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An action research project on the role of student self-help groups in enhancing entrepreneurial skills in higher education institutions

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Abstract

Entrepreneurship triggers the economic condition of a country. This paper focuses on understanding the impact of the Students Self Help Group (SSHG) on entrepreneurial skill development. Young students in our country are playing an important role in the development of their resourcefulness and their skills. The students' entrepreneurial skill shows the way for the empowerment of young entrepreneurs. It facilitates the students to become economic independence, self-reliance, political, social, and legal awareness, self-confidence, and positive attitude. One resourcefulness approach is the formation of Students Self Help Groups (SHGs) in Higher Education Institutions. This strategy has fetched noticeable results in the college and all over the districts.

This paper will concentrate on the 500 Students' Self Help Groups members in Chandigarh, Punjab, and Delhi. This paper focuses on the entrepreneurial skills required to equip students to choose entrepreneurship as a career. The respondents of this research are Student Self Help Groups, who are successful in their entrepreneurial ventures and the study outcomes clearly depict the existence of a positive relationship between entrepreneurial competency and training. It also stresses upon the role and contributions of all the mentors in the real success of the Students Self Help Groups.

Keywords: Student self-help groups, entrepreneurial skills, higher education

Introduction

Higher Education Institutions play a vital role in enhancing and developing students' entrepreneurial skills/qualities to participate in entrepreneurial activities through Students Self Help Groups.

The use of interactive sessions with SSHGs will help students to understand self-employment, and it also motivates them to think it over and take up entrepreneurship in the future.

In the present scenario, it is crucial to recognize that graduate unemployment is widespread, and students start looking for a job as soon as they finish their studies. Getting the desired position is challenging under close circumstances. The different causes of this could be poor academic performance, lack of self-assurance, ineffective communication, or lack of knowledge, among other things. These issues may be confusing. Via appropriate direction and focus from educational activities or courses. It is difficult to obtain the ideal position in many situations. The various reasons for this could whether it be subpar academic achievement, a lack of confidence, bad communication, or a lack of knowledge. The concept of the provision of SSHGs acted as a key and very innovative idea to meet and solve the income and employment problems.

Nowadays Higher Education Institutions are promoting Students' Self Help Groups and also promoting entrepreneurial skills through Day long Bazars, Stalls, and the Selling of products, etc. The interaction of young SSHGs with the entrepreneurs, their experiences, and the life story can inspire young minds to take up entrepreneurial activities on their campus. Students these days are aware of the importance of entrepreneurship for their potential career growth.

Meaning of student self-help groups

MGNCRE has focused on capacity building of faculty, empowering students with skill building, promoting student entrepreneurship, internship and apprenticeship, forming Student

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Self Help Groups (SSHGs), all the while taking forward the agenda of Social Entrepreneurship, Sustainability, Rural Entrepreneurship, Rural Management, Vocational Education and Skilling. The apprentices went all out into the districts of the country to promote Entrepreneurship involving District Collectors and administration heads to release the competition posters and give directions to educational institutions to participate in entrepreneurial activities. Student Self-Help Groups (SSHG) were formed in HEIs which will base their business activities on select milestone days and conduct their promotions and sales around those days.

Features of student self-help groups

1. For Student Self Help Group (SSHG) formation students come forward to team up for working towards the implementation of a business.
2. SSHG formation requires 3- 4 students teaming up. The size of the SSHG could be 3 members, 4 members, and maximum 12 members.
3. SSHG needs mentoring from faculty of various disciplines from time to time. During the formation of SSHG itself activities of running a business through a sales counter or kiosk on a college campus can be taken up.
4. As we see to the features of SSHGs a set of ideas and concepts aimed at helping each other in SSHG helps the SSHG to understand what motivates people to become social entrepreneurs, what skill set or competence is required and how willingness towards running a business improves.
5. SSHGs could follow the literature and discuss with open ended conversations with experts and the stakeholders of business fraternity. HEIs could arrange for community interactions and industrial interactions.
6. The ideas of business activities conducted at various colleges could boost SSHGs elsewhere.

A brief introduction to Institutional Sustainability Ranking

For a progressive Higher Education Institution (HEI), a relevant ranking framework will help the institution achieve higher acceptance and enhance/strengthen it. Today, the ranking methodology is used by HEIs to evaluate their performance, compare themselves to peers, and plan their medium- to long-term development.

