



Case Studies

The Emerging Entrepreneur
Competition

50

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The Emerging Entrepreneur Competition

1. Innovation & Intuition

Nadeem Abbas, a resident of a far flung village in Muzaffargarh considered it an honor to be part of the ‘Emerging Entrepreneur Competition’. He took the competition as a challenge to show his family that he can not only support them but also fulfill his dream of starting up a business of his own. “Unfortunately, I have never had many opportunities to fulfill my dreams. But when I got one, I was not prepared to let it slip”, said Nadeem.

Thinking strategically on how to maximize on the limited resources given to them for the start-up, Nadeem and his team came up with a unique idea of selling products which were not readily available in their village – petrol and chicken. With little investment, the team rented a place in the central commercial market of the village and bought initial goods for sale: a few liters of fuel and some chickens. The villagers who had to walk long distances to access both these items were now buying them from a nearby place at almost the same price. The business idea soon started to flourish and Nadeem and his team were successful in reaching more than 70 individuals.

With hard work and commitment of the entire team, they eventually made a profit of more than Rs. 1000 and served more than 250 customers. During the project, they learnt how to deal with customers and how to satisfy their needs, which helped them retain many of their initial customers. Nadeem confessed that his team was initially afraid of not being able to recover even the capital investment since not many villagers wanted or could afford to buy petrol and chicken at regular basis. However, the fear diminished over time as the team’s dedication started paying off. Contrary to their fear, they not only made profit but also gained popularity in the local market which will give them a competitive edge over future competitors.

Team Members: **Nadeem Abbass**, Kishwar Hussain, M Muzaffar Iqbal, Muhammad Iqbal, Muhammad Kashif (Vocational Training Institute Mehmood Kot)

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2. The Girl Power

“In a country where females are not given as many opportunities as men, I was ecstatic to be able to take part in an entrepreneur competition amongst male members”, said Saadia Kanwal in a confident voice. Saadia and her team set up a multi-combination stall at their institute where they offered different eatables everyday and brought unique clothing items for sale. Their food items included tea, dahi bhallay, fruit chat, samoosay – you name it and they had it. Home-made super delicious spicy food items gained popularity in no time. Their stall was barraged with students as soon as it was break time.

Keeping in mind that their institute not only had student population but also instructors, they decided to keep various types of clothes at their stall to target the faculty members. Much to their surprise, their clothing items were an equal hit. All the group members used to manufacture these items at home and bring them to their institute for sale. These included traditional frocks, trendy kurtis, and casual shirts. The group members recalled having total support from their family members. They made a profit of PKR 510 by serving to more than 250 individuals. The only major challenge faced by some team members was the long distance they had to cover to make it to the institute every day. Nonetheless, the spirit of gaining a new learning experience kept them going.

Summing up her conversation, Saadia said, “The competition was a wonderful experience. All of the group members learned how to interact with real customers and the best part was that the girls got to know how to interact with people in practical life; especially the art of carrying out business. Each group member used to work from home but now they know how to market their product and get a fair price”.

Team Members: **Saadia Kanwal**, Nazish Shaheen, Saira Bibi, Farzana Batool, Sajeela Ismail (Vocational Training Institute, Taunsa Sharif)

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3. “Because I am a girl, and I can”

Mahpara is a girl with passion for innovation – she strives to do something different. Since childhood, she has been looking at things from a different perspective. She got the chance to show her abilities to a larger group at the entrepreneurship competition. Along with other four classmates, she did not take much time to come up with a product other groups were not offering. The team decided on showcasing decorations with mirror and clay. The unique idea was pitched in by the team leader and the other group members were equally passionate about it. The tasks were divided according to the potential of each group member. Some girls made clay jewelry while others with the know-how of mirror decorations handled mirror decorations with clay flowers etc.

Due to the uniqueness of the products, the items were sold in no time and the girls had to sit every night to make them again for another day’s display. The impressive use of the small investment was put to the right output and the team made a profit of Rs. 5,000 by serving 70 customers. Mahpara expressed, “We could not have made such a huge profit without the team effort. We learnt that it is extremely important to work as a team and to support each other at all times. That’s the key to success. The competition boosted our confidence and taught us how to manage a small business of our own”. She also mentioned that another secret to the huge profit they made was that the team unanimously decided to reinvest the money in the business to make higher profits. Mahpara aims to finish school and start a small social enterprise which will benefit her and the society at large. She mentioned that such opportunities should be offered to all female students as they are mostly working from home and have no idea about marketing their products.

Team Members: **Mahpara Saleem**, GilZaib Akhter, Lubna Bibi, Kanwal Saleem, Asia Maqbool (Vocational Training Institute Layyah)

4. Expanding the Horizon

“It was an honor for me to be the team lead. I was given the opportunity to lead a group of five and come up with an entrepreneurship idea. We worked as a team and succeeded”, said Javeriah Hafiz. The team decided to stick to the safest entrepreneurship idea i.e. eatables. The thought process behind the concept was to capitalize on the money children brought to schools and colleges for lunch and provide them with home-made good quality food. The team mutually decided on a menu for the entire week and offered a wide variety of snacks and lunch items. The menu included spicy dahi bhallay, healthy fruit chat, tantalizing samosas and traditional daal choley for lunch. The focus of the team was to offer good quality homemade products to the children for the healthy consumption of lunch during school hours.

In order to further capitalize on the investment, the team decided to increase their target market by setting up stalls outside local schools at break time. The response was phenomenal. The team had to increase the quantities of products to ensure consistent supply. The entire team dedicated their personal break time to cooking food items for these extra stalls. Javeriah described it as a great learning experience for all the team members. They all learned the art of multitasking. The team served food to more than 150 individuals and made a profit of PKR 1140. “It was challenging at the beginning as we did not want to compromise on our studies; however, with a little bit of extra effort and dedication, everything turned out great. So much so that we even made a good amount of profit at the end”, she added. It gave the team members an insight to the practical life and acquaint them with real life challenges.

Team Members: **Javaria Hafiz**, Anila Basheer, Rabia Bibi, Farhat Bibi, Sajida Bibi (Vocational Training Institute Mehmood Kot)

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5. Made to Lead

Belonging to a remote village of Kot Addu, Aziz Bibi was excited to take part in the emerging entrepreneurship competition at her institute. Despite being the youngest member of the group, only 15 at that time, she was selected as the team lead by all members owing to her energy and enthusiasm regarding the project. The team members had complete faith in her abilities to lead the project.

Keeping in mind their target audience, Aziz Bibi and her team decided to stick to the traditional profit making items – food and clothing. The team knew that putting up a stall in a girl's college would mean that they had to focus on products that attracted a female audience; clothing being the most important. They collected clothes of different types and embroideries from various places and kept them at display with small profits. They were able to cater to 60 customers and make a profit of PKR 920.

Having the experience of handling a business completely changed Aziz Bibi's perspective to life. She says she was confined to her house to cook food and manage household chores, but with this project she showed her family how brilliant she was at managing her own business. Seeing her lead at the competition, her family members also realized that their girl was meant for something bigger than the chores. Later on, Aziz bibi's family allowed her to open a small shop of her own right outside her house and manage it to contribute to the family income. Aziz bibi expressed, "I was only 15 when I got the chance to experience a life changing event – or that's what I would call it. As if it was not for this competition, I would still be considered a non-earning member of the family. Thanks to the organizers of the entrepreneurship competition who gave me the freedom and had faith in me to lead the project to profit. More of such opportunities should be given to students so they may succeed in their practical life."

Team Members: **Aziz Bibi**, Shahida Bibi, Asia Aziz, Najma Kausar, Shehnala Basheer (Vocational Training Institute Mehmood Kot)

6. Giving Something Back

From a very young age, Mustansar had always wanted to help others in his community. After being enrolled in a formal school, he took part in different social work opportunities which came his way. However, they were all limited in scope. Mustansar was delighted to know about the entrepreneurship competition as he knew it was his chance to shine. Mustansar wanted to come up with a product that would serve dual purpose: generating profit and contributing to the society. After intense brainstorming, the team decided on three products: 1) recycling old clothes 2) health awareness 3) food stalls.

During the strategic planning phase, the team divided the tasks and shared the workload equally. They also involved some females who arranged food items such as pakoray, samaosay, and chana chaat. They made these at home and delivered fresh food for the customers every day. Alongside food preparations, the girls also took part in recycling the clothes. Male members of the group went to the flea market, purchased some items, and the girls added new ornaments to that clothing overnight. These recycled clothes targeted the marginalized groups of the society. Other group members were handling the third element of the project i.e. health awareness. The team hired a local doctor and rented a weight machine. They went door to door and asked for permission to weight all the members of the house. After weighing, the doctor recommended food plan to every individual according to their weight in order to increase health awareness amongst the society.

Mustansar and his team made a profit of Rs. 2,000 and served 75 individuals of the most disadvantaged section of the community. He said, “This competition has helped me regain my faith that if you decide to do something for the greater good, do it with full dedication and everything will fall in place. I had an extremely cooperative team and thanks to them we made record breaking profits alongside benefiting our society”.

