

EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES TO HELP STUDENTS OF LOW INCOME FAMILIES STUDYING IN THE NATIONAL  
CURRICULUM IN THE RURAL AREAS OF BANGLADESH

Aveen Tasnuba , Mashiyat Nawal , Auritro Zaman

Scholastica

Internship session: 2024 (June - July)

**Executive Summary:**

This report centres around the children of rural areas , their struggles in pursuit of education and how steps can be taken to make it easier for them to learn and develop into productive members of society . The project was undertaken within the supervision of Poraai.com, who have established classrooms in Netrokona (PC1) and Gazipur(PC2) that aid in the education of underprivileged students in rural areas of Bangladesh. Extensive background research was done during the project, along with multiple other steps including a cost benefit analysis, ideation and a decision matrix among many, to formulate solutions by discussing with relevant personnel who are well versed regarding the education system of Bangladesh in rural areas . The solutions mentioned within this report are such that they can be implemented at a wide scale and with minimal difficulties so that the students can learn more efficiently and develop faster than they are doing at the moment . The solutions are of relative low cost and maintenance is of low difficulty so they can be kept running for long periods of time . Our flagship solutions are creating “Mini cinemas” and “School collaborations” which integrate the current learning environment of the children with the online resources that are at hand in an interactive manner . We aim to integrate multimedia into education so that students are able to access a new style of learning that deviates from traditional methods and caters to the unique needs of each student .

**Overview of Coordinator:**

The purpose of the internship provided by Poraai.com serves several key objectives such as professional development, practical experience, networking and background research. The internship was designed to benefit both the interns and the organisation by providing meaningful learning experiences and contributing to professional and personal growth.

In my role as an Internship Coordinator in this internship session, I was responsible for overseeing and facilitating the internship program. My duties included onboarding interns and coordinating their day-to-day activities.I also acted as a liaison between the interns and various objectives to ensure a smooth integration and meaningful learning experience.

During the internship, I focused on equipping interns with essential skills and knowledge to enhance their professional development. Key areas of instruction included:

1. Project Management: I taught interns how to effectively manage projects, including setting a model for the project, report writing format, creating timelines and monitoring progress.
2. Communication Skills: Emphasis was placed on developing strong written and verbal communication skills, including how to write professional reports, how to arrange the interview sessions and how to present ideas clearly in meetings. I organised regular stand-up meeting session via WhatsApp and Zoom and provided guidance to the interns, arranged feedback sessions, addressing any issues promptly and ensuring that the interns met their learning objectives.
3. Technical Skills: Depending on the specific needs of the department, interns were trained in relevant software tools and technologies, such as Canva.
4. Team Collaboration: Interns were guided on best practices for working collaboratively within teams, including how to contribute effectively in group settings and handle interpersonal dynamics.
5. Problem-Solving Techniques: Interns were taught problem-solving strategies to address challenges they might encounter in their tasks, including critical thinking, brainstorming, decision matrix etc.
6. Logbook and meeting minutes writing: Interns were guided to maintain a logbook and meeting minutes with the elements such as Activities and tasks, objectives and goals, skills and knowledge gained, feedback and observation, personal reflection and future plans to keep track of their progress, reflect on their experience and provide valuable documentation for the internship report.

These aimed to prepare interns for their future careers by providing them with practical skills and knowledge applicable in their professional endeavours.

### **Description of Company:**

This project has been designed for the company called “Poraai.com”, it is an online educational platform based in Bangladesh. Their main goal is to make education accessible and affordable for all. The CEO of the company Mr. Muntasir Mubin Sauvik is currently residing in Saskatoon Canada, he oversees business operations. Mr. Asif Rahman Akash is the operations manager of the company,

Ms. Sumyya Binte Mahmud is their internship coordinator and Ms. Tanha Ahmed Nijhum works as the senior instructor for Poraai.com.

They have two physical classrooms; Poraai classroom 1 which is situated at Netrokona Bangladesh, where they provide free online and offline education to highschool students of low income families and prepare them for the national board exams. Poraai classroom 2 is situated at Gazipur, where free of cost English language education is provided to high school students. Online classes are conducted by Ms. Tanha Ahmed Nijhum and Ms. Sumyya Binte Mahmud, while the offline classes are conducted by Joynal Sir and Mofazzul Sir.

Along with providing free education ,they also host multiple donation programs and have guest speaker sessions. They also have different internship programs throughout the year.

### **Description of Internship:**

#### **Interns:**

Aveen Tasnuba  
Mashiyat Nawal  
Auritro Zaman

#### **Internship coordinator:**

Sumyya Binte Mahmud ( Coordinator + Instructor )  
Tanha Ahmed Nijhum ( Senior Instructor )  
Muntasir Mubin Sauvik ( CEO of Poraai.com )

The internship with poraai.com started on 29th June, 2024. A physical orientation was arranged and all the internship coordinators, representative of poraai.com Asif Rahman Akash and interns were present. Additionally, Muntasir Mubin Sauvik joined from Canada through a video call. The interns were introduced to the company and given a brief summary of what the whole internship session would include. Time schedules of interns were fixed by the orientation and work started from 2nd July, 2024.

The interns completed multiple assignments throughout the internship. The following is the list of activities completed by the interns:

1. Logbook Writing: The interns were asked to keep a logbook throughout the internship, which is a written record of all the tasks done each day of the internship. This helped us keep track of our progress. The summary of each day was promptly written then reviewed by the internship coordinators at the end of working hours.
2. Elevator Pitch: As the first task of the internship, the interns learned how to create an elevator pitch, which is a short 1 minute video giving a comprehensive introduction of ourselves in a professional manner. The interns then submitted their own elevator pitch which was reviewed and improved with the help of internship coordinators.
3. Presentation Making: The interns learned how to make formal presentations on PowerPoint on Canva. Different ways to make a presentation more interactive and engaging were focused upon. The interns then worked on their own presentations on a social norm topic that was reviewed by internship coordinators and feedback was given.
4. Reels/ Video Making: The interns were taught how to make and edit reels or videos targeted towards a social media platform. The interns then were tasked on making an engaging reel on an informational topic of their choice. The interns submitted their drafts and the internship coordinators helped us improve any aspect that needed change.
5. Meeting Minutes: The interns were taught how to write meeting minutes for any meeting conducted and multiple samples were shown for reference. Thereafter, the interns wrote meeting minutes for each day's meetings.
6. Project Design and Report Writing: The most significant assignment conducted was the project design and report writing. The interns were taught how to do research for a project and multiple steps taken for proper research paper writing. They were mentored by Muntasir Mubin Sauvik and other internship coordinators throughout the process. The project design method is discussed in the following section. The research and writing spanned the whole internship duration and was the central assignment of the internship.

