

A Study on the Investment Behavior of Working Women with Special Reference to Agra District

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ABSTRACT

Investment is playing an important role to grow their wealth and providing a safety for the future uncertainty, net for retirement and other financial goals and it becomes protection shield for the future unexpected expenditure. In earlier time women were not aware the importance of investment and there were very less saving and investment by the women but at a present time women are more aware about the importance of investment and now a days they properly plan their future and keep investing in different options. Currently there are many investment options available in the market, women need to choose different investment option according to their socio economic status and investment purpose. In present time the ratio of working women increases rapidly and this will lead to increase the number of women investors. Their financial influence is becoming stronger as they feel responsible for household expenditure and saving. This study examines the investment behaviour of women investors in different investment avenues.

KEY WORDS

Investment Avenues, Investment Behaviour, Investment Option, Socio-Economic Status, Women Investors, Working Women, Financial Goals

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I. INTRODUCTION

Investment refers to the employment of funds with the aim of getting return on it, or in general, it is the use of money in the hope of making more money. Investing being a wide spread practice and helping others to make their fortunes in the process. First step is to determine the characteristics of the various investments and then matching them with the individuals need and preferences. All personal investing criteria are designed in order to achieve certain objectives. In India, there are various options related to investment available for working women, but the decisions to choose depends on the knowledge and the commitment to stay invested for a longer term. Investment can be for various reasons such as for adding up of wealth, save a corpus amount for retirement, reach financial goals, get income tax exceptions, saving for children, for building beautiful houses, buying luxurious vehicle and so on. Working women have greater propensity to save and invest but even today they are influenced by various factors such as colleagues, friends, relatives and various demographic and economic factors.

In current situation, women are ready to invest for their future because they are educated and employed. They are free to choose what they want on the basis of their education and independent nature. They are now securing their future about investment decisions. There are various investment opportunities for future investment. Mostly working women are likely to invest where the risk factor is low. Investment is increasing because of the creating awareness of females for investment. Saving is good, but investment is better for making development in the nation.

In India, there has been a significant rise in the number of working women who are financially independent. They have realised that financial security and independence are equally important. In present time, women have strengthened their participation in every sector. The Government is also making many efforts to bring them forward. Today, women can be seen working in large numbers in IT sector, banking, accountancy, fashion, medical profession, media industries, and their participation is increasing in different types of investment.

INVESTMENT TIPS FOR WORKING WOMEN

As we can see that investment is increasing day by day, but we have to choose that type of investment pattern in which saving can be used in better way. It is also seen that women unknowingly taking wrong decision about investment, if we choose to take good investment decision then there are some points which we should remember in our mind.

1. Prepare Investment Plan

Investing money without a plan is like a playing blindly. Investing money in different investment option can backfire without a proper plan. Investment portfolio must be made according to goal. Goal based investment is a practical medium of investing. When you have a life goal it becomes effective to ascertain the time period and amount required to achieve it.

2. Start Early

People often begin thinking about saving for the future later in life. This applies to women who work as well. Saving late in life has many adverse effects. The main problem with waiting to invest until later is that you miss out on the benefits of compounding. If you start saving and investing early, even a small amount can grow over time and become a large sum in the long term. Another advantage of starting early is that you have more of your income available to invest when you're young. In your twenties, you have fewer responsibilities compared to when you're in your thirties with a family. It's a good idea to start early and invest for the long term to build your net worth.

3. Tax-Efficient Investments

When we invest their money in any investment option we considered only what is the return on investment however we often ignore whether the return on investment is tax free or tax deduction is available or not. Our calculation is limited to the rate of capital appreciation over a period. The impact of tax on rate of return helps to decide whether investment is fruitful or not. It is therefore to understand the tax policies on investment.

4. Systematically Investment

Systematically investment plays an important role for the creation of wealth. A working women can start investment systematically by investing small amount out of their saving in the early stage of their carrier but it is important to maintain investment continuously. When money is invested continuously for a long period it will helps to secure the future.

5. Investment Portfolio

Everyone must diversify their investment portfolio because it leads to reduce risk associated with investment. Investment must be made in different investment options because your investment portfolio will be completely depend on a narrow investment scheme

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

1. AyushiModi(2023) conclude that higher income group women are high risk bearer as comparison to those women who is belonging to lower income group because they maintain most of their investment portfolio in riskless as well as risky financial investment like fixed deposit , Government securities, shares , bonds and debenture.

