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An Assessment of Financial Literacy Levels and Underlying Financial Behaviour Influencing Investment Decisions Among Women Professionals in The State of Telangana

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Abstract

Women In India are considered as a potential economic force as they play several roles who , by actively engaging in various professions like, Medicine, Law , Industry , Politics, Arts etc are leveraging India's economic growth trajectory. With the potential to earn , women are financially empowering themselves by participating in financial decisions and making investment choices. However, their financial decisions are dependent on several determinants like levels of financial knowledge, ability to take risk, whether or not, a women's investment decisions are influenced by family members or friends and the barriers they face while making investments .Several studies pan India revealed that ,there is an evident difference in the financial knowledge among women and men and it still continues to be an impediment in taking investment decisions among them . The present research study is undertaken in the State of Telangana since it houses the highest population of working women in India with almost 93% of them actively engaged in non agricultural professions. The Study is focused on the examining the levels of financial literacy and the underlying financial behaviour affecting investment decisions and barriers to investing among women professionals belonging to specific professions like medicine, law, banking , Information Technology , Academics and Self employed in the State of Telangana. . The data for research is collected through emails and personal interviews of women professionals by administering a structured questionnaire. The responses from 350 women professionals were analysed using SPSS 26 version. The study will provide an opportunity to understand the underlying investment behaviour of women professionals and their preferred choice of investments which will enable developing women friendly investment products

Keywords: Financial Literacy, Financial Knowledge, Financial behaviour, preferred investment choices, women professionals

1. Introduction

Women today are considered as an important human resource who , by actively engaging in various professions like, Medicine, Law , Industry , Politics, Arts etc are leveraging India's economic growth trajectory. As reported in the CII blog. there are 432 million women of working-age in India, out of which 343 million are employed in the unorganized sector . Women have the higher earning potential and prefer

taking independent financial decisions. That said, as reported by Nathani (2016), The Economic Times, with reference to women handling their investments, and financial planning, it is perceived that majority of women rely on the male members of their families i.e either their father, husband, brother, etc. either completely or partially. Many studies focused on financial literacy levels and investment behaviour of women have concluded that women lack necessary skills for financial decision making. There is a growing literature reporting low levels of financial literacy across the global population and the connect between literacy and savings behavior (Bernheim and Garrett 2003); (Bernheim , Garrett and Maki 2001); (Lusardi and Mitchell, 2006) (Lusardi and Mitchell 2007) in their study stated that financial illiteracy is even more rampant among females than males. Roy and Jain (2018) and Singh and Kumar (2017) observed that due to lack of financial literacy and financial education, women were unaware of the differences between insurance, savings and investment products . Ramanaiah and Gowri (2011) opined that lack of financial literacy and lower degree of knowledge of investment products among women entrepreneurs have led to inept management of finances in MSME.

It is important to understand that women have specific financial literacy needs, primarily due to their longevity , low earning capacity in comparision to men . Hence the likelihood of facing financial vulnerability and hardships. Sanjeevni,. et.al (2016) made an observation that though women's financial decisions depended upon several factors such as risk tolerance , influence of family members and friends , there is a degree of variation in women's income, expenditure, savings, financial knowledge, awareness about different financial instruments. For a correct financial decision, women are required to possess sufficient knowledge on their financial needs and various investment avenues . This inturn would empower them to fulfill their investment objectives .

The present research is aimed at understanding the financial literacy levels and psychology of investment decision making among working women professionals in Tier I cities of India. The findings may throw light upon the variations in the financial decisions and barriers faced by women particularly belonging to legal, financial, medical , academic and independent professions which may be beneficial to financial institutions, to design suitable financial products to suit their future financial needs.

Rationale of the Study

The findings of a survey of women's investment behaviour conducted by DSP Women Investor pulse and Neilson in the year 2015 with 4,013 women and men revealed that inspite of growing awareness and financial independence among women, only 33% had exercised their own choice in investment decisions, compared with 64% men. Of these, only 30% did so of their own volition, while most were prodded by their life partners or parents. For Investment related decisions , women are said to have relied more on their spouses (40%) and less on parents (27%) . A digital survey of 750 women by Scripbox in February 2017, revealed that when it comes to managing the household finances, only 5.9% of women intended to handle the financial matters while 18.6% women depended on their spouses or parents to handle the financial matters. Another survey conducted by Times of India in the year 2017 highlighted the fact that the percentage of working women having no investment was at a whopping 80% . The survey which involved approximately 4,800 women investors, observed that just 18% of single working women make

their own decisions. The percentage of married employed females making financial decisions was as less as 13% which implies that the financial preparedness that is expected of working women , is still a distant dream. A major roadblock that prevent women from being smart investors even today is inadequate knowledge of financial instruments and the necessary skills to create a financial portfolio. The objective of the research study is to understand the financial literacy levels, investment behaviour of women professionals and the barriers they face in making informed judgment and investment decisions.

