



HOME BAKING AS A SMALL BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS: A CASE STUDY OF GOLAGHAT DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT:

There are a lot of technological advancements alongside education these days. So, there is no task which is restricted to a specific gender or age group. Anyone can pursue their passion as profession. With the rise in home baking culture across India after lockdown it has been seen that more and more women and college students are getting engaged in small business activities. This includes home makers and college students who took up their passion as earning source and started pursuing as side hustle. This paper examines the rise of home bakers specially in college students and challenges faced by them. Baking sector has become one of the most empowering sectors for passionate bakers. Therefore, the concept of home baking has given birth to young home bakers not only in urban areas but also in rural as well as remote areas. Breaking the typical stereotype norms that males are bread earners and female belong to kitchen, women entrepreneurs are infusing building career right from their kitchen to bakery section. Interestingly, for many students, home baking has turned out to be a business venture. Many of them are self-taught bakers. They accept pre bookings through pages on social media accounts and are very confident of continuing their part time business along with studies. Home baking business helps women and students to improve their standard of living and also contributes to the welfare of society by providing better quality and large variety of goods and services and effective utilization of resources.

Key words: *Entrepreneurship, home bakers, students as bakers, challenges, financial management.*

HISTORY

Cakes are the desserts which everyone wants to have a slice of. The history of cake baking is very colorful and exciting one. The word 'cake' comes from the Swedish word, 'kaka.' The Egyptians were the first to exhibit baking skills. The first cakes combined bread and honey. The Egyptians made cakes by turning them over once during the baking process. The Greeks are famous for an early form of cheesecake. The Romans developed fruit cakes with raisins, nuts, and other foods. India was a European colony for many years. Perhaps, the first cakes found their

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way into India, thanks to the Europeans who visited and lived in India. The Portuguese, Dutch, British and French settlers introduced baked goods in India. Although, Baking is not a traditional form of cooking in a country like India, the expansion of this can be traced back to the 18th century when the British introduced bread in India. In the 1950s and 1960s, India's bakery industry grew satanically due to the rising demand of bakery products. The first cake bakery in India was established by a south Indian named Mampally Babu of Thallasery, a small town in south India. The name of his bakery was the Royal Biscuit Factory.

INTRODUCTION

Cake has become the sweetest dish of all kind of celebrations. No celebrations can be without cutting a cake these days; people want to make moment rememberable with a sweet slice of cake. Changing customer habits and lifestyle is giving a boost to home bakers. Therefore, baking has become the ocean of opportunity for all passionate bakers because this career is becoming more viable and rewarding one. This sector has witnessed an exponential growth worldwide with huge number of bakeries and home bakers in India alone. This sector guarantees the profitability and innovations and also the opportunity of business expansion. Interestingly, being the fastest FMCG industries in India, it has become an opportunity specially for college students as a side hustle along with their studies. In the past few years mostly during corona there has been a big boom in this baking culture; there are large number of home bakers who have started baking customized cakes and got an opportunity to follow their passion and also can monetize their efforts. Specially, the students are turning towards the baking business across India and this paper is completely focusing on the reasons of turning towards the home baking business and how are they balancing their studies along with weeping up creamy batter.

OBJECTIVES

1. To understand the reason behind the rise of home bakers specially among students
2. To understand how are they managing their studies along with their passion.
3. To access the challenges faced by the bakers in Golaghat district



REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The Times of India Article (2021) explained that those offering homemade products online say those social media platforms have helped them reach out to a larger customer base. The increasing demand for homemade cakes and pastries and their popularity on social media brought with them their share of controversies. The news article from The Times of India (2021) ‘Rise of the Home Bakers’ stated how the pandemic and use of social media became a blessing for the Home Bakers. The social media has become a tool for advertisement. The pandemic had a great effect on several lives, thus to manage the stress and anxiety, people started to get into baking. Malika Bhagat (2020) ‘Sweet nothings: Home bakers whip up and deliver delights amid lockdown’, Ms. Malika Bhagat has mentioned about the home bakers from Delhi who are facing a tough time to keep the business going on, to cater a high demand with limited resources / raw materials. Home bakers offer a special lockdown menu which consists of healthier or keto desserts, keeping in mind the health and safety of the customers. Raisa Bruner (2021) No matter how different their origins, these home bakers are all crafting a meaningful future through their culinary pursuits. For some, it is a creative way to earn an income in tough times. For others, it’s a chance to home in on a newfound purpose. Priyanka P. V and Padma Srinivasan (2015) in her research study identified various factors that determine the purchase of a product using social media from a customer's point of view. The study concludes that continuous customer support services will result in improvement of customer retention. New applications and social platforms will flourish and allow even greater personalization and real-time, location-based engagements in media. A blog posted on Barry Callebaut website, ‘Why people bake at home – Top 3 Home-baking trends’ has mentioned why home baking is getting so much growth during the pandemic. This time, people utilized to bake sweets for their families and watched many baking recipes on the social media platform. The 3 main reasons for this are – Indulgence: Due to the lockdown, people tried their hands on baking. Health is the other reason/trend which has gained importance thus, people preferred home baked delicacies which offered them vegan and eggless options; Convenience is the ultimate reason. The director of Bonn Group of Industries, Mr. Amrinder