2. B. Manasaand P.Ishwara(2022) stated that women are the backbone of family, business and society. She plays an important role in every phase of life. Due to the lack of knowledge of growth and risk factor and low level of confidence becomes the foot shackles for women and this become hurdle for utilization of different avenues. To get opportunities in a future, women should get updates related to avenues. therefore women must have the detailed information about avenues that will help in the choosing of alternative avenues according to the requirement of her family risk factor related with avenue

3. R Hariniand R. Savithri(2021) stated that women are a risk averse investor because she invest in a risk free or risk less investment options. The main reason of not investing in risky avenue is lack of unawareness. Various polices must be framed and guidelines must be issued for creating awareness and boost the confidence level for investing various avenues for working women.

4. M.Banurekha and N.Sowbarnigga (2021) the aim of this study to recognize the investment and saving behavior of working women and to know how they are aware for different saving and investment avenues available in market and also know the potential and benefit of different investment options. Income, saving and investment related to each other and fix the direct relation with each other. Saving out of income are done for future expenditure especially for children education unforeseen expenditure. It was noticed that higher return investment whose beta is greater than 1 were being preferred but beside this risk factor gravely affect the investment decision.

5. Mansi Jain, P. K. Chopra and Amitkhare (2019) conclude that higher return attract the investment in share market and real estate market and this become the main objective of investing in these two investment options. Investment in mutual fund allows a tax deduction and preferred with tax saving objective. Investment in fixed deposit and NSS/PPF/PF and insurance offer a riskless return and also fulfill a safety objective. Investment in bullion is the liquid investment option.

6. Manish Sharma and H. K. Bindu (2019) found that the main reasons working women invest are to secure their future, provide for their child's education, save on taxes, plan for retirement, and be prepared for family emergencies. The top barriers to investing for them are a lack of knowledge and confidence, followed by being cautious about risks and not being interested in investments. Many of the women prefer a financial planner who will prioritize their interests and help them earn better returns. While most don't believe a female advisor understands them better, they do have preferences for certain investment options like bank deposits, tax-saving fixed deposits, life insurance, precious metals, and more.

7. V.V. Sessa Mohan (2018) propound that in the 20th century, women play an important role in many different fields. Some women have succeeded in starting their own businesses or startups. However, only a few women make decisions about investing money in market securities. This study looked at how women invest. The results showed that investors check their investments every week. They should save more money and invest in different things because they're not earning much from their investments and sometimes losing money. The study recommends that investors get advice from experts since they might not be good at managing investments on their own. People invest in popular stocks and use strategies to protect their investments. Family members should also support women in their investments. Overall, the study suggests that investors should follow a plan for their investments.

8. Dr. M. Veena (2019) concludes that Indian women in the 21st century have made great progress in becoming empowered and making their mark in the country. There have been significant improvements in the status of women in India in recent years. However, some women still lack confidence and knowledge when it comes to investing. This leads them to make investment choices influenced by various factors. That's why it's important to do ongoing research to find out what factors affect the investment decisions of working women and how these factors impact their investment behavior.

9. S. Sariga., Gayathri.S.Nair, K.G Rajani (2023) the researchers aimed to understand how women employees in Ernakulum district invest their money. They discovered that while more women are starting to invest, they have lack knowledge about different investment schemes. To address this, the Government should organize awareness programs to educate women about investment strategies. The study state that many women choose to invest in banks and their main goal is to save for their children's education. They generally prefer investments that are low risk but offer high returns. Encouraging women to begin investing early and consistently in a variety of options can assist them in reaching their financial goals in the long run

10. G. Rekha. & R. Viahnupriya. (2018) this study looked at how women who work, whether in Government jobs, private companies, or their own businesses, invest their money. The research found that a lot of the women who participated work in private companies and they like to invest in gold. The study also showed that most women save money for their children's education, weddings, and other important things in life. It suggests that women with higher incomes tend to invest more. The researchers believe that there is potential to improve saving and investing habits among women who earn salary.

11. S. Neha (2016) this study conclude that working women invest their saving in different various avenues. After the understanding of demographic with the help of chi-square test, it was conclude that there is no direct relationship between education with investment while there is significant relation between age and income.