Team members: **Mustansar Nazar**, Muhammad Ubaid Ullah, Muhammad Naeem, Muhammad Shahid, Muhammad Tahir (Vocational Training Institute Mehmood Kot)

7. Learning from the Best

Falak started learning entrepreneurial skills ever since he was a little kid. His teacher was his father as he had a small enterprise of his own. He had seen ups and downs of owning and managing a business. When he heard about the entrepreneurship competition, he gladly took the opportunity to show his abilities. “I wanted to show my father how well he taught me as a child” said Falak when asked why he chose to be a part of the competition.

Along with his team, Falak decided to open up small canteens in two of the local schools in a nearby locality. With the initial investment, they bought all the material including snacks, drinks, and planned to keep at least one homemade item on the menu for every day in each of the schools. Pricing the products was a challenge for the team as young children in schools do not spend a lot on buying lunch. They had to offer good quality and hygienic food at cheap prices so that children were tempted to buy eatables from the canteen.

Each of the group members took some assistance from their female family members to cook homemade products. Every day, one homemade dish was sent by a group member’s family and was kept on the menu in both the schools. The food varied from naan tiki to biryani. The team also ensured that the supplies of the favorites of the children such as packed chips and juices were not disrupted. The team made an overall profit of more than Rs. 1,000 and served about 150 children. “Having the profit money in my hand at the end of the competition made me feel like I was on cloud nine. The entire team’s efforts had paid off. And for me particularly, it was like a reward and thanks to my father who taught me all these years how to patiently run a business and invest in customers”.

Team Members: **Falak Sher**, Akhtar Abbas, Muhammad Jamal, Sajad Habib, Imran Haider
(Vocational Training Institute Mehmood Kot)

8. Ring A Bell

It is no hidden fact that during student life, many children do not have a lot of money to be spent at canteen or to purchase balance for their mobiles. “Therefore, many students including myself generally get easy load (top up) in the phone of a nominal amount which helps us stay in touch with our loved ones”, said Matee ur Rehman. School canteens usually have all eatables and also mobile-cards, but they rarely offer the choice of easy load. Identifying the demand for easy load, Matee and his team decided to kick-off a small entrepreneurship of easy load within the school premises.

Through personal connections, the team got in touch with the vendors of U-fone and Telenor and arranged for a device for easy load. The product was unique in nature as no one in the university was offering it. Soon after the launch of the project, the easy load stall was always crowded. The demand was overwhelming. Students, and even the faculty members, from the entire institute started getting easy load from the stall. “It was highly encouraging to see so many students come to our stall for easy load. Initially, we were scared to launch such a simple product. But once we did it, our profits were huge”, said Matee while explaining how a simple idea which is in demand can generate mounts of profits.

Their team generated Rs. 600 at the end of the competition and served more than 900 people. Matee mentioned that after getting feedback from different customers, they also arranged for easy load services from other telecommunication operators and that increased the profits. This also helped in customer retention and the same clients kept coming back. He also acknowledged the efforts of his team and mentioned that everyone played an important role. He emphasized that without the team, it would not have been possible to turn this into a profitable venture.

Team Members: **Matee ur Rehman**, Tariq Majeed, Muhammad Fiaz, Tanveer Ahmed, Fawad Ather (Vocational Training Institute Taunsa Shareef)

9. Guiding the Girls

It's every girl's dream to do something big in her life and be appreciated for it. It becomes an even bigger challenge as that girl starts to grow older and realizes that the opportunities offered to her are not as many as being offered to her brothers. But armament to prove her worth, Maryam always fought with her family for her rights - to be enrolled in school and to be part of the family business i.e. selling hand embroidery clothes. Before the competition, she was helping her family work from home while the male members of the family would go door to door selling the products and handling finances.

The experience of launching a new business and successfully running it with four other female members marked her journey to being independent. She gained firsthand experience on how to interact with customers, how to showcase her products, how to communicate with clients and overall how to satisfy and retain customers. Brining innovation into the concept, the team members decided to do something different than just selling traditional clothes. They came up with the idea of handmade bags – school bags, hand bags, and clutches to cater to the female population of their institute. The girls designed the bags in colorful combinations with various accessories which made each piece very unique.

It was a brilliant idea to launch handmade bags as no one else in the vicinity was selling them. Due to the uniqueness of the product, the team sold their items to more than 90 customers. The team members expressed that it was difficult to match the soaring demand but the excitement of doing something productive and earning from it kept them going. “This experience taught us how to match demand and supply with a given set of resources – an important lesson for practical life”, said Maryam.

Team Members: **Mayam Rani**, Farhat Ahmad, Sameena Kiran, Samia Rasheed, Roshany Akhter (Vocational Training Institute Layyah)

Maryam mentioned loss and the database has no profit listed for this group

10. For the Love of Food

Still in her teenage, Rida showed impeccable leadership skills at the entrepreneur competition. Going with the safe idea of eatable products, Rida and her team came up with unique selling techniques and presentation ideas to attract students to their small business enterprise. The team had several planning meetings before they started the business and discussed everyone's individual role to have a focused plan for the entire duration of the project. The plan was to attract people of all age groups by keeping food items for youngsters as well as professionals. Their stall included snacks like chana chaat, papri chaat and lunch items such as pulao or biryani. Every day the menu was different and a different type of chaat and rice were cooked.

Rida ensured that all members took part in all activities so they all could develop knowledge of how to run a business of their own. This capacity building technique was really successful as some of the team members already have their own small enterprises. Their project served more than 100 individuals and their food was highly appreciated by the customers.

In order to keep improving, the team arranged daily meetings to discuss the future tasks and the new ideas to present the food. "Customers loved the idea of having home-cooked food with catchy presentation and we catered various age brackets. This was our unique selling point during the competition," said Rida. The team made a profit of Rs. 1000 but more importantly each one of them learned how to be an entrepreneur. She added that such entrepreneurship competitions help students in building confidence and teaches people skills especially to females.

Team Members: **Rida Shahtaj**, Rehana Parveen, Zakia Bibi, Saima Ashraf, Attia Rasheed (Vocational Training Institute Mehmood Kot)

11. Love What You Do

“It was a milestone for me to be a part of a vocational institute. Not many girls in our village are allowed to travel everyday for the sake of education and skills,” said Nazia, now 26 years old. She expressed how she always wanted to learn and be an educated woman but was never given many opportunities. Nazia mentioned that it was her thirst to learn something new every day which led her to not only take part in the entrepreneur competition but also lead her group.

“We decided to do something which we all loved – making dresses”, said Nazia. She elaborated that all her group members worked equally for the competition and mentioned that they did everything together – from shopping for the raw material, doing embroidery, packing the outfits, and selling them in the market as well as households. She explained that their group loved every bit of the experience. They went to wholesale shops to keep their products and also visited households in their own residential areas. Each group member took certain sets of clothes to their place at the end of the day and would sale the products in their “mohallah” in the evening. They also took orders for clothes which were sold out and would sit together the next day to complete the orders. She mentioned that this experience did not only polish our communication skills but also taught us how to manage demand and supply and how to make conversation with clients. Nazia and her team served at least 32 individuals and made a profit of PKR 1800.

“This competition taught us countless things – most importantly it taught us how to love our work and earn from it as a team”, expressed Nazia who is now married and is doing embroidery and selling clothes from her home. She mentioned taking pride in the fact that she is now a contributing member of her family’s income – something she never would have thought of before this competition.

Team Members: **Nazia Parveen**, Najma Parveen, Iqra Sehar, Bakhtan Bibi, Sajida Parveen
(Punjab Vocational Training Institute Fateh Pur)

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12. Fit to Win

At the young age of 19, Shaista was selected as the team leader for her group to participate in the ‘emerging entrepreneurship competition’. Shaista and her team didn’t take much time deciding what their product would be; they wanted to capitalize on their existing skill of making clothes. They decided to take this opportunity and show what they learnt in their vocational training institute. The idea was simple yet the gang of girls added their element of uniqueness in each product they created. For females, they came up with beautifully ornamented frocks and kurtas and for men they produced intricate embroidery for suits. They saved time by working on their products during the training class as well as at home.

Their selling strategy was also simple yet worked perfectly in their favor. They sold clothes in their college and at the end of the day took clothes home to sell in their residential areas. Each group member came from a different locality therefore their sales increased dramatically. Every alternate day, the girls would switch the products for diversity. They sold their clothes to more than 25 households and earned a profit of PRK 600.

Shaista mentioned that the competition taught each one of them how to go to the market and purchase raw material in bulk at reduced prices, how to sell their product and convince the customer to buy their product through effective marketing. “It was our first experience at selling products door to door so initially getting sales was challenging for our entire team. However, within a couple of days, the first hand experience taught us how to sell our products effectively – something we all cherish now”, said Shaista while appraising the entrepreneurship competition. She also mentioned that such initiatives are extremely important for girls since they are not usually given hands on experience and hence lag behind guys in the bigger entrepreneurial landscape.

Team members: **Shaesta Hina**, Naseem Akhtar, Sonia Qamar, Aqsa Ghafoor, Bushra Mansha (Vocational Training Institute Fateh Pur)

13. Smart Lighting

Still in his teens, Fakhr ul Zaman is an individual with a vision. He wanted to not only do something for himself but also give back to the society. Along with his team, Fakhr came up with the idea of making LED lights and selling them to the community. The strategy was well-thought out by the entire group. They all belonged to different villages and every village was facing electricity crisis. Where rich of the community can afford generators and UPS, the marginalized class is unable to cater to the crisis in the country at reduced price.