Additionally, the interns had the opportunity to observe and interact with the PC1 classroom of poraii.com and interview Rebeka Yasmin, who is also a social work activist.

Due to certain political unrest within the country during the time of the internship, approximately 1 week of internship period was not completed. As a result, certain activities and tasks were scrapped to finish within time. The internship was officially completed within a month, ending on 27th July, 2024. Further feedback and editing of the report was completed following that.

### **Description of Project Design Method:**

The interns were given a selection of topics to choose from , out of which the first topic out of the list was chosen . Before commencing with the report , the interns conducted research on their own , collecting resources across the internet related to the topic which were thoroughly read and archived for reference later on . As part of research , the interns were able to interview some parents and students from Poraai Classroom 1 and Rebeka Yasmin , from which the interns were able to gain insights into the problems that plague those living in rural areas . After the interns finalised their background research , the interns contacted Muntasir Sauvik to ask him of his requirements and what he wanted to come out of the project . He also set out constraints for each requirement he pointed out . Using such guidance , the interns divided out tasks between them and started writing up a draft report to start off their project . Upon writing up drafts at a frequent pace which the interns showed to their coordinators , they were able to better their project and bring it to the standards required using their critiques and advice .

The project was divided into a set timeline as shown below :

- Resource Identification
- Ideation
- Cost-Benefit Analysis
- Decision Matrix
- Assessment Test
- Project Review
- Final Report Submission
- Logbook Submission
- Certificate Ceremony

The basic outline of a report project has also been mentioned below :

- Problem Statement
- Background Research
- Requirements
- Constraints
- Objectives
- System Design

- Prototype
- Testing
- Feedback & Adjustment

Descriptions of some of these outlines and the work entailed with each has been written down throughout the report to allow the reader to understand the intern's thought process and work.

### **Background Research :**

The background research is the foundation of the report , providing information upon which we based our proposed solutions . We compiled various reports and other like minded research papers to understand the conditions of students in rural areas and propose appropriate solutions to empower the student's ability and curiosity to learn . We had also conducted various interviews where we talked directly with the people living in the rural areas to understand their situation better and talked with Rebeka Yasmin , a collaborator of Poraai.com

The sources we looked at while forming our proposed solutions :

- ❖ The Daily Star  
(<https://www.thedailystar.net/country/news/54-bangladeshi-rural-households-lack-internet-access-survey-1960661>)
- ❖ The Dhaka Tribune  
(<https://www.dhakatribune.com/opinion/longform/305384/the-challenge-of-education-reform-in-bangladesh>)
- ❖ Unesco  
(<https://www.iiep.unesco.org/en/rural-education-bangladesh-problems-and-prospects-11709>)
- ❖ ResearchGate  
([https://www.researchgate.net/publication/44826909\\_Raising\\_Basic\\_Education\\_Levels\\_in\\_Rural\\_Bangladesh\\_The\\_Impact\\_of\\_a\\_Non-formal\\_Education\\_Programme](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/44826909_Raising_Basic_Education_Levels_in_Rural_Bangladesh_The_Impact_of_a_Non-formal_Education_Programme))

These are the key points that we found out during our interviews with the rural families of Netrokona via Poraai Classroom 1 :

1. Students from underprivileged families in Netrokona, Bangladesh who are studying at the PC1 classroom for poraii.com have reported that none of them have any source of communication and internet at home. Households in their area cannot afford and hence do not have any phones, laptops or such opportunities.
2. Students in such remote areas of Netrokona, who travel everyday to poraii.com classrooms usually face transportation issues to access the classroom facilities, due to lack of any transport they usually resort to walking which takes up a huge part of their day, hindering their education by consuming essential time.
3. Joyнал Sir, a teacher working for the poraii classroom, has reported that they do not have the time or opportunity to give the additional support that certain special needs students require.
4. In most households, both the parents are illiterate, therefore are paid very meagre amounts for the jobs available. With multiple children, it becomes impossible to support education for all of them.
5. Only 10% of the population in Netrokona have access to wifi and almost all families have zero access to a mobile phone. It is believed that a huge gap in technology is present between the urban and rural population.
6. Due to previous and continued low rates of education in this area, lack of parent's education and available resources cause these students to find themselves unable to extend their knowledge beyond that of the school hours. Educational support from external sources such as guidance from more experienced people around them or researching online is not a possibility. Additionally, parents lack awareness regarding the importance of education which often causes overlooks in the enforcement of children. Without such crucial guidance the students lack motivation and opportunities.,
7. Many students are required to be helping out in domestic work or agriculture related work, which hampers their education as during peak harvest seasons they cannot attend school at all and in general spend a large proportion of their day working hence unable to concentrate solely on education.

**Problem description:**

As technology develops further , so does its scope in education. With children from urban areas able to access such technological benefits to aid in their studies , children from rural areas are unfortunately unable to do the same. Children from rural areas , especially those outside of the Dhaka region are already at a disadvantage as they do not have the basic resources to complete their education and with the rapid advances in technology in the education field which they are unable to access , these children are left even further behind than their peers in urban areas. To help narrow the gap between those fortunate and unfortunate , this report aims to propose solutions that allow the children from rural areas to access some of the technology that is popular in the education field and bring about innovation in their studying. We have developed strategies that aim to combine offline and online aspects of learning so that our target students can experience the benefits of both worlds , all while learning and developing at a faster rate than before through our solutions. The solutions provided aim to help bridge the gap between children of urban and rural areas so that in the future , we can aim to create a country where all are equal on the basis of education.

