

ONLINE TRAINING AND HOME-BASED BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT AMONG FEMALE STUDENTS: AN EDUCATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

Dr. Sudipta Chakraborty*

*Assistant Professor,

Department of Education,

Sibsagar University, Sivasagar, Assam, INDIA

Email Id: schakraborty@sibsagaruniversity.ac.in

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ABSTRACT

The researcher of this present study did an investigation on female students' engagement in home-based business during pandemic situations and the role of education in this.

Major Objectives of the Study

This present study had three major objectives. First, the researcher wanted to know the extent to which the female students are prioritizing the necessity to take training on different home-based businesses through different online courses, second, the researcher wanted to investigate how much the female students had taken such training through online courses and had engaged themselves in a different home-based business and the third objective was to suggest different educational strategies for strengthening students' engagement in different home based business training activities.

Methodology Followed

This study was a pilot-based study based on primary data collection and data interpretation techniques. The female students studying in Sibsagar College, Joysagar had been used in this present study. The time duration of this study was 2021. A self-made unstructured interview schedule was used for the present study. A Google Form for collecting necessary data was also generated. Moreover, the researcher personally interviewed the students using Google Meet App.

Findings of the Study

The result of the present study had revealed that most of the female students had concentrated completely in departmental online course-related classes and very few students had engaged themselves in acquiring any home-business-related skills. Necessary educational suggestions had been put forward to students for developing their level of interest in taking home-based business training which is an utmost necessity in pandemic situations.

KEYWORDS: *Female students' engagement, home-based business training, online education.*

INTRODUCTION

1.0 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The two major aspects that Indian education always prioritizes are making education universal and vocational. Keeping in mind the current complex social situations where the struggle for

existence is the main motto, education should be such which can prepare the child for future careers. Vocationalisation of education is learning some specific knowledge, skill, attitude, and participative ability related to skill, trade, commerce, business, particular vocation, or occupation. It is the system of giving training to the individual related to a specific vocation, job, or career. Vocational education and training are an integral part of our education system. Making a child for the world of work should be the major goal of any education system in India. There are lots of job-oriented courses which give a direction to the learner which the learner wants to do in life and what are those subjects which can help the person to achieve his targets.

Unemployment and under-employment are the major problems that Indians are facing right now especially in this COVID 19 pandemic situation which has made millions jobless. In this COVID 19 situation, it was seen that people who worked for companies, for a particular job have lost their jobs. People are stuck at home in this lockdown, and this gives a huge impact on their socio-economic life. COVID 19 pandemic situation has given me a very important life experience that is why engaging in a career to become self-sufficient at a very early age is so important. Why is it so important to find out ways not only to fight the virus but to give a new direction to the quality and standard of living? It is important to develop a sense of engagement among students towards different skills, careers which can help a child to become self-employed at an early age of his life. So that they can have some career alternatives in their lives if any devastating situations occur.

Every child is unique in his own field. The needs, abilities, and interests of different children are different. The young mind develops aspirations from the very beginning of life. Adolescence is the stage of being adventurous, focussed, and enthusiastic. It is the stage of exploring one's own hidden talents first, own career opportunities first in which they are opted for. So that they can make themselves ready for any situation if they don't get a well-settled job for which they planned their education. Every child must think about the best possible alternatives as career options which is the utmost necessity in this changing society and this growing complexity.

This research did an investigation on students' engagement in home-based business in pandemic situations and the role of education about this. A home-based business is where an individual runs his business from home. His own home is the prime place from where he operates all his business-related activities and his transactions. The greatest advantage of home-based business is that there is a lack of communication among the mass. All the dealings, transactions, communications can be operated from a considerable distance. This is a more flexible system where an individual at any time from anywhere can operate his business and can earn money for his livelihood. However, running a business from home demands lots of hard work, planning, organizing, directing, controlling, and coordinating skills, and most importantly interest and positive attitude towards it.