Catering to the demand of their own community, the team members decided on selling LED lights. Fakhr volunteered to make the lights himself for reduced costs. Along with his team members, he purchased the required raw material, put together the batteries and arranged them in attractive boxes so they looked aesthetically different to the ones already available in the commercial market. Once the LED lights were ready, now came the process of selling them – something the team feared at that time as there were other LED lights available in the commercial market. Thinking strategically, they decided to not only put out their product in the commercial market i.e. selling it to wholesalers but they also decided to sell these door to door in their own villages. They marketed their light as a low-cost solution for the poor households. Fakhr admitted that the team initially had trouble selling their product door to door as they had no prior marketing experience. “But with time we all learned how to pitch the product and we were making sales everyday”, said Fakhr. The team made a profit of PKR 1800 and sold their product to more than 50 beneficiaries. Fakhr mentioned that this firsthand experience taught him how to be a true entrepreneur.

Team members: **Fakhr ul Zaman**, Mudsar Iqbal, Mohsin Iqbal, Ishfaq Hussian, Azhar Jawaaid (Vocational Training Institute Fateh Pur)

14. The Smart Solution

Rizwan was a passionate boy who wanted to do something that his family would be proud of. “I come from a poor family where my father was the only bread winner”, said Rizwan while telling why he wanted to do something that would be remembered. Determined to change the condition of his house, Rizwan got enrolled in a vocational institute in Fateh Pur. He was only 16 when he took part in the emerging entrepreneurship competition and volunteered to be the team leader. Rizwan and his team decided to work on a product that was high in demand. After brainstorming for a while they decided on making LED lights as some of the group members knew how to do that. They knew their product would be in demand owing to the electricity shortages in the country. They focused on keeping the costs for the LED lights as low as possible as they wanted to sell the product to students who wanted to study at night but were unable to do so due to the electricity crisis.

In terms of selling the product, the team decided to go sell them everywhere possible. They kept the LED lights at commercial markets with a certain profit margin and also took some to their residential areas and sold them in their community. With a multi-target approach, the team was successful in sweeping a profit of PKR 1600 and sold them to more than 25 households. “During this competition, what we learned the most was how to communicate with general public – how to convince them to buy the product we were selling. Every buyer had to be treated differently and that was something we learned with field experience only”, said Rizwan. He also mentioned that they got complete support from their families. “My father was so proud of the fact that I made the LED lights that he would go to every house in the village and introduce himself and tell that my son made this light. That was an extremely proud moment for me and this was only made possible because of this competition’, said Rizwan.

Team members: **Rizwan Anjum**, Liaqat Ali, Irfan Akram, Umer Farooq, Qamar Abbas (Vocational Training Institute Fateh Pur)

15. Bringing beauty home

“I have to admit, I was a little scared when I was chosen as the leader for the group. But owing to an extremely supportive team, my job was made easy”, said Nain Tara. Nain Tara along with other four female group members chose the idea of selling beauty products at reduced prices and offered services to women at their doorsteps. “Belonging to a village, we understood how difficult it was for females to go out of the house and avail parlor services so we thought of bringing them the parlor at their door step”, said Nain Tara while explaining the idea behind their product.

The group decided to get pamphlets made for the beauty products and services and distributed them in their residential areas to market how their products were cheaper and most importantly available at their doorstep. Their services included low-cost high-result beauty products, mehndi application services, and other skin care treatment products. In the beginning, women were resilient to this idea. However, as one of the females of a mahalla used the products and availed our services, the demand would rise in that area. So much so that our group members had to write the orders on a paper and bring the additional products the next day. The group sold their products in more than 300 households and made a combined profit of PKR 1200. Nain Tara expressed that this experience taught them how to deal with customers and gave them a lifelong skill. She mentioned that she is now married and also running a beauty parlor of her own. She said that she opened the parlor after the successful experiment of the beauty products they launched during the competition and is benefitting from the adventure even until now.

Team members: **Nain Tara**, Saima Sharif, Samra Ahmad, Maira Shahid, Fauzia Iram
(Vocational Training Institute Kot Addu)

16. “Earning by means of trade”

“The ‘emerging entrepreneurship competition’ was one of the biggest opportunities in my life. I belong to a really poor family and my father was a daily wage earner. I knew I had to do something out of the box to get noticed and that’s what I did”, said Mohammad Arif from Kot Addu district while telling us about his motivation behind merchandizing spare parts of motor cycle. He mentioned that since we were a team of five members, after some investment in spare parts of motorbikes, we also bought mobile accessories and started selling them for petty cash. The turnover from the spare parts of the bike was not as quick as the mobile accessories. However, we kept selling both the items.

Arif remembered having a long pre-launch meeting with the team over investment in spare parts of motorcycles and mobile accessories. He acknowledged that as a team we knew only spare parts won’t get us the aimed profit margin as the returns from such an investment as long term. The combination of the two items benefitted the team. At the end competition, they had served more than 50 customers and made a profit of PKR 680. Commenting on the nature of the competition Arif said, “Such initiatives provide a mean of earning for so many families especially those who do not have taken the risk of investing in a small business of their own on their own ever. Trade is a means of earning our Holy Prophet (PBUH) encouraged all us to take part in. Right now, I am studying and running a small merchandize of spare parts of motor cycles and supporting my family. This all happened due to the competition. Such opportunities should be given to students in my humble opinion”.

Team members: **Muhammad Arif**, Muhammad Asif, Muhammad Ijaz, Muhammad Amir, Nazar Hayyat (Vocational Training Institute Kot Addu)

17. Loving the Mother Nature

“I love nature – plants (flowers & trees) are my passion”, said Shahbaz while speaking about his product idea for the competition. Shahbaz mentioned that he and his team wanted to buy plants at a cheaper rate from the nurseries and to sell them door to door in households. They wanted to create awareness amongst the society about importance of greenery in their lives. Shahbaz mentioned that his village did not have much green patches as he had seen in other villages therefore he stressed on the idea of selling plants. Families of the group members were also supportive as the fathers of two members were farmers and always encouraged the importance of plants in one’s life since childhood.

Taking the lead, Shahbaz said that they divided different locations amongst all group members and hence covered quite a vast geographical area as their target audience. Shahbaz was responsible for purchasing the plants in bulk and distributing to other group members for sales. The team as a whole made a profit of PKR 800 and served about 200 households. “It helped us groom ourselves. It taught us how to talk to potential clients. It gave us the confidence to speak to general people, in fact, become advocates of Mother Nature”, said Shahbaz. He also mentioned the team not only learned how to handle a small enterprise but also learned to give something back to the society. By selling plants at door steps, not only did the team made profit for themselves but also created a healthy safe environment for generations to come. Such ideas are an inspiration and also known as a social good in economic terms.

Team members: **Shahbaz Fazzal**, Mujahid Hussain, Muhammad Imran, Asghar Hussain, Arif Parvez (Vocational Training Institute Kot Addu)

18. Doing What We Do Best

The group decided on capitalizing the team member's existing skills. Kashif, the team leader, had some experience in making LED lights. The idea of selling LED lights in villages during summer time was attractive as the worst ever electricity shortage hits the country during that time and affects the rural areas the most. The team made a plan to create LED lights on their own under the guidance of Kashif and later on sell them to wholesalers in bulk to make higher profits.

Once the raw material was bought, no time was wasted in making the LED lights which could survive for days without charging if used for a couple of hours daily. Instead of concentrating the energy in selling these lights door to door, the group decided to get in touch with the wholesalers and kept their product at commercial shops. Kashif mentioned that convincing the shopkeepers to keep their LED lights for sale purposes was challenging initially as the team did not have the required communication skills. However, with some hands on experience, they learnt our way around it. The team sold their product to 50 beneficiaries and made a team profit of PKR 2000. "We already had the skills to make the product. This competition taught us how to take small risks in life and we put our product in the market priced strategically so that we reap higher profits. The end result is in front of you. We made a phenomenal profit", said Kashif. He also mentioned that after the competition he did not give up on the business idea. To date, he is still making LED lights and supplying them to the wholesalers. However, alongside, he has also started selling other products. "Thanks to the competition which believed that young adults like us can make a difference in the society", said Kashif.

Team members: **Kashif Irfan**, Muhammad Irfan, Muhammad Usman, Ali Waris, Azhar Javeed (Vocational Training Institute Fateh Pur)

19. Bringing Door to Door Solution

“With the little investment we had, we wanted to focus on offering services and capitalize on the returns”, said Majeed when explaining their product. He mentioned that all the group members agreed that they will offer door to door services of repairing electrical appliances. The concept was new to the market as electrical appliances are generally taken to a shop for repair. It involves travel cost every time something has to be repaired. The group invested their money in transport and the material needed for repair. All group members went to same locations but each member would go to a different house and ask if they needed any electrical repairs. This way not much time and money was wasted in travel and larger populations were catered easily. The team almost covered the entire district of Kot Addu and made a profit of PKR 1500. The team offered the repair services at a rate cheaper than the market. With repairs that were complicated or required an additional spare part, the team member would go the next day with the supply and repair it. This way, the households got their job done at cheaper cost and without having to go out and look for a shop.