**Problem statement:**

The problem research describes the aim of the research in a concise manner which allows the reader to vaguely understand what the contents of this report will be. The problem statement for this report is :

**“ EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES TO HELP STUDENTS OF LOW INCOME FAMILIES STUDYING IN THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM IN THE RURAL AREAS OF BANGLADESH “**

**Requirements:**

Requirements can be considered as an overview of what the project aims to achieve and what the employer directly wants from the project. It provides us with a proper and concise direction that must be fulfilled for the success of the project and satisfaction of the employer. We have used the requirement as a compilation of benchmarks to attain that would be a guide throughout our project, as well as a measure for defining the demands of the employer and hence attaining them.

The following enlists the requirements that were finalised after consulting with Muntasir Mubin Sauvik from poraii.com:

- The solution has to bring about a positive change for the target audience - students of highschool level in rural areas of Bangladesh ( Netrokona & Kishoreganj ).
- The solution has to be inexpensive in its implementation and for the consumers.
- The solution must incorporate both online and offline measures of mitigating the problem
- The solution must make use of existing resources present within the rural area community and Poraii classroom PC1.
- The solution must not have a learning curve that is too steep for implementation, the consumers must be able to grasp it with minimal or no prior training.
- The solution must consist of multiple levels of understanding and be compatible with students of a range of abilities.

Our project tackles each of these requirements with an elaborate plan. It includes both a traditional offline approach as well as a more sophisticated online venture. The project has been maintained to be within realistic financial boundaries, creating an inexpensive yet effective strategy. The design allows flexibility for students to implement in a personalised manner, hence being inclusive of a large audience.

### **Constraints:**

To bring any project within realistic bounds, a constraint must be imposed upon it. Our constraints have been finalised keeping our time and goals in mind to create an achievable goal. Additionally, they prevent us from going off track from what the project was originally meant to be. Constraints helped us mark proper timelines for each task, divide the workload efficiently among each member, create a sharp resolution of the solution and create a better understanding of what our solution must comprise.

The following are the constraints we have outlined after careful consideration of every factor:

- The solution must bring about at least 2 positive changes for the target audience - students of highschool level in rural areas of Bangladesh (Netrokona & Kishoreganj).
- The upper bound for the cost of the solution for the consumers has been set at 2000 bdt per month for each student.

- The solution must have 1 approach that is fully offline and 1 approach that converges both online and offline.
- The solution must at least make use of any 1 or 2 existing resources that the students have at hand.
- The solution can require the consumers a maximum of 1 week of learning before successful implementation.
- The solution must be inclusive of at least 2 levels of understanding of students.

Our project meets each constraint as it is adaptive in nature therefore students can decide their own pace. The project will require minimal funding by the consumer as a major portion is through voluntary collaboration with schools. This will allow us not only to promote education in these areas, but also create a tangible “knowledge bank” that would remain a part of the community past the project duration.

### **Objectives:**

This was the most crucial part of the project, after being provided with the requirements and constraints, then came the objectives where we had to determine the next step. With every requirement set by Poraai.com came the constraints which then helped us set our objectives.

- 1) The first requirement stated that the solution needs to bring positive change, the constraint was that we had to restrict it to two positive changes only. After going through all the possible changes, we came up with two which suited the most. The solutions reduce the knowledge barrier for the students in the villages as they will be exposed to more efficient and different study techniques and also increase community encouragement for education.
- 2) The next requirement stated that the solutions need to be inexpensive, in addition to that came the constraint that it needs to be within 1000/2000 tk, per student. In response to that after further speculation and in detailed calculations, the mini cinema costs 8500 tk per month and since it can be used by 40+ people, hence it will cost 213 tk per month for each student. The school collaboration solution costs 2900 tk per month and as it can be used by a huge number of students as well (30/40 students), it will approximately cost 73tk per student to avail this service.
- 3) The third requirement wanted the solutions to be both offline and online, the constraint stated that it has to have at least one offline and one online and offline program. After extensive planning and discussion we came up with the two solutions, the mini cinema falls under both offline and online as it will be a physical service however the content will be presented online. However on the other hand the school collaboration is a fully offline program.
- 4) This requirement asked for the use of existing resources, the constraint stated that at most two existing resources needed to be used. For the mini cinema, an open space for students to gather was already available, along with that existing electrical

connections were also put to use. For school collaboration, existing materials such as projects, posters etc from other schools are being used. Since the materials will be stored in the village school, that is also a resource we will be using.

- 5) The requirement demanded that the solution must not be too hard to implement, in other words, the learning curve must not be steep. The constraint stated that the learning curve must be within 1 week. This was maintained in the mini cinema solution as 1-2 sessions of attendance, which is around 2 days, would be enough to adjust to the new method of learning. The solution of school collaboration is also easy to understand as students would have this implemented in their natural setting of the school they attend, therefore through help of teachers they can grasp the content within an estimated 3-4 days.
- 6) The last requirement stated that the solution must accommodate multiple levels of understanding of students. The constraint asks us to include at least 2 levels of understanding. This was implemented in both the solutions through a pre assessment examination on the topics of English, Bangla and General Knowledge. The scores would help us divide the students into different 3 categories of understanding and therefore provide resources tailored to their understanding through separate sessions and projects in the solutions.

### **Ideation:**

In the ideation phase we analysed all our resources, objectives, requirements and constraints regarding the project and came up with multiple solutions, among which we have finalised two solutions. The following is the description in detail of the finalised solutions:

#### **Solution : Mini Cinema**

The project includes hosting shows featuring educational content. The capacity for each show approximates to a minimum of 2 and a maximum of 50 students. The shows would be held weekly and segmented into 3 slots each day to accommodate students of 3

different understanding levels. Therefore, a total of 12 shows per month will be held with a run time of 1 hour each and 1 hour for further discussions. An estimated 1 week of learning curve is anticipated for the students to get used to the system.