The advantages

- Attracting excellent students and professors
- Attracting research funds and eligibility for Central and State Government research programs
- Stakeholder perception improved
- Improving national and international partnerships
- Offering online degree programs, applying to the Government of India's Institutions of Eminence (IoE) plan, and gaining academic autonomy, among other

Purpose of the research

- To check the impact of SSHG in the development of entrepreneurial skills among students.
- To study the impact of the role of SSHG in employment generation.
- To study how the SSHGs overcome all the problems and become empowered.

- To Check the impact of Entrepreneurship activities on young students
- To examine the encouraging factors that help SSHGs to succeed in the activities.

The objective of the study

- To assess the impact of SSHG on the development of entrepreneurial skills.
- To study the role of SSHG in employment generation.
- To study the problems and challenges faced SSHGs and made a suitable suggestion.
- To explore the interests Students in Entrepreneurship
- To examine the role of mentors in encouraging entrepreneurship.

Review of Literature

Arjun Yallappa Pangannavar (Author), Arjun Y. Pangannavar (Author), Arjun Y Pangannavar, Self-Help Groups (SHGS) & Women Empowerment In India, New Century Publications, 2012

This book explains and examines the role of SHGs in the socio-economic empowerment of poor rural women in India. This book gave the solutions that how inadequate support to women and insufficient protection to their respective families affect society as a whole and undermines efforts to achieve gender equality. In different cultural, political and social systems, various forms of family exist and the rights, capabilities and responsibilities of family members must be respected. The emergence and rapid multiplication of Self-help Groups (SHGs) based on micro credit is a phenomenon that is gaining increasing importance in the development scenario. SHGs are being viewed by governments and NGOs as a strategy for both women's empowerment as well as poverty reduction.

Dr. S Bose, Self-Help Groups and Rural Developments (English, Hardcover, Bose S), MJP Publishers, 2013

This volume explains Self Help Groups those started by non-profit organizations that generally have broad anti-poverty agenda. SHGs are established as local financial intermediaries with their own internal savings and credit business and access to bank refinancing. In recent years, however, Self-Help Groups have been mushrooming in the country to such an extent that they now occupy a significant place in nation building and social transformation process. Today, they have not only ensured that their presence is left in every corner of the Indian society but also have felt no area of development untouched.

Charles Drebing, Leading Peer Support and Self-Help Groups, Lulu. Com, 2016

Few peer support/self-help group leaders have more than minimal training in how to lead a group successfully. This is unfortunate, as leading a self-help group is often challenging. This book is designed to provide easy access to key information and strategies to help peer specialists and other lay group leaders develop and expand their group facilitation skills so they can lead healthy thriving peer support groups.

Gopal Sharma, Financial Inclusion, Self-Help Groups (SHGS) & Women Empowerment, New Century Publications, 2013

Women's lack of economic empowerment not only impedes growth and poverty reduction, but also negatively impacts education and health outcomes for children. Thus, it is extremely important to ensure that women are economically empowered. The objective is to meet the financial needs of the poor by linking SHGs with the formal credit agencies. Financial inclusion of India's women can be best ensured through SHGs. This collection contains papers that provide valuable insights into the importance and functioning of SHGs to ensure financial inclusion and hence economic empowerment of women in India.

SA Kumar (Author), SC Poornima (Author), MK Abraham (Author), K Jayshree (Author), Entrepreneurship Development, New Age Publishers, 2021

This book presents a lucid treatment of a wide range of issues involved in the development of entrepreneurship. It presents an insight into the identification of business opportunities, creating a venture and financing and managing it. The book further explains the choice of technology and equipment, man, machine and materials management, PERT and CPM and quality assurance.

Research Hypothesis

Hypothesis framed to study: how Student Self Help Groups enhanced the entrepreneurship skill among the members of the group and how it motivates others to join the SSHGs.

Challenges of research

▪ Inadequate Training Facilities

The training facilities given to the Students of SSHGs in the specific areas of like selling of product, make product from best out waste, how to earn from cooking stalls and other technical knowledge are not adequate to compete the tasks.

▪ Problems of Marketing

Marketing is an important area of functioning of the SSHGs. It is also seen that some colleges don't do marketing of the events held in the college. That result in low sale of product, lack of awareness among students.

▪ Low Return

The return on investment is not attractive in certain groups due to lack of mentoring, lack of financial support etc.

▪ Lack of Expertise

All the members in the SSHGs may not have the same caliber and expertise. So they are afraid of doing the entrepreneurship tasks.