Women entrepreneurs benefit most from their engagement in finance, marketing and supportive environment (**Siegrist 2025**). Women entrepreneurs during the pandemic contributed to the financial management and financial decision making process of their families. But their roles in business and in household activities greatly affected by COVID 19 pandemic (**Uddin and Baruah, 2024**) Students need to engage with different entrepreneurship clubs. They acquired empirical experiences by joining themselves with different entrepreneurship clubs, they acquired training from masters working in industrial fields and got business experiences (**Ebiringa et. al 2015**). Students' engagement in home-based business helps in self-learning. It is seen that in

comparison with filed-based businesses mostly influenced by socio-economic and institutional forces, online educational training related to home-based businesses or involving in online home-based businesses provides opportunities for self-sufficiency without much constraints (**Muhammad and Elizabeth, 2017**). The study finds that home-based businesses run by women in Pakistan make a *significant positive contribution* to their families' financial well-being. The study concludes that women's entrepreneurial income boosts their entire family's family lives (**Muhammad et. al. 2021**). In another international study conducted in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, on women entrepreneurs, it was found by the researchers that sampled women entrepreneurs faced severe economic challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic. Some major challenges are drops in sales, disrupted supply chains, difficulty repaying loans, and limited access to government aid (**Rahayu et. al 2023**).

RESEARCH GAP

From the above mentioned reviews of related literature, it was found that the major areas covered in the above mentioned studies were vocational education, women's entrepreneurial contribution and benefits of home based business for financial stability. But very few research studies had been conducted on female students' engagement and their online training experiences during the pandemic. This present research study is quite significant to know how COVID 19 pandemic contributed in shaping students' motivation, preparedness for online home business. Therefore a clear gap exists in understanding female students' engagement in online home based business during pandemic and role of education in this.

TIME GAP

This study was conducted in 2021. At that time the institution where this pilot study was conducted was known as The Sibsagar College, Joysagar. Later on 1st August, 2024, the institution was upgraded to University and the new name was given as Sibsagar University. As the data of this study belong to the time gap of 2021, that is why, the researcher of this study has used the older name of this institution.

Even though this study was carried out in 2021 during the COVID-19 pandemic, it still matters a lot in 2025. That COVID 19 Pandemic Period of that time brought great changes in the complete mechanism of education and has developed lots of new innovations in the field of education which we are using till date. This study will give a base to the new researchers to know how much things have changed since the pandemic. This study also supports national efforts to strengthen women's skills, literacy and entrepreneurial confidence. The suggestions made in the study remain useful even now because the educational planners and the policymakers are still trying to help young women in making them self-employed. Though the study was conducted in 2021 but this study has a great impact in the present as well as in the future.

2.0 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The major objectives of the study were –

2.1 To study the extent to which the female students are prioritising the necessity to take training on different home-based business through different online courses.

2.2 To investigate how much the female students had taken such training through online courses and had engaged themselves in different home-based businesses.

2.3 To highlight the role of education in the form of different educational strategies for strengthening students' engagement in different home based business related activities. .

3.0 DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

This study was confined to only one college i.e. The Sibsagar College, Joysagar, Sivasagar, Assam, India and female students studying in this college were the target group of this study.

4.0 CONCEPTUAL AND OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS OF THE TERMS USED

4.1 Student: The dictionary meaning of student is a person who is studying in academic institutions like in schools, colleges or in universities. In this study, female students mean those specific girl students who are studying in the Sibsagar College, Joysagar, Sivasagar, Assam, India.

4.2 Engagement: Commitment or association with something. Here in this study, the researcher wanted to know the extent to which the female students are prioritising the necessity to take training on different home-based business through different online courses and how much the female students had taken such training through online courses and had engaged themselves in different home based business.

4.3 Home based Business: A home based business is a small company or business that people operate from their home. In this research study, the researcher wanted to see in pandemic situation, how much priority female students studying in the Sibsagar College, Joysagar, Sivasagar, Assam, India gives in different home-based business and what are the different online educational courses that female students at present are following (if any) to take proper training in home based business.

4.4 Pilot Study: Pilot study is a small study usually undertaken in a small area for fulfilling some specific research objective under a small horizon. This study was a pilot study. This study was confined to only one college i.e. The Sibsagar College, Joysagar, Sivasagar, Assam, India and the female students studying in this particular college were the target group of this study.

5.0 RESEARCH DESIGN

This study was survey-based. It was a pilot study. The descriptive survey method was used for the present study.

6.0 GEOGRAPHICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE AREA SELECTED FOR THE PRESENT STUDY

This college is situated at the eastern bank of Joysagar Tank and is approximately 5 km southwest of Sivasagar town, Sivasagar, Assam.