The 3 different understanding levels included would be as following:

1. **Beginner** - Students who struggle in understanding while reading and listening to basic English or Bangla at a normal pace.
2. **Intermediate** - Students who show proper understanding through reading and listening to basic English or Bangla at a normal pace but struggle at a faster pace and complex concepts.
3. **Advanced** - Students who show a strong grasp of understanding through reading and listening both basic and complex English or Bangla and are able to critically assess works with depth.

Where each student lies in these criterions will be predetermined through an assessment test, where the students would be shown videos from each of these levels and then asked related questions to assess their understanding. Score on this test would rank them as

beginner: <20 intermediate: 20-40 advanced: 41-50.

The students will be assessed for improvement after completion of 8 shows attended.

The shows will be held in a venue that would be rented. The screening will be through the use of a projector setup using mobile data as a source for wifi to minimise costs. A teacher with sufficient knowledge to use the devices as well as help students understand the concept will be employed. Additionally, another personnel to manage the venue, attendance, etc. will be employed. The content shown will be sourced through available online infographics that are free for educational purposes. This would include videos in both English and Bangla on social norms, current affairs, educational television shows, documentaries, etc.

The monthly cost of this project is around 8500 bdt per month. This can be covered by charging the students attending a minimal fee that is affordable for them as well. At the minimum capacity, the fee would be 400 bdt; while at maximum capacity, the fee would be 40 bdt.

#### Solution: School collaboration

This project is a fully offline solution based on the concept of reusing and recycling old materials from schools in Dhaka city and circulating them throughout the schools in the rural areas such as Netrokona itself. Through this program the used high school syllabus and curriculum materials such as projects, IE sheet resources can be shared among the students of the village. This program will be conducted quarter wise, once in four months .All the resources used in that certain quarter will be sent to the villages

via a pickup van. This initiative will be useful for all the students in the rural schools as they would be able to gain knowledge on certain topics through the resources and also grow curiosity.

- In order to begin this program and keep it running one person is required to manage the exchange and communicate, act as the middleman between the schools.
- Due to this project being super simple and self explanatory the learning curve height is at a minimum of 3 days.
- This initiative is thought out to be usable by 30/40 people at once as it is intended to gather as much resources as possible from other schools.
- Existing resources which are to be used are the projects and materials from the schools. They will be stored at the village school.
- The total cost per month is estimated to be 2900 taka per month, other elements and costs are expected to be
  - 1) 1500 taka as a salary per month for the liaison.
  - 2) Transportation costs 7000 taka every four months to deliver the resources from Dhaka city.

### **Project Review:**

#### **Personal Statement of Internship Coordinators:**

**Summya Binte Mahmud:** While this was the first time for me working as an internship coordinator, working with the interns throughout the internship was a pleasant experience as everyone was cooperative and diligent. Even though my interaction with the interns was much more limited than I had anticipated, I was able to learn and observe their individual characteristics as a proper

contact was kept throughout each step of the project between the interns and the coordinators, which in turn helped in the project. All of the interns showed dedication to each task and we were able to complete the majority of the assignments within the estimated timeframe. However, we faced certain difficulties and limitations throughout the project as well. Some of the significant ones were the lack of a 'breathing room' or excess time in cases of unexpected delays. As we could not conduct the internship for almost a week, our schedule was harmed quite a bit. Additionally, I have gained much more experience as an internship coordinator through this experience that I would be able to utilise in future. For example, I have realised the priority of interaction with the target demographic that we are addressing in the research. Hence, in future endeavours I would try my utmost to provide that link between the interns and the students of low income families to enhance the depth of project research.

**Tanha Ahmed Nijhum** : It was my first time working with students of Scholastica for an internship session and I was excited to see what they had to offer . With past experience as an internship coordinator , I was excited to help the new interns out and guide them throughout the month-long program . It was refreshing to see the thought processes of the young interns and I was able to gain insight into how they work and learn from it . Guiding them throughout the program was a personally rewarding experience from which I hope the interns will be able to leave with good memories and knowledge that they can apply in the next chapters of their lives . For me it was particularly rewarding to see my past experiences at Poraai.com come into use and how it helped me navigate the challenges this internship program provided . However , the internship program was not without its problems ; this was supposed to be a 3 month long program but it was condensed into a 1 month one . This caused many aspects of the internship to be hurried or even completely cut off and I believe that hurt the overall experiences of the new interns . Not only that , due to the unforeseen Quota reform movement developing right in front of our eyes , the internship program had to be halted for at least a week , leading to delays in our project . We weren't prepared for such developments to occur and it taught me to be more prepared and have more contingency plans planned out for future internship programs .

#### Personal Statement of Interns:

**Mashiyat Nawal:** The internship was a very immersive experience as I got to interact with many people with decades worth of experience in this field as well as highly skilled individuals who are starting their journey. I have been able to learn a lot from them, including my co-interns. I appreciate the structure of poraai.com and the project design as well as it allowed me to have a much better understanding of the dynamics regarding the low income households and students, whom the project we worked on is based upon. The coordinators made it easier to grasp as well through their unwavering efforts with helping us in the face of any confusions. Even then we have faced some shortcomings such as a very limited duration of the internship and difficulties staying on schedule

due to external factors. However, I perceive these as a learning factor that I would improve in my future projects and believe the internship fulfilled every expectation that I had held at the start of it.

**Aurito Zaman:** It was a very rewarding experience from my end , being able to learn so much from the internship coordinators . Their wisdom , guidance , humour really livened up the whole atmosphere and helped me ease into the internship smoothly . Not only coordinators but my fellow interns were also instrumental in making this a pleasant experience ; I learned a lot from them and I believe I have made a new batch of good friends . Being able to talk with students from rural areas was a deeply humbling experience and being able to see how they interact in classes brought about a feeling of pride . Seeing them do their best even though their circumstances were not the best was deeply inspiring , I don't think I will forget that anytime soon . The shortcomings we faced throughout the internships never managed to dampen my spirit and I only have the coordinators and my fellow interns to thank for that . I learned a lot and I hope I can put whatever I learnt into good use in my future endeavours .