Measures to address these challenges

▪ Providing Hands on training to the students

Faculty of the HEIs gave hands on training to the students on selling of product, make product from best out waste, how to earn from cooking stalls

▪ Providing Hands on training for Digital Marketing

The three days digital marketing course was introduced by the HEIs so that student know how to promote their

products on social media platform. This will help them to increase their sales and increase awareness among the students.

▪ Helping students to gain investments

The Mentors was deputed to the self-help groups and they complete their task on time. They help students to gain investments throughs NGOs and guide them to collect small amount from each members.

▪ Providing one on one mentoring

The regular mentoring to the student self-help groups in order to boost their moral and motivation.

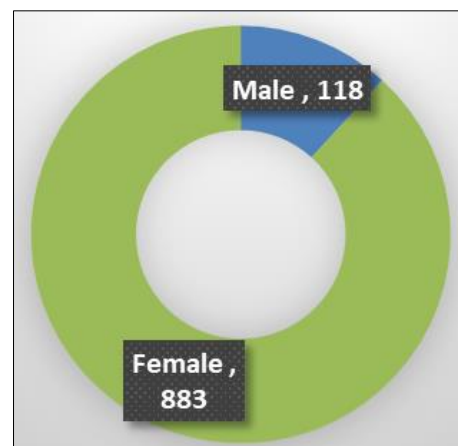
Research Methodology

A sample of 1000 members of a student's self-help group from Chandigarh, Amritsar, and Gurdaspur Pathankot has been considered for the purpose of the present study. Primary data was collected through a google form. The questionnaires were carefully designed by taking into account the parameters of my study. Descriptive statistics, factor analysis, and Chi-Square Tests have been used for analyzing the collected data. The descriptive analysis examines the accuracy of the data entry process; measures the inconsistency of responses and reveals the spread of data points across the sides of the distribution. The understanding of descriptive statistics helps in the interpretation and generalization of research results. In the context of the present study, the data were analyzed in terms of frequency tables. The purpose was to understand the fundamental characteristics of sample data and to make the inferences more meaningful for the targeted audience.

Information of State/ District/ HEIs Covered

Sr. No.	District	State	No. of Students	No. of HEIs
1.	Chandigarh	UT	216	13
2.	Amritsar	Punjab	123	10
3.	Pathankot	Punjab	321	11
4.	Gurdaspur	Punjab	330	10

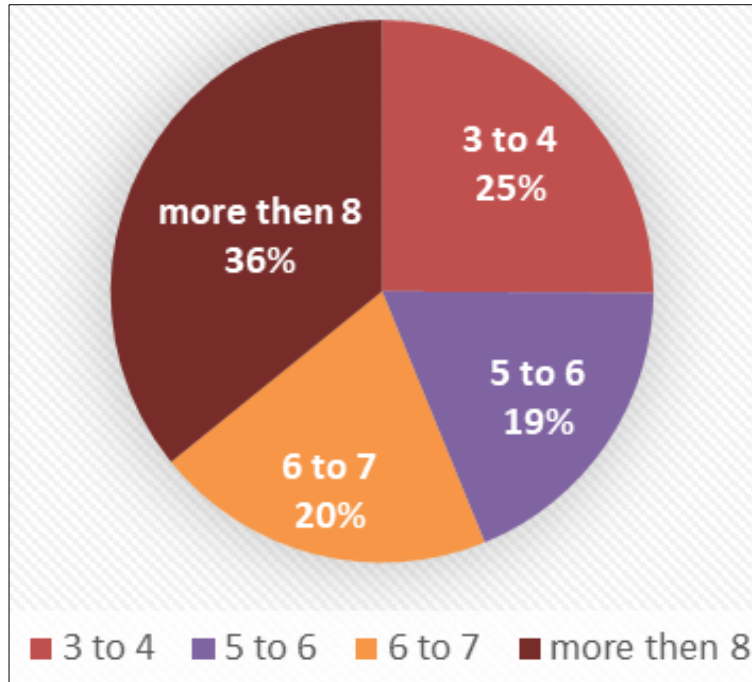
Information of gender of respondents



The target audience for this is the Students of Higher Education Institutions. Total 883 female students participated in these SSHGs and total 118 male students participated in these SSHGs.

