

## A Case Study on Pathao: Scaling Technology-based Solutions and Social Impact in Urban Bangladesh

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### ABSTRACT

As the sixth-largest populous metropolis, Dhaka, the capital city of Bangladesh, creates massive traffic congestion, in which the ailing patients had suffered the most. Given the high penetration of smartphone users, the technology becomes more affordable, consumers become more aware of its potential benefits, and companies strive for tighter integration of their services through the platform. This has created a great opportunity for firms such as Pathao to operate and grow in the fastest growing E-commerce sector in Bangladesh. Therefore, the study aims to explore the role of Bangladesh's fastest digital platform, Pathao to create digital solutions in people's lives, from a marketing perspective. Pathao offers a range of services to create and scale technology-based solutions and social impact. The present case study analyzes the marketing tools and solutions offered by Pathao ride and Pathao health & pharma. A SWOT analysis is built upon the marketing mix, competitive analysis, marketing strategy, and segmentation strategy. The impact created by Pathao is analyzed from the lens of commercial and social perspectives. It is found that Pathao became one of the easiest ways of commuting and earning by sharing rides and Pathao will be a key player in its technological advancement. The study establishes the urge for a business-friendly and consumer-oriented regulatory framework, which should be supplemented with plans for the greater transportation industry. It is suggested that if information and communication technology connectivity can be improved, such technological solutions can be used in a variety of other industries. This would help the country achieve its goal of becoming a "Digital Bangladesh. Despite its status as a pioneer, Pathao's promising attributes give us reason to be hopeful about the future.

**Keywords:** *Bangladesh, Pathao, Social Impact, Technology-Based Solutions.*

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## INTRODUCTION

Dhaka is the capital and economic center of Bangladesh, which has one of the world's fastest-growing economies. While this rapid expansion creates various business opportunities, it also places a strain on the country's limited resources. With the economy transitioning from agriculture to industrial sectors, individuals from all across the country are flocking to the capital city of Bangladesh, Dhaka in search of work. Dhaka was the 6th most populated city in the world, according to a report by World Population Review, with a population of 22.5 million people (Dhaka Tribune, 2022). The city suffers the worst traffic conditions in the world, with an average driving speed of only 7 kilometers per hour—slightly faster than the average walking speed (Quaium, 2017).

In addition, during the pandemic, a considerable proportion of non-COVID-19 individuals who require immediate medical attention are not being seen by doctors in most institutions. A large number of people with cancer, cardiovascular illness, and kidney disease are in desperate need of hospital treatment. Lack of awareness, anxiety and a scarcity of medical-grade personal protective equipment (PPE) have caused widespread concern among medical personnel and the general public. As a result, many non-COVID19 patients are hesitant to seek medical help. Doctors, on the other hand, are concerned about coronavirus infections from unidentified individuals (Reza, Sultana, & Khan, 2020). In this aspect, the people of Bangladesh have plainly shown their dissatisfaction. The issue is getting worse for Dhaka residents who are delayed in traffic. A person might travel around a city using a variety of methods in the past. Individuals now have even more travel options because of innovative new technology and business concepts like Pathao.

Given that transport-sharing has risen to the top of the sharing economy in Bangladesh, the opportunity of requesting a ride from a user's phone, sharing a ride with a coworker, or getting a bike outside their house. Being a platform-based ride-sharing company creates value by connecting individuals or parties through a platform (mobile app). Furthermore, platforms eliminate most of the high initial capital cost, lowering entry barriers and allowing for quick diversification of service offerings.

Hence, the study's primary focus is on Dhaka residents who suffer serious healthcare and traffic-related challenges. The study's goal is to look at how digital platform companies use technology to provide solutions. Pathao, an on-demand digital platform company that offers a varied variety of services such as transportation, food delivery, and e-commerce, is the subject of the study.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Present Situation

The city of Dhaka has a vast population, necessitating the development of several roadways. With a population of 28.2 million people, Dhaka is the world's 6th -most populous metropolis (Dhaka Tribune, 2022). The roads and communication networks are insufficient to support such a large population creating massive traffic congestion in the city. According to a recent World Bank research, the average speed in Dhaka is between 7.0 and 8.0 km/h. A typical car travels at a speed of 12 kilometers per hour. In our daily lives, it wastes a huge amount of time. Furthermore, most city residents use public transit for common people, such as minibuses and rickshaws. These cars are also extremely risky and can only transport a few people. A bicycle or motorcycle may be the best alternative in these situations. A bike from a bike-share service travels at a speed of 16 kilometers per hour. This means that people who use such services can travel much faster than people who use most other modes of transportation (Financial Express, 2018).