**Aveen Tasnuba:** It was an honour for me to work at Poraai.com for the past one month, this internship has given me some really memorable experiences which I will reminisce forever. Being very new to the professional field, the unconditional guidance from the instructors and coordinators made the journey really smooth. One of the most notable experiences was interaction with Poraai classroom 1 and Ms. Rebeka Yasmin, it really helped me gain perspective and I really enjoyed conversing with the new people. This internship has also provided me with two new friends. The existing structure of the company in place made the experience better. One of the limitations I think we faced was a lack of personal engagement which gave an impression that the information was derived indirectly. In conclusion this experience was extremely helpful as I got a look into the professional and organised lifestyle, I hope I will be able to look back and use this in my future as well.

Overall takeaways from this internship project:

- Interns learned the importance of teamwork and how to divide up tasks between them for efficiency .
- Interns were able to gain an insight into the workings of a corporate setting and learn tidbits about some aspects of it during the 1 month course .

- Time constraints were a major setback and prevented the interns from engaging in other planned out projects . The interns were not able to learn about things such as resume writing , how to apply for job interviews and more importantly were not able to go to Netrokona to visit the students of Poraai Classroom 1 .
- Interns struggled with juggling multiple tasks at once which could not be helped due to the cramped schedule created by the 1 month limit so everything was a bit rushed and less polished .

Future recommendations for the next batch of interns:

- Coordinators should not try to condense the whole 3 month program into a 1 month one , Cut out unnecessary projects and consult interns on what their personal goals are to determine what tasks and events should be kept in the internship , It should be tailored so that the interns get the most out of the internship .
- Try not to take on too many tasks at once and work on one at a time but within reasonable times and reasonable quality .
- Start the report project early to get a valuable head start .

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Key areas of instruction include:

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These aimed to prepare interns for their future careers by providing them with practical skills and knowledge applicable to their professional endeavours.

***Description of Company:***

This project has been designed for the company called “Poraai.com”, it is an online educational platform based in Bangladesh. Their main goal is to make education accessible and affordable for all. The CEO of the company Mr. Muntasir Mubin Sauvik is currently residing in Saskatoon Canada, he oversees business operations. Mr. Asif Rahman Akash is the operations manager of the company, Ms. Sumyya Binte Mahmud is their internship coordinator and Ms. Tanha Ahmed Nijhum works as the senior instructor for Poraai.com.

They have two physical classrooms; Poraai classroom 1 which is situated at Netrokona Bangladesh, where they provide free online and offline education to high school students of low-income families and prepare them for the national board exams. Poraai classroom 2 is situated at Gazipur, where free of cost English language education is provided to high school students. Online classes are conducted by Ms. Tanha Ahmed Nijhum and Ms. Sumyya Binte Mahmud, while offline classes are conducted by Joynal Sir and Mofazzul Sir.

Along with providing free education, they also host multiple donation programs and have guest speaker sessions. They also have different internship programs throughout the year.

***Description of Internship:***

**Interns:**

Aveen Tasnuba

Mashiyat Nawal

Auritro Zaman

**Internship coordinator:**

Sumyya Binte Mahmud ( Coordinator + Instructor )

Tanha Ahmed Nijhum ( Senior Instructor )

The internship with poraai.com started on 29th June 2024. A physical orientation was arranged and all the internship coordinators, representatives of poraai.com Asif Rahman Akash, and interns were present. Additionally, Muntasir Mubin Sauvik joined from

Canada through a video call. The interns were introduced to the company and given a summary of what the whole internship session would include. The time schedules of interns were fixed by the orientation and work started from 2nd July, 2024.

The interns completed multiple assignments throughout the internship. The following is the list of activities completed by the interns:

1. **Logbook Writing:** The interns were asked to keep a logbook throughout the internship, which is a written record of all the tasks done each day of the internship. This helped us keep track of our progress. The summary of each day was promptly written and then reviewed by the internship coordinators at the end of working hours.
2. **Elevator Pitch:** As the first task of the internship, the interns learned how to create an elevator pitch, which is a short 1-minute video giving a comprehensive introduction of ourselves professionally. The interns then submitted their elevator pitch which was reviewed and improved with the help of internship coordinators.
3. **Presentation Making:** The interns learned how to make formal presentations on PowerPoint on Canva. Different ways to make a presentation more interactive and engaging were focused upon. The interns then worked on their presentations on a social norm topic that was reviewed by internship coordinators and feedback was given.
4. **Reels/ Video Making:** The interns were taught how to make and edit reels or videos targeted towards a social media platform. The interns then were tasked with making an engaging reel on an informational topic of their choice. The interns submitted their drafts and the internship coordinators helped us improve any aspect that needed change.
5. **Meeting Minutes:** The interns were taught how to write meeting minutes for any meeting conducted and multiple samples were shown for reference. Thereafter, the interns wrote meeting minutes for each day's meetings.
6. **Project Design and Report Writing:** The most significant assignment conducted was the project design and report writing. The interns were taught how to do research for a project and multiple steps taken for proper research paper writing. They were mentored by Muntasir Mubin Sauvik and other internship coordinators throughout the process. The project design method is discussed in the following section. The research and writing spanned the whole internship duration and was the central assignment of the internship.

Additionally, the interns had the opportunity to observe and interact with the PC1 classroom of poraai.com and interview Rebeka Yasmin, who is also a social work activist.

Due to certain political unrest within the country during the time of the internship, approximately 1 week of the internship period was not completed. As a result, certain activities and tasks were scrapped to finish within time. The internship was officially completed within a month, ending on 27th July 2024. Further feedback and editing of the report were completed following that.

#### ***Description of Project Design Method:***

The interns were given a selection of topics to choose from, out of which the first topic on the list was chosen. Before commencing with the report, the interns conducted research on their own, collecting resources across the internet related to the topic which were thoroughly read and archived for reference later on. As part of the research, the interns were able to interview some parents and students from Poraai Classroom 1 and Rebeka Yasmin, from which the interns were able to gain insights into the problems that

plague those living in rural areas. After the interns finalised their background research, the interns contacted Muntasir Sauvik to ask him about his requirements and what he wanted to come out of the project. He also set out constraints for each requirement he pointed out. Using such guidance, the interns divided out tasks between them and started writing up a draft report to start their project. Upon writing up drafts at a frequent pace which the interns showed to their coordinators, they were able to better their project and bring it to the standards required using their critiques and advice.