7.0 SAMPLES OF THE PRESENT STUDY

This study was a pilot-based study. Due to the pandemic situation, the researcher collected the required data online. One Google form constructed by the researcher was distributed in the students' departmental what's app group. A total of 83 female students responded, filling that Google form submitted back. So, 83 students were the sample of the present study.

8.0 RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

Unstructured Questionnaire and Unstructured Interview Schedule: A self-made unstructured questionnaire using Google form was constructed by the researcher and was used in this present study. A self-made unstructured interview schedule was used for the present study.

9.0 METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

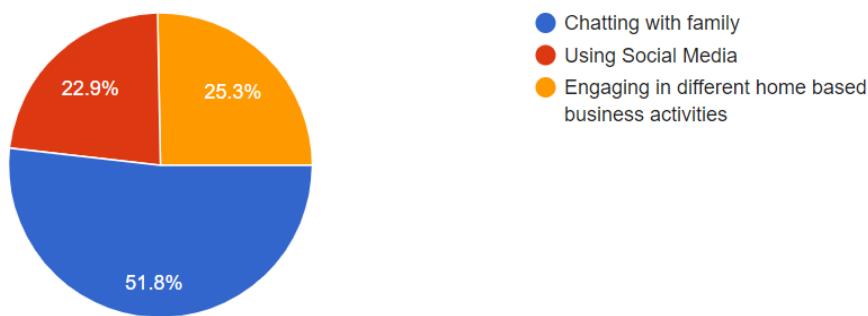
The complete qualitative data analysis method was applied in this present study.

10.0 RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The researcher got responses from 83 students from all 2nd, 4th, and 6th Semester Students studying in the Department of Education, The Sibsagar College, Joysagar. The findings of the present study have been presented under the following headings -

How are you utilizing your leisure time at home in this pandemic situation ?

83 responses

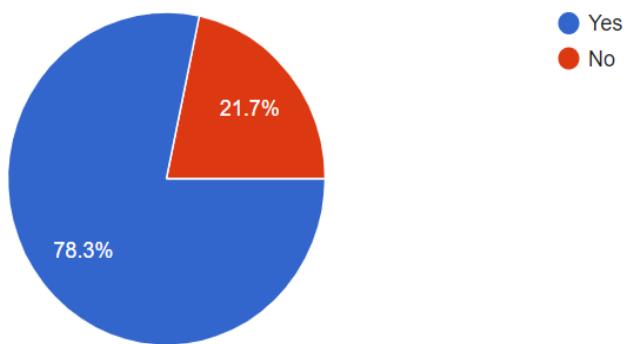


The researcher first wanted to know how the departmental students are utilizing their leisure time at home. Then it was found that most of the students (51.8 percent) spent their leisure time chatting with family. 25.3 percent of students engage themselves in different home-based business activities and 22.9 percent of the students use social media in their leisure time. It was found that only 25.3 percent of students engage themselves in different home-based business activities.

The researcher took further interviews of these specific 25.3 percent students using Google meet and asked these students to inform them about different home-based businesses that they are continuing at present in the pandemic. Only 2 students said that they have orders for cake making in a pandemic situation. 18 students said that they are searching for different options related to home-based business over the internet, but they are not getting any such opportunities to date. So, from this analysis, it has been revealed that very few students are engaging themselves in a home business in a pandemic situation. Among which, 2 students are directly involved with home-made cake making business, and 18 students are searching for different opportunities related to home business in a pandemic situation. But the majority of students are utilizing their leisure time by chatting with family.

Do you use Social Media frequently ?

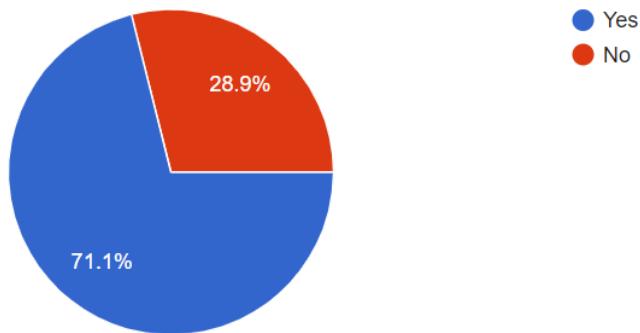
83 responses



It was found in the study that most students (78.3 percent) use social media frequently.