On top of that, the average monthly cost of owning, operating, and maintaining a car is estimated to be around BDT 70,000. This estimate includes insurance, taxes, registration, fuel, a chauffeur's income, maintenance, and the cost of the car as a capital asset (or a car loan as an alternative option). The capital expenditure is anticipated to last for five to eight years, after which maintenance costs begin to skyrocket. A private car is used for an average of 80 journeys per month in Dhaka, according to our calculations, on average Dhaka automobile owner spends roughly BDT 900 every journey, whereas a ride-share car user spends around BDT 300 per trip. In other words, a frequent ride-share user saves three times without sacrificing the convenience of a car ride. A trip on a ride-share bike is less than BDT 150 for a relatively hassle-free ride. Meanwhile, a CNG user pays BDT 250 per trip and receives none of the ride-share product's increased features (such as door-to-door pickup and drop-off) (Financial Express, 2018).

Pathao has been discovered to strive to gratify its consumers by avoiding traffic, offering competitive costs, ensuring their safety and security, and preserving their privacy. In addition to becoming the country's ride-sharing leader, has founded Pathao Health intending to alleviate the suffering of individuals in need of emergency pharmaceuticals by primarily offering OTC pills and medicines. Telemedicine, Women's Health, Symptom Check, Home test, and Health advice are some of the segmented services offered by Pathao Health, which are now more efficient in providing value to customers. Pathao's user interface allows partnering organizations to communicate with individuals about the health services they provide. Because of the platform's practicality and reach, the process of finding a partner was very simple for the country's ride-hailing giant. Furthermore, the ease of creating forms and quick access to data proved to be a huge selling factor for customers. To be more explicit, k1extra service means Pathao users will stay longer and use the app more frequently, increasing Pathao's per-user revenue.

## WHY THE PROBLEM NEEDS TO BE ADDRESSED?

Rapid urbanization in the emerging markets urges resolving the issues of urban cities more prudently with an aim to ensure sustainability, in which technology adaptation is an essential prerequisite. Despite this need, the emerging markets suffer from weak technology and lag in realizing entrepreneurial prospects (Hafiz et al., 2021). Dhaka is an urban city with a population that is rising at an unprecedented rate every year. Migration from the country's rural areas to Dhaka has been a major factor in the country's population rise. Although the rate of growth has reduced in recent years compared to the 1990s, the population appears to be increasing at an increasing rate (refer to Table 1).

Table 1. Dhaka Population Data (Urban Area)

Year	Population	Growth Rate (%)	Growth
2030	27,374,000	12.50	3,043,000
2025	24,331,000	15.90	3,342,000
2020	20,989,000	11.10	2,091,000
2017	18,898,000	7.40	1,300,000
2015	17,598,000	19.50	2,400,000
2010	14,731,000	19.50	2,400,000
2005	12,331,000	19.90	2,046,000
2000	10,285,000	23.40	1,953,000
1995	8,332,000	25.80	1,711,000
1990	6,621,000	42.10	1,961,000

Source: Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics—Dhaka Information Statistics.

\*The above table is adopted from BBS (2016).

Due to the city's high population, the city's road and communication network is unable to handle a massive surge of traffic. Around 3,042,853 licensed automobiles are operating in Bangladesh, with officials estimating that about 40 to 50 percent operate in Dhaka alone (excluding rickshaws, bicycles, and other unregistered vehicles) (BRTA, 2017). The sheer number of automobiles in the city is a significant impediment to businesses wishing to deliver items on schedule to their consumers. Due to the high expense of car acquisition and upkeep, plus the fact that most automobiles are stuck on the road, private vehicles are not the most common means of transportation for regular commuters in the city. The average city commuter uses public transportation, such as the bus, minibuss, or "tempo," and rickshaw. During the pandemic, the patients had the most difficulty traveling to get proper health services. On a different note, Bangladesh had a smartphone penetration rate of 48 percent among mobile phone users in Bangladesh (The Daily Star, 2022), which is expected to become much higher in the future years as the technology becomes more affordable, consumers become more aware of its potential benefits, and companies strive for tighter integration of their services through the platform. This has created a great opportunity for firms to gain access to previously inaccessible market niches as Pathao has been able to combine the necessary technology to get the most out of each platform to the benefit of their clients.