The project was divided into a set timeline as shown below :

- Resource Identification
- Ideation
- Cost-Benefit Analysis
- Decision Matrix
- Assessment Test
- Project Review
- Final Report Submission
- Logbook Submission
- Certificate Ceremony

The basic outline of a report project has also been mentioned below :

- Problem Statement
- Background Research
- Requirements
- Constraints
- Objectives
- System Design
- Prototype
- Testing
- Feedback & Adjustment

Descriptions of some of these outlines and the work entailed with each have been written down throughout the report to allow the reader to understand the intern's thought process and work.

***Background Research :***

The background research is the foundation of the report, providing information upon which we based our proposed solutions. We compiled various reports and other like-minded research papers to understand the conditions of students in rural areas and propose appropriate solutions to empower the student's ability and curiosity to learn. We also conducted various interviews where we talked

directly with the people living in the rural areas to understand their situation better and talked with Rebeka Yasmin, a collaborator of Poraai.com

The sources we looked at while forming our proposed solutions :

- The Daily Star  
(<https://www.thedailystar.net/country/news/54-bangladeshi-rural-households-lack-internet-access-survey-1960661>)

- The Dhaka Tribune

(<https://www.dhakatribune.com/opinion/longform/305384/the-challenge-of-education-reform-in-bangladesh>)

- Unesco

(<https://www.iiep.unesco.org/en/rural-education-bangladesh-problems-and-prospects-11709>)

- ResearchGate

([https://www.researchgate.net/publication/44826909\\_Raising\\_Basic\\_Education\\_Levels\\_in\\_Rural\\_Bangladesh\\_The\\_Impact\\_of\\_a\\_Non-formal\\_Education\\_Programme](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/44826909_Raising_Basic_Education_Levels_in_Rural_Bangladesh_The_Impact_of_a_Non-formal_Education_Programme))

These are the key points that we found out during our interviews with the rural families of Netrokona via Poraai Classroom 1 :

1. Students from underprivileged families in Netrokona, Bangladesh who are studying at the PC1 classroom for poraai.com have reported that none of them have any source of communication and internet at home. Households in their area cannot afford and hence do not have any phones, laptops, or such opportunities.
2. Students in such remote areas of Netrokona, who travel every day to poraai.com classrooms usually face transportation issues to access the classroom facilities, due to lack of any transport they usually resort to walking which takes up a huge part of their day, hindering their education by consuming essential time.
3. Joynal Sir, a teacher working for the Poraai classroom, has reported that they do not have the time or opportunity to give the additional support that certain special needs students require.
4. In most households, both parents are illiterate and, therefore, are paid very meagre amounts for the jobs available. With multiple children, it becomes impossible to support education for all of them.
5. Only 10% of the population in Netrokona have wifi access and almost all families have zero access to a mobile phone. It is believed that a huge gap in technology is present between the urban and rural population.
6. Due to previous and continued low rates of education in this area, lack of parental education and available resources cause these students to find themselves unable to extend their knowledge beyond that of school hours. Educational support from external sources such as guidance from more experienced people around them or researching online is not a possibility. Additionally, parents lack awareness regarding the importance of education which often causes overlooks in the enforcement of children. Without such crucial guidance, the students lack motivation and opportunities.,

7. Many students are required to help out in domestic work or agriculture-related work, which hampers their education as during peak harvest seasons they cannot attend school at all and in general spend a large proportion of their day working hence unable to concentrate solely on education.

***Problem description:***

As technology develops further, so does its scope in education. With children from urban areas able to access such technological benefits to aid in their studies, children from rural areas are unfortunately unable to do the same. Children from rural areas, especially those outside of the Dhaka region are already at a disadvantage as they do not have the basic resources to complete their education, and with the rapid advances in technology in the education field they are unable to access, these children are left even further behind than their peers in urban areas. To help narrow the gap between those fortunate and unfortunate, this report aims to propose solutions that allow children from rural areas to access some of the technology that is popular in the education field and bring about innovation in their studying. We have developed strategies that aim to combine offline and online aspects of learning so that our target students can experience the benefits of both worlds, all while learning and developing at a faster rate than before through our solutions. The solutions provided aim to help bridge the gap between children of urban and rural areas so that in the future, we can aim to create a country where all are equal based on education.

***Problem statement:***

The problem research describes the aim of the research in a concise manner which allows the reader to vaguely understand what the contents of this report will be. The problem statement for this report is :

**“ EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES TO HELP STUDENTS OF LOW-INCOME FAMILIES STUDYING IN THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM IN THE RURAL AREAS OF BANGLADESH “**

***Requirements:***

Requirements can be considered as an overview of what the project aims to achieve and what the employer directly wants from the project. It provides us with a proper and concise direction that must be fulfilled for the success of the project and the satisfaction of the employer. We have used the requirement as a compilation of benchmarks to attain that would be a guide throughout our project, as well as a measure for defining the demands of the employer and hence attaining them.

The following include the requirements that were finalised after consulting with Muntasir Mubin Sauvik from poraii.com:

- The solution has to bring about a positive change for the target audience - students at the high school level in rural areas of Bangladesh ( Netrokona & Kishoreganj ).
- The solution has to be inexpensive in its implementation and for the consumers.
- The solution must incorporate both online and offline measures to mitigate the problem
- The solution must make use of existing resources present within the rural area community and Poraai classroom PC1.

- The solution must not have a learning curve that is too steep for implementation, the consumers must be able to grasp it with minimal or no prior training.
- The solution must consist of multiple levels of understanding and be compatible with students of a range of abilities.

Our project tackles each of these requirements with an elaborate plan. It includes both a traditional offline approach as well as a more sophisticated online venture. The project has been maintained to be within realistic financial boundaries, creating an inexpensive yet effective strategy. The design allows flexibility for students to implement in a personalised manner, hence being inclusive of a large audience.