Objectives of Research

a) To examine the levels of financial literacy among women professionals
b) To study relationship between the investment behaviour and preferred investment choices of women professionals
c) To examine if there are any differences in investment preferences of women based on the profession they belong to
d) To examine the investment barriers faced by women professionals

Literature Review

The Review of literature is broadly undertaken in four segments

a) Financial Literacy definitions, concept, need and importance
b) Women and level of financial literacy levels
c) Investment behaviour of working women in India
d) Women and barriers to investing

Financial Literacy: Definition ,concept, need and importance

Over the past few years, governments of developed and emerging economies have become increasingly aware of the significance of ensuring that their citizens are financially literate. This has originated from the reduced public and private support systems, altering demographic profiles , developments in the financial and investment landscape coupled with disruptive technologies . Financial illiteracy deprives the population from making feasible financial decisions, which can leave a negative impact on both personal and, financial resilience in the world economies . Hence Financial literacy is attracting attention across world as a necessary life skill and a viable financial education policy by governments acts as a catalyst of economic and financial stability and development. The more the financial literacy ,greater is the economic progress of a nation.

OECD/INFE high-level Principles on National Strategies for Financial Education , defines financial literacy as "a combination of financial awareness, knowledge, skills, attitude and behaviour necessary to make sound financial decisions and ultimately achieve individual financial well-being"(OECD, 2012). The OECD definitions suggests three important dimensions viz financial knowledge, financial behaviour and financial attitude to examine financial literacy .

According to (Remund, 2010) financial literacy has many descriptions in prevalent body of research as financial literacy officers have given the researchers/authors freedom of expression and evaluation of financial literacy . Many researchers / authors like Al-Tamimi and Bin Kalli (2009), Howlett, Kees, and Kemp (2008) and Yoong, See, and Baronovich (2012) arguably supported the interchangeability of definitions of Financial literacy, financial education and financial knowledge . However , in contradiction to the above mentioned , (Houston 2010)[17] stated that the two dimensions of financial literacy are financial education and financial knowledge and financial literacy has more significance . Anthes (2004) defined personal financial literacy as "the ability to know, analyse, manage and inform about the financial conditions that affect material well-being of an individual".

Atkinson and Messy (2012) recommended only three aspects to judge financial literacy as it is relevant and is broadly used in literature. The ability to make informed financial decisions by the economic agents are highly shaped by the levels of financial literacy they possess. According to Rooij, Lusardi and Alessi (2007), , the need for financial comprehension in individuals stems out of two situations : Firstly, the complexity and diverseness of financial products, of which many are incomprehensible, essentially requires an understanding and secondly, due to the responsibility of managing ones own financial and social security, individuals need to engage in their personal financial management. The benefits of financial
literacy not only extend well beyond stronger household finances but also promotes financial resilience within the real economy .

Global Variations in financial literacy

Insights from Standard and Poor's global financial literacy(2015) survey reflects upon the fact that the levels of literacy varied widely between advanced and emerging economies . Fifty five percent of adults in the major advanced economies–Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States possessed financially literacy . Contrary to the advanced nations, financial literacy levels among adults in BRICS (Brazil, the Russian Federation, India, China, and South Africa) averaged at 28%.