The company contributed profoundly to the growing need for diverse services as well as to the increasing app usage in the country. It could grasp the market share operating in the fastest growing E-commerce sector in Bangladesh which is predicted to reach a size of USD 3 billion (according to e-CAB) by 2023. Digital platforms like Pathao have been offering huge potential to the E-commerce sector to the benefit of Dhaka city dwellers. Hence, the case of Pathao offers important implications and deserves to be studied.

## METHODOLOGY

In qualitative research, the case study is one of the frequently used methodologies (Yazan, 2015). The qualitative case study is a research method that enables a complex phenomenon to be explored through the identification of different factors interacting with each other. The case observed is a real situation. In the field of nursing science, it may be a clinical decision-making process. Marketing case study examples, like the one below, highlight the benefits of a business product. A case analysis is a deep dive into a subject. A secondary dataset is scrutinized using news portals, websites, and journals. The reason for choosing the method is secondary research can be an excellent tool for decision-making and identifying future trends.

### **PATHAO: A BLESSING IN DISGUISE**

Pathao launched its digital platform in March of this year. Fahim Ahmed is the current CEO of Pathao. Pathao was founded by Hussain Elius, Fahim Saleh, and Shifat Adnan. Pathao's headquarters are in Dhaka (Pathao names Fahim Ahmed as CEO". The Business Standard. 1 November 2021. Retrieved 21 November 2021). In this scenario, the research will be discussing two Pathao sectors. Pathao rides and Pathao health are two examples. That is why throughout the research the vision and objective of Pathao's two sectors shall be expounded. Pathao rides are designed to save you time and money. Their target market is young people who are looking for work. Its goal is to give consumers the safest and quickest services possible. Their riders vary in age from 18 to 40 years. They went for the middle class. Its objective is to become Bangladesh's fastest digital platform, furthering the country's digital vision. They want to make Bangladesh as digital as other nations by providing an app. Why should you pick a Pathao ride? They encourage customers by providing convenient payment options (card, bKash, cash, digital pay), secure riding, and bonus points. Who makes money with Pathao? A quick, safe, and simple way to make money for a better life appeals to the younger generation.

### **Actions Initiated by Pathao**

Pathao Ride: Pathao offers on-demand travel services through bikes and vehicles to lessen transportation risks for the general public. Patho debuted its bike in the middle of 2016, and its vehicle service was offered towards the end of 2017. They began this service with the slogan "Your Journey, Our Responsibility" (Ullah & Islam, 2017). Pathao has expanded its service to include bicycles and motorcycles to alleviate the passengers' suffering. They please their customers by responding quickly and providing service in desired approaches. This service is significantly more popular among young people.



Anyone in need of transportation may just log in to the app and choose a pickup and dropoff location. A map with an estimated time will show in front of them. Motorcycles are more accessible and cost less than other modes of public transportation. It also saves travelers time (The Daily Star, 2017). Pathao Rides cost BDT 25 per 2 kilometers, BDT 12 per kilometer, and BDT 2.5 per minute while waiting for a charge, which is much cheaper than auto rickshaws (Pathao, 2017). Pathao is also quite particular about their time. They deal with the problem of time when transporting individuals from one location to another. With a low jam rate, they consistently strive to provide their clients with the quickest and safest service possible.

Pathao Health and Pharma: Pathao, an online medical service, began its health and pharma service in March 2020. It was during this period that Covid-19 began to spread across Bangladesh. This service was created to supply clients with prescription and over-the-counter medications. During Covid, 19 individuals refused to go shopping since the illness was contagious and others were becoming more ill. It also raises the need for health care in an unprecedented way. The hospitals were unable to accept such a large number of patients and hence failed to provide effective care. There was also a medication shortage. Only telemedicine, such as Pathao, would be the greatest alternative answer in this case. To address the issue, Pathao collaborates with Maya to give medical advice from recognized physicians, check syndrome per WHO, NHS, DGHS, and IEDR guidelines, and video consultation or hotline help (Pathao Website, 2022.). The Pathao app, in collaboration with Lazz pharma and Tamanna Pharmacy, offers its customers drugs based on their requests (The Daily Star, 2020). They have made it possible for their customers to order medication by just uploading images of their prescriptions to the app, and they will deliver it to their doorsteps in only 40 minutes.