**Constraints:**

To bring any project within realistic bounds, a constraint must be imposed upon it. Our constraints have been finalised keeping our time and goals in mind to create an achievable goal. Additionally, they prevent us from going off track from what the project was originally meant to be. Constraints helped us mark proper timelines for each task, divide the workload efficiently among each member, create a sharp resolution of the solution, and create a better understanding of what our solution must comprise.

The following are the constraints we have outlined after careful consideration of every factor:

- The solution must bring about at least 2 positive changes for the target audience - students of high school level in rural areas of Bangladesh (Netrokona & Kishoreganj).
- The upper bound for the cost of the solution for the consumers has been set at 2000 bdt per month for each student.
- The solution must have 1 approach that is fully offline and 1 approach that converges both online and offline.
- The solution must at least make use of any 1 or 2 existing resources that the students have at hand.
- The solution can require the consumers a maximum of 1 week of learning before successful implementation.
- The solution must be inclusive of at least 2 levels of understanding of students.

Our project meets each constraint as it is adaptive in nature therefore students can decide at their own pace. The project will require minimal funding by the consumer as a major portion is through voluntary collaboration with schools. This will allow us not only to promote education in these areas, but also create a tangible “knowledge bank” that would remain a part of the community past the project duration.

**Objectives:**

This was the most crucial part of the project, after being provided with the requirements and constraints, then came the objectives where we had to determine the next step. With every requirement set by Poraai.com came the constraints which then helped us set our objectives.

1. The first requirement stated that the solution needs to bring positive change, the constraint was that we had to restrict it to two positive changes only. After going through all the possible changes, we came up with two that suited the most. The solutions

reduce the knowledge barrier for the students in the villages as they will be exposed to more efficient and different study techniques and also increase community encouragement for education.

2. The next requirement stated that the solutions need to be inexpensive, in addition to that came the constraint that it needs to be within 1000/2000 tk, per student. In response to that after further speculation and detailed calculations, the mini cinema costs 8500 tk per month and since it can be used by 40+ people, hence it will cost 213 tk per month for each student. The school collaboration solution costs 2900 tk per month and as it can be used by a huge number of students as well (30/40 students), it will approximately cost 73tk per student to avail of this service.
3. The third requirement wanted the solutions to be both offline and online, the constraint stated that it has to have at least one offline and one online and offline program. After extensive planning and discussion, we came up with two solutions, the mini cinema falls under both offline and online as it will be a physical service however the content will be presented online. However, on the other hand, the school collaboration is a fully offline program.
4. This requirement asked for the use of existing resources, the constraint stated that at most two existing resources needed to be used. For the mini cinema, an open space for students to gather was already available, along with that existing electrical connections were also put to use. For school collaboration, existing materials such as projects, posters, etc from other schools are being used. Since the materials will be stored in the village school, that is also a resource we will be using.
5. The requirement demanded that the solution must not be too hard to implement, in other words, the learning curve must not be steep. The constraint stated that the learning curve must be within 1 week. This was maintained in the mini cinema solution as 1-2 sessions of attendance, which is around 2 days, would be enough to adjust to the new method of learning. The solution of school collaboration is also easy to understand as students would have this implemented in the natural setting of the school they attend, therefore through the help of teachers, they can grasp the content within an estimated 3-4 days.
6. The last requirement stated that the solution must accommodate multiple levels of understanding of students. The constraint asks us to include at least 2 levels of understanding. This was implemented in both solutions through a pre-assessment examination on the topics of English, Bangla, and General Knowledge. The scores would help us divide the students into different 3 categories of understanding and therefore provide resources tailored to their understanding through separate sessions and projects in the solutions.

***Ideation:***

In the ideation phase, we analysed all our resources, objectives, requirements, and constraints regarding the project and came up with multiple solutions, among which we have finalised two solutions. The following is the description in detail of the finalized solutions:

Solution: Mini Cinema

The project includes hosting shows featuring educational content. The capacity for each show approximates to a minimum of 2 and a maximum of 50 students. The shows would be held weekly and segmented into 3 slots each day to accommodate students of 3

different understanding levels. Therefore, a total of 12 shows per month will be held with a run time of 1 hour each and 1 hour for further discussions. An estimated 1 week of learning curve is anticipated for the students to get used to the system.

The 3 different understanding levels included would be as follows:

1. **Beginner** - Students who struggle in understanding while reading and listening to basic English or Bangla at a normal pace.
2. **Intermediate** - Students who show proper understanding through reading and listening to basic English or Bangla at a normal pace but struggle at a faster pace and complex concepts.
3. **Advanced** - Students who show a strong grasp of understanding through reading and listening both basic and complex English or Bangla and can critically assess works with depth.

Where each student lies in these criteria will be predetermined through an assessment test, where the students will be shown videos from each of these levels and then asked related questions to assess their understanding. The score on this test would rank them as beginner: <20 intermediate: 20-40 advanced: 41-50.

The students will be assessed for improvement after completion of 8 shows attended.

The shows will be held in a venue that will be rented. The screening will be through the use of a projector setup using mobile data as a source for wifi to minimize costs. A teacher with sufficient knowledge to use the devices as well as help students understand the concept will be employed. Additionally, other personnel to manage the venue, attendance, etc. will be employed. The content shown will be sourced through available online infographics that are free for educational purposes. This would include videos in both English and Bangla on social norms, current affairs, educational television shows, documentaries, etc.

The monthly cost of this project is around 8500 bdt per month. This can be covered by charging the students attending a minimal fee that is affordable for them as well. At the minimum capacity, the fee would be 400 bdt; while at maximum capacity, the fee would be 40 bdt.

Solution: School Collaboration

This project is a fully offline solution based on the concept of reusing and recycling old materials from schools in Dhaka city and circulating them throughout the schools in rural areas such as Netrokona itself. Through this program, the high school syllabus and curriculum materials such as projects, and IE sheet resources can be shared among the students of the village. This program will be conducted quarter-wise, once in four months. All the resources used in that certain quarter will be sent to the villages via a pickup van. This initiative will be useful for all the students in the rural schools as they would be able to gain knowledge on certain topics through the resources and also grow curiosity.

