvement affects their career awareness, earning potential, and long-term professional goals.

Questions	**Common responses from the following universities- BRACU, NSU, RU, EWU, DU-FBS**
What do you think an ideal university orientation program should include?	Interactive sessions, games, Q&A, career mapping, alumni speeches
How can corporate entities inspire students and provide guidance on their orientation day?	Recruiter expectations, skill development sessions, career mapping, mentorship, office tours, company culture, alumni/experts sharing their success stories, souvenirs/scholarships
What kind of extracurricular	Clubs, case competitions, internships, campus ambassadorship, online business, social work, arts

activities do you participate in?	
What programs can corporate entities organize to equip students for higher levels of income by graduation?	Sessions on investment & financial management, paid internships, student loans at lower interest rates, case competitions, savings accounts, exclusive investments, skill enhancement programs, mentorship, startup funding
Do you prioritize financial success, career growth, or work-life	1. Work-life balance 2. Financial success 3. Career growth

Table 2: FGD findings of 1st and 2nd year students from BRACU, NSU, RU, DU-FBS, EWU

The FGD findings show that first- and second-year students prioritise early corporate engagement that is participatory, skill-focused, and financially advantageous. They express a high interest in initiatives such as mentorship programs, internships, startup funding and opportunities to meet with industry experts, which not only help them develop their skills but also leave a positive impression on the organisations involved. This is strongly related to the concept of employer branding, as meaningful early encounters help organisations identify themselves as appealing and trustworthy employers in the eyes of prospective employees. Organisations can improve their employer brand, cultivate long-term loyalty, shape early career decisions, and gain a competitive advantage in attracting top graduates by tailoring orientation programs, skill-building efforts, and financial support to student priorities such as work-life balance, financial security, and career progression.

3.5 Conclusion

The results of focus groups, student questionnaires, and interviews with campus ambassadors show an obvious rise in undergraduate students' involvement with employer branding initiatives.

Campus ambassadors emphasised that first- and second-year students are frequently in an exploratory phase, taking part in interactive, skill-building and social events with less immediate emphasis on professional aspirations. Meanwhile, final-year students are more focused and career-oriented, seeking internships, job opportunities and hands-on industry experience to prepare for employment.

Survey results support this, revealing that younger students are more interested in networking and skill workshops, whereas final-year students prefer clear career trajectories and employment-related events. Throughout the years, social media and student groups have become important mediums for event promotion.

Focus group discussions emphasise the importance of early-year engagement activities such as interaction, financial support, mentorship, and exposure to industry experts. Students prioritise work-life balance, financial stability and professional progress, implying that organisations must address these issues holistically in order to foster long-term employer brand loyalty.

To summarize, these findings support a staged employer branding approach, with broad, engaging and skill-focused activities in the early years, followed by career-focused initiatives for final-year students. This method positions companies to develop talent from beginning to end and hire top undergraduates when they enter the workforce.

3.6 Recommendations

i. Design Interactive and Skill-Based Programs for Early-Year Students

To effectively engage first- and second-year students, companies should create activities that go beyond typical presentations. Incorporating interactive components such as gamified learning, live Q&A sessions, and mentorship opportunities enhances the whole experience. To help students gain confidence early on, these activities should focus on developing essential skills such as communication, problem-solving, and basic industry knowledge. The goal is to provide a positive and lasting impression that positions the organisation as approachable and committed to student success from the start.

ii. **Offer Financially Supportive and Practical Exposure Initiatives**

Financial considerations and practical experience are strong motivators for students, particularly in their early years. Companies can enhance their employer brand by offering paid internships, startup funding opportunities, scholarships, and financial literacy training on budgeting, investing, and career-related financial planning. In addition, organising industrial tours and practical projects exposes students to real-world work environments, closing the gap between job demands and academic learning. Such activities show a company's commitment to comprehensive student development and can generate loyalty that lasts until graduation.

