

Collaborations In Self Help Groups - A Computer Science Perspective Study and Framework

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Abstract

A Self Help Group [SHG] is a group of 10 to 20 people who come together and pool their resources to form a small business. SHGs also evolve into larger organizations through federations. SHGs have been very effective in India. There were several thousands of them spread geographically all over the country [about 3.367 million SHGs as of April 2011 as per www.indiastat.com]. Automation of SHGs will greatly impact the SHGs' performance in business and in society. SHGs are gaining importance in research studies, and hence formalizing the SHGs is a fundamental initiative for further research. Sometimes SHGs receive tasks which they cannot complete with their existing resources [resources mean skills, materials, machinery, workers, etc]. In such situations, they collaborate with other SHGs who have the required resources. SHGs also collaborate to achieve higher objectives [goals]. There is no proposed framework for Self Help Groups, and Collaborations among Self Help Groups. This paper provides a formal framework for SHGs and also models a rudimentary framework for collaborations among SHGs. The chief functionality of SHGs is to execute tasks, and also tasks are the basic reason for collaborations. So, to develop a framework for collaborations, we first need to formalize a task. We also formalize a member and SHG, and then proceed to develop framework for collaborations among SHGs. A rudimentary framework for collaborations among SHGs is obtained; and it is also observed that, through further research, holistic models can be developed based on this work. Collaboration is a joint effort of multiple individuals or work groups to accomplish a task or project. This is an extremely useful feature which helps in achieving goals which are otherwise not feasible for a single individual or work group. Hence, this paper attempts to develop a framework for collaborations in SHGs and also proposes a metric of collaboration.