Despite exponential growth in the personal finance segment in India and Government initiatives to improve financial literacy , a concerted effort to make the sector more streamlined for its consumers both male and female , becomes imperative . The survey undertaken by NCFE, India ranks the lowest among all the BRICS nations, with only 24 per cent of India's population being financially literate. With the nation's commitment to Agenda 2030 towards achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), there is a felt need to raise the levels of financial literacy and financial education of the population which will align with SDG 4 on Education , the objective of which is to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote life-long learning opportunities for all (SDG Target 4.6 on Literacy and SDG Target 4.4 on Life Skills under SDG 4 on Education)

Women and Financial Literacy levels

Women are said to display lower levels of financial literacy than men despite similarities in their contribution to many economic outcomes such as high-school performance or participation in the economic workforce (Goldin, 2006). Financial literacy levels differ in important ways when it comes to characteristics such as gender, education level, income, and age. Globally, 35 % of men are financially literate, compared with 30 % of women. Lusardi and Mitchell (2014) in their study stated that "women were less likely to provide correct answers to the financial literacy questions, while they are also more likely to indicate that they "don't know" the answer, a finding consistently observed in other studies as well". However, a noteworthy gender gap in financial literacy levels was analysed by Atkinson and Messy (2012), Chen and Volpe (1998) observed that women possessed lower level of financial literacy than men .Though Financial literacy levels among men was higher than in women; women possessing higher incomes were more confident in handling their personal finance and exhibited higher financial literacy level. According to Lusardi and Scheresberg (2017) women who were young with a troubled married life and having children were subject higher levels of financial distress. As per the study undertaken by Roy and Jain (2018), lower involvement of women in financial decisions can be associated to lack of basic financial education, less participation in money management discussions with women in the family and ignorance of various investment products and. Devi (2016) in her study , summarised that gender difference in financial literacy was widely noticed among the people in India , and Indian women in particular, experienced difficulty in making decisions regarding savings and buying financial products.

Investment Behaviour of Working Women in India

Budhwar et al. (2005) observed that the position of women acting in managerial role has undergone a change in the current economic context. Study stated that prior to liberalization, women did not get sufficient access to work and showcase their talent and skills. Post liberalization, women could establish their identity through their skills and talents in various management positions. The research also explored that women have cut across gender stereotypes and multiple role expectations, hitherto considered impediments to women's career progression. Kansal and Zaidi (2015) research work on investment behavior of women in India reveals that females are more risk averse than males and the degree of confidence about their investment decision is low when compared to male members. The paper discusses various parameters which effect women's investment decision like return, long-term growth, risk, liquidity and retirement income. The study also reveals that women mostly prefer to invest in bank deposits, post office deposits, gold, silver and government securities, which are comparatively safer instruments. The research contribution made by Veluchamy and Thangaraj focuses on the investment pattern among the women executives . The author states that the pattern of investment was predominantly explained by the demographic variables like age, nativity, marital status, type of family, size of the family, income generation in the family, number of literate people in the family , designation, personal income and family income.

Bahl (2012) , in his observations on the investment behaviour of young women concludes that younger women are already capable of developing their investment plans. The study affirms that women who are

employed in private sector are more interested in investing their funds than those working in public sector. According to Bahl, working women invest in insurance plans since they are unwilling to take risk to attain gains and aspire for a safe future. Kappal and Rastogi (2015) observed that self employed women considered investment as a long-term instrument; they are averse to risk and conservative with their investments . The study also highlighted the fact that women entrepreneurs are per se willing to take risks in businesses but not for investment decisions. Less time at their disposal and lack of focus to understand investments and lesser knowledge about different financial products was the cause for their risk averse behaviour . The study affirms that women entrepreneurs investment behavior is taken after their parents . Neeraj A & Bijit Biswas(2012) , in their study concluded that Financial literacy levels among the health care providers which included doctors , nurses and interns was found to be substantially low due to deficiency in knowledge regarding one or more financial attributes. The authors in their suggestions , expressed that there is a need for inclusion of finance management in the curriculum and continuous sensitization of the Health care providers is warranted to enable them to take informed financial decisions to meet their personal financial goals.