Do you like sharing your academic and other leisure time activities in social media?

83 responses



It was found that 71.1 percent of students like sharing their academic and other leisure time activities on social media. The present study has revealed that the majority of students are quite friendly with the use of social media. The researcher further interviewed those 2 students doing cake-making business at home to know whether they take the help of social media platforms to learn some new skills or to promote their work. Then these 2 students confirmed that they use social media for the said purpose.

When you see your friends start their own home business like cake making, pot making etc. at home during this pandemic, earn money with this and share their achievements in Social Media, then how you react ?

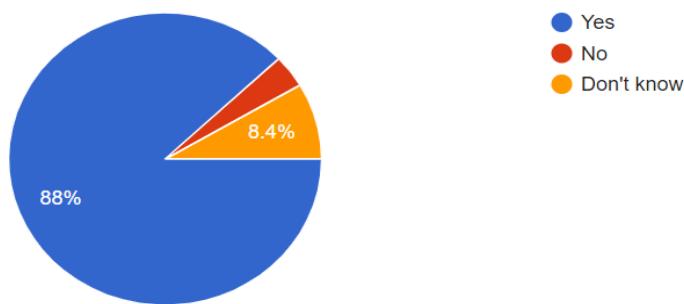
83 responses



The researcher wanted to know student's reactions when they see their friends start their own business-like cake making, pot making, etc. at home during pandemic, earn money with their home business activities and share in social media then the researcher found that after getting such news in social media, majority of students (47 percent) tend to think about their own engagement in different home business activities. The researcher personally interviewed these 47 percent and found that after watching such friend-related news on social media, they develop the instinct of engaging themselves in different home-related business activities, but no distinct planning and implementation related activities of a home-made business, but such planning is instinctive and temporary. The students did not take any major initiative to plan their own home-related business activities.

Are you interested to start your own home based small business in this pandemic to earn money at home ?

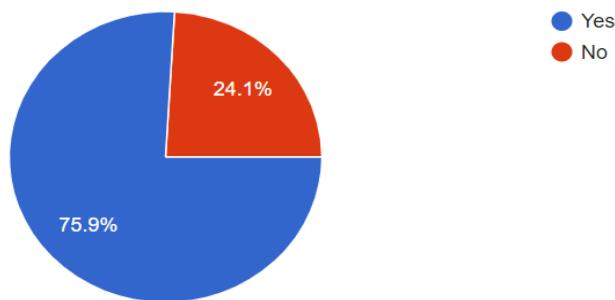
83 responses



But interestingly in this section, 88 percent of the students are interested in opening their own home-based business. But it was further found in the study that they do not have proper planning and strong willpower to start their own home-based business as analyzed from students' responses in the previous questions asked.

Have you ever tried to acquire knowledge about the start up money required to open home based business in this pandemic ?

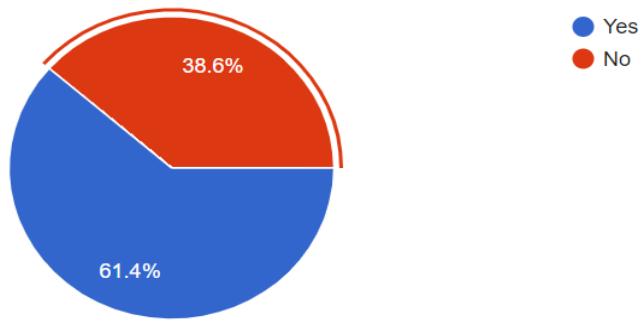
83 responses



Most of the students (75.9 percent) further said that they have inquired about the start-up money required for opening their own home-based business. But after that, no such initiative was taken by these students to inquire further and to continue their home-based business

Have you ever enquired any training and support program available online with the home based business opportunity ?

83 responses

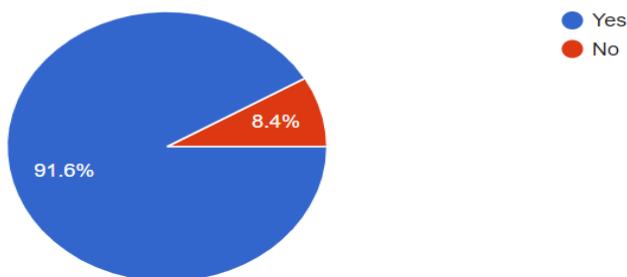


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Most of the students (61.4 percent) said that they have enquired about different training and support programs available online about the home-based business opportunity. On being further asked by the teacher to mention those specific educational programs or training programs that they searched or attended related to home-based business then the researcher did not get any specific concrete answer. The students searched the online educational courses available sometimes, but they did not continue the process and take it to the next level.