iii. Utilize Social Media and Campus Clubs for Effective Outreach

Since social media platforms and student organisations are the primary means by which students learn about company activities, firms should create strong alliances with campus ambassadors and clubs. Tailored content, timely event marketing, and genuine engagement on channels such as Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn can greatly boost student involvement. Partnering with student groups also keeps companies up to date on current trends and interests, allowing them to create more relevant and appealing events. Likewise, maintaining constant and visible engagement across these channels ensures that companies remain top-of-mind among the student population.

iv. Deliver Targeted Career-Focused Engagement for Final-Year Students

Final-year students are strongly motivated by clear career paths and talent validation. Companies should host career seminars with industry professionals, hands-on workshops for advanced skill certification and specialised networking sessions that link students directly with recruiters and alumni. Transparent information about job openings, internship opportunities and hiring processes helps students avoid confusion and prepares them for successful career searches. Tailoring these programs to final-year needs enhances the possibility of talented students choosing to join the company after graduation.

v. Maintain Consistent, Creative and Inclusive Campus Presence

In order to establish a strong employer brand, businesses must continue to be present on campus through a range of innovative activities. Students can demonstrate their skills and connect the organisation with innovative thinking and problem-solving by sponsoring hackathons, case contests, or innovation challenges. Providing giveaways, planning exciting competitions, and sharing alumni success stories help to humanise the brand and build strong emotional bonds. Ensuring events are inclusive and accessible to students across all academic years and disciplines helps widen the talent pool and enhances the company's reputation as a supportive employer.

By adopting these multifaceted recommendations, companies can develop a dynamic and phased employer branding strategy. This approach not only aligns with student's evolving needs throughout their academic journey but also positions the company as an attractive and trustworthy employer, ultimately securing a sustainable competitive advantage in talent acquisition.

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Appendix A.

b-Ace Campus Ambassador-1 (Transcription)

Speaker 1: Hello bhaiya, thank you for joining me today.I am conducting this interview as a part of my academic internship project on Shaping Perceptions Early: How bKash Builds Its Employer Brand Among Undergraduates. Before we begin I would like to assure you that your responses will be used solely for academic purposes and your identity will remain confidential. The purpose of this interview is to gain your perspectives and experiences on career related sessions and To assess student perceptions in regards to the importance of academics versus extracurricular activities (ECAs). If everything sounds good, we can begin bhaiya?

Speaker 2: Yes, definitely.

Speaker 1: Okay so let's begin with the first question. Based on your own experience and what you've seen in your club, how do students from different academic years like from 1st till the final year respond to career-related sessions or workshops?

Speaker 2: Honestly, it's kind of different for each of the year. Since in the first year students they basically show up to the events more like free sessions, we can just enjoy it or we have free time we can just go like that. But in the second year students they just start to think a bit more seriously than the first year ones but they are still into exploring. And in my opinion about the final year students they are more like grabbing the opportunities or inquiring about the jobs or they are more likely to network because they have to do it and since their time is ticking for that reason, so these are the perspectives.

Speaker 1: Okay so to sum it up it's more like the final year students are more focused into their career rather than the first year students, right bhaiya?

Speaker 2: Exactly

Speaker 1: Okay let's move on to the second question. Have you or your peers personally felt more clarity or confidence about your career path after attending employer-hosted sessions or workshops?

Speaker 2: Yes, even I have also felt it for myself as because sometimes a good employer or good sessions conducted by the prospect of the particular industries that actually motivates me or give me an idea that okay I finally get to know about this industries for example. It's like I have got the whole idea of the company so it's like I am one step ahead into getting to know the company. So this is it.

Speaker 1: Okay so to sum it up it gives you more clarity and confidence that yes this the career path I want to choose for myself.

Speaker 2: Yes exactly.

Speaker 1: Okay let's move on to the third question that, in your experience do 1st or 2nd-year students seem less aware or less engaged with career opportunities compared to older students in their final year?