Women and Barriers to investing

Global Women and Money Study 2015 report by Fidelity International, reveals that an increase in female economy hasn't truly translated into women's finances and women still don't consider themselves as investors, which has the potential to impact their finances both now and in the future, as they get closer to retirement. The findings of DSP BlackRock study reported by Padiyath (2013) and Goyal (2013) , while 92% employed and 84% unemployed women , were involved in the investment decision-making process , only 23% of employed women and 10 % of unemployed women were sole decision makers .According to (Goyal, 2013), even among the 23% of sole decision makers , the number of divorced and widowed women outnumbered the others which explicitly indicates that women became sole decision makers not out of choice , but due to absence of a better option. The author also reports that unemployed women were informed about the household investments decisions but had no significant role to play (Goyal, 2013). Uma & Sasikala, (2014) study on investment pattern among women in the district of virudhunagar , revealed that women investors experienced difficulty due to commission and brokerage fee, lower levels of awareness, High risk, low liquidity, price fluctuation, The report titled 'Women & Money Power 2015 Study' by LXME, a social fintech organization for women, revealed that 22 per cent of women were ignorant about their investments and they mostly depended on family and partners. Around 92 per cent of the women surveyed expressed that they were not seeking any information on financial investments from websites and sought to 'Self learning for making investments if any. Vohra & Mandeep(2017) in the Literature review undertaken on women investors concluded that few of the weaknesses underlying a women investor's are risk aversion, conservative attitude, lower levels of financial awareness , lack of confidence, over dependence on guidance from others, not willing to accept unnecessary change in their status quo, poor health and religiousness .Prashant & Sanjeet(2014) studied the risk taking ability among women and concluded that age and occupation are the most influencing determinants of their investment behaviour and risk taking abilities. In their study , the authors concluded that different patterns of investment play a major role in the risk tolerance among women investors.

According to Prashant Kumar and Sanjeet Kumar, factors like age and occupation had major influence on the investing behaviour of the women and their risk taking abilities. Diferent pattern of the investment plays a cruicila role in the risk tolerance amongst women investors From the literature review, it was observed that several studies on financial literacy levels and investment behaviour of working women have been carried out across the world in general and India in particular, but there is limited research on the comparative analysis of financial literacy levels and investment behaviour of women belonging to specific professions like Law, Medicine, Academics, Banking , Information Technology and Self driven entrepreneurs. The present study aims at examining the financial literacy gap , investment behaviour and barriers to investingamong the women professionals. Previous studies also highlighted the fact that despite being professionals , the percentage of women who are well acquainted with the investment avenues is very low due to lack of sufficient financial knowledge . Hence there is a overarching need for women to be financially literate to manage their investments for their future financial security.

Research Methodology

The present study was undertaken in the State of Telangana, which has a highest population of working women, with almost 93% of them working in non agricultural professions as per the survey of National Family Health Survey-5 . The responses from women professionals belonging to specifically Medical, Legal, Banking , Information Technology and Self driven entrepreneurs are taken to examine their financial literacy levels , their investment behaviour and barriers to investing . A convenience sample of 350 working women professionals who are in middle of their career with 5 years and above experience in making investments , hailing from Hyderabad, Rangareddy, Medchal-Malkajgiri, Nalgonda and Warangal districts are drawn for the study . The survey will offer an insight on the gap in literacy levels, challenges faced and investment preferences of women professionals. The data has been collected from both primary and secondary sources. Both the data have helped the researcher to get an accurate result of the factors influencing the decision-making process. The primary data was collected through a structured questionnaire and interview method .

Review of literature was undertaken for framing the constructs . The items were tested for content validity. The questionnaire was based on the variables identified in the process of literature review. Responses for questions on financial literacy levels, investment behaviour and barriers faced by women in investing were collected by the researcher on a five-point Likert scale due to its suitability with the data-analysis process . For secondary sources of data, various national journals, OECD reports, and online newspapers and content was referred to.

Tools used for Data Analysis

Data is analyzed using SPSS Software version 26 . The following Statistical techniques are applied in this study: a) Cluster Bar diagram and Cluster analysis for assessing the similarity or dissimilarity amongst professions and the financial literacy levels among women professionals. b) Literacy gap analysis amongst professionals c)Reliability of the scale items is tested using Cronbach Alpha Coefficient & KMO and Bartlett's Test for testing the reliability of the data d) Regression and ANOVA to study the impact of

profession on the investment preferences of women professionals, impact of financial behaviour on investment choices and the impact of Investment barriers on Investment attitude of women professionals.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

TABLE –I

The financial literacy levels were assessed based on 15 questions and the responses received from the women professionals.