12. R. Ganpathi And VarshaMadhavan(2021) this study found that women invest only a small part of their income. This is because they might not fully understand investment options and prefer to avoid risks. A lot of women rely on others for investment decisions and don't make their own choices. Many women invest opportunistically rather than having planned strategies. They mostly consider easy access to their money as the most important factor. Women generally have some basic understanding of investing, which is positive for their involvement in investing. they tend to avoid high-risk situations and prefer safer options. They often follow family advice for making financial decisions, seeking guidance from experienced individuals.

III. OBJECTIVES

1. To know the investment behavior of working women in Agar district.
2. To study the different types of investment schemes.
3. To find out the influencing factors for investment of working women.

IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

80 working women were selected for the present study. Convenience sampling method was used for the study. Primary data was collected through self structured questionnaire and Secondary data was also collected from various published sources including research paper, journals, publications, magazines, reports, websites etc. Geographical area of the study is Agra district and Research area is Investment Behavior. This is a descriptive and analytical study.

INVESTMENT SCHEME

In India, there are various investment schemes with low and high returns for investors.

GOVERNMENT INVESTMENT SCHEMES WITH HIGH RETURNS OPTIONS:

ATAL PENSION YOJANA (APY)

Atal Pension Yojna(APY) called as security plan also, is provided by Government for the employees who are working in an unorganized sector. This scheme is helpful for those who are not taking any economic advantageous and not saving a few money for their old age or retirement. Atal Pension Yojna pays Rs 1,000, Rs 2,000, Rs 3,000, Rs 4,000, or Rs 5,000 per month to its subscribers according to their age and participation. To register in this particular scheme an individual should not be more than of 40 years of age and less than the 18 years of age. At least minimum contribution age is 20 years, so that pension will started at beginning of 60 years of age.

PUBLIC PROVIDENT FUND (PPF)

Public Provident Fund (PPF) is playing an important role for any investor to create wealth. Investors are creating wealth from this PPF account from a long time ago. PPF accounts are giving them great interest rate and it's also tax advantageous, that is why, many customers are joining this scheme. Whenever you become member of this, after the 1 year ending of that scheme time period, at any point of time, and before the 5 years of closing scheme, the customer can apply for a loan which should not be more than of 25 percent of sum.

SUKANYA SAMRIDDHI YOJANA (SSY)

SukanyaSamriddhiYojana(SSY) is a public welfare plan made by the Government. It was formulated under the campaign of 'betibachao, betipadhao'. It was made for the financial assistance of a girl child in India. This plan was introduced in 2015 by Prime MinisterNarendraModi to reduce the tension among parents regarding their daughter's higher education, marriage, and other life milestones. A girl under the age of 10 can have an account opened in her name under the scheme by her parents or other legal guardians. The payment is between Rs. 250 and Rs. 1, 50,000 per fiscal year for 15 years following the date of opening. Even if the returns are higher than those of comparable fixed-income schemes, the program has a lock-in period of 21 years. However, a girl can make a partial withdrawal after she turns 18 years old. Your application for an SSY account will be accepted by any poor financial institution.

NATIONAL PENSION SCHEME (NPS)

The National Pension Scheme (NPS) is a program that offers retirement benefits to make sure that its participants would have a reliable income in their old age. An account number for a permanent retirement is supplied to each NPS user. A shareholder can allocate their wealth among stocks, bonds, and other secure

investments. Simply said, contributions to the NPS have no maximum amount. Section 80cc(1b) of the income tax act allows for a tax break or deduction for investments up to Rs. 50,000. up to Rs. 1,50,000 in investments may be tax-deductible under section 80c of the income tax act.

SOVEREIGN GOLD BONDS (SGBS)

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) releases sovereign gold bonds on behalf of the Indian Government. Bonds backed by gold are referred to as SGBS. Government officials established the SGB scheme in November 2015 as an alternative to owning actual gold. In addition to the profit from fluctuations in prices, the gold bond also offers a fixed interest rate of 2.5% per year on the issue price. The accrued interest is deposited into the investor's chosen savings account every six months. Due to the SGB's reliance on paper, it is free from the risks and costs associated with long-term storage. Since early redemption is allowed after the fifth year, this investment option is regarded as liquid. SGBS can also be used as collateral for secured loans or sold as a last-minute emergency measure.