The Health Care solution of Pathao Health connects people to health services via digital platforms. Connecting individuals entails providing accurate information and guiding them on how to overcome barriers. They used to provide one-on-one online medical treatment via phone or video conversations. Pathao health is divided into five sections. Women's health, telemedicine, at-home diagnostics, and health advice. Prescriptions can also be obtained online, and drugs can be ordered using the app. They will, however, be required to pay consultation fees before receiving any services. Pathao can provide online medical treatment for a big segment of Bangladesh's population, noting that the Pathao app has over six million users registered. In the ongoing pandemic, State Minister of the ICT Division Zunaid Ahmed Palak stated that given the difficulty to deliver healthcare online or over the phone by the government, the digital health service will be the real game-changer in this pandemic. The app will help bridge the gap as many individuals in Bangladesh do not have access to healthcare for a variety of reasons (Dhaka Tribune, 2020). Customers may use the app to purchase prescription, nonprescription, and over-the-counter medications. Pathao's delivery agents are also educated to preserve cleanliness and will stand three steps away from the clients' doors. They also feature a computerized payment mechanism, which allows clients to avoid personal touch. Customers who make digital payments using LankaBangla, Visa, or Mastercard can claim a BDT 200 cashback.

## Marketing Tools and Solutions by Pathao

### Marketing Mix

The marketing mix, popularly known as the 4Ps, is extensively employed around the globe. The marketing mix is centered on the four p's of marketing. The four p's are Product, Price, Promotion, and Place. The following is Pathao's marketing strategy: Product: Product strategy is crucial when developing a marketing mix since it is the key property that meets the demands of the client. Pathao is an online platform that provides a wide range of goods and services to its clients through a single app. Several of its products are market-exclusive, and Pathao is the only platform where customers can access all of the services they need daily. The Pathao app is quite appealing owing to the brand's color palette of red and white. Furthermore, the program is developed in such a manner that anybody may download it and find it to be user-friendly. Pathao advertises its services as the "#1 Platform for All Services."



Figure 1: Pathao Health app (Adapted from *Pathao.com*)

**Price:** *Pathao* has claimed that they seek to make people's lives simpler by offering service in as little time as possible, and as a consequence, their fee reflects this objective of immediacy. They are providing lower costs than established rivals like Uber and Shohoz. They also provide a variety of promotional codes to make the shopping process easier for the consumer. Every week, they send out fresh discount coupons to their clients. They may give very low pricing in comparison to other service providers in the industry because of these promo codes. They also have a distinct pricing strategy, which is shown in Table 2:

Table2: Comparative price list of a ride-sharing platform

	Initial fees	Cost per minute	Cost per Km	Service Fee
<b>Pathao Ride</b>	BDT 25	BDT 0.5	BDT 12	BDT 0
<b>Uber Ride</b>	BDT 25	BDT 03	BDT 18	BDT 0
<b>Shohoz Ride</b>	BDT 25	BDT 0.5	BDT 12	BDT 0

Note: Adapted from [Pathao.com](http://Pathao.com); [uber.com/bd/en](http://uber.com/bd/en); [shohoz.com](http://shohoz.com)

**Promotion:** *Pathao* began by only offering transportation services on Facebook. As a result, there was a schism between *Pathao* and its clients. To that end, they build a smartphone application in which they include all of their services and pitch it as a one-stop shop where everyone can obtain their ride-sharing, food delivery, goods delivery, and health services all in one spot. Following the *Pathao* application's introduction, the firm started advertising it via a range of media outlets, including Facebook, newspapers, and television commercials. Additional advertising efforts include sending customized SMS messages to those who have already enrolled for the apps and offering special bargains to those who have not. A new *Pathao* point system has been implemented to aid with the company's advertising. Customers will collect points for each service they use, which they may then redeem for monetary savings at a later period, the more orders they make. It also makes an offer to consumers, such as a 70 percent discount on their first trip, to attract additional customers.



Figure 2: Pathao Promotions (*Pathao* website)



**Place:** It was founded in Dhaka to alleviate traffic congestion and provide service promptly. It is currently widely utilized throughout the nation. *Pathao* was introduced in two major cities in 2018: Chittagong and Sylhet, respectively. *Pathao* is presently found in 64 districts in Bangladesh. However, there are few ride-sharing possibilities in Dhaka, Chittagong, and Sylhet. Furthermore, this Bangladeshi business controls the Nepalese ride-hailing sector. *Pathao* Health is no longer accessible outside of Bangladesh. As *Pathao* Health is an Online-based service that individuals from all across Bangladesh may use with the aid of "Maya."