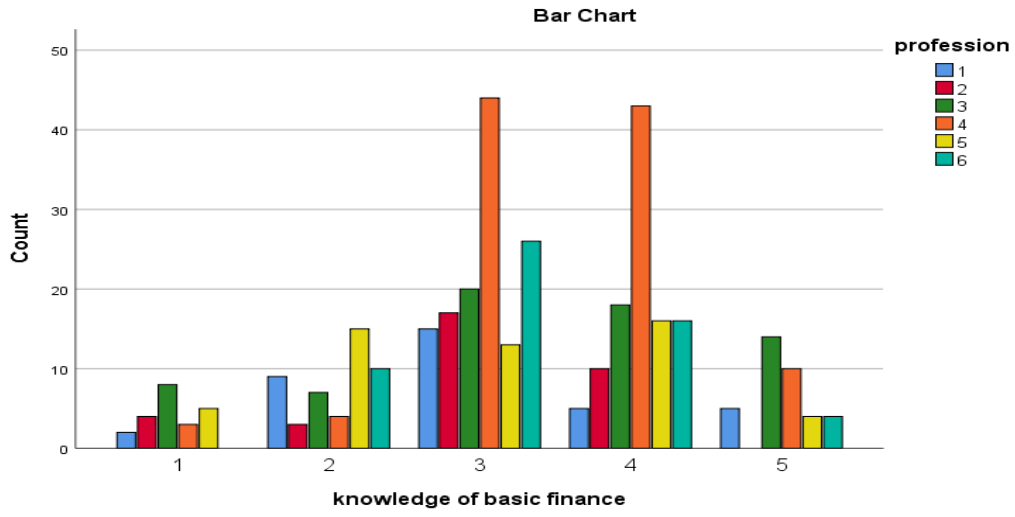
Profession and Financial literacy levels Cross tabulation

		profession						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Financial literacy levels	1	2	4	8	3	5	0	22
	2	9	3	7	4	15	10	48
	3	15	17	20	44	13	26	135
	4	5	10	18	43	16	16	108
	5	5	0	14	10	4	4	37
Total		36	34	67	104	53	56	350

Source: SPSS Output

From table I , it is observed that the responses received using Likert scale, when ranked with (1)-extremely unaware and (5)-extremely aware majority of women professionals exhibited moderate levels of financial literacy . Between the professions , "highly Aware " response was received from 13.8% lawyers, 0% doctors, 21% Bankers, 9.61% Academicians, 7.5% software profession and 7.5% entrepreneurs. This indicates that women possess lower levels of financial literacy.

Fig.



Source : SPSS Output

TABLE –II
GAP ANALYSIS

S. No	Financial literacy parameters	Expected Mean Score	Actual Mean Score	Literacy Gap
1	Knowledge about Inflation	**5**	**4.48**	**0.52**
2	Knowledge about returns ofvarious type of investments	**5**	**4.68**	**0.32**
3	Knowledge about what isliquidity	**5**	**4.36**	**0.64**
4	Knowledge of compounding	**5**	**3.48**	**1.52**
5	Knowledge about mutual funds	**5**	**3.26**	**1.74**
6	Awareness about post office savings Account	**5**	**4.0**	**1.0**
7	Knowledge about stock trading	**5**	**2.53**	**2.47**
8	Risk diversification	**5**	**2.48**	**2.52**
9	Understanding of PortfolioManagement	**5**	**3.44**	**1.56**
10	Awareness about Real Estate	**5**	**4.58**	**0.42**
11	Knowledge about PPF	**5**	**4.23**	**0.77**
12	Knowledge about Pension Fund	**5**	**3.39**	**1.61**
13	Need for Health Insurance	**5**	**4.56**	**0.44**
14	Need for Life Insurance	**5**	**4.89**	**0.11**
15	Chit funds	**5**	**4.57**	**0.43**
16	Awareness of Senior citizen scheme	**5**	**3.50**	**1.50**

Source: author's caculation

Gap Analysis is based on the premise that respondents have the basic knowledge of the financial and investment concepts, and the expected mean in the assumed situation is expected to be 5. But in actual sense all the values are bound to be different . Hence there is a need to calculate actual mean . The literacy gap is obtained by taking the difference between expected mean and actual mean . If the literacy gap is

lesser than 0.75, one can ignore since the gap is almost negligible. If the gap lies between 0.75 and 1.5 , it is a cause for concern and there is scope for reducing the gap by gaining the required knowledge. when the literacy gap variable is above 1.5, it is considered to be critical and needs to be addressed. The author took responses for 15 questions on financial literacy and it was observed that parameters 4, 5,7,8 , 9,12, 16 have a literacy gap of more than 0.75 and hence there is a need to address this gap amongst women professionals.