SENIOR CITIZENS SAVINGS SCHEME (SCSS)

One of the best Government investing plans is the Senior Citizen Savings Scheme (SCSS), which is a well-known choice. The initiative was created to safeguard the future of people 60 years of age and older. It has a period of five years, which can be extended by an additional three years, and offers a higher interest rate than other low-risk investment options.

GOVERNMENT INVESTMENT SCHEMES FOR THE LOW-RISK INVESTOR

FIXED DEPOSITS

If you want invest their money in risk free investment scheme then you can opt for Fixed Deposit (FD) in a nationalized bank and post office. These bank offers fixed rate of interest at different maturity period and you can invest in fixed deposit to get a fixed return after maturity period. It is a most risk free invest option among the different option available in market.

PUBLIC PROVIDENT FUND

It is the most preferable option for those investors who wants to evade risk attached with investment .In PPF you can invest your money between Rs.500 to Rs.150, 000 for a period of maximum 15 years during a financial year. Government of India fixes the rate of interest on PPF every quarterly. Investment in PPF along with interest is a totally tax free income this is a most attractive feature of PPF investment option.

GOVERNMENT SECURITIES (G-S)

Government Securities are offered by the Government of India to finance its borrowing. This investment option is very reliable because they are guaranteed by the national Government and having a high market ratings. Different types of Government securities issued by the national Government like treasury notes, capital indexed bonds, floating rate bonds etc.

SOVEREIGN GOLD BONDS (SGBS)

Gold has always considered as most safe and liquid investment option for ages. You can buy a Sovereign Gold Bond issued by the Government instead of physical gold. Return on sovereign gold bonds is based on a market linked, the Government has fixed interest rate of 2.50% on investment.

NATIONAL SAVING CERTIFICATE (NSC)

As a citizen of India you can avail a National Saving Certificate (NSC) investment option from any post office for a minimum of Rs. 100. There is no maximum limit for investment under this investment option. Under this investment option you will get a fixed interest rate return without any bearing risk since it is issued by the Government of India.

NATIONAL PENSION SCHEME (NPS)

This investment scheme is especially towards for your retirement. The money invested under this scheme is managed by pension fund manager registered under the pension fund regulatory and development authority of India (PFRDA) in various funds. At the time of maturity, 40% of the corpus is used to buy annuity, and the rest 60% can be withdrawn as lump sum. It is a totally tax free investment option.

POST OFFICE MONTHLY INCOME SCHEME (POMIS)

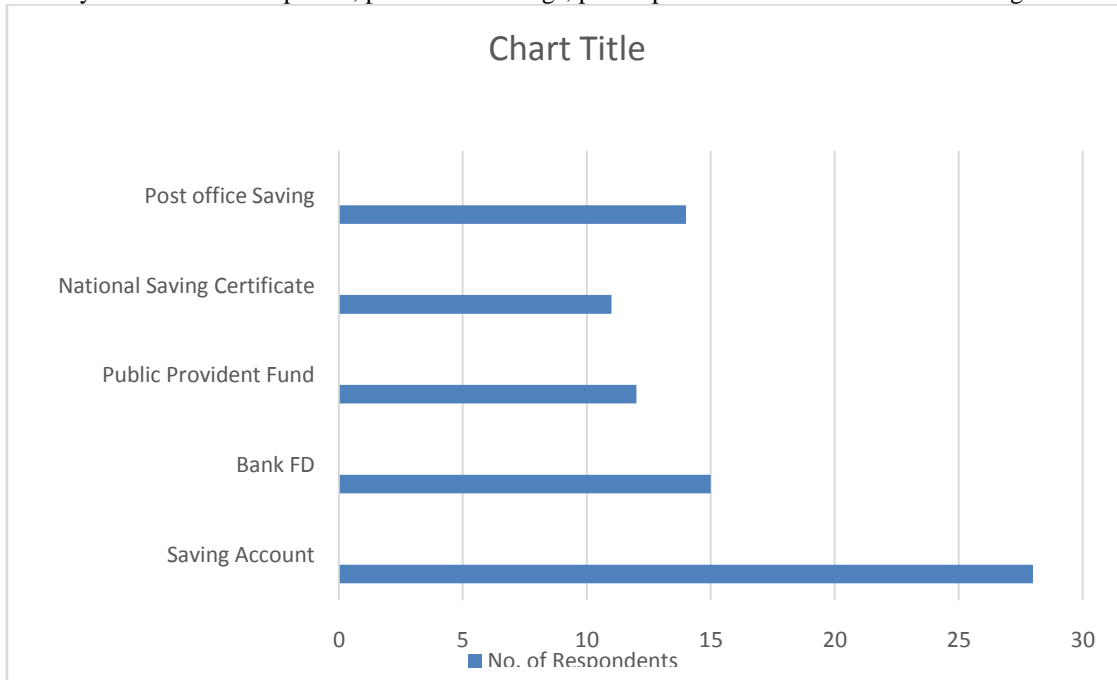
POMIS is offered by the post offices. It is a safest investment option, where can invest their money with a minimum investment amount of Rs. 1,500 and maximum Rs.4.5 lakh. The interest rate is fixed by the national Government and interest amount can be directly transferred in to your saving account every month.