If you get any opportunity to attend different online courses provided by your academic institution related to home based business opportunities along with all support required, then will you participate in such online educational programs ?

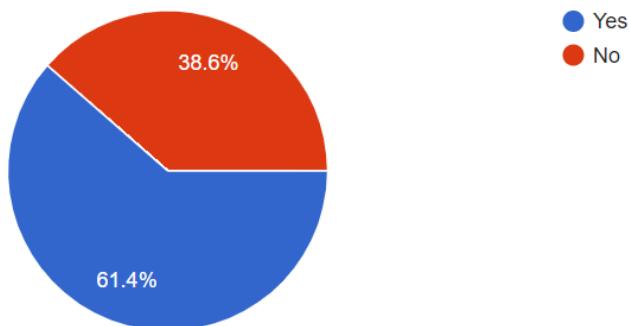
83 responses



The researcher further asked a student to know if they get an opportunity to attend different online courses provided by their academic institutions related to an online home-based business opportunity related to all support required, then will they participate or not in such online training programs than most of the students (91.6 percent) said that they will attend such programs under the guidance of their academic institutions

Have you ever enquired the different products and services available online to start home based business ?

83 responses



Most of the students i.e., 61.4 percent inquired about the different products and services available online to start a home-based business. But while asking the students through interview sessions about the different products and services, then no specific reply came in this direction.

How excited are you in attending different online training courses on different home based business ?

83 responses



In this question, most of the students (41 percent) said that they are always excited about attending different online training courses on different home-based businesses but not getting proper scope about this.

Interpretations of the Findings

It was found that only 25.3 percent of students engage themselves in different home-based business activities in a pandemic situation. And from these 25.3 percent students, only 2 students are directly involved with home-made cake making business, and 18 students are searching for different opportunities related to home business in a pandemic situation. But most students are utilizing their leisure time by chatting with family.

The researcher wanted to know whether the students use social media frequently or not. It was found in the study that most students (78.3 percent) use social media frequently. And most students like sharing their academic and other leisure time activities on social media. So, it was found that students are quite friendly with social media. The researcher further wanted to know whether these students use their social media related to home business management or for collecting information/training related to home business purpose or not i.e., the purpose of using social media. Then it was found that very few students use social media for the said purpose. 2 students doing cake-making business at home and using social media for learning new skills and for promoting their own home-based business. But interestingly in this same study, it was found that 88 percent of the students are interested in opening their own home-based business. But it was further found in the study that they do not have proper planning and strong willpower to start their own home-based business as analyzed from students' responses in the previous questions asked. The researcher wanted to know student's reactions when they see their friends start their own business like cake making, pot making, etc. at home during pandemic, earn money with their home business activities and share in social media then the researcher found that after getting such news in social media, majority of students (47 percent) have the tendency to think about their own engagement in different home business activities, but no distinct planning and implementation related activities of a home-made business, but such planning is instinctive and temporary. The students did not take any major initiative to plan their own home-related business activities.

The findings of the present study have revealed that most students have a hidden interest to engage themselves in different home-based business activities of their own choice. They just

need educational support especially from their academic institution in the form of training for establishing themselves in their own field. The students showed interest in a home-based business. Most of the students (75.9 percent) further said that they have inquired about the start-up money required for opening their own home-based business. But after that, no such initiative was taken by these students to inquire further and to continue their home-based business. Most of the students (61.4 percent) said that they have enquired about different training and support programs available online about the home-based business opportunity. Most of the students i.e., 61.4 percent inquired about the different products and services available online to start a home-based business. In this question, the majority of the students (41 percent) said that they are always excited about attending different online training courses on different home-based businesses but not getting proper scope about this. The researcher further asked the student to know if they get an opportunity to attend different online courses provided by their academic institutions related to an online home-based business opportunity related to all support required, then will they participate or not in such online training programs than most of the students (91.6 percent) said that they will attend such programs under the guidance of their academic institutions.