Singh, has revealed about how the pandemic has helped the home bakers to get into focus and attract a number of customers. Offering healthy baked goods and unique products have assisted the home bakers to get business.

METHODOLOGY

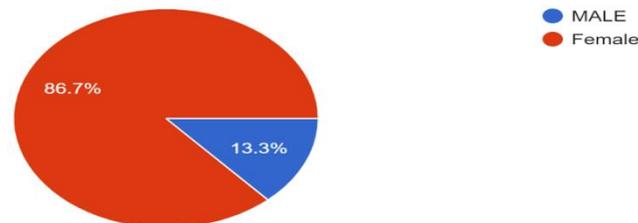
The study is qualitative descriptive research. Data collected through both primary and secondary sources. Primary data: primary data was collected through questionnaires and personal interviews. The structured questionnaire was circulated to 45 home bakers out of which 30 respondents gave their feedback. Secondary data was collected through articles, research papers, journals, websites, newspapers, blogs etc.

ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

1. gender?

It has been found that 86.7% of the respondents are from female community.

.Gender
30 responses



2. Are you a student?

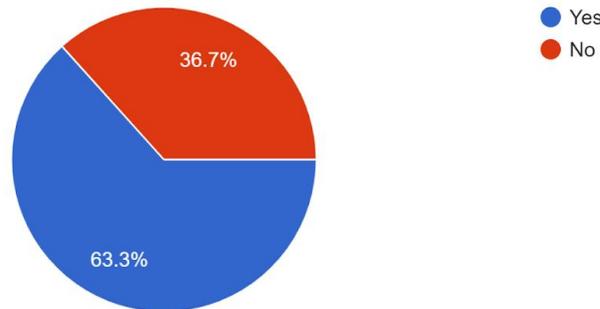
It has been observed from the study that 36.7% (11) respondents are from various profession fields or house wives but rest of 63.3% (19) responded were students who have started baking out



of their passion and turned out to be a small business entrepreneur.

.Are you a student.

30 responses

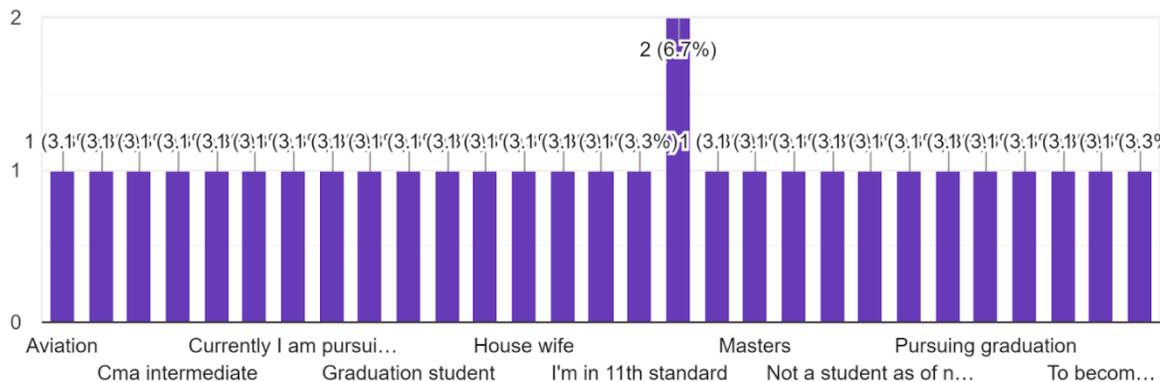


3.What are you pursuing in education?

Out of 30 respondents there are house makers among rest of the students some are undergraduate students some are pursuing their masters, some are pursuing their higher degrees like PhD, one of them is a CMA student and three of them are law students.

.If yes what are you pursuing in education.