ANALYSIS AND FINDING

INVESTMENT AVENUES

Investment Avenues	Respondents	%
Saving Account	28	35
Bank Fixed Deposits	15	18.75
Public Provident Fund	12	15
National Saving Certificate	11	13.75
Post Office Savings	14	17.5
Total	80	100%

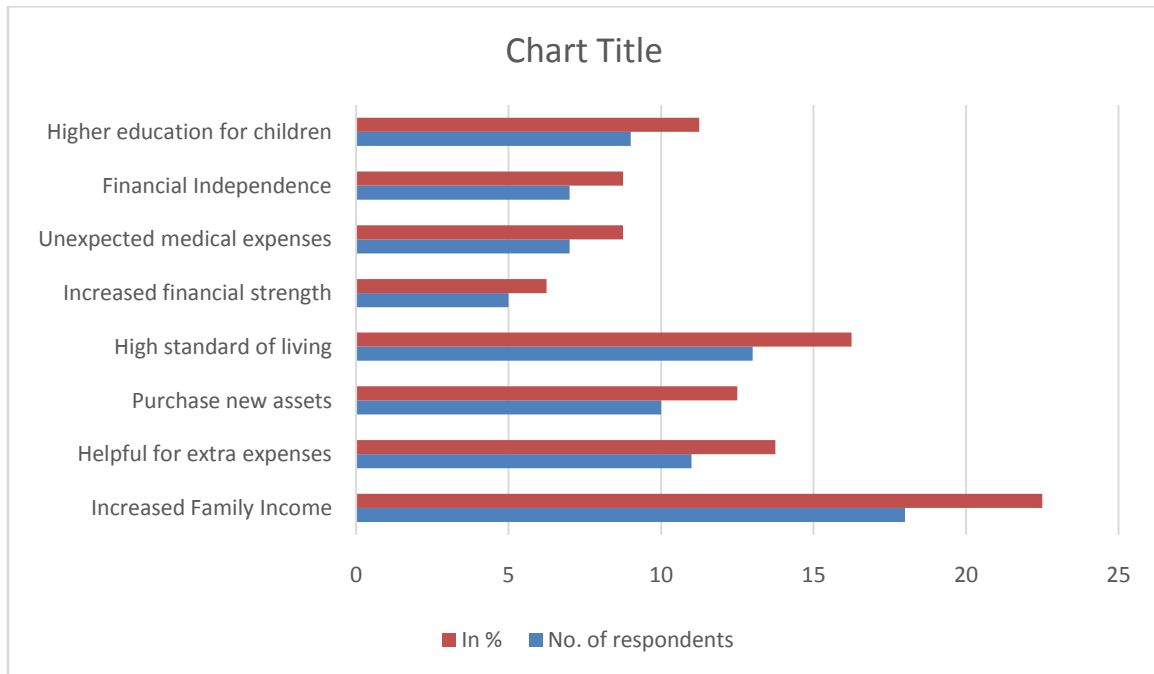
the maximum investment is made in saving account i.e. 28 respondents are investing in savings account, followed by the bank fixed deposits , post office savings, public provident fund and national savings certificate.