Speaker 2: Yes definitely, the first and second year students are less aware not because they don't care but because they don't feel the urgency yet. And about the older students specially those in their third and fourth year, they know that their time is just ticking and that they need to pay more attention.

Speaker 1: Okay so they are more into thinking that yes I have to make a quick decision in order to move forward in my career.

Speaker 2: Yes, definitely.

Speaker 1: Okay next up is what types of career-related sessions seem to attract the most student interest like for example if that includes CV building, networking, industry talks? Since you are part of a club you have arranged these kind of sessions, what do you think in your perspective attracts the most students?

Speaker 2: To my knowledge and past experiences, CV building sessions always get a crowd, also about the networking sessions as well especially if there is a chance to meet big industry people or the industry leaders they are more of a like they get to know the exciting speakers which are like formal or more of a like student zone. So they are more into the CV building and the networking sessions.

Speaker 1: Okay so if I may ask that whether the case was like this that after the session ended everyone rushed to get connected on LinkedIN or to ask questions to the individual person or the industry expert?

Speaker 2: Yes even I have also done it in my past experiences when the session ends I tend to go to the speaker and get to know about him more in a deeper sense and exchange visiting cards to get added in their LinkedIN profiles, in order to build more of a continued connections with them.

Speaker 1: Okay so that gives you an edge into knowing that person more if you have any future plan of joining that company.

Speaker 2: Yes exactly or like having the opportunity to see him or her in the next events, you know probably getting him to know me more better for example like getting into their company so that they can vouch for me.

Speaker 1: Okay bhaiya understood, that was a really clear insight. So to moving up to the second last question, do you think students tend to remember or favor companies that engage with campus more frequently or in creative ways like their brand presence?

Speaker 2: Definitely, if a company keeps showing up again and again and they do fun or creative things people remember them like if they bring interactive games or maybe for examples workshops, giveaways or maybe speakers, students will actually talk about them later.

Speaker 1: Okay so talking about them later means is it on social media like a social buzz?

Speaker 2: Yes, for example in their messengers or whatsapp or socially they get to talk about the speakers in the back end with their friends and families. For example, when I talked with some big tech guy and I usually talk about him infront of my families so that I can share my views and their experiences as so that these people or the company I can represent it to my family or friends so it's like a buzzing.

Speaker 1: Okay bhaiya understood. Okay we have come down to the last question of this session which is as a club president what advice would you give to employers who want to better connect with students across all academic years targeting from the first year till the final year?

Speaker 2: Okay I would say do not just focus on final year students, I would rather say connect with the first years too maybe through lighter skill based sessions so that it warms up the students up like for example an engaging session which is like less boring and which is more of a like interactive games or which has more interactions. I would rather suggest to bring related speakers not that just someone reading from a corporate script so definitely I would suggest this to the employers.

Speaker 1: Okay so since you are club president have you arranged any sort of event like that in order to attract more and more students or to educate them regarding their career path?

Speaker 2: Yes, just recently very recentlyI have arranged an industry visit which is based on taxation/ auditing since I am more into like finance and accounting club so I tend to like motivate my students to go their so that they can have hands on experiences to learn about how the auditing and how the taxation works so that the students don't just get all the bookish knowledge that we tend to get in our universities but also get the hands on experiences when they get to the industries and learn from the experts. So this is something I have done very recently.

Speaker 1: Okay bhaiya understood that was a really clear perspective on how students tend to look into their career path from the starting of their university till the final year, like in the first year they are into like exploring and in the third and final year they are more into getting the indept knowledge about which path to follow or which company to approach.

Speaker 1: Okay any last words you want to add to your whole interview session bhaiya like a recommendation or anything?