### **Competitive Analysis**

In Bangladesh, there are various ride-sharing and healthcare organizations. Uber, Gojak, Oval, and other similar services Uber is one of *Pathao*'s main rivals. Uber was the first app-based ride-sharing service to be offered in Bangladesh. *Pathao* offers both vehicle and motorcycle riding services, while Uber exclusively offers car rides. Uber's functionality is quite similar to *Pathao*'s. Users must open the app, choose a location, and riders will pick them up and transport them to their destination. *Pathao* costs BDT 25 every 2 kilometers, while they charge BDT 21 each kilometer (Uber Newsroom, 2017) Despite providing the same level of service, *Pathao* is more known among the younger population for its bike riding service. *Pathao* also delivers speedier service than Uber, making it preferred to Uber. *Pathao*'s opponent in the health service provision field is Robi's *Myhealth*. They provide low-cost health suggestions through SMS and also provide phone consultations to consumers. Customers also get a unique hotline number with an infinite number of physicians (Robi website, 2022). They do, however, have a significant log-in procedure that entails subscribing numbers by USSD and it takes a long time to receive the subscription, while *Pathao* clients merely need to download their app to get service. *Pathao* is affiliated with the World Health Organization and other international health organizations, making them superior to *Myhealth*.

### **Marketing Strategy**

*Pathao* Ride offers its consumers automobile transportation services. Customers may use the *Pathao* application to choose their location and vehicle type and schedule a trip at a very affordable price point and with safety. *Pathao* Health provides customers with medical services such as medical advice from major health organizations and skilled physicians. *Pathao* Health also strives to identify diseases, connect patients with physicians, and aid with prescription delivery to their homes.

*Pathao*'s business strategy is built on digital marketing, which is a novel alternative to conventional advertising. The capacity to target particular audiences is one of the most significant benefits of digital marketing. *Pathao* capitalized on this opportunity, resulting in a massive increase in their target market. *Pathao* will combine its services with digital advertising, showcasing and attracting customers with tempting offers. *Pathao*'s major promotional strategies include digital marketing, in which *Pathao* app users who have enrolled will get updates about their services. *Pathao*, for example, may present offers for both ride-sharing and health services while also automatically informing consumers of any relevant medical information. *Pathao* has the option of SMS marketing. *Pathao* will notify registered consumers via SMS of any special discounts or promotions.

Thus, customers can consider their options before booking a ride or utilizing the medical services of others. When they send an SMS with an offer, individuals will consider and will be compelled to use *Pathao*.

Finally, given the state of the economy, everyone, especially those in the middle and higher-income categories, would rather save than spend more than necessary. *Pathao* may opt to follow an alternate pricing strategy known as daily low pricing rather than pursuing a high-low price approach. This pricing model comprises charging a little daily fee with only minor decreases.

### **Segmentation Strategy**

#### **Market segmentation**

*Pathao* divides the market into separate categories of purchasers and various purchasers have distinct wants, desires, traits, and behavior, which may assist in simply separating the market. Consumer market sectors are broadly classified into the following categories.

**Geographic segmentation:** Geographic segmentation is the division of a market into geographical units. Cities, regions, and nations. *Pathao* was in charge of segmenting the country, city, and area. These units are classified according to their services. *Pathao* routes are supplied. Gazipur, Chittagong, Sylhet, and Dhaka are among them. *Pathao* ride sharing is not just available in Bangladesh. They also provide ridesharing services in Kathmandu. *Pathao* health services assist individuals by providing services over the phone or through video calls. Doctors from all around Bangladesh are available for consultation. As a result, *Pathao* Health has no set location. It can service consumers all around the nation since it is an online platform. They have also collaborated with Maya, Paratha Health, and others in the *Pathao* health sector.