PURPOSE OF INVESTMENT

	respondent	%
Increase Family Income	18	22.5
It Helpful For Extra Expenses	11	13.75
Purchase New Assets	10	12.5
High Standard Of Living	13	16.25
Increase Financial Strength	5	6.25
For Unexpected Medical Expenses	7	8.75
Financial Independence	7	8.75
Higher Education For Children	9	11.25
Total	80	100%

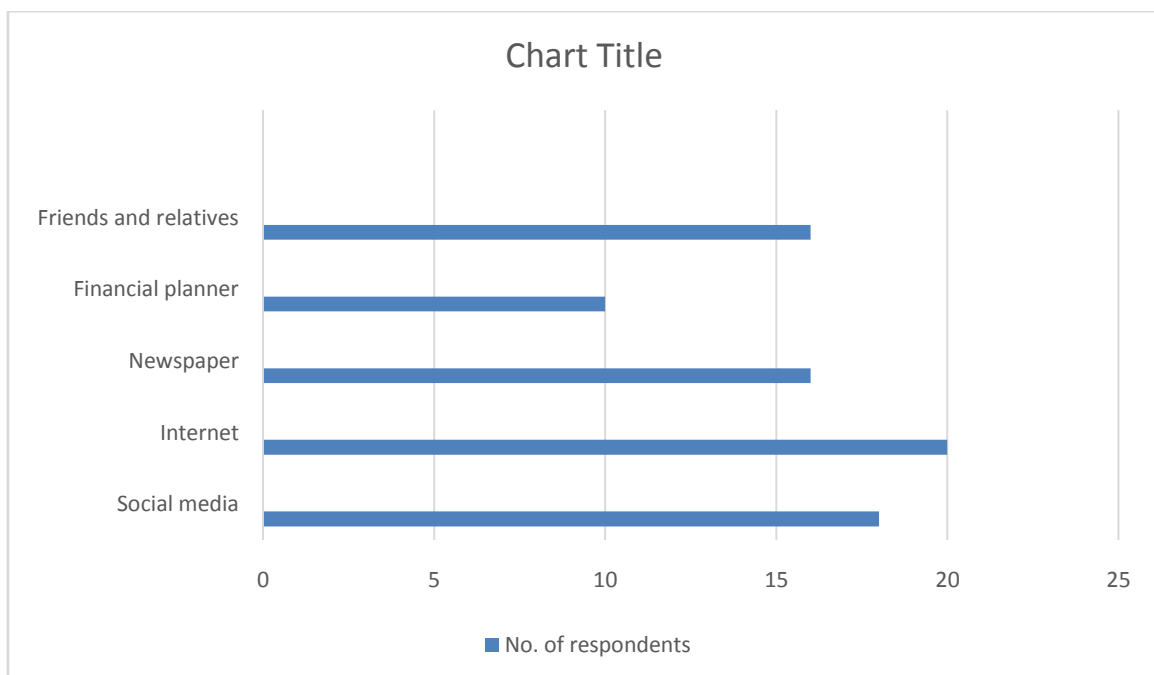
Among 100% respondents 22.5% respondents are investing due to increased family income, and then to maintain their high standard of living, for 13.75% respondents it is helpful to meet extra expenses, for 12.5% respondents to purchase new assets , for 8.75% respondents to meet unexpected medical expenses and financial independence and only 6.25% respondents believe it is to increase financial strength. In this analysis we have found that main purpose of investment is increase family income.



SOURCE OF INVESTMENT AVENUES

Sources Of Information	Respondent	%
1. Social Media	18	22.5
2. Internet	20	25
3. News Paper	16	20
4. Financial Planner	10	12.5
5. Friends And Relatives	16	20
Total	80	100%

Among 80 respondents 20 respondents know about investment avenues through internet, 18 respondents know about it through social media, 16 respondents through newspaper , friends and relatives and 10 respondents agree to know about investment avenues through financial planner. Most of the people get to know about investment avenues through internet and social media.