Speaker 2: My recommendation for a company or any other companies would be like when their conducting any seminar or any event to our university I feel like they should create more interactive sessions or more of like games sessions. So that people don't get bored with all those boring seminars or sessions if they are planning to do more with the particular universities because people remember company when they do think which is unique or which is different from other companies because there are some companies which actually does some actual effort to do some interactive game session. They also give prized during those sessions like first, second, third prizes for example they are part of sessions or seminars though it is like 1 hour 30 mins or even for 1 hour, I think there is an increased amount of students when there is food and lesser amount of students when there is no food. So food is a means of motivation so my only recommendation or a suggestion or maybe an advice that when you arrange any seminar or sessions if it is not for a workshop or like industry visit or something like more of like experiential you should or you may include interactive games sessions or workshops or maybe like the food. These are some of the motivational factors that you can provide while doing your visit to the universities when targeting the final year students or maybe the second year, third year or maybe the first year students, because this is how the students will actually remember you because in my earlier past experiences I know what food was given to me or what kind of quizzes I have attended and the company names and the things they have done and said. So it's basically a medium or basically a way how the students can remember your company as well as the speaker themselves so yeah.

Speaker 1: Okay bhaiya that was really great insight because you were talking about how to attract the students into coming into these sessions because they are really a hands on learning for them but it’s important to attend and know why are here. So that was really interesting and thank you for your time bhaiya, so this was the interview session so based on all of your experience I have recorded the session and this is going to be used for academic purpose. So thank you for the insights and have a good day.

Speaker 2: It’s my pleasure and thank you as well. Hope to see you soon.

b-Ace Campus Ambassador-2 (Transcription)

Speaker 1: Hello apu, thank you for joining me today and I am conducting this interview as part of my internship project on Shaping Perceptions Early: How bKash Builds Its Employer Brand Among Undergraduates. The purpose of this interview is to gain your perspectives and experiences on career related sessions and to assess student perceptions in regards to the importance of academics versus extracurricular activities (ECAs). If everything sounds good, we can begin bhaiya? Before we begin I would like to assure you that your responses will be used solely for academic purposes and your identity will remain confidential, unless you give me the permission to disclose. If everything sounds good, shall we begin apu?

Speaker 2: Thank you apu, yes we can begin.

Speaker 1: So let me start by asking you the first question, which ased on your own experience and what you've seen in your club, how do students from different academic years from 1st year till the last year respond to career-related sessions or workshops?

Speaker 2: Okay apu, from the club I have gained experience I have seen how the first year, second year and the third year students differently react to the career related sessions or workshops. If I talk about the first year students they usually be very excited about the club events. In first semester or first year, they join the clubs and they are very excited about the club events they often join the session to support the club or they want to prove that they are loyal to clubs. Besides this they also join the session if it's a fun or unique, purely for career learning. For the second year student they begin to think more seriously about careers and future plans, they attend seminars to understand topics better and gain knowledge that could help them later. Now if I come to the third year students we see that they are generally interested in the sessions with a clear focus or learning or skill development and preparing for their careers.

Speaker 1: Okay apu understood, so that was your brief understanding of how final year and the second to first semester students react to club events organized related to any sort of career related sessions, right apu?

Speaker 2: Yes apu.

Speaker 1: Let's then move on to the second question, Have you or your peers personally felt more clarity or confident about your career path after attending employer-hosted sessions or workshops related to your career or major or the subject that you have been targeting to study in your final year?

Speaker 2: Yes apu. Let me share a story, in recent sessions with NCC bank my CSE peers told that they were highly motivated when the HR head shared that he was originally a CSE graduate but eventually became the HR head showing that the career path took unexpected yet successful turns. Sessions like career talks and other important workshops help us the final students to understand how to start our careers, navigate career path and prepare accordingly. The real stories and the practical insights gives students actually more clarity and confidence about their own professional journeys.

Speaker 1: Okay have you felt that also apu? Like did it work for you after attending any sort of session?

Speaker 2: Yes apu, it also worked for me.