**Demographic segmentation:** The market is divided into demographic segments based on age, education, generation, and occupation. *Pathao* did it deliberately as they are aimed at middle-class people aged 18 to 40 years. They segmented their consumer market to expedite expansion and better fulfill customer needs. Being a digital platform, they must utilize apps. Youth are frequent and comfortable users of the app. Hence, *Pathao*'s services are geared toward young people. The demographic segmentation of healthcare is based on age groups, with differing degrees of complexity. They cater to all ages, as they do throughout the covid season. *Pathao* health services may benefit people of all ages. Attending checkups and other healthcare treatments requires time and money. That is why people with smartphones can easily access the *Pathao* app and avail their services.

**Psychographic segmentation:** Psychographic segmentation is based on behavioral and psychological characteristics. *Pathao* provides digital services using smartphones. *Pathao* rides, food delivery, health, tong, pharma, and retail services were all available. Style is important here. Because the wealthy classes drive while the middle classes ride bicycles. As a consequence, the food industry's lifestyle and individuality are preserved. People will maintain their lifestyle and personality features in the sphere of health.

Someone may prefer ideas, counsel, or guidance, or they may be concerned about safety. Patients range in nature depending on their lifestyle.

**Behavioral segmentation:** Divide the customer based on their attitudes, the benefit sought, product use or reaction, occasions, knowledge, user status, loyalty status, and usage rate. *Pathao* effectively handles each phrase to attract its target market. They research customer reactions to their services to improve them. They provide offerings in an attempt to spark people's interest in *Pathao*. Customers that are devoted to them will feel more comfortable and at ease while utilizing their services. *Pathao* ride-sharing services are the safest, fastest, and most pleasant. Customers are not damaged in this manner. They do market research and create innovative services to fulfill the needs of consumers. In *Pathao*'s health sector, the top physicians were employed to assist patients and make them feel protected. *Pathao* split their business in a highly planned and structured manner to expand quicker and push our nation Bangladesh one step farther.

#### **SWOT ANALYSIS OF PATHAO'S MARKETING SOLUTIONS**

SWOT is abbreviated by strength, weakness, opportunity, and threat respectively. This section analyzes the SWOT of *Pathao*.

##### Strength:

- Enjoys first-mover advantages in ride-sharing firms, based on an on-demand ride-sharing app.
- *Pathao* trips are beneficial and convenient for clients since the firm prioritizes user convenience and customer care
- At a reasonable cost, attracting a bigger number of users. *Pathao* has extended its service to Sylhet and Chittagram, in addition to Dhaka.
- *Pathao* offers a variety of ride-sharing options, including vehicles and motorcycles.
- The robust tracking system of the *Pathao* app allows users to follow their whereabouts via GPS.

##### Weakness:

- Offering solely app-based service, which might pose complications if the app encounters any technical challenges that greatly impede the whole company.
- Chances of technical failure of GPS cause issues for both the client and the riders.
- Terrible customer service and a hotline when compared to its rival Uber.
- Unlawful and disloyal attitude by *Pathao driver*.
- *Pathao* cyclists do not use any branding, which might make it difficult to track them down.

#### Opportunities:

- *Pathao* may grow its operations into hitherto untapped markets by featuring female riders to attract a more feminine user segment, resulting in a more comfortable service for the female user.
- It may offer bus services in addition to transportation services, providing additional advantages to customers who utilize local buses.
- *Pathao* health service may collaborate with top and trusted health care institutions of the country to deliver greater advantages to clients for a win-win situation.

#### Threats:

- Given the low entry barrier, potential rival companies are entering the market. To compete with its rivals, it charges competitive pricing, which results in decreased profit and growth.
- -There may also be a danger in the event of government restrictions, such as if the government imposes a greater tax on these agencies, which would force them to raise their fees, creating a threat in the near future.
- -Even a minor error in dealing with the drugs and medicines might put *Pathao* Health in danger.

## IMPACT CREATED BY PATHAO

### ***Commercial Impact***

Headquartered in Dhaka, *Pathao* is the first major ride-sharing company in Bangladesh to get an enlistment certificate from the authorities. As a blessing to the lifestyle problems of the city dwellers, *Pathao* is a well-known and rapidly developing digital platform that provides various digital services like ride-sharing, food delivery service, health service, retail system, tong, package service, courier service, and so on. *Pathao* has grown to include *Pathao* Food, *Pathao* Parcel, *Pathao* Courier (B2B), *Pathao* Shop, *Pathao* Tong, *Pathao* Pharma, *Pathao* Health, *Pathao* Top Up, and *Pathao* Pay Later.