Data Interpretation

1. How Many students are in your self-help group?

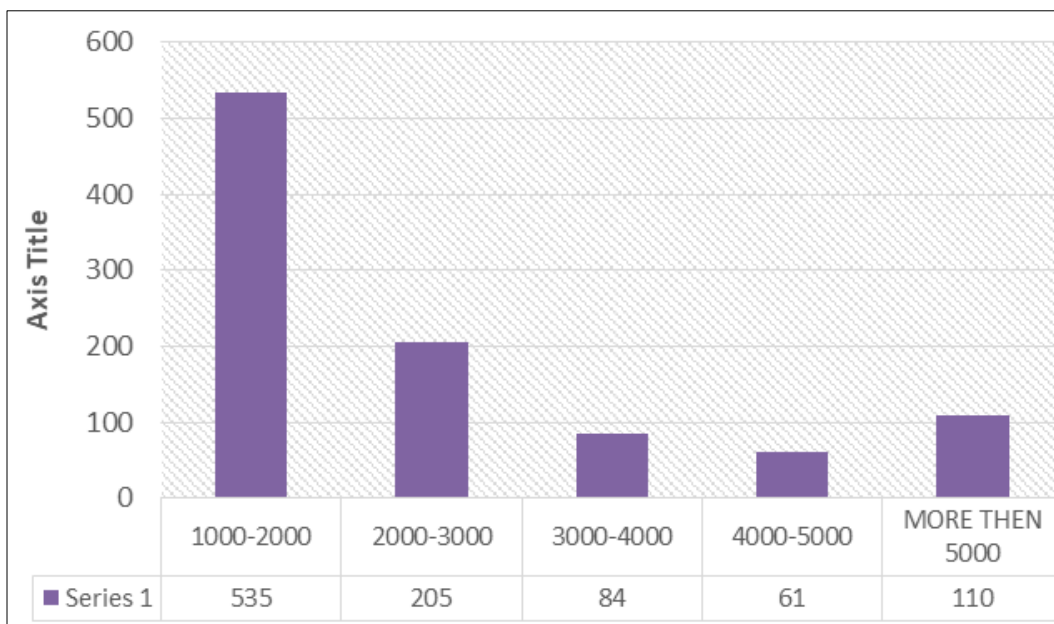


Interpretation

It is interpreted that the 25% of Students Self Help Groups have 3 to 4 students, 19% of Students Self Help Groups

have 5 to 6 students, 20% of Students Self Help Groups have 6 to 7 students, 36% of Students Self Help Groups have more than 8 students.

2. How Many profit you earn through these Students Self Help Group



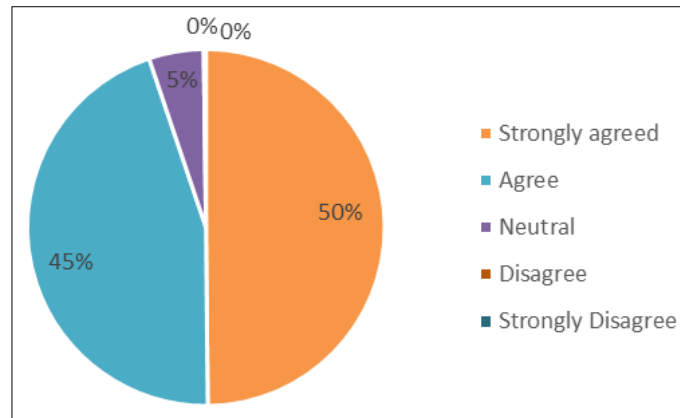
Interpretation

It is interpreted that 535 students out of 1000 earn income in range of 1000-2000, 205 students out of 1000 earn income in range of 2000-3000, 84 students out of 1000 earn income

in range of 3000-4000, 61 students out of 1000 earn income in range of 4000- 5000, 110 students out of 1000 earn income in range of more than 5000.

The role of college in encouraging entrepreneurship

3. Enhance Communication Skills

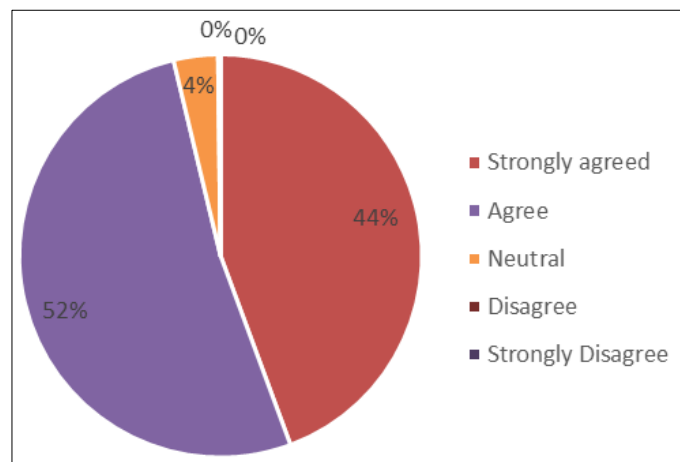


Interpretation

It is interpreted that 50% strongly agreed Students Communication skills got enhanced by participating in entrepreneurship activities. 40% Students agreed

Communication skills got enhanced by participating in entrepreneurship activities. 5% Students neutral agreed that there Communication skills got enhanced by participating in entrepreneurship activities.