“We learnt how to communicate with potential customers. We introduced ourselves and then informed them that we could offer low-cost electrical repair services. At times, the females of the house were reluctant to open the door to males but once one of the households opened, the entire mahalla would bring their appliances for repair”, said Majeed. He also mentioned that each one of the group members learnt from this experience and such initiatives should be offered to all students who are about to enter their professional lives as such activities build a level of confidence which no theoretical work can.

Team members: **M. Majeed**, M. Tariq. M. Kashif. M. Fayyaz, M. Zeeshan (Vocational Training Institute Fateh Pur)

20. For the Love of Spices

“We wanted to do something completely different”, said Irfan while explaining his product idea. He said that the team wanted to come up with an idea which other competitors were not already doing and was within the given investment amount. After multiple team discussions, they decided on selling home-made masalay (local term for spices). For this purpose they set up a meeting with an acquaintance who was in the business of selling masala-jaats already. After consulting him, they bought the raw material, made the maslas and sold them to various shopkeepers in the neighborhood and closeby vicinities’. The maslas were relatively priced lower in comparison to other market brands and the team used all authentic herbs to do so. Soon their products gained popularity in the market and were in high demand. The group extended the supply to other adjacent village’s commercial markets. The team secured a profit of PKR 3000 and sold it to more than 40 beneficiaries.

“This competition gave us the confidence that we could do any business we wanted once we put in hard work and dedication”, said Irfan. He also mentioned that owing to the successful entrepreneurship idea, two of the team members transformed the idea into a full fledged business and now are supporting their families by earning from it. He also mentioned that even today if they go back to those shops that were our clients, they want us to take this forward and resume making the masalas. “I am currently finishing my studies and you never know, after completing my education I might as well start the same business as the competition has given me quite an experience and exposure to public relations in this field. This competition taught me to believe in myself and gave me the confidence to speak to people. I am thankful to the organizers of this event/competition”, said Irfan.

Team members: **Muhammad Irfan**, Tauqeer Hussain, Muhammad Rashid, Muhammad Tariq, Muhammad Tariq (Vocational Training Institute Kot Addu)

21. Go Green

“I followed my heart and shared the idea with my team members. They also loved it and we started working towards it”, said Javed. At the age of 20, Javed felt that he should not only be making profit for the competition but also be able to give something back to the society. The product idea shared with the team was of selling seasonal plants. Javed took the lead and explained the entire procedure to the team as his father was a farmer. They decided to buy seasonal plants in bulk and sell them to households at cheaper price. The team members went from house to house informing them of the importance of fresh plants within their house and encouraged to buy from them as they were selling at a cheaper price.

Just after a few visits, the team realized that their product idea was doing well. They reinvested some of the profit they made initially and bought plants again for further resale. The strategy paid them well eventually as they made a profit of PKR 900 and sold plants to more than 70 households. Javed shared that their team did not face any major challenge during the competition. He also mentioned that this competition made them realize their potential and taught them that a little risk in life is mandatory. “The most important thing we learned was to communicate and market our product in the real commercial market. It was an outstanding learning experience for each one of the team members. We realized the importance of sharing with the community”, said Javed.

Team members: **M. Javed**, M. Nadeem Ashiq, M. Tanveer, Anwar Ahmed, Saad Ullah
(Vocational Training Institute Kot Addu)

22. Going Solar

“I feel honored to be chosen as the group leader for my team during the competition. My team was extremely supportive and we blended so well”, said Nadir. Nadir and his team came up with the unique idea of making solar lamps. They wanted to target the student age group who has a lot difficulty studying at night during examinations and while covering regular course work due to electricity shortages. Nadir expressed how they wished to have something low-cost that would give energy during light time so that they could prepare for their exams. Keeping all these factors in mind, the team came up with the idea of solar lamps. The lamps were designed such that they could work for hours without electricity, and for days, if used for a couple of hours every day. Due to the severe electricity outage in the country, the product was expected to be high in demand especially in the villages.

Once the small solar lamps were ready, all the team members were to sell them in their residential areas. The team members would go house to house informing the resident about the benefit of the lamp and encouraged them to buy from them at a cheaper price. “Since solar lamp was a new idea in the village, it was awfully hard for the team members to convince villagers to buy their product. There came a point where we thought we would go in loss but thanks to Allah Al-mighty sales started coming in”, said Nadir. He mentioned that the group sold lamps to about 9 individuals and that gave them a profit PKR 700. Explaining further Nadir mentioned that they had expected a very high demand for solar lamps; but the response of the general people was not as enthusiastic as they had expected. Nonetheless, they managed to take the venture to profitable side.

Team members: **Nadir Hussain**, Muhammad Sarfraz, Bilawal Saeed, Muhammad Sajid, Muhammad Azam (Vocational Training Institute Mehmod Kot)

23. Giving Girls a Chance!

“I belong to a far off village of Tausa Shareef where girls are not sent to schools. It is widely believed that since they are not the bread winners of the family, no money should be spent on their education”, said Saima while telling how honored she felt to be the part of entrepreneurship competition. She along with her other team members decided to take advantage of their existing skills and hence their product idea was ‘decorations’. These included beautiful floral arrangements, fancy tissue boxes made with traditional mirror work, out-class handkerchiefs and contemporary embroidery suits for women. Every group member took the responsibility for one item and worked on it. Once these products were completed, they were attractively arranged in the display area.

College students were attracted by the arrangements and the display center was always crowded. Even the faculty members appreciated their effort and bought quite a few products. “It felt great that even our teachers appreciated our arrangements and said that it was one of the most appealing stalls of the competition”, said Saima. The group made a profit of PKR 800 and sold their products to more than 28 individuals.

Saima also mentioned that each of the group members learnt something new and practical during the competition. “I learned how to operate a computer, another girl improved her communication skills while talking to customers, and another group member learnt how to make floral arrangements and so on. I will never forget this experience. It was once in a lifetime opportunity for me and others in my group”, said Saima. She mentioned that one of her group members is now operating a small business of decorations from home and earning for her family. She recommended that more and more girls should be encouraged to take part in such competitions.

Team members: **Saima Latif**, Amina Mai, Khalida Parveen, Nausheen Gull, Rehana Faiz Chishti (Punjab Vocational Institute, Taunsa Shareef)

24. Dreaming and Daring To Do

“I was the eldest in the family and married. I had a lot of responsibility over my shoulder. I had to be the provider for my family but never had courage to take a risk and start a business. What if it failed? How would I pay the bills? I could have never taken this leap if it wasn’t for the entrepreneurship competition at my institute. It did not only give me back my confidence but also helped me stand on my own feet”, explained Iqbal. He was ecstatic to find out about the competition and took the opportunity to take the risk he has been wanting to for so long now. Iqbal along with his other group members invested in making a low-cost UPS and UPS chargers.

Taking the lead, Iqbal purchased the required raw material and started putting together the UPS. Other team members also helped and their product was ready in no time. The team sat together to develop a marketing strategy to sell their product which they claimed was not difficult owing to the persistent energy crisis throughout the country. Their UPS was designed in such a way that it was taking minimum load and giving multiplied output. Iqbal mentioned that poor people living in the village could not afford the cost of a high-end UPS; therefore they created a mini version which would survive for hours if used strategically. They were offering a low cost solution to the poor people. The team rented out a shop in the central commercial market and advertised through word of mouth. “We already knew that our product would pick demand slowly”, mentioned Iqbal. As expected, gradually, customers started coming in and the team was making money. At the end of the competition, the team sold 5 UPS.

Iqbal mentioned that he owes all the success of his life to this competition as he now owns a UPS shop and is earning decently. He said that he keeps innovating and is now planning to launch a solar UPS for the villagers who cannot charge the batteries on electricity. He plans to use small solar plates which will not cost much and offer higher return.

Team members: **Muhammad Iqbal**, Shahbaz Gull, Hamza Iqbal, Muhammad Irfan, Muhammad Zeehsan (Vocational Training Institute, Layyah)

The team lead did not remember the profit and it’s not in the given database either

25. Healthy Farming

Being students of the discipline of agriculture, Qadeer and his team wanted a product idea that would incorporate their expertise and through which they can apply their theoretical knowledge practically. After much brainstorming, the team decided to offer consultancy for farming. During their planning meeting, they decided to make pamphlets of different pests and insecticides that the farmers should know of while cropping. Qadeer mentioned that people in villages often do not know which medicine can be used for which pest and therefore are fooled easily by medicine companies which are making huge profits off these poor people.

The team offered consultancy for crops and shared information with the farmers which could save them a whole lot of money and time. Once the pamphlets were ready, the team went to different villages, gathered the farmers and informed them about their objective. “Convincing the villagers especially farmers who have been doing things the traditional way for decades now was difficult. However, with facts and figures we were able to get through them”, expressed Qadeer. After the meeting, the team members would sell the pamphlets for a very low cost so that the farmers could buy. The farmers were getting low cost solution and hence were very interested. With their innovative consultation services, the team made 11,000 PKR in profit and gave about 25 full-fledge consultancies.