Speaker 1: Okay understood apu. Okay thank you for your insights, let's then move on to the third question which is In your experience, do 1st or 2nd-year students seem less aware or less engaged with career opportunities compared to older students who are in their final year?

Speaker 2: Yes apu, I also feel that the first and second year students are generally less aware of career opportunities, actually I think they think about it less. They want to have fun in university in first or second year, after the second year they think about this career opportunity. That's why the senior student recognize the urgency that working on their skill building and attending sessions that will help them in the future in their career.

Speaker 1: Okay understood but don't you think apu it's also necessary for the first year students to start their planning or shouldn't their mindset be like yes they have to think early in order to climb the corporate ladder later on?

Speaker 2: Yes apu I also think they should start thinking about their career opportunities in the second or third semesters. In their first semester they don't understand so many things but after their second semester they should start thinking about their opportunities how they should be doing networking or how they will improve their CVs.

Speaker 1: Okay apu understood. Okay then let's move on to the next question.What types of career-related sessions seem to attract the most student interest for example, CV building, networking, industry talks or if we bring any sort of industry expert, will that spark their interest or anything of that like?

Speaker 2: Okay I feel like industry talks or career talks, networking events usually attract students so that they can build network. Here I am talking about specially the last year students, they want to focus on their networking so it's all about the industry talks and the networking events, as they actually draw their attentions. Then there are some skill based workshops, like some learning tools like excel or digital marketing or CV writing, these also attract them. So that's how they know how to prepare themselves for the future.

Speaker 1: Okay apu can you share any of your examples like have you participated in any sort of sessions like that which focused mainly on CV building or any sort of industry talks?

Speaker 2: Yes in this semester I also joined the career talks session by NCC bank, the HR head and the Marketing head was there and it was a very insightful session on how how to be confident that I am in this profession but I can also shift my profession. Likewise, I am in this company I can also do well in that company as well, also we learned how a company is doing well or not, how can we know about them and we should apply or not in that company and how we can gain this knowledge from them.

Speaker 1: Okay apu understood so it's more like if we gain their perspective it kindof opens more field or more exposure giving us that opportunity that yes we can embrace any other field if we want or if that sparks our interest right apu?

Speaker 2: Yes apu.

Speaker 1: Next up moving to the second last question which is Do you think students tend to remember or favor companies that engage with campus more frequently or in creative ways?

Speaker 2: Yes students tend to join those companies that show consistent or creative campus engagement for example like workshops like skills based workshops and industry talks like we know them more when they come to our campus and discuss about their career journey so that we can learn and also it helps the company as well like the company gets popularity and students want to join that company. When they are talking about their career they also talk about this company and how flexible their culture and how it is like. So creates interests within so they tend to join those companies that actually create a campus engagement. Also the sponsor of case competitions and the mentorship programs, it helps companies to be connected with students.

Speaker 1: Okay apu that was really insightful because it actually gives the companies an idea of how the students are and how they are thinking towards their company and which topics sparks their interest right apu?

Speaker 2: Right.

Speaker 1: So let's move on to the last question of this session which is As a club president, you are the club president of the BUMA club, what advice would you give to employers like the companies who want to better connect with students across all academic Years?

Speaker 2: I would like to advice that to work closely with the campus ambassadors to understand the current trends and the student interest and the best ways to engage with different academic years. Student interests are sometimes based on the trends so if they focus on the current trends and student interests they will be able to make better connections with them, like interactive sessions to capture them with the ongoing trends. Also like sponsor innovative competitions that will challenge the students creatively and professionally. I think this will help build more connections with the students.

Speaker 1: Okay so it's more like if they connect or do things that would spark interest of the students it will actually help their employer branding team and their company as a whole because in that way they are kind of attracting the students like the bright minds into their company, right apu?

Speaker 2: Yes.

Speaker 1: Okay apu, this was all the questions and thank you for your time. I hope this would really help me in my internship project and this was in general a very insightful session with.