Their goal-based business model aims to utilize technology to change Bangladesh. In addition, it is quickly becoming the leading logistics supplier in Bangladesh. *Pathao* collaborates with several e-commerce sites, including [daraz.com](http://daraz.com), [bagdoom.com](http://bagdoom.com), [amikini.com](http://amikini.com), [Ajker.deal.com](http://Ajker.deal.com), and others. *Pathao*'s current rivals are Chaldal, Uber, FoodPanda, Evaly.com, and others. Healthcare Solution *Pathao*, a ride-sharing company, has partnered with Digital Healthcare Solutions, Praava Health, and Maya to provide real-time healthcare through the app. A webinar was held on Wednesday to announce the introduction of *Pathao* Health. *Pathao* Health will connect customers to Covid-19 trackers through the internet and offer one-on-one medical consultations via phone and video.



### ***Social Impact***

**Corporate Social initiatives:** *Pathao* is involved in a variety of social service activities. *Pathao* for lowering the country's unemployment rate. *Pathao* is connected to over a hundred thousand individuals. *Pathao* conducts road safety projects with the assistance of celebrities. They handed out over 50,000 helmets for free to ensure the safety of its consumers. They enabled individuals to borrow bicycles without paying any interest. They also funded prominent singer Abdul Kuddus Boyati's medical expenses.

**Inspiring Education for all:** *Pathao* offers a unique concept for youngsters who are unable to complete their schoolwork. *Pathao* has established a new scheme in which they cut BDT 1 from each ride and give the money to needy children. They think that only education has the power to change the world, thus they are doing their job.

**Initiatives during the pandemic:** *Pathao* "Tong" has developed an on-demand essential delivery service in response to the coronavirus epidemic. *Pathao* "Pharma" offers over-the-counter (OTC) and non-prescription drugs. Their objective is to have all orders delivered in 40 minutes or less.

**Social Collaboration:** The Bidyanondo Foundation has worked tirelessly to create public awareness about preventative measures. They have mostly taken the initiative to distribute meals to the poorest communities. *Pathao*'s biggest honor has been to assist the Bidyanondo group with logistical assistance. *Pathao* also successfully collaborate with endearing CSR projects like Mission Save Bangladesh during the pandemic. *Pathao* was delighted to collaborate on this initiative with Sheba.XYZ, The Daily Star, and The Daily Shamakal.

### **DISCUSSION**

The ride-share and health-care deliver a largely smooth door-to-door service making the ride and healthcare services 'middle-class urban blessing'. The app-based services are providing some immediate economic gains. We can estimate the size of the ride-share market in Dhaka at around BDT 22 billion (2,200 crores) per year based on the average monthly income of different ride-share service providers and the anticipated number of vehicles currently active in the sector (Financial Express, 2018). Despite the hype, we must not lose sight of the bigger picture. Ride-sharing still accounts for a small portion of the overall transportation industry. It is now only a competitor (with an estimated 23 percent market share) in the private passenger motor vehicle-hailing services subsector, which includes CNG and rental automobiles that may be privately leased to move around town (Financial Express, 2018). App-based healthcare is still in its infancy too.

Given *Pathao*'s well-established brand image, expanding its service yield a strong probability of success. The indigenous *Pathao* is arguably Bangladesh's most successful app-based service. *Pathao* has carved out a niche for itself by focusing on motorbike services and marketing itself to Dhaka commuters with a catchy musical tagline: 'Beat the traffic.' It is based on successful ride-hailing motorbike services in congested emerging-

market cities such as Jakarta, Indonesia (Go-Jek), and Kigali, Rwanda (SafeMotos). *Pathao* has already gained a lead by leveraging these firms' local expertise (Financial Express, 2018). *Pathao* operates on the SuperApp model, providing all of its services through a single app (DhakaTribune, 2019).

*Pathao* is giving its service in different counties in a holistic manner. The main target of *Pathao* is to provide their service in Dhaka city. And one of the main problems in Dhaka city is traffic jams. For this traffic jam issue in day-to-day life, in most cases, patients are facing problems drastically. Not only that but also in emergency cases, people are not able to go to a specific place in a due time. But *Pathao* has already decreased the percentage of suffering. They set a target time for reaching the specific place of their customers. Even they charge less than other digital platforms. Now they also reduce the suffering of patients by giving digital health care services. In Dhaka city, due to huge traffic, *Pathao* became one of the easiest ways of traveling from one place to another place within a very short period. Side by side, the middle-class people get more benefits by sharing *Pathao* rides. However, *Pathao* also charges less amount of cost, and the safest service with saving time is the main catching point of this digital platform. Following the investigation of *Pathao*, it can be foresighted that *Pathao* may draw clients from all over the country as a result of their convenience offering, boosting their profit. In order to be competitive, *Pathao* ride and health should focus on its competitors' actions and make attempts to ensure its business growth.