4. Time Management Skills

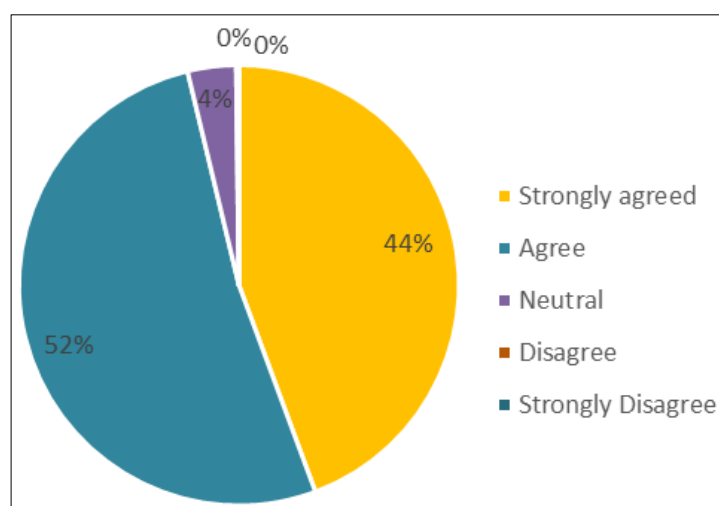


Interpretation

It is interpreted that 44% students strongly agreed that these entrepreneurial activities help in enhancing time management skills, 52% students agreed that these

entrepreneurial activities help in enhancing time management skills, 4% student's neutral think that these entrepreneurial activities help in enhancing time management skills.

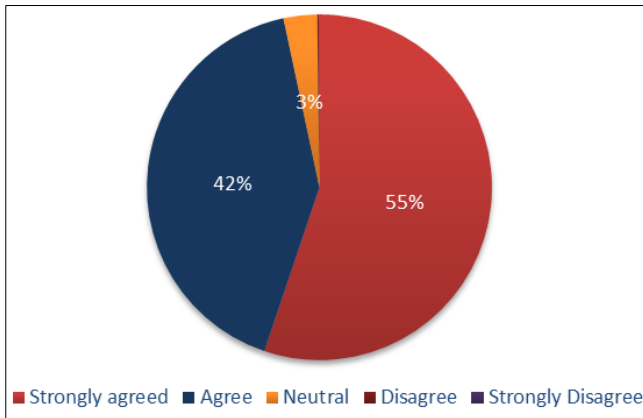
5. Leadership skills



Interpretation

It is interpreted that 44% students strongly agreed that these entrepreneurial activities build leadership qualities among them, 52% students agreed that these entrepreneurial activities build leadership qualities among them, 4% students neutral think that these entrepreneurial activities build leadership qualities among them.

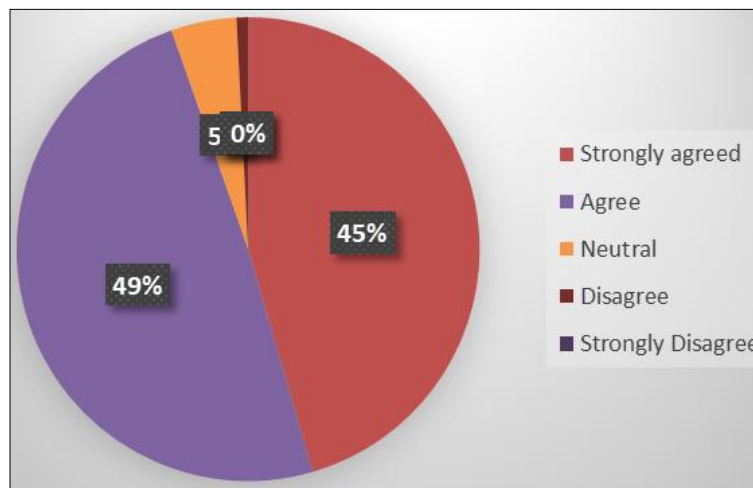
6. Creativity Skills



Interpretation

It is interpreted that 55% Students strongly agreed that these entrepreneurial activities enhance their creative level, 42% Students agreed that these entrepreneurial activities enhance their creative level, 3% Students neutral think that these entrepreneurial activities enhance their creative level.