Reliability Analysis

For data collection, the researcher has adopted a self-structured questionnaire. Hence it was important to test the reliability of the questionnaire. .The reliability analysis result showed that the value of Cronbach's Alpha was 0.903 for 39 items. Cronbach's Alphavalue higher than 0.70 denote internal consistency of the scale items.

The KMO and Bartlett test evaluates all available data together. A KMO value over 0.5 and a significance level for the Bartlett's test below 0.05 suggest there is substantial correlation in the data.

Table III - Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items
0.903	**39**

Source: SPSS

Table IV - KMO Bartlett's Test

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.738
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	9639.541	32042.004
	741	10296
	.000	.000

Source: SPSS output

KMO value is .738 which is greater than 0.5 indicating that the sampling is adequate and p value is .000 which is lesser than 0.05. Hence, it is adequate to conduct analysis for the given data

1) PREFERRED INVESTMENT CHOICES AMONGST WOMEN FROM DIFFERENT PROFESSIONS

Study hypothesis: H0: There is no significant impact of profession on preferred investment choices. To verify the hypothesis, Cluster Analysis and One-Way ANOVA is conducted .The results were as follows:

TABLE –V

CLUSTER ANALYSIS

Profession					
Tukey					
Cluster Number of Case	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05			
		1	2	3	4
4	33	1.4545			
2	34	1.5588			
3	62		3.3710		
6	111			6.7297	
5	67				5.4627
1	43				5.6047
Sig.		.893	1.000	1.000	.693
Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.					
a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 48.767.					
b. The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.					

Source : SPSS output

From Table V categorises Six clusters for working professionals, Academicians have been categorized into fourth cluster, Lawyers have been categorized into Second cluster, Self Employed into first cluster and Bankers have been categorized into third cluster, Doctors have been categorized into fifth cluster, Software Professionals have been categorized into Sixth cluster

TABLE-VI

CATEGORISATION OF CLUSTERS

Preferred Investment Choices					
Tukey HSD					
Cluster Number of Case	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05			
		1	2	3	4
2	34	2.6588			
5	67		2.9552		
6	111		2.9784		
1	43			4.1116	
4	33				4.4364
3	62				4.1710
Sig.		1.000	1.000	1.000	.626
Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.					
a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 48.767.					
b. The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.					

Source: SPSS output

From the table –VI , it can be inferred that Doctors, Lawyers and Software Professionals who belong to fifth, second and sixth cluster have responded as can't say pertaining to financial awareness with respect to Post office, Small Savings,Fixed deposits,Mutual funds,Chit funds and Shares which portrays that they are not aware about financial products whereas Self employed, bankers and academicians which belongs to first, third and fourth cluster have responded that they would Moderately prefer investing in financial instuments as they are aware about the financial instruments.

TABLE-VII
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Financial Investment Preferences		N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Clusters	1	43	4.1116	.37110
	2	34	2.6588	.41056
	3	62	4.5710	.39146
	4	33	4.4364	.54188
	5	67	2.9552	.32440
	6	111	2.9784	.48117
	Total	350	3.5017	.85106

From the above table it is evident that there is a variation in responses from women belonging to different professions whose responses fall between 2 and 4.

TABLE –VIII
ONE WAY ANOVA

ANOVA						
Financial Investment Preferences		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
	Between Groups	190.275	5	38.055	209.439	.000
	Within Groups	62.504	344	.182		
	Total	252.779	349			

Source : SPSS Output

It is evident from the table-VIII that the significance value is less than 0.05, hence the null hypothesis is rejected and alternate hypothesis is accepted i.e there is a significant impact of profession on preferred investment choices.

IMPACT OF FINANCIAL BEHAVIOUR ON PREFERRED INVESTMENT CHOICES

TABLE-IX

Descriptive Statistics of Financial Investment Preferences:

Sr. No.	Financial Investment Preferences	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
1	Post office Small Savings	3.8571	1.13407	-0.464	-1.012
2	Fixed deposits	3.9257	1.10750	-0.794	-0.25
3	Mutual funds	3.4914	1.30623	-0.431	-0.807
4	Pension funds	3.2171	1.29745	0.01	-1.065
5	Shares	3.0171	1.34771	-0.01	-1.098

Descriptive statistics of the five**Financial Investment Preferences** shows that majority of the factors are showing maximum frequency occurrence in the mid-range of the scale i.e., all the respondents have agreed that they Moderately Prefer Investing in Post office Small Savings and fixed Deposits whereas they are not sure about investing in Mutual fund, pension funds and shares.