30 responses

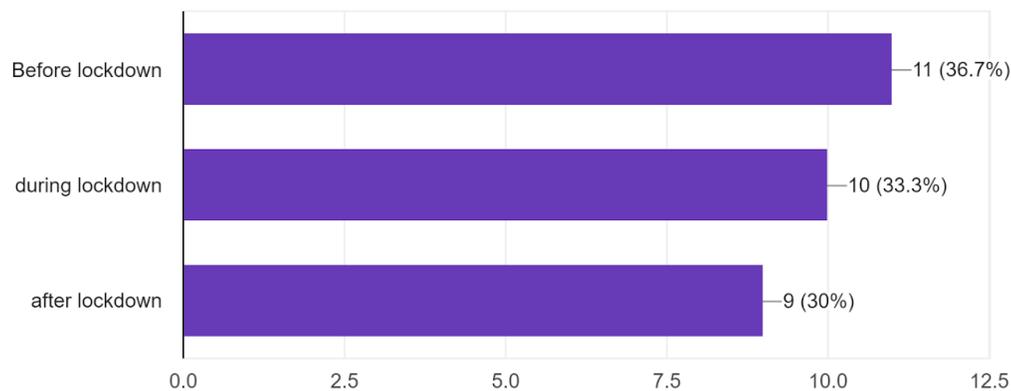


4.When did you start baking.



To identify when did the respondents actually start baking or deciding about getting into this home baking business the analysis for the same was 36.7% i.e.,11 of them started baking even before lockdown and 33.3% i.e.,10 respondents entered into the business during lockdown and rest 30% i.e.,9 respondents got into this business after lockdown.

.when did you start baking .
30 responses

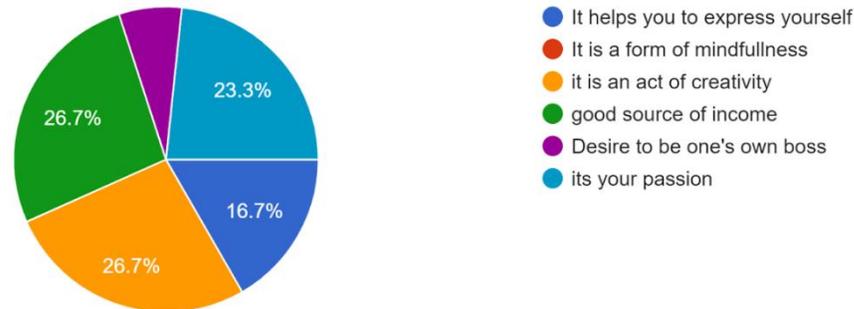


5.What was the purpose of baking?

Out of 30 respondents 7 have started baking out of their passion for baking,5 of them started with a thought that baking is a form of mindfulness,8 of the took it as a creativity later started earning out of it,8 respondents started this business as a source of earning,2 of them always wanted to be self-employed so they ventured in this area.



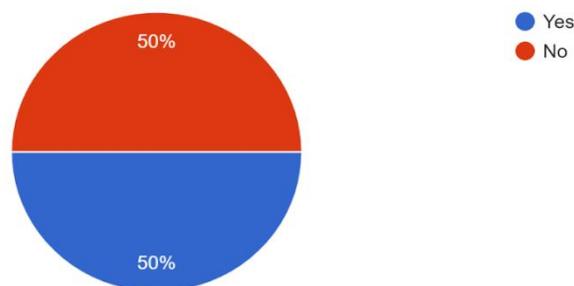
.what was the purpose of cake baking.
30 responses



6.have you been trained in cake baking?

There are professional courses or training programs to learn the skills of baking, out of 30 respondents 50% i.e., 15 of them is trained, they have done courses to upgrade their skill and rest 50% i.e., 15 are self-taught bakers without any professional training in baking.

.Have you been trained cake baking.
30 responses



7.How did you come up with this idea of cake baking as a business opportunity.

The response to this question was varied from bakers to bakers. Mostly said the rising demand of baking products specially customized cakes, they have seen it as a profitable yet innovative business activity. Some respondents said initially they started it out of passion and now all of their efforts are getting monetize. some said they got motivated by appreciation received from family

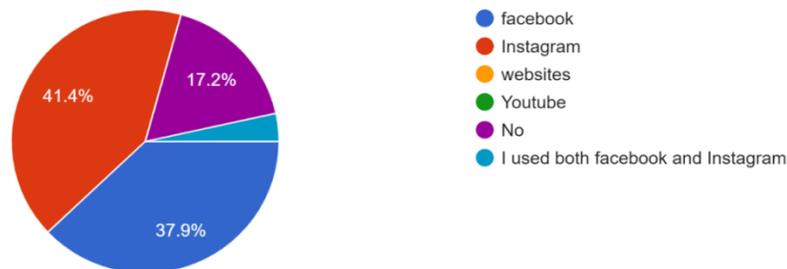


and friends and started serving others too. Therefore, it can be interpreted that most of the bakers have started as their passion now it has become their part time business profession because of demand from the customer.