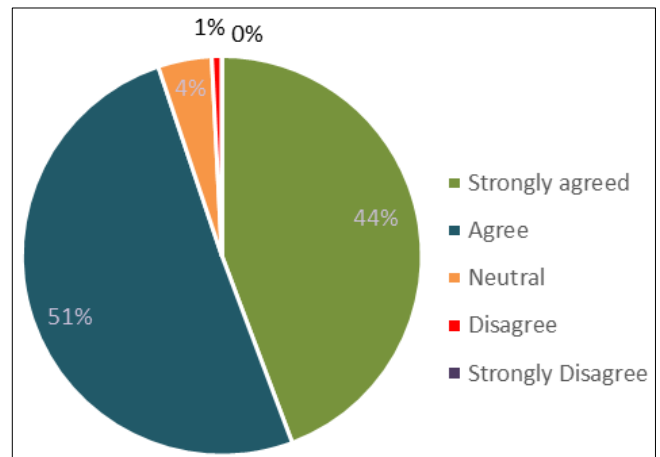
8. Social Networking Skills



Interpretation

45% Students strongly agreed that these entrepreneurial activities build social networking skills, 49% Students strongly agreed that these entrepreneurial activities build social networking skills,

7. Problem Solving Skills



Interpretation

44% Students strongly agreed that these entrepreneurial activities build problem solving skills in them, 51% Students agreed that these entrepreneurial activities build problem solving skills in them, 4% Students neutral that these entrepreneurial activities build problem solving skills in them, only 1% Students disagree that these entrepreneurial activities build problem solving skills in them

5% Students neutral think that these entrepreneurial activities build social networking skills, 1% Students disagree that these entrepreneurial activities build social networking skills.

How SSHGs got motivated

Sr. No.	How SSHGs got motivated	Strongly agreed	agreed	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1.	Traditional Class	324	544	112	20	00
2.	Mentoring of students	409	516	57	15	00
3.	Interaction with Entrepreneur	392	506	98	3	01
4.	Day long Bazars	376	495	109	20	00

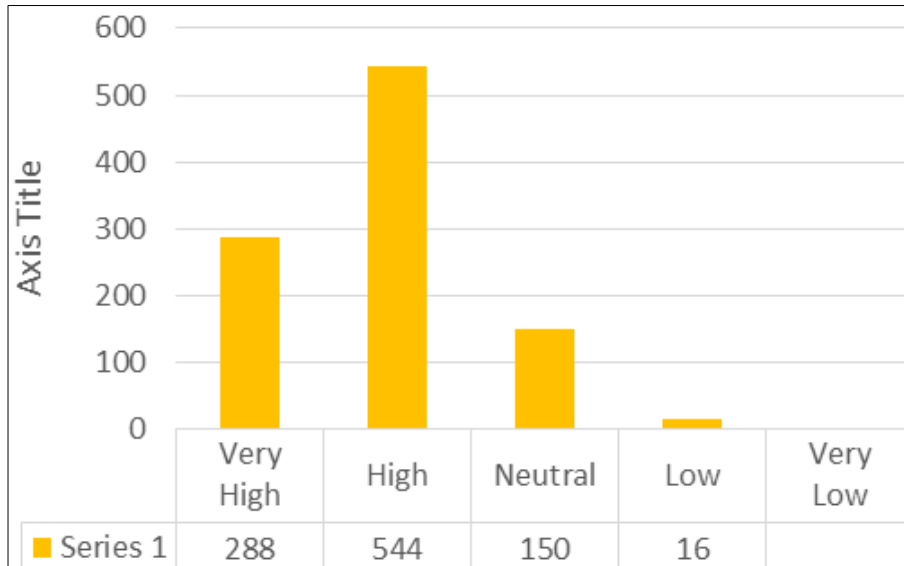
Interpretation

This table represent the data how SSHGs got motivated. It is observed that 324 student strongly agreed that Traditional Class plays an important role in motivating SSHGS, 544 agreed, 112 are neutral, 20 disagree. 409 respondent strongly agreed that mentoring is important for SSHGs, 516

agreed, 57 are neutral, 15 disagree. 392 respondent strongly agreed that interaction with entrepreneur motivate them to great extent, 506 agreed, 98 are neutral, 03 disagree, 01 Strong disagree. 376 respondent strongly agreed that day long bazars motivate SSHGs, 495 agreed, 109 are neutral, 20 disagree.