Study hypothesis: H0: There is no significant impact of Financial Behaviour on preferred Investment choices among women professionals. To verify the hypothesis, Linear Regression is applied and after confirming the test assumptions and conditions, the results were as follows:

TABLE- X

Correlations						
		IP1	IP2	IP3	IP4	IP5
Pearson Correlation	IP1	1.000				
	IP2	.161	1.000			
	IP3	-.036	.557	1.000		
	IP4	.463	.369	.283	1.000	
	IP5	.207	.154	.095	.214	1.000
Sig. (1-tailed)	Preferred investment choice	.	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000

The variable preferred investment choice among women professionals is seen to have a positive significant correlation with financial behaviour for all five instruments indicating that financial behaviour and investment choices are positively correlated

TABLE -XI

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.519	.270	.259	.66331	1.577
Predictors: (Constant), Shares, Fixed deposits, pension funds , Post office Small Savings, Mutual funds					
Dependent Variable: preferred investment choice					

From the above Table, we can infer that the coefficient of correlation (R) is 0.519, which shows a relationship between Financial Behavior and preferred Investment choices with r square 0.270. The financial behaviour impacts preferred Investment choices by 27% .

Table -XII

ANOVA						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	55.844	5	11.169	25.384	.000[b]
	Residual	151.355	344	.440		
	Total	207.199	349			
a. Dependent Variable: Preferred investment choices						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Shares, Fixed deposits, Chit funds, Post office Small Savings, Mutual funds						

From theTable XII – it is evident from ANOVA results value of significance is less than 0.05, which means the Financial Behavior (IV) are statistically significant with Financial Investment Preferences (DV), as the p-value is less than 0.05. Hence, it is evident from table XX that null hypothesis is rejected and alternate hypothesis is accepted i.e. **there is a significant impact of Financial Behavior on preferred investment choices of women professionals**

Table- XIII

Coefficients						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.688	.165		16.333	.000
	Post office Small Savings	.053	.041	.078	1.290	.198
	Fixed deposits	-.149	.040	-.214	-3.685	.000
	Mutual funds	.237	.041	.402	5.784	.000

	Pension funds	.049	.031	.082	1.557	.120
	Shares	.061	.044	.106	1.376	.170
a. Dependent Variable: preferred investment choice						

From the above table, financial behaviour is having significant effect on preferred investment choices as b value is Positive and significance value is lesser than 0.05.

Relationship between barriers to investing and Investment attitude of women professionals

TABLE- XIV
Descriptive Statistics of Barriers to investing

Sr. No.	Barriers to Investing	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
1	Lack of sufficient knowledge	3.8000	1.18249	-0.705	-0.377
2	Low levels of risk tolerance	2.9114	1.21624	0.007	-0.974
3	Lower levels of confidence	3.3171	1.15528	-0.283	-0.59
4	Investment decisions are taken by male members of the family	3.7829	.92016	-0.088	-0.916

Descriptive statistics of the four barriers and the deviation from the mean shows that majority of the factors are showing maximum frequency occurrence in the mid-range of the scale i.e., all the respondents have agreed that they face investment barriers

Study hypothesis: H0: There is no significant relationship between barriers to investing and Investment attitude of women professionals

To verify the hypothesis, Multiple Regression is considered and after confirming the test assumptions and conditions, the results are as follows:

TABLE-X

Correlations						
		IB1	IB2	IB3	IB4	IB5
Pearson Correlation	IB1	1				
	IB2	0.282	1			
	IB3	0.347	0.35	1		
	IB4	0.441	0.39	0.54	1	
	IB5	0.435	-0.09	0.11	0.32	1
Sig. (1-tailed)	Investment Attitude	.	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000

From the table X, we can infer that the Investment attitude is observed to have a positive significant correlation with barriers to investing among all the women professionals for all four factors indicating that when the barriers to investing will have an impact the investment attitude of women professionals.