- To begin this program and keep it running one person is required to manage the exchange and communicate, acting as the middleman between the schools.
- Due to this project being super simple and self-explanatory, the learning curve height is at a minimum of 3 days.
- This initiative is thought out to be usable by 30/40 people at once as it is intended to gather as many resources as possible from other schools.

- Existing resources that are to be used are the projects and materials from the schools. They will be stored at the village school.
- The total cost per month is estimated to be 2900 taka per month, other elements and costs are expected to be
  - 1) 1500 taka as a salary per month for the liaison.
  - 2) Transportation costs 7000 takas every four months to deliver the resources from Dhaka city.

### ***Project Review:***

Personal Statement of Internship Coordinators:

**Summya Binte Mahmud:** While this was the first time for me to work as an internship coordinator, working with the interns throughout the internship was a pleasant experience as everyone was cooperative and diligent. Even though my interaction with the interns was much more limited than I had anticipated, I was able to learn and observe their characteristics as proper contact was kept throughout each step of the project between the interns and the coordinators, which in turn helped in the project. All of the interns showed dedication to each task and we were able to complete the majority of the assignments within the estimated timeframe. However, we faced certain difficulties and limitations throughout the project as well. Some of the significant ones were the lack of a 'breathing room' or excess time in cases of unexpected delays. As we could not conduct the internship for almost a week, our schedule was harmed quite a bit. Additionally, I have gained much more experience as an internship coordinator through this experience that I will be able to utilise in the future. For example, I have realised the priority of interaction with the target demographic that we are addressing in the research. Hence, in future endeavours, I would try my utmost to provide that link between the interns and the students of low-income families to enhance the depth of project research.

**Tanha Ahmed Nijhum:** It was my first time working with students of Scholastica for an internship session and I was excited to see what they had to offer. With experience as an internship coordinator, I was excited to help the new interns out and guide them throughout the month-long program. It was refreshing to see the thought processes of the young interns and I was able to gain insight into how they work and learn from it. Guiding them throughout the program was a personally rewarding experience from which I hope the interns will be able to leave with good memories and knowledge that they can apply in the next chapters of their lives. For me it was particularly rewarding to see my past experiences at Poraai.com come into use and how it helped me navigate the challenges this internship program provided. However, the internship program was not without its problems; this was supposed to be a 3 month long program but it was condensed into a 1 month one. This caused many aspects of the internship to be hurried or even completely cut off and I believe that hurt the overall experiences of the new interns. Not only that but due to the unforeseen Quota reform movement developing right in front of our eyes, the internship program had to be halted for at least a week, leading to delays

in our project. We weren't prepared for such developments to occur and it taught me to be more prepared and have more contingency plans planned out for future internship programs.

Personal Statement of Interns:

**Mashiyat Nawal:** The internship was a very immersive experience as I got to interact with many people with decades of experience in this field as well as highly skilled individuals who are starting their journey. I have been able to learn a lot from them, including my co-interns. I appreciate the structure of poraai.com and the project design as well as it allowed me to have a much better understanding of the dynamics regarding the low-income households and students, whom the project we worked on is based upon. The coordinators made it easier to grasp as well through their unwavering efforts to help us in the face of any confusion. Even then we faced some shortcomings such as a very limited duration of the internship and difficulties staying on schedule due to external factors. However, I perceive these as a learning factor that I would improve in my future projects and believe the internship fulfilled every expectation that I had held at the start of it.

**Aurito Zaman:** It was a very rewarding experience from my end, being able to learn so much from the internship coordinators. Their wisdom, guidance, and humour livened up the whole atmosphere and helped me ease into the internship smoothly. Not only coordinators but my fellow interns were also instrumental in making this a pleasant experience; I learned a lot from them and I believe I have made a new batch of good friends. Being able to talk with students from rural areas was a deeply humbling experience and being able to see how they interact in classes brought about a feeling of pride. Seeing them do their best even though their circumstances were not the best was deeply inspiring, I don't think I will forget that anytime soon. The shortcomings we faced throughout the internships never managed to dampen my spirit and I only have the coordinators and my fellow interns to thank for that. I learned a lot and I hope I can put whatever I learned into good use in my future endeavours.

**Aveen Tasnuba:** It was an honour for me to work at Poraai.com for the past month, this internship has given me some memorable experiences that I will reminisce about forever. Being very new to the professional field, the unconditional guidance from the instructors and coordinators made the journey smooth. One of the most notable experiences was interaction with Poraai classroom 1 and Ms. Rebeka Yasmin, it helped me gain perspective and I enjoyed conversing with the new people. This internship has also provided me with two new friends. The existing structure of the company in place made the experience better. One of the limitations I think we faced was a lack of personal engagement which gave an impression that the information was derived indirectly. In conclusion, this experience was extremely helpful as I got a look into the professional and organised lifestyle, I hope I will be able to look back and use this in my future as well.

Overall takeaways from this internship project:


- Interns learned the importance of teamwork and how to divide up tasks between them for efficiency.
- Interns were able to gain an insight into the workings of a corporate setting and learn tidbits about some aspects of it during the 1-month course.

- Time constraints were a major setback and prevented the interns from engaging in other planned-out projects. The interns were not able to learn about things such as resume writing, how to apply for job interviews, and more importantly were not able to go to Netrokona to visit the students of Poraai Classroom 1.
- Interns struggled with juggling multiple tasks at once which could not be helped due to the cramped schedule created by the 1 month limit so everything was a bit rushed and less polished.

Future recommendations for the next batch of interns:

- Coordinators should not try to condense the whole 3-month program into a 1 month one, Cut out unnecessary projects, and consult interns on what their personal goals are to determine what tasks and events should be kept in the internship, It should be tailored so that the interns get the most out of the internship.
- Try not to take on too many tasks at once and work on one at a time but within reasonable times and with reasonable quality.
- Start the report project early to get a valuable head start.

### **Appendix:**

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