“The response we received after the meetings was phenomenal. Even today some of the farmers contact us for information regarding the condition of their crop and we give them solutions based on goodwill. This competition gave us a direction on how to earn money using our education and we are thankful to the hosting organization for this”, said Qadeer in his concluding remarks.

Team Members: **Qadeer Hussain**, Muhammad Arif, Umar Farooq, Waseem Akram, Sana Ullah (Vocational Training Institute, Layyah)

26. Binding the Team

Realizing the need for more than just a photocopier at the schools and universities in his community, Muhammad Imran came up with the idea of providing book binding services to different educational institutes in the area. According to Imran, “Being students and given the strong need, it was thankfully not difficult for us to reach out to fellow students in other institutes and seek their participation to put up small stalls providing book binding services.”

Much to the groups’ surprise, the need for a book binding service was felt not only by students but also the faculty members and the management of different schools and universities. Upon receiving good feedback on their entrepreneurial idea and having learnt the technique of doing it, the team soon decided to expand their initiative to more than a 100 schools in the area along with several commercial markets near the academic institutes. Imran recalled that eventually the team was serving different locations encompassing almost their entire district. Meanwhile, he also explained that it did become a challenge for his team to coordinate amongst these stalls in different areas. However, they put in their best effort and it deemed good results.

As a result of their efforts, the team was able to accumulate a decent profit of up to PKR 2,600. Imran said that the competition encouraged him and his team to do more even after it ended. He expressed, “This opportunity provided me and my team the firsthand experience to conduct business, talk to clients, understand client requirements, and to come up with solutions to fulfill those requirements”. In the end, he was thankful to his team for putting in hard work and dedication for the competition.

Team Members: **Muhammad Shakil**, Zafar Abbas, Muhammad Sohail, Muhammad Hassan

27. Selling the Sim

Not many girls get the opportunity to run a small business while still being a student. Grabbing every opportunity that came her way, Saira started off in the competition with a confident footing and pitched her idea to sell telephone sims in different crowded areas and gain experience of being a sales agent. Having confidence in herself and her team, Saira started off with buying up to 100 sims from local franchises of multiple telecommunication companies. Since she was buying in bulk she managed to have decent discount on the deals and choose as attractive mobile numbers as possible for sales.

Showing good leadership skills, Saira soon divided sims amongst her team members and they started selling in different key locations each day. This technique allowed them to tap into a higher range of customers. Saira explained confidently, “We knew within the first few days that our idea was a success and we needed to capitalize on it and make as much profit out of it as possible”. Saira and her team started to put up small stalls in different crowded locations, such as bus stations and commercial markets, where customers would walk up to them to purchase sims directly rather than walking down to the mobile franchises.

Saira mentioned that her team was able to collect a profit of PKR 10,000 from their little business enterprise. She confessed that although she was confident that she’d do well, she did not expect such high profit in such little time. She confessed that even though it was a challenge to run the business, it taught her a great deal and if given the chance, she would be happy to go through this experience all over again.

Team Members: **Saira Tabassum,** Mubeen Tabassum, Fatima Bibi, Maria Muzaffar, Sana Ashiq (Vocational Training Institute Vehari)

28. IT on the Move

Driven by his passion to work in the Information Technology industry after graduation, Awais had an innovative product idea to pitch in at the team meeting. He offered to provide software and smart phone solution services at the doorstep of their customers. Hearing the idea, the team unanimously agreed to take this concept forward.

Since the team was offering IT solutions at doorsteps, there was no limitation to the target audience. The team could cater to calls from all over the district. Soon after little advertisement, calls started coming in. Awais strategically organized the home-tours of the group members so that the travel cost remained minimal. The team made about 40 visits in different localities. “Customer satisfaction became the primary source of our business venture. Happy customers told others about their experience with us and our sales increased”.

Awais and his team managed to collect a profit of more than PKR 2,000 from the venture. Awais insisted that the real profit was their experience and the long lasting customers they gained during the competition. In his words, “The respect and appreciation gained from the customers was priceless for me and my team.” Awais took pride in the fact their idea was innovative and had not been implemented ever before.

Awais also said that this exercise made him and his team realizes that in the beginning of a business venture, one must always focus on quality products and services. In this strategy, returns might come slow, but once they start coming in – it is overwhelming. “Our team expresses high gratitude to the Punjab Vocational Training Council which taught us to run a business and make an earning for ourselves”.

Team Members: **Muhammad Awais**, Muhammad Afzaal, Farrukh Hasnain, Mudassar Javed, Muhammad Arshman Razaq (Vocational Training Institute Vehari)

29. A Healthy & Safe Community

Upon learning about the entrepreneurship competition, Rashid pondered over how he could use this opportunity to do business such that would benefit the society alongside giving monetary returns. Rashid and his team had several meetings, and eventually chose to provide services of carrying out cheap clinical tests including sugar test, blood test and tests for several other diseases. In order to execute their idea, the team put up stalls in different areas of the district that they found best suitable to target potential customers.

In order to set their project aside from the conventional methods of testing, the team decided to charge PKR 100 per head instead of the market rate of PKR 300. Recalling the discussion among his team members, Rashid said, “We knew that if we did not offer a price advantage over our competitors, people would simply not bother to use our service.” However, even with the lower prices the team faced another challenge of lack of awareness and willingness to adhere to these medical tests in the rural areas. Their clientele were people who didn’t understand the importance or need of conducting medical tests. Rashid and his team started giving awareness about the diseases and their potential cures to different gatherings in the village (Baithaks) and encouraged members to come to their stall for further information. The team also put up small banners and attractive posters to gain attention to their stall and to educate and spread awareness about very common diseases.

Rashid mentioned that he had a sense of fulfillment after devoting his efforts and hard work into something that benefited the society as a whole. He pointed out that the ability to help others especially our own community alongside making profit seemed like the perfect thing to do.

Team Members: **Mohammad Rashid**, Noman Khalid, Muhammad Bilal, Sabila Perveen, Zunera Perveen (Vocational Training Institute Khanewal)

30. The Super Suppliers

Shahzad and his team members took part in the competition by playing the role of a supplier. They bought various bakery items in bulk from large bakery units and supplied them to small general stores in the vicinity while keeping a small profit for themselves. Since the team constituted of five members, they divided the work equally shared the work burden.

The bakery items supplied by Shahzad and his team mostly included bread, cakes and biscuits. Although they supplied other items too, Shahzad mentioned that these three items were the most demanded. The team managed to cater to more than 200 shops in the area and this decent market share allowed them to carve up a profit of PKR 4,000. Having said that, Shahzad did not forget to share the troubles his team members went through to achieve this goal. He mentioned that the biggest challenge they had to face was the lack of personal transport as several rounds had to be made for consistent supplies. However, the team members did not give in. They walked for miles and miles in order to complete orders. “We took local transport sometimes but even that was very rare since most of our local general stores clients were in the areas where local transport did not go”, said Shahzad.

Shahzad said he was excited to have learned how to do marketing and maintain a small business enterprise. He confessed that since dealing with customers is a paramount for any business, the opportunity to have dealt with real customers and negotiated real deals has given him confidence that no other experience could have.

Team Members: **Shahzad Ali**, Sajjad Hussain, Qamar Ali, Amir Noor, Husnain (Vocational Training Institute Vehari)

31. A Timely Realization

Being a 30-year-old student enrolled in a Master's program with no practical job experience, Azra truly valued the opportunity that had come knocking at her doorstep. It did not take her long to assume the role of a team leader and emerge with a consensus on a business plan. The team decided to put up a stall in their university with various everyday food items contributed by all group members. During the group meeting, everyone would volunteer to make one food item which was to be put on the menu for the next day.

The food item business was doing well but Azra timely realized that they needed to have some additional products to enhance their sales. The team bought some cosmetic products and kept them for sale at small margins. These cosmetic products were made at home from natural herbs. Azra's mature approach and her leadership capabilities helped the team transform their losses to profits – in no time they had catered to more than 2,000 customers and calculated to have made a profit of PKR 2,670.

“The competition experience motivated me and my team to set small targets and achieve them other. It was due to this competition that for the first time I realized I could have a small business of my own other than running after jobs upon graduation. I admit that it was challenging for us to deal with customers initially; however, I along with my other team members learned quickly and we successfully ran our business”, said Azra. She expressed that this competition holds a special value for females as it gives them the chance to learn to make an earning from within their households.

Team Members: **Azra Parveen**, Anam Shahzadi, Sana Riaz, Zahida Bibi, Hurmat Bibi (Vocational Training Institute Chishtian)

32. Wait for the Weight

Being a student of medicine, it was not difficult for Iftikhar Ali to come up with an idea to make money from a simple weight machine. Along with his team, Iftikhar successfully proved that even if the simplest ideas are implemented carefully and hard work is put in, they can generate outstanding results.