Confidence and Professional Goal of the Respondents are to become Entrepreneur

9. What is your confidences Level after completion of these activities?

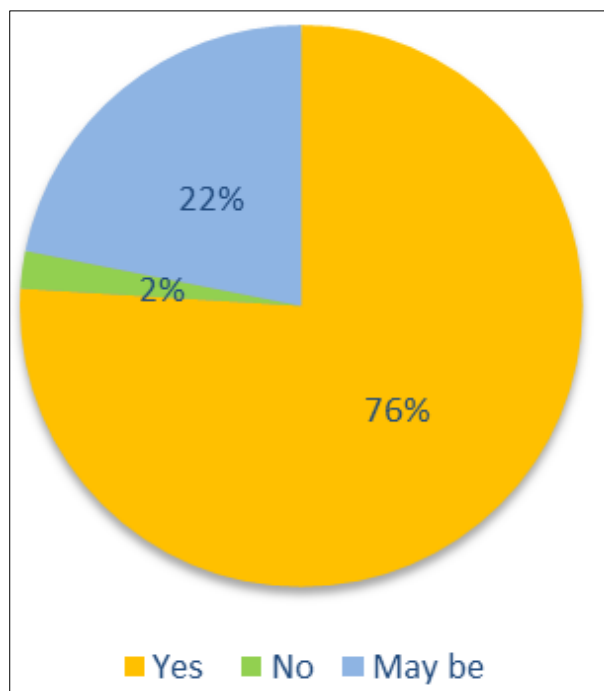


Interpretation

It is interpreted that 288 Students are very high confident after completing these entrepreneurial activities, 544 students are highly confident after completing these

entrepreneurial activities, 150 students are neutral confident after completing these entrepreneurial activities, only 16 students think there confidence become low after completing these entrepreneurial activities.

10. Do you want to become an entrepreneur?

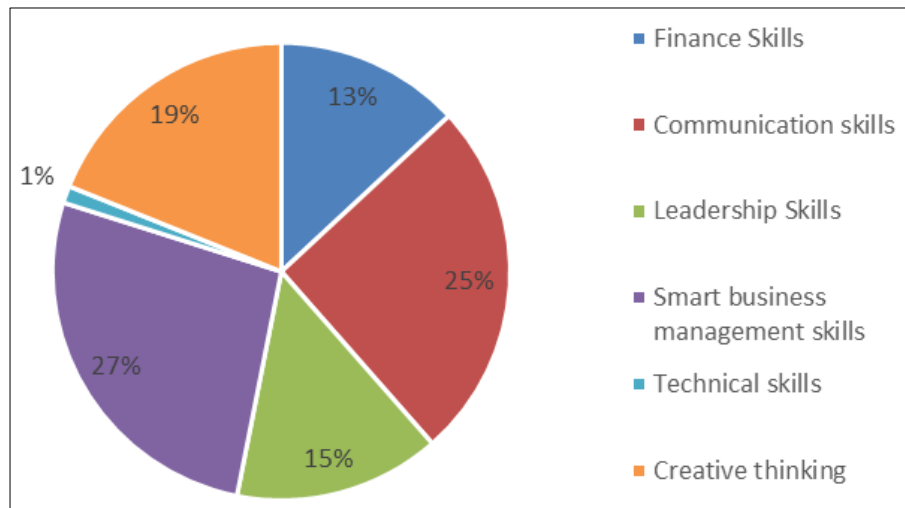


Interpretation

It is interpreted that 76% student want to become entrepreneur, 22% students may be want to become

entrepreneur, only 2% students don't want to become an entrepreneur.