8. Do you make use of social media platforms for advertising your baking business. If yes, which platform do you prefer.

Out of 30 respondents, 5 stated that they don't use social media platforms for their business, for rest 25 respondents, it is very clearly seen that they preferred various social media platforms for their cakes. Majority of them i.e., 12 chose Instagram, 11 opted for Facebook, 2 of them preferred both Facebook and Instagram platforms.

Do you make use of social media for advertising your baking business. If yes, which platform do you prefer.
29 responses

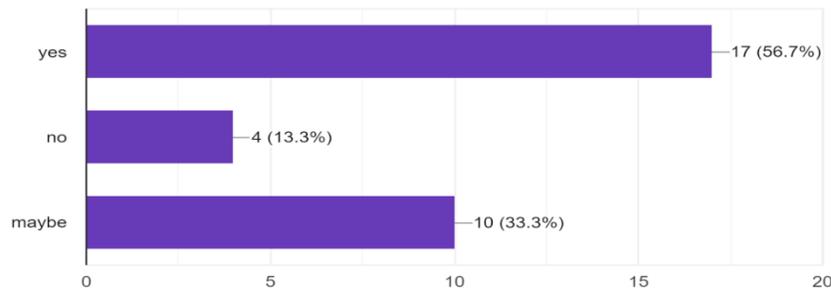


9. were you successful in attracting the potential customer for your business using social media.

56.7% i.e., 17 of the respondents found that social media helped them to draw attention of their customers towards their home baking business, 13.3% said it did not help them to gain more customer for their business, 33.3% i.e., 10 respondents were not much sure about it.



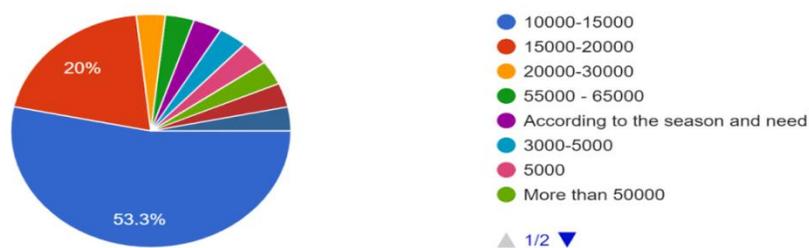
Were you successful in attracting the potential customer for your business using social media.
30 responses



10. What is your monthly income from this business.

From the data collected it is seen that the responded are earning very good amount of money from their home baking .Maximum respondents(16) said their monthly earning from this part business is 10k-15k,6 respondents said their per month earning is 15k-20k.It is seen from the study that the earning of home bakers starts from 5000 and it can be extended to even 55000-65000 for those who are completely focusing on their baking business not as part timer.

what is your monthly income from this business.
30 responses



11. How do you deliver your Product.



The study showed that most of the home bakers (19) ask for self-pick up (take away),8 respondents said they self-deliver the product but took extra shipping charges (50-60rs),3 respondents said they self-deliver their products to the customer without any extra charges.

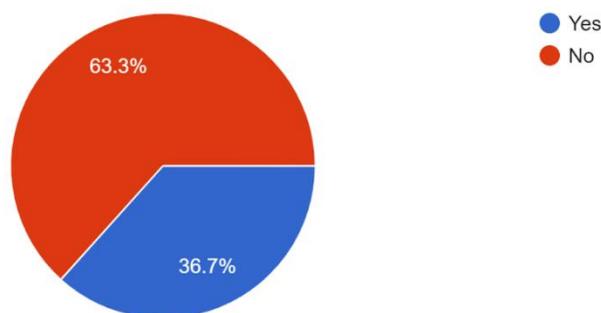
How do you deliver your product.
30 responses



12. Is your business registered under food safety and standard authority of India (fssai).

When it came to registration under Food Safety And Standard Authority of India, 11 of them have FSSAI license and rest 19 do not have any food license or have not registered for the same.

Is your business registered under food safety and standard authority of India (fssai)
30 responses



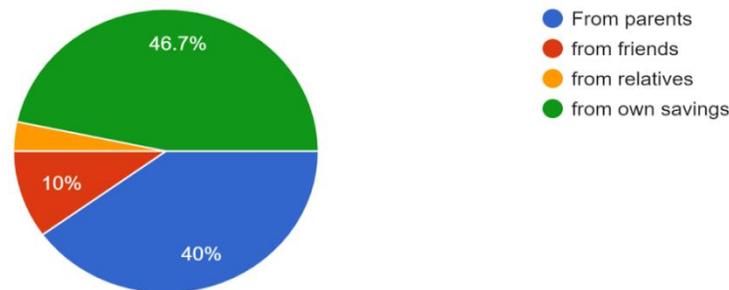


13.How did you manage capital to start this business.