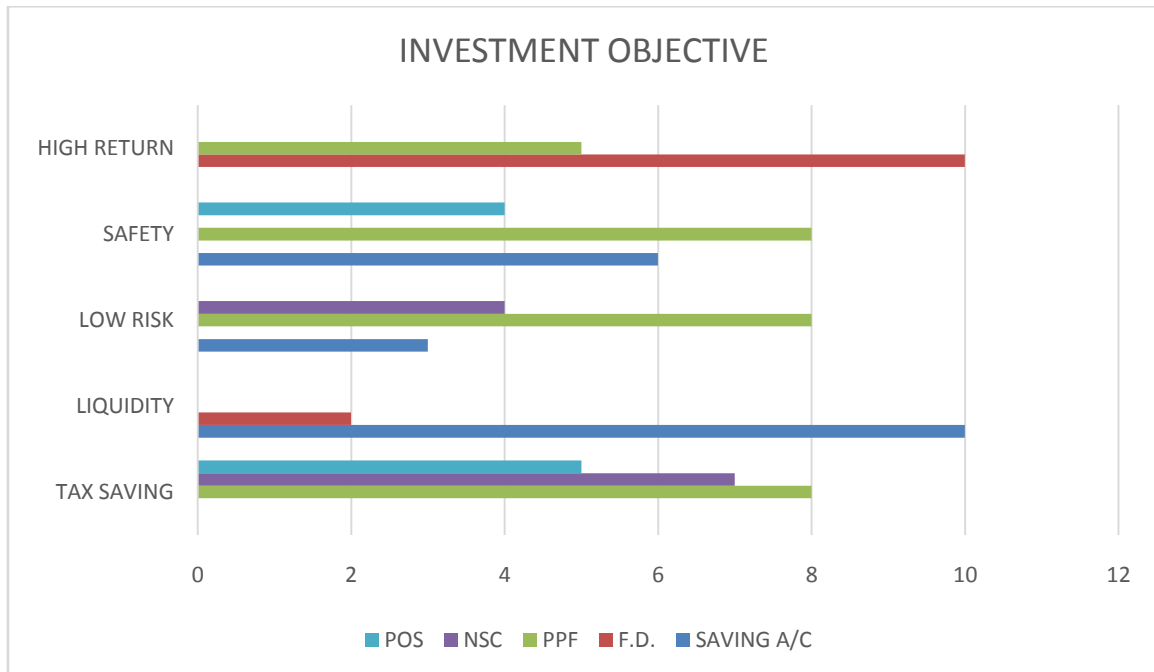


INVESTMENT OBJECTIVE

Investment Objective	Respondent	Saving A/C	F.D	PPF	NSC	POS
Tax Saving	20 (25%)	Nil	Nil	8(40%)	7(35%)	5(25%)
Liquidity	12(15 %)	10 (83.33%)	2(16.66%)	Nil	Nil	Nil
Low Risk	15 (18.75%)	3(20 %)	Nil	8(53.33 %)	4(26.66 %)	Nil
Safety	18(22.5%)	6 (33.33%)	Nil	8(44.44 %)	Nil	4(22.22 %)
High Return	15 (18.75%)	Nil	10(66.66 %)	5(33.33 %)	Nil	Nil
Total	80					

Among 80 respondents 20 of them choose to invest in tax-saving options. Among these tax-saving investors, 40% opt for Public Provident Fund (PPF), 35% prefer National Savings Certificate (NSC), and 25% favor Public Provident Fund (POS) as their investment choice. 12 respondents allocate their funds to liquidity-oriented investments. Within this category, a substantial 83.33% opt for the reliability of a Savings Account, while 16.66% opt for the slightly more locked in option of Fixed Deposits (FDs). In the low-risk investment category, chosen by 15 respondents, the distribution is as follows: 20% have confidence in a Savings Account, 53.33% invest in Public Provident Fund (PPF), and 26.66% put their faith in National Savings Certificate (NSC).

Moving on to the safety conscious investors, totaling 18 respondents, their allocation is divided as follows: 33.33% opt for the security of a Savings Account, 44.44% invest in Public Provident Fund (PPF), and 22.22% entrust their funds to Public Provident Fund (POS). Finally, among the 15 respondents seeking high returns on their investments, a significant 66.66% are inclined toward Fixed Deposits (FDs), while the remaining 33.33% favor Public Provident Fund (PPF). Acc. To this study tax saving and safety are the investment objective of mostly working women. Saving A/C and Fixed deposit are the highest investment avenues.