The findings show a clear gap between students' interest and their actual involvement in home-based business activities. The present study has revealed that majority of students expressed a desire to start their own business but very small number of students actually took initiative in skill building and business planning. It was found in the study that students are comfortable in using technology but they need adequate guidance in this direction. At the initial stage, most of the students inquired about business planning but their research was ended into curiosity level only and very very few number of students had made up.

Considering this, the researcher has suggested different educational strategies. These are-

11.0 SUGGESTED EDUCATIONAL STRATEGIES FOR STRENGTHENING STUDENTS' ENGAGEMENT IN DIFFERENT HOME-BASED BUSINESSES IN PANDEMIC SITUATION

Considering the findings of the present study, the researcher has suggested some specific educational strategies for strengthening students' engagement in different home-based businesses in pandemic situations. These are –

Firstly, it was found in the study that most of the students use social media frequently. So, considering this, teachers can use this media to upgrade their knowledge in a home-based business. Teachers can share important news/ you-tube videos related to home-based business and can share that information with students over WhatsApp. In this way, awareness and interest related to home-based business can be created.

Secondly, it was further revealed in the study that very few students use social media platforms to learn some new skills or to promote their work. Though the number is found small in this research, teachers can show proper guidance to students regarding their interest in sharing their home-business-related achievements in social media. Teachers can give proper guidance and the right direction. Teachers can suggest different authentic educational websites that are prioritizing such home-based business and can make such students conscious about this.

The study further revealed that most of the students after seeing their friends started home-based business sometimes develop a sense of self-engagement to such business, but they do not take

any major initiative to plan their own home-related business activities. Most students do not have strong willpower and are planning to start their own home-based business. Teachers can develop that willpower, that planning from the very beginning in their minds. Teachers through counselling sessions /different psychological tests in vocational interest can identify the hidden potentialities of the students. Proper books related to student's areas of interest can be suggested, students can be encouraged to search different relevant information, and can be guided by business experts on how to structure the business in which they are interested. Those business experts can be invited by the teacher in educational institutions and such relevant classes can be arranged.

It was further found in the study that 91.6 percent of students are interested to attend online educational courses available on home-based businesses if organized in their own educational institution, but they are not interested to search online educational courses or training programs available on home-based business. Teachers can take a major role in this direction. There are different vocational, need-based, online courses available at present. Students can benefit from those courses both in formal and non-formal mode. Teachers first develop the horizon of his/her knowledge about those courses available and must give the right direction to students in this regard. The educational institution can organize different workshops, seminars, conferences from time to time-related to home-based, need-based small vocational courses. Prominent entrepreneurs can be invited by the educational institution to give adequate first-hand training to students in this direction. Moreover, the educational institution can take different small projects where students can be taken to firms, factories, local industries based on students' needs and choices. Proper felicitation ceremonies can be organized for those ex-students of educational institutions who got success in their entrepreneurial business. These practical examples will motivate the students to think about their need-based vocation-related activities from the very beginning.

12.0 CONCLUSION

This is a pilot-based study conducted among students studying in the Sibsagar College, Joysagar, Sivasagar, Assam to know students' engagement in different home-based businesses during pandemic situations. The study had revealed that the majority of students are not ready to go for home-based business though they have an interest. The majority of students have reported that they need guidance, training, and opportunities from their own educational institution in this field of home-based business. So, the educational planners and policymakers can bring some useful educational recommendations where need-based courses related to opening their own start-up business or different courses can be suggested along with practical training programs. It is the responsibility of a teacher who with the help of his own knowledge, skill and attitude can bring desirable changes in the behavior of the students and tell them the importance of getting financial independence and experience at an early age through the right need-based selection of vocational activities. Then only we can think about more modernized, progressed, and developed India.

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The researcher of this paper expresses her deep sense of gratitude to all the female respondents of The Sibsagar College, Joysagar, Assam, India, for helping her in collecting all the necessary information for this study.

Author (s) Contribution Rate

The researcher Dr. Sudipta Chakraborty is the sole contributor of this whole work. She has given 100% contribution to this work. No co-author is attached with this study.

Special Note: Graphs designed in this particular study are AI generated from the data which is completely authentic and original. So, I am acknowledging AI for designing the graphs for clear understanding.

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