Iftikhar's team did not put a lot of investment in starting up their business as they simply bought a weighing machine and headed to a nearby crowded market area to start luring customers to have themselves weighed. Given the simplicity of their services, the team decided to play safe and keep a minimalistic rate of PKR 10 per head. Soon the team realized that their daily income largely depended upon the area they had chosen for the day. It did not take long for the team to find out about a large scale flower festival being held in the district. Grabbing the opportunity, all team members divided the day into different shifts and ensured that the weighing stall was open at all times during the festival. Iftikhar recalls to have catered up to 300 customers at the festival alone. "All of us worked hard as this platform was our opportunity to prove our skills. We learnt communicating with the general people and some marketing skills as well", said Iftikhar while confessing that it was their first time deal with the public and luring diverse customers was a challenge initially. Iftikhar mentioned that it was an incredible feeling when we figured that we made a phenomenal profit of PKR 5,000. He also said that all his team members put in great effort and appreciated that "they sometimes walked miles rather than taking public transport in order to keep the cost of business minimum." Such dedication and hard work is bound to reap fruitful results.

Team Members: **Iftikhar Ali**, Muhammad Asim, Muhammad Farooq, Muhammad Shahid Ali, Zeshan Rasheed (Vocational Training Institute Khanewal)

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33. Celebrating the Summers

Having the opportunity of the entrepreneurship competition, Nadeem wanted to do something out of the box – he proposed the idea of a mobile stall offering seasonal beverages. Seeing the hot weather, if the beverages were served cold, the team was expected to reap high profits off this venture. The team decided to keep packed beverages and offered a locally made beverage called Sardai (a drink traditionally used in remote areas to kill heat in summers). Nadeem mentioned having some prior experience with local beverages hence he was confident that he could pull off the Sardai very well. Additionally, they placed several small gifts on the mobile stall to attract young customers in the locality.

In coordination with other team members, Nadeem chose various crowded public areas like main markets, shopping malls and street markets. Having had served almost dozen customers daily, Nadeem remembers going home with at least some profit daily. He stated that “I feel blessed to have been given the opportunity to participate in the competition because it taught me how to run my own business and how to cater day-to-day highs and lows.” Overall, Iftikhar and his team recorded to have served more than 1000 customers and managed to collect a total profit of PKR 2000 as a product of their hard work and team effort.

Nadeem further elaborated that his team could have done better if they did not faced competition in shape of other contending mobile beverage stalls in the markets. He explained that “since the mobile beverage stall (called *rairi* in local language) of our team was new, we were always treated as newbies and had to convince and encourage potential customers to at least try our beverage before making any decision.” This experience turned out to be thrilling for him and his team. He said that once we got used to it, team members would compete amongst themselves over who convinces and attracts more customers. According to Nadeem, every member of his team felt way more confident about their business skills after the competition.

Team Members: **Mohammad Nadeem**, Arslan Mukhtar, Zeeshan Jamil, Adnan Ali, Ahtsham Raza (Vocational Training Institute, Chishtian)

34. Health Highlighted

The entrepreneurship competition meant a lot more to Asif Saeed as he belonged to a rural village where basic necessities of life like health care and education were barely available. Grabbing the entrepreneurship opportunity, Asif decided to help the needy families in his neighborhood other than having a sole motive of making profit.

Along with his five team members, Asif acquired basic necessary medical equipment to carry out tests like urine and CGC and embarked on the mission to a healthy neighborhood. Other than focusing on making profits and setting up this health care unit in an urban area where a higher proportion of people could afford the services, Asif set up the health care unit in a remote village where medical services were highly needed. Unexpectedly, Asif and his team encountered more problems than anticipated. Asif said in a sad tone, “Initially even some of my own relatives were reluctant to be tested by me or my team members because they thought I was just a young one not capable enough to conduct them.” However, with some coaxing, people started getting their checkup from the team. As Asif and his team’s prime goal was to help the poor people of the community, they kept the cost of the test to bare minimum. They charged only PKR 30-50 for the tests. Asif said, “People assumed that since I was offering unimaginably lower rates, somehow services or capacity to conduct medical tests was poor as well.”

Asif and his team’s hard work and commitment to the cause finally led them to reap profits out of a venture which was aimed to provide health relief to the poverty stricken people. “Often I only collected money from those who offered and did not ask for money from those who seemed less privileged”, said Asif while telling us that the team made an overall profit of PKR 375.

Team Members: **Asif Saeed**, M. Shahid Hanif, Farooq Ahmad, Sikandar Nawaz, Gulf Bilal (Vocational Training Institute Bahawalpur).

35. Technology at your Doorstep

Being a student of computer science discipline, Umar Shahid did not take much time deciding his product idea for the competition. Along with his five team members who were interested in a computer studies project as well, Umar offered to deliver computer software and hardware solutions to their clients' doorstep on a single call.

Umar's team wasted no time in acquiring the necessary equipment for smooth operations, including CD-ROMs, CDs, USB Flash drives and others, and started their operations right away. Umar shared that "most of the calls we got were from different educational institutes and offices regarding their Windows being corrupt. Hence, reinstalling Microsoft Windows became our most demanded service." At the same time, Umar highlighted that the team provided all sorts of software and hardware solutions to those who requested as the idea was to provide an all-inclusive technical support to the customer's doorstep at cheaper rates. Further explaining the reason behind the product idea, Umar alleged that "we offered our clients an alternate and convenient method to get computer services compared to conventional the methods, which included carrying the computer or laptop to and from the service shop and this unique idea got us the profits we wished". Umar and his team visited more than 25 households during the project span. Umar expressed that "managing our studies alongside providing these door to door services was challenging for all of the group members but with good coordination and support from each other, we were able to manage both the tasks well". Umar and his team mentioned that the first hand experience of talking to the clients was a learning they could not have gained any other way. They appreciated the entrepreneurship idea and recommended that such activities must take place annually so that all students can gain from it.

Team Members: Umar Shahid, Asim Habib, Usman Hameed, M. Faisal, Atif Iqbal (Vocational Training Institute, Bahawalpur)

36. Importance of Customer Feedback

One of the very first things, Rao Hamza and his team did was to hold a brainstorming session for product ideas. After much discussion, the team decided to put a food stall offering different kind of snacks and everyday meals. Initially, Hamza and his team placed the food stall in their college and came up with various delicious food items including Somsa, Dahi Bhalla and Chana Chat. Confessing that these items were not really unique, Hamza highlighted “there was a lot more to the concept than the items on the menu.” He explained that the taste of these conventional food items and the team’s service was the key to their operations.

Almost halfway into the competition, the team learned about a festival being held at the local zoo and thought it was not an opportunity to miss. The team moved the stall from their college to the festival and managed to find numerous customers. To keep it interesting, the team agreed to keep updating their menu in response to the feedback of their customers. Hamza remembered that his team served more than 300 customers. He admitted that the real hike in the profits came when they started serving cold drinks along with the food items and this was as a result from the customer feedback. Hamza admitted that if they had not listened to their customers and kept serving food items without drinks, they might not have made any profit at all let alone PKR 800.

Summing up his experience of participating in the competition, Hamza said “All of us understood that the idea of the competition was to run a small business to learn the trades and have necessary experience if we ever chose to start our own business someday. Keeping that in mind, I think we all went home learning something new every day”.

Team Members: **Rao Hamza**, M. Qasim, M. Rizwan, Sajheel, M. Abid (Vocational Training Institute Bahawalpur)

37. From Students to Being Entrepreneurs

Being students of electrical engineering, it made sense for Sohail Anjum and his team to opt for providing services of the likes of an electrical repairing shop. Sohail explained that since majority electrical appliances are made up of similar electrical circuits, we offered to repair an extensive list of household items including all kind of fans, ironing machines, air conditioners, washing machines, ovens and more.

Sohail further explained that his team barely had to invest in the business except for banners used for advertisement of our services. Along with his team members, Sohail decided to put up a stall in their college so their friends could bring malfunctioned or broken electrical items from home and get them repaired at the stall. However, the team soon realized that majority of their clients preferred if they visited them at home and provided in-house services. "Providing services at home benefited both the parties involved: the customers and us. We were able to cater a larger audience and the customer benefited from home service". Moreover, since the team constituted of five members, sending two of the group members to cater to a home-based client did not affect their services at the stall. Sohail recalls serving a dozen customers and declared to have earned PKR 1400 from the project.

"The competition allowed me and my team members to practically apply the concepts we studied in class. We used our existing knowledge to gain experience of a profitable entrepreneurship", said Sohail explaining how good he felt while applying the theoretical concepts to the practical life. He said, "It is easier said than done. We faced a lot of difficulty in gaining the trust of the customers initially. However, it all worked out well in the end", said Sohail.

Team Members: **Sohail Anjum**, Arslan Ahmed, Sarfaraz Ahmed, Muhammad Shahzad, Yasir Hussain (Vocational Training Institute Bahawalpur)

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38. A Difficult Leadership

Arslan and his team decided to offer book binding services when selected for the emerging entrepreneurship competition. Being the leader, he held a team meeting and delegated work among all members of the team and the team members immediately got down to business.

According to Arslan, they put up a stall in their college and two team members were assigned to go to different markets and collect orders from various nearby stationary shops. Thereafter, Arslan said that “every evening all of us would sit down and divided work to be taken home.” According to Arslan, he enjoyed being the group leader and his team members were extremely cooperative. He said it was his first experience to have work as a leader in a business environment and it felt great. He explained that it was his goal to keep the other members indulged in the activities so they could learn from the experience equally since none of them had any prior experience of any business activity.