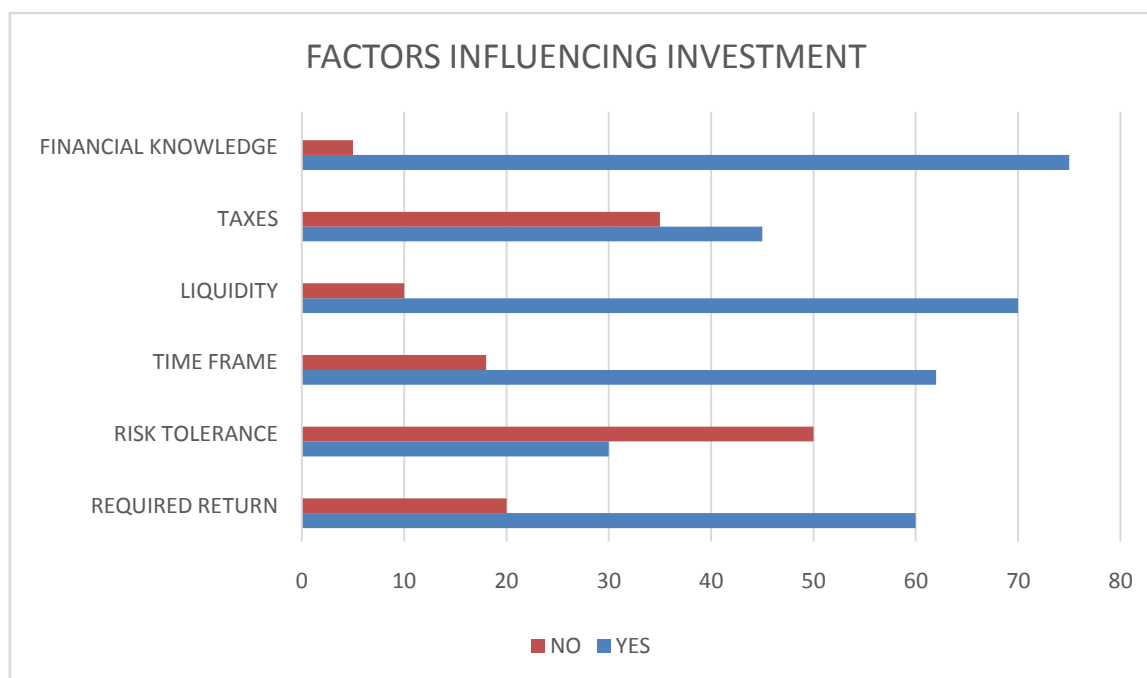


FACTOR INFLUENCING INVESTMENT

Factors	YES	%	NO	%
Required Return	60	75	20	25
Risk Tolerance	30	37.5	50	62.5
Time Frame	62	77.5	18	22.5
Liquidity	70	87.5	10	12.5
Taxes	45	56.25	35	43.75
Financial knowledge	75	93.75	5	6.25

There are some factors which influence the investment decision of working women. 75% respondents (60 out of 80 women) say that required return is influence the investment decision and 25% (20 out of 80 women) are not influence by this factor. Risk tolerance factor is influence the 37.5% women and 62.5% women is not consider this factor at the time of investment because they are invest only safe investment avenues. 77.5%

women is consider the time frame factor at the time of investment. liquidity factor is consider by 87.5% working women only 12.5 % women are not favour of this factor in investment decision. Taxes are important factor which influence the investment decision of 56.25% working women. Financial knowledge is important factor which influence 93.75% women's investment. Most of the working women are consider the financial knowledge at the time of investment in different avenues. Mostly women are not influence by risk tolerance factor due to their less risky or safe investment.



V. FINDING

1-The maximum investment is made in saving account i.e. 28 respondents are investing in savings account, followed by the bank fixed deposits, post office savings, public provident fund and national savings certificate. The minimum investment by working women in PPF and NSC.

2-Maximum working women investment objective is to increase family income, secondary to increase their financial strength and other females are investing to maintain their high standard of living, to meet medical expenses or purchase new assets.

3-Internet and social media is the main source of investment for many women, then newspapers, friends and relatives and financial planner is a source to least number of women.

4-Maximum females are doing investment for the purpose of tax saving and investment and then reason behind doing investment is low risk and minimum women are doing investment with the objective of liquidity.

5-The factor affecting the investment criteria of working women is financial knowledge and the least important factor is risk tolerance. Other factors are also influence the women's investment like Liquidity, Time Frame, Taxes and Required Return.

VI. CONCLUSION

Women act as an active participant in all the paths of life. As financial literacy attempts to measure the financial decision of people. The present study focuses on the investment behavior of working women, with this research we came to the conclusion that women prefer to invest in risk free or low risk avenues. This study is evident that working women invest in various investment avenues with maximum investment in saving account, with their main purpose of investing as increased family income, with their main investment objective as tax saving. Hence, women must get updated with investment avenues in order to identify the savings and investment pattern.

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