## IMPLICATIONS

### ***Managerial Implications***

*Pathao* is a startup that is always changing, and the *Pathao* team believes in embracing dynamism as part of their company strategy. The company's founders intend to grow its network to embrace the entire country of Bangladesh, ensuring that everyone may benefit from the services they offer. It is a product of the global digitalization movement. While Bangladesh's electronic sector is not yet up to level with the rest of the world, it is fast developing. E-commerce is the economy's future, and *Pathao* will be a key player in its technological advancement. With a lack of competition in the motorcycle taxi service, the expensive cost of other tech-based taxi services such as Uber, and widespread criticism from many international firms, *Pathao* has a lot of room to grow in the long run.

### ***Regulatory and policy implications***

In Bangladesh, current regulations prohibit the use of automobiles registered to private individuals for commercial reasons. The government, on the other hand, has acted fast to address this issue by enacting its ride-sharing service policy. This will help to clear up some of the system's ambiguities (Financial Express, 2018). The study establishes the urge for a business-friendly and consumer-oriented regulatory framework, which should be supplemented with plans for the greater transportation industry. The legislative environment has been favorable to the ride-share industry, which is both dynamic and fledgling, and hence requires policy nurturing. In addition, the subsector is a tech-driven

transformational venture. If information and communication technology connectivity can be improved, such technological solutions can be used in a variety of other industries. This would undoubtedly help the country achieve its goal of becoming a "Digital Bangladesh" (Financial Express, 2018).

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The bike-share movement has exploded in popularity during the last year. Motorbike sales in Bangladesh have increased by a whopping 44 percent (Financial Express, 2018). These trends suggest that motorbikes will be used more frequently on Dhaka's roadways. Nevertheless, the bike-share services should be viewed with care in Bangladesh. With an alarming number of young people (and co-riders) prone to road accidents, the growing fleet of two-wheelers is a cause for concern. Two-wheelers can be unruly, causing problems for fellow commuters and pedestrians, according to South-East Asian experiences.

It is well acknowledged that there is a global scarcity of equipment and healthcare personnel needed to respond to the devastating health issues of millions of patients in the post-pandemic era. The healthcare providers must be cautious about the expiry dates of such medicines and provide the items on time. In addition, it would be beneficial if all relevant stakeholders, particularly makers of medical equipment, personal protective equipment, sanitizers, and people with medical training, could donate their help to beat the aftermath of the crisis (Reza, Sultana, & Khan, 2020).

## LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIVES

The study of the Pathao case is not beyond limitations. First, this study has focused on only two sectors of *Pathao* companies which are the *Pathao* ride and *Pathao* health sectors. The study has analyzed the case from the lens of marketing and emphasized the customers' satisfaction. Hence analyzing the economic value of employment opportunities is beyond the scope of its discussion. Future researchers can extend the study by analyzing the sectors that are served by *Pathao*.

Second, the case study has largely dependent on the secondary data source and did not cover any interviews with the related stakeholder to analyze the marketing tools and solutions. Future studies can fill this gap and emphasize interviews to collect the necessary data. This approach will enhance the insights into the solutions and impact created by the organizations studied.

## CONCLUSION

*Pathao* is a technology start-up that makes the most use of its resources, resulting in rapid growth and innovation. To ensure that everyone has access to the services, the company plans to open additional offices around Bangladesh. In the study, *Pathao* Health & Pharma and *Pathao* Ride were chosen to showcase *Pathao*'s public service. Even though there was a pandemic, they kept going. Despite its status as a pioneer, *Pathao*'s promising attributes give us reason to be hopeful about the future.

Nonetheless, this corporation is under pressure from fierce local and worldwide competition, irate customers, and environmental concerns. However, no company is immune to adversity, and adjustments in marketing and technical service could salvage this one and secure its long-term stability and growth. If *Pathao* continues to enhance and update its markets while also providing cutting-edge technology to its consumers, it can play an important role in e-commerce.

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