“It was a learning experience, every day we learned something new. However, the task to communicate with a customer and attract clients to hire us rather than our competitors stood out in our experience”, shared Arslan while mentioning that their team catered almost 210 customers during the competition and calculated to have accumulated profit of PKR 1,300. While concluding his conversation Arslan mentioned that he learnt a lot of things being the leader which will help him in this professional life later on. According to him it was challenging to keep the entire team moving at the same pace and ensure that everyone was involved in all the activities. He struggled to encourage healthy competition amongst team members but learned the trait of management quickly.

Team Members: **Arslan Ali**, Muddsar Hussain, Tanveer, Kashif, Sufyan Yaqoob (Vocational Training Institute Chishtian)

39. Including the Poor

Being medical students and working as clinical assistants part time, it was not difficult for Muhammad Ahmad and his team to come up with the idea of providing different medical tests to the lower-class at a lower cost. The team decided to earn and give something positive to the society by including the less privileged; who are generally left out in all matters.

Ahmad gathered the necessary medical equipment and further divided his team into two so that they could cater to a higher target audience. The team members used all strategies to attract customers. They began luring clients in crowded road sides, went door-to-door in several residential areas and also hosted a stall in the large city market for awareness of the poor. Ahmad explained how they considered every individual in their vicinity a potential customer alongside focusing on the extremely poor. The team would start by explaining the benefits of having a medical checkup and eventually conduct blood tests and Hepatitis (B and C) tests for those who came to believe of the importance of these tests. Furthermore, Ahmad explained that they did not forget their mission to cater to the lowest social class. He said, “We offered free tests to those who were genuinely not able to pay for it.” Ahmad mentioned that they served about half a dozen people and gained a profit of PKR 350.

Commenting on the experience of the competition, Ahmad said, “The most valuable learning of this experience was customer engagement. It is an art to gain clients and it takes a lot of confidence to do so. Some of my team members were from rural background and were initially reluctant to speak to customers. But they soon learned and I am proud that they did so under my leadership”

Team Members: **M. Ahmad**, M. Asif Shahid, Faisal Ghafar, M. Qurban, Danish Kaleem (Vocational Training Institute Bahawalpur)

40. Fresh from the Farm

Ateeq Hussain from H.H. Sheikh Khalifa always wanted to do something valuable in his free time. He was studying during the day time and used his evenings for innovative new ideas. He was ecstatic when he got selected for the entrepreneurship competition as he knew this was his chance to show his potential to the world. Leading a group of four, Ateeq divided the team to perform two main tasks: selling cold drinks and fresh vegetables in commercial markets.

Ateeq explained that he kept rotating the group members for both the activities as he wanted all of the participants to be involved and have equal chance of practical experience. He said, “This way almost all members of the group were working and gaining practical knowledge and firsthand experience of running a business.” While some group members partnered up with a local shop in city’s market to sell different type of cold drinks to customers shopping in the market during the sunny hours, other members did something completely different. They collected farm fresh vegetables and sold them to the customers at reduced prices. Since the team was buying it from the farmers and there was no intermediary involved, they were able to keep a good margin for profit and still be able to sell the vegetable at a price lower than the commercial prices.

Ateeq recalled having served more than 100 customers and gained a decent profit of PKR 26,000. “Although different members of the team had different duties, we were all glad to have had direct interaction with customers and acquired the knowledge to greet customers at a shop. We learnt how to handle different types of clients and that experience will remain with us for a lifetime”, said Ateeq.

Team Members: **Ateeq Hussain**, Nasir Zaman, M Hameed, M Imran, Sajjad Ahmed (Vocational Training Institute H.H. Sheikh Khalifa)

41. Keeping It Simple & Spicy

After long meetings amongst the team members, Sajid and the team decided to keep it simple and give it their best. They pitched the idea of selling every day food items in busy commercial areas of their district. The team members arranged eatables like dahi bhallay and pokoriya and sold them for a small profit.

Sajid and his team placed stalls in different commercial areas in an attempt to gain more customers every day. "Since we were all students, many customers appreciated our work and asked us to even pack additional food in order to support our initiative," said Sajid in a thanking manner. The response by the customers was overwhelming. The team had to increase quantities almost every day and they would still run out of the product before the end of the day. "All of the team members discussed and divided responsibilities equally ensuring one person was at the stall at all times whereas others arranged for the raw material often catering to the increased demand. This allowed us to keep our stall open for long hours in comparison to other competitors. Those who put up the stall in the morning would go home early and the other team members who were not present in the morning would join in the evening and keep the stall running till late at night", said Sajid.

Having served more than 200 customers, Sajid and his team gained profit of PKR 1000 during the competition. Sajid further said that he and his team members learned that no business is small and that even with limited resources and little investment; one can start generating good profits provided that there is sincere effort and hard work being put in. He added, "It was our first time dealing with public and we all gained a lot from it."

Team Members: **Sajid Hussain**, Talha Rehman, Abdul Rehman, Shahid Khan, M Ayub (Vocational Training Institute H.H. Sheikh Khalifa)

42. It's Not Just A Man's Job

Misbah and her team wanted to something unique. They knew mostly other female groups would opt for either foot items or a clothing stall. They wanted their product to be unique and to be the most sold. Misbah, the team leader had some experience of mobile recharge as her brothers had a shop of easy load. Together the team decided to take the idea of mobile recharge forward as most girls in the institute had mobiles and were seen requesting balance transfer from each other upon reaching their credit limit. Since there was not much investment required, and not many hands – the girls decided to take it to the commercial market level. They planned to set mobile credit not only within their institute but also in nearby commercial areas.

Seeing the response of the customers, that the team also decided to buy some new sims and started offering new sims alongside mobile credit services. Providing a vast range of services, each member of the team would spread the word around in their community and soon they started receiving customers at their homes. "We sold around 150 to 200 new sims collectively and made a profit of PKR 3,000", said Misbah.

"I have to admit the response on our business idea was phenomenal. We had not expected this much appreciation and these many customers", said Mishab in an exciting tone. One of the important factors in being able to reach these many people was that the team did not have to move around with a lot of equipment. Moreover, Misbah mentioned that the team members often conducted transactions over phone calls while sitting at home. While concluding Misbah mentioned that the only challenge they faced was that the male members of the society was not very excited about our venture and hence would not purchase mobile credit from them. She said, "I wish our society becomes more tolrrable of things a woman can do".

Team Members: **Misbah Abbas**, Zahida Ashraf, Zarina Younas, Iqra Afzal, Umm-e-Kalsoom (Vocational Training Institute Sadiqabad)

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43. Good Food, Good Feeling

“We didn’t want to take a huge risk”, said Nimrah while explaining the idea of her team at the entrepreneurship competition. Nimrah and her team opted to sell various home-cooked dishes. Nimrah said that she knew that her team members would be most comfortable with this idea and it was most suitable for girls of our age especially when some of them were wonderful cooks. It was a well planned move which got the team countless customers and they made a profit of PKR 1500 at the end of the competition.

After discussing the menu and the daily dishes, the team started collecting all the required ingredients. They bought the ingredients from a wholesaler to reduce their costs. Contrary to other teams, owing to their idea, the girls were ready to sell their first items after just few hours of cooking. Some of the most well received food items of their stall were “Potato Cutlus, Tender Rice and Spicy Pakoray.” The girls managed to gain a lot of customers by word of mouth as their products were simply delicious. “We catered at least up to a hundred customers and sold various dishes on different days to retain our customers. This was the first time we learnt about customer loyalty as the customers who bought from us the previous day would come the next day asking for the items on the menu and requesting us to save some for them”, said Nimrah.

“Participating in the competition allowed all the team members to understand how to manage a small business and, more importantly, how to manage it with limited resources”, said Nimra. Thinking hard she said, “If I had to point out one thing that was the most valuable for me, it would be budget management”.

Team Members: **Nimra Khalid**, Khalida Anwer, Hina Anwer, Shahana Mukhtar, Aysha Kanwal (Vocational Training Institute Sadiqabad)

44. Get the Door, It's the Repairman

Having prior experience in repairing electrical appliances like air conditioners and freezers, Waqas and his team decided to do the same for the emerging entrepreneurship competition. They said it would give them the practical experience they needed before they entered their professional lives. Waqas said, “We recently learned how to fix electrical appliances through an extensive academic course and we were eager to put our knowledge to practice and the competition seemed the perfect opportunity.”

Waqas mentioned that his team was lucky to have had good partnerships with fellow workers in the field. He explained that they visited different shops in the market and offered them to refer any customers who would come seeking for repairmen of air conditioners or freezers. From there on, Waqas said that it was up to us to contact those customers and settle the deal to make visit and do the repair. Upon inquiry about the business idea, Waqas confirmed that they wanted to capitalize on the seasonal demand for air conditioning repairs. As expected, the customers started to flood in and the team was fixing air conditioners right and left. They made a profit of PKR 5,500 by offering services to about a dozen customers.

This little exercise taught the team how to put their theoretical knowledge to practical application. Waqas mentioned, “Being the group leader, things were a lot more complicated for me than the others. I had to divide responsibilities between group members and keep a check on each of them. I had to ensure everyone got the exposure and that they all learned about marketing, budget management and how to work with a team”.