11. Which Skill of Entrepreneurship is enhanced through these Student Self Help Groups?



Interpretation

It is interpreted that 13% respondent Financial Skill of Entrepreneurship is enhanced through these Student Self Help Groups

25% respondent Communication Skill of Entrepreneurship is enhanced through these Student Self Help Groups

15% respondent Leadership Skill of Entrepreneurship is enhanced through these Student Self Help Groups

27% respondent Smart Business Management Skill of Entrepreneurship is enhanced through these Student Self Help Groups

1% respondent Technical Skill of Entrepreneurship is enhanced through these Student Self Help Groups

19% respondent Creative Skill of Entrepreneurship is enhanced through these Student Self Help Groups

Findings and Outcomes of the Action Research

- 25% of Students Self Help Groups have 3 to 4 students, 19% of Students Self Help Groups have 5 to 6 students, 20% of Students Self Help Groups have 6 to 7 students, 36% of Students Self Help Groups have more than 8 students.
- 535 students out of 1000 earn income in range of 1000-2000, 205 students out of 1000 earn income in range of 2000- 3000, 84 students out of 1000 earn income in range of 3000- 4000, 61 students out of 1000 earn income in range of 4000- 5000, 110 students out of 1000 earn income in range of more than 5000.
- 50% Strongly agreed Students Communication skills got enhanced by participating in entrepreneurship activities. 40% Students agreed Communication skills got enhanced by participating in entrepreneurship activities. 5% Students neutral agreed that their Communication skills got enhanced by participating in entrepreneurship activities.
- 44% students strongly agreed that these entrepreneurial activities help in enhancing time management skills, 52% students agreed that these entrepreneurial activities help in enhancing time management skills, 4% students neutral think that these entrepreneurial activities help in enhancing time management skills.
- 44% students strongly agreed that these entrepreneurial activities build leadership qualities among them, 52% students agreed that these entrepreneurial activities build leadership qualities among them, 4% students

neutral think that these entrepreneurial activities build leadership qualities among them.

- 55% Students strongly agreed that these entrepreneurial activities enhance their creative level, 42% Students agreed that these entrepreneurial activities enhance their creative level, 3% Students neutral think that these entrepreneurial activities enhance their creative level.
- 44% Students strongly agreed that these entrepreneurial activities build problem solving skills in them, 51% Students agreed that these entrepreneurial activities build problem solving skills in them, 4% Students neutral that these entrepreneurial activities build problem solving skills in them, only 1% Students disagree that these entrepreneurial activities build problem solving skills in them
- 45% Students strongly agreed that these entrepreneurial activities build social networking skills, 49% Students strongly agreed that these entrepreneurial activities build social networking skills, 5% Students neutral think that these entrepreneurial activities build social networking skills, 1% Students disagree that these entrepreneurial activities build social networking skills.
- It is observed that 324 students strongly agreed that Traditional Class plays an important role in motivating SSHGs, 544 agreed, 112 are neutral, 20 disagree. 409 respondents strongly agreed that mentoring is important for SSHGs, 516 agreed, 57 are neutral, 15 disagree. 392 respondents strongly agreed that interaction with entrepreneur motivate them to great extent, 506 agreed, 98 are neutral, 03 disagree, 01 Strong disagree. 376 respondent strongly agreed that day long bazars motivate SSHGs, 495 agreed, 109 are neutral, 20 disagree.
- 288 Students are very high confident after completing these entrepreneurial activities, 544 students are highly confident after completing these entrepreneurial activities, 150 students are neutral confident after completing these entrepreneurial activities, only 16 students think their confidence become low after completing these entrepreneurial activities.
- 76% student want to become entrepreneur, 22% students may want to become entrepreneur, only 2% students don't want to become an entrepreneur.
- 13% respondent Financial Skill of Entrepreneurship is enhanced through these Student Self Help Groups, 25%

respondent Communication Skill of Entrepreneurship is enhanced through these Student Self Help Groups, 15% respondent Leadership Skill of Entrepreneurship is enhanced through these Student Self Help Groups, 27% respondent Smart Business Management Skill of Entrepreneurship is enhanced through these Student Self Help Groups, 1% respondent Technical Skill of Entrepreneurship is enhanced through these Student Self Help Groups 19% respondent Creative Skill of Entrepreneurship is enhanced through these Student Self Help Groups.

Conclusion

The present study has proved all Hypothesis to be correct. The entrepreneurial activities are certainly strengthened if SSHGS are promoted. SSHGs are going to play an important role in boosting entrepreneurship skills of the young minds. These entrepreneurship activities seem to be successful in considering the growth and rise in the number of SSHG and the income of the students. The interest taken by the HEIs in promoting SSHG is worth appreciating. The concept has created an opportunity for the young minds to become independent and generate income. The study also shows that the contribution of students towards family income has also increased with increase in their income as a result of being part of an active SHG has motivated them to work more efficiently and contribute a more substantial sum towards group. The rise in the entrepreneurship skills has also upgraded their performance ability which in-turn has led to higher output.

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