TABLE-XV
Regression

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.588	.346	.339	.58886	1.781
Predictors: (Constant), lack of Sufficient knowledge, lower levels of risk tolerance, lower confidence and Investment decisions are taken by male members of the family					
Dependent Variable: Investment Attitude					

From Table XI , it can be inferred that the coefficient of correlation (R) is 0.588, which shows a relationship between Investment Attitude and barriers to investing . With r square being 0.346., investment

barriers in women professionals impacts 34.6% of their Investment Attitude .

Table –XVI
ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	63.365	4	15.841	45.685	.000[b]
	Residual	119.629	345	.347		
	Total	182.994	349			
a. Dependent Variable: Investment behaviour						
b. Predictors: (Constant), lack of Sufficient knowledge, lower levels of risk tolerance, lower confidence & resistance to shift investments and Investment decisions are taken by members of the family						

Table XVI of ANOVA results show the analysis of the significance of multiple regression where the value is less than 0.05, indicating the model significant, which means the Investment
Attitude (IV) are statistically significant with Investment barriers(DV), as the p-value is less than 0.05. Hence, alternate hypothesis is accepted i.e. There is a significant impact of Investment barriers on Investmement behaviour

FINDINGS FROM THE STUDY

The present research is undertaken to examine the financial literacy levels among women belonging to Legal, medical , academic ,information technology , banking and self employed from the State of

Telangana. Many c commonalities were observed among the professionals with respect variables of study. All the women professionals exhibited least to moderate levels of literacy irrespective of the professions they belong to. Some of the findings which emerged from the study are a)there is a significant impact of financial behaviour on the investment attitude of women professionals b) The profession they belonged to ,influenced their financial and investment preferences and almost majority of women professionals faced barriers to investing which were predominantly lack of sufficient knowledge, lack of confidence and resistance to shift to new investments and involvement of family members in investment decisions.

It was observed that the awareness on certain concepts related to investments such as Inflation, liquidity , life and health insurance, post office saving investments, real estate and gold was predominantly high and hence less literacy gap. However, awareness of compounding , portfolio selection and management, risk diversification, stock trading , awareness of various schemes of mutual funds, pension funds and their need and senior citizen schemes were very less with an observed larger gap between the expected and actual means. was at moderate to . Between the professions, women who are bankers exhibited higher levels of financial literacy and software professionals and doctors exhibited the least. The literacy gaps among the professionals ranged between 0.11(least gap) to 2.52 (highest gap). Significant finding of the present research is that among five districts of Telangana, maximum percent of investment (32%) was made by women professionals hailing from Hyderabad, 24% of investments from Rangareddy district, 19% from medchal malkajgiri, 17% from Warangal and least i.e 8% from the district of Nalgonda. indicating that investments are made in districts with higher levels of growth and development. All the women professionals belonging to the 5 districts preferred their investments in post office savings, insurance , real estate and fixed Deposits. Betwwen the professions , it was observed from the study that doctors and software professionals mostly depended on their spouses or colleagues and rarely investment advisors for investment decisions due to both lack of time and financial knowledge. Academicians , bankers and self employed are able to make investment decisions only with respect to post office savings ,fixed deposits gold and insurance but they lacked sufficient knowledge of mutual funds, pension funds and shares . Secured future , low risk investments , secured and consistent returns were the important investment objectives of women professionals.

Conclusions of the study

From this study, it can be concluded that women when equipped with adequate financial knowledge can become potential investors and own the responsibility of their investment decisions an prepare themselves for future financial security. The very nature of the Indian socio economic conditions have made women abstain from making financial decisions. This is widely observed in the districts of Nalgonda, Medchal and Warangal where women are found to have less access to internet, or any other source of information. Hence there is a dire need for financial education to address the huge gaps particularly in advanced investments such as Shares, Mutual funds , pension funds and similar such investment avenues. Considering the vagaries of life and relationships, it is essential for working womento make informed judgments and take control of their financial well being which can be attained only with exposure to financial knowledge. The barriers women face are distinct for each woman which further depends on her socio economic status. Since this research has been conducted on the working women professionals and astudy of their investment behavior, it becomes important to understand the different types of investors.

Women investors have their own preferred choices while making investments . It is ot only important to understand the financial behaviour of women so as to create innovative financial products but also sensitise this segment of investors to actively engage in the Indian investment ecosystem.

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