Team Members: **Waqas Butt**, Irfan Ali, Muhammad Saqib, Zeshan Akram, Abrar Ashraf
(Vocational Training Institute Sadiqabad)

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45. Fresh, Fast & Tasty

Asia and her team solved an old problem their institute was facing via the entrepreneurship competition being held at the institute. They wanted to revamp their college canteen. As Asia puts it, “It was quite obvious that both students and faculty were ordering daily meals from outside the school and it only made sense to provide a good alternative.”

After much discussion about food items and their costs, Asia and the team decided to put simple yet valuable lunch servings like biryani, pulao rice, naan and channay on the canteen menu. Asia explained that they only provided good quality home-cooked meals at the college canteen and the response was overwhelming. “I still remember that the first day we were sold out within one hour of our set up and had to arrange for more eatables immediately. Thanks to the cooking skills of all the team members, we were able to put up another shift of serving”, said Asia. Incorporating ideas as time passed, the team kept snack items for those who were not up for complete meals. One of the team member suggested that to gain further confidence of the customers, they could cook openly in front of them so they know it’s being cooked in a clean environment. She excitedly added that the idea worked and soon the number of customers attending the stall grew. Detailing the period of the competition, Asia said that they dealt with more than 40 customers that allowed them to gain a profit of PKR 1,000.

“Dealing with customers was a prime issue at first but, at the same, it was the area that we progressed in the most. It was our first experience to run any sort of business and it taught us an incredible deal about how to solve different problems that arise while running your own business”, said Asia.

Team Members: Asia Nazeer, Qamar un Nisa, Sundas Mobeen, Misbah Ramzan, Sidra Afzal (Vocational Training Institute Sadiqabad)

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46. Feel Natural, Be Natural

Being an aspiring beautician herself, Ayman was quick to act when she got selected for the emerging entrepreneurship competition. She registered a team of five members who shared the same passion for beauty techniques as her and soon Ayman had her own little beauty parlor offering various services to local females in the society.

To add an additional flare to attract customers to their stall, some members of the team took the responsibility to fill it with peculiarly made handicrafts that added to the scenic beauty of the stall as they hanged for display. Much to their surprise, Ayman shared that “often people would get attracted by the handicrafts and while having a look at them, they’d get curious about our services at the parlor.” She stressed that the idea of displaying attractive handicraft material was a huge success. In addition to offering beauty advice and makeovers at the stall, Ayman explained that they soon realized that many ladies did not have time to have a makeover at the spot so they started offering them to come at their home in the evening and have it done at a convenient time that suited them well. She said that this allowed them to increase their customer base and suddenly more customers were walking in.

Discussing the overall response of the customers, she confirmed that they completed almost 335 orders and managed to sum up a total profit of PKR 2,500. She said the competition allowed us to learn how to deal with customers and convince them into buying your services. At the end, she confessed that they consider themselves lucky that they were able to do the task that they loved the most and we were glad to see it deemed good result.

Team Members: **Ayman Imran**, Sobia Abbas, Samina Mughal, Iqra Imran, Mavia Noreen
(Vocational Training Institute Rahim Yar Khan)

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47. Have It All

Ayesha and her team was eager to keep an extremely versatile and extensive list of items at a multi-purpose stall that would cater all kinds of walk-in customers. With the help of all the team members, Ayesha was able to implement the idea well as she distributed different tasks and/or items to different group members.

Explaining the diverse nature of the products they sold at the stall, Ayesha said, “We kept jewelry, different food items, hand-made and woven bags, attractive decoration baskets and some clothes with interesting embroidery on them.” She further explained that her group understood that business ethics are almost the same regardless of the products or services you offer. So as a team they decided to cater maximum audience and for that they had to keep a versatile product list. Moreover, the team did not only limit themselves to a stall in their college but also extended it to City Park for some days when it was feasible for them. Recalling the days, Ayesha confessed that even though embroidery was just one of the items on the product list, it required special attention and discrete skills to produce good clothes with embroidery.

Talking about the statistics, Ayesha mentioned that their team served more than 400 customers including teachers, students and other community members. She said that they were able to collect profit up to PKR 1,000. “Confidence to sell products as saleswomen and the ethics of communicating with a client were some of the primary skills that we gained from our experience. At the end of the day, all the group members were overwhelmed seeing the response of their own efforts. They knew they had the potential but never had the chance to explore”, said Ayesha in a reassuring tone. In the end, she suggested that competitions like this should happen more often.

Team Members: **Ayesha Yousaf**, Nabila Kousar, Asia Yousaf, Samina Kousar, Sumaira Kausor (Vocational Training Institute Rahim Yar Khan)

48. Divide and Rule

Liaqat Pur's Zulfiqar Ali understood the discrete nature and severe implications of diseases like Hepatitis B and C. At the time of the competition, his team unanimously voted that there was no better idea but to capitalize on the skills of their leader. The team decided to give awareness about several fatal diseases common in our society.

Zulfiqar managed his team strategically ensuring each member was occupied. Some of the team members were going to hold a door-to-door campaign to spread awareness, provide pamphlets, explain the implication of these diseases and finally resolve any queries of the customers. This strategic planning helped the group a lot as Zulfiqar explained that “there were other groups doing similar activities but perhaps they did not distribute tasks among group members as we did and went in as a whole team so this slowed them down.” Once the team provided initial awareness, customers started coming in automatically to get different medical tests. Zulfiqar added, “Our interaction with the first few clients gave us the idea that majority of them were interesting in finding their blood type. We immediately added it to our services”.

Zulfiqar pointed out, “I believe that our decision to divide different tasks for different team members and conducting them step by step allowed each member to become proficient in doing their own tasks rather than dealing with each aspect collectively. Some might not agree to my leadership style. However I believe specialization was the key to our successful venture”. The team looked after more than 100 customers and gained an extremely lucrative profit of PKR 26,500. Zulfiqar also mentioned that such competitions are extremely useful to students who want to have an entrepreneurship of their own and hence must be included in the course work of all students enrolled in vocational institutes.

Team Members: **Zulfiqar Ali**, Saifullah Zafar, M.Humair Alvi, Sajjad Ahmed, Rizwan Ali (Vocational Training Institute Liaqat Pur)

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49. Thinking Out of the Box

Mohsin and his group members were all computer studies' students. They took in the emerging entrepreneurship competition with a special mission - they aimed to provide basic level computer training to students of different local *Madriissas*, which usually only focus on religious education.

According to Mohsin, "The basic idea behind the concept was to familiarize these students with computers in general and offer beginner level information which can help them secure a decent job after graduating from their institute". Mohsin divided his team into two groups, one of which provided theory knowledge of computers to the students and the other which provided practical knowledge and assisted them in practical application of the theory they learned during the lesson of the first group. Each group taught the students for almost half hour daily. Mohsin revealed that they registered roughly 22 students from local Madrissa of "Liaqat Pur Masjid," which paid Mohsin and his group 200 per student. At the end of the competition, Mohsin quoted the profit of his team to be around PKR 1,500.

Explaining the kind of computer knowledge passed on to the students, Mohsin said, "We taught them how to use MS Office, including Microsoft Word & PowerPoint, along with other small programs requested by the Madrissa management." He also said that he felt that the goal of his team was met when he saw the Madrissah students use computers proficiently. Furthermore he mentioned that recently he received calls from two of his students who thanked him for the training as it helped them secure a good job after completing their studies. Mohsin mentioned that competitions like these allow students to think outside the box and broaden their horizon.

Team Members: **Mohsin Ali**, Khursheed Ahmed, Mazhar Hussain, Muhammad Shams, M.Aamir Khan Abbasi (Vocational Training Institute Liaqat Pur)

50. The Twin Challenge

Muhammad Zarif and his team took a twin challenge: they wanted to sell battery-powered torches and provide computer training courses to young students. In order to manage the two diversified tasks well, Zarif divided the team and each member had different responsibilities. The team providing computer training course admitted a total of 20 students from a local *Madriisa* and started off with giving them basic computer knowledge. Since these students barely knew how to use computers and work in a technological environment, Zarif explained that they had to start with teaching these students how to turn on a computer, and how to log in to the operating systems at the first day. He explained that the computer course was a beginner level course and hence students took time grasping the technological environment. On the other hand, the team selling battery powered torches went from one shop to another as they introduced their product in main markets of the city. Zarif mentioned that the group was able to sell more than 50 torch batteries and this was an impressive figure. “I had an extremely talented team. I did not have to manage every small thing. Team members were cooperative and helped each other at every step. This is one of the reasons our team was able to produce such good results”, said Zairf. His team made a profit of PKR 800 from both the initiatives.

“Competitions like this should be offered to all students as they not only teach you how to run a business but also teaches you how to make decisions at real time, how to talk to customers, how to communicate with people in general and allows one to gave an insight into the practical life”, said Zairf while appreciating the efforts of the organizers.

Team Members: **M. Zarif Khan**, M.Waseem Abasi, Muhammad Amin, Ameer Aslam, Khalil Ahmed (Vocational Training Institute Liaqat Pur)