When it came to capital (finance) to start their home baking business,14 respondents said they started this business with their own savings,12 respondents said they borrowed from their parents,3 of them said their friends helped them financially and rest borrowed from relatives to get required equipment's and supplies for their business.

How did you manage capital to start this baking business.

30 responses

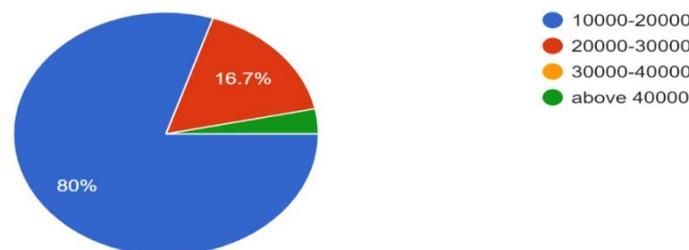


14.What is the minimum budgeted to start this business.

When it was asked about minimum budgeted to get into this business. Majority said that the minimum budgeted to start home baking business is 10k-20k, few respondents said above 40k

What was the minimum budgeted required to start your cake business..

30 responses

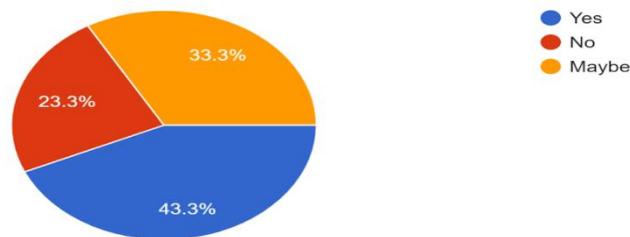




15.Is your earning enough to meet your expenses.

From the study it is seen very clearly that 13 respondents said that their income from baking business is enough to meet their expenses,7 of them said not enough,10 respondents said may be but not sure.

Is your earning enough to meet your expenses.
30 responses



16.How do you manage your studies along with baking.

When it comes to managing studies along with baking, respondents said they managed both very nicely like a working mother manages both work and family. Some respondents said their classes are up to 1 pm and they get enough time to bake for their customers. Students also said they like to take pre bookings so that they could make proper schedule for their study and baking it also does not take much time to get baked.

17.How are you utilizing your earnings from this part time business.

From the study it has been found that respondents are meeting their expenses with the earnings from baking and some of them started saving to reinvest their earnings to expand their business in future.Many said they are also helping their parents financially. therefore, the main motive behind turning towards baking business is financially independence.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY



With the rising demands in baking and technological advancements many people are turning towards baking business. The industry is dominated by female section of the society. The study showed the main reasons why students are turning towards baking business is nothing but the visible growth and rewards. The home baking community consists mostly women whether student or a house wife. From the study itself it has been seen that 86% of the bakers are females. The home baking community is mostly people who don't have any professional certification, many of them are self-taught bakers. Students got into this business because of their passion for creativity, demand for cakes, desire for being financially independent. Although, they are taking pre orders or prefer to take orders on weekends so that their study will not get hampered. With the earnings from cake baking they use to bear their own study related expenses and they do save for their further studies. These home bakers also face challenges sometimes like struggle in finding the right type of customer, price negotiation by the customer, limited business knowledge, high competition, inconsistent electricity, meeting the expectation of customer, time management particularly during exam times. Not every home baker starts after completing a 3-year degree in food. Most home bakers get into home baking because of sheer passion. The industry of home baking is mostly driven by passion into business than otherwise.

CONCLUSION

Home baking is one of the most trending yet profitable business these days. In a country like India, where the baking is not a tradition form of cooking, due to the change in people taste and life style it has gained the popularity. The digital platforms also helped many of the bakers and given them a platform. Rise in home bakers among students has been observed mostly during and after lockdown. The home baking community consists of people from other fields apart from students community. It is observed that out of total responses majority are female students, thus it can be interpreted that females are no longer belongs to their home kitchen only they have started entrepreneurship straight from their kitchen desk and they are becoming independent financially. The study observed that there should be more awareness regarding financial management among student community so that their earnings can be utilized in more efficient and fruitful way. They can invest in mutual funds and stock market is also a great option to get exciting returns through systematic investment plans.



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