

AN OVERVIEW OF INVESTMENT AVENUES AVAILABLE FOR WORKING WOMEN INVESTORS

Dr.T.Kiruthika, Assistant Professor, Department of Commerce (E-Commerce), NGM College, Pollachi

ABSTRACT

In the modern financial landscape, working women have emerged as vital economic contributors, increasingly engaging in investment activities. Despite greater awareness and income independence, their investment behaviour is still influenced by a variety of socio-cultural, psychological, and economic factors. This paper explores the diverse investment avenues available to working women, assesses their preferences, and identifies the challenges they face while making financial decisions. The study draws upon recent literature and data to provide a comprehensive overview of traditional and modern investment instruments, from fixed deposits and gold to mutual funds and digital assets. The paper aims to encourage more informed and confident investment decisions among working women.

KEYWORDS:

Working Women, Investment Behaviour, Financial Literacy, Mutual Funds, Gold, Fixed Deposits, Digital Investment, Risk Aversion

INTRODUCTION

The increased participation of women in the workforce over recent decades has significantly contributed to economic growth and altered household financial dynamics. With growing incomes and financial responsibilities, many working women are now actively involved in making investment decisions. However, investment avenues and preferences among women differ from their male counterparts due to several factors such as risk appetite, financial literacy, long-term security, and social responsibilities.

Working women often juggle career and family obligations, leaving them with limited time to research and manage financial portfolios. As a result, they tend to favour investment options that are secure, easy to manage, and offer moderate returns. Despite this cautious approach, there is a noticeable shift towards more diversified and strategic investment choices among financially aware women.

This article aims to provide a detailed overview of investment avenues suitable for working women and discusses the evolving nature of their investment patterns in the contemporary financial ecosystem.

Importance of Investment for Women:

As more and more women are working, it's easier for them to invest. The reasons why investing is so important for women are:

- **Financial Security** - Investing regularly can help to build a strong financial foundation, which can be beneficial in achieving financial objectives in the future. Additionally, it can provide a cushion for the family in the event of a financial emergency.
- **Supporting Family Goals** - Planning for long-term goals like buying a home, raising children's education, etc. requires a large sum of money. Sometimes, salary and savings are not enough to meet these long-term goals. That's why it is important to invest wisely to support family's financial goals.

- **Financial Support to Old Parents** - As parents age, they need both physical and mental assistance. Investing ensures that your salary does not have to cover all of your expenses.
- **Planning for Children's Future** - Every parent wants what's best for their kids. Education costs are rising every year, so it become very important to start saving for your children education. Saving also helps to build the lumpsum required to cover the education costs.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Sharma & Verma (2025) explored the rise of app-based investments among tech-savvy female professionals. They found convenience, real-time tracking, and lower transaction costs to be major motivators for adoption. The study points out that mobile investment platforms have significantly enhanced participation among younger, urban women. Such technology-driven tools are reshaping traditional investment behaviours.

Mitra (2024) noted a significant trend among urban working women towards diversified investment portfolios. The research emphasizes a shift from traditional savings methods to goal-based financial planning, integrating both safe and growth-oriented avenues. Better exposure to financial products and higher disposable incomes have contributed to this behavioural change. The study underscores the importance of financial advisory services in promoting strategic investment.

Kumar and Rani (2023) observed a growing inclination among working women towards mutual funds and systematic investment plans (SIPs). This shift is largely attributed to the increasing digitization of financial services and greater awareness of market-linked instruments. The study highlights the role of accessibility and transparency in influencing investment choices. Their findings indicate a gradual move away from purely traditional instruments.

Jain (2023) emphasized the role of social influence in shaping women's investment decisions. Peer groups, family advice, and online financial influencers emerged as strong determinants of portfolio choices. The study suggests that these informal channels often bridge the gap in formal financial literacy. Digital platforms were found to amplify these influences by providing easy access to expert opinions and peer reviews.

Choudhury and Singh (2022) examined the financial behaviour of urban working women in India, revealing a strong preference for safety-oriented investments over high-return options. The study found that traditional avenues such as gold and fixed deposits remain dominant due to low financial literacy levels. Risk aversion and cultural influences were key determinants shaping their investment patterns. The authors suggest the need for targeted financial education programs to encourage diversification.

R. Ganapathi & Varsha Madhavan (2021) in their study titled "A study on Investment Behaviour and Attitude of Woman Investors of Bangalore, Karnataka" found that females are not able to master all investment destinations, which makes them afraid of taking risks and so invest only a fraction of their income. The majority of women still can't decide whether or not to invest. They're still dependent on others to do this work. The aim of the study is to analyse the effect of less education on the personal and impersonal decisions of women who are not well educated and educated.

These studies collectively indicate a growing shift in investment preferences among working women, moving from risk-averse instruments to more balanced and growth-oriented options.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Despite their growing economic role, working women often lack access to personalized financial guidance, leading to conservative investment behaviour. Cultural norms, lower risk tolerance, and inadequate financial education hinder their ability to make informed decisions. This article seeks to explore available investment avenues and evaluate whether current trends reflect a shift towards more empowered financial participation.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

To study the overview of investment avenues available for working women investors.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopts a descriptive research design. Secondary data was sourced from journals, government reports, and financial websites.

Investment Avenues Available for Working Women

The investment preferences of working women have evolved significantly in recent years, reflecting a blend of traditional values and modern financial aspirations. Historically, safety, stability, and cultural factors shaped their choices, resulting in a strong preference for secure instruments. However, increasing financial literacy, digitization, and access to diversified products have encouraged a gradual shift towards growth-oriented investments. The available avenues can be broadly categorized into **traditional** and **modern** options.

➤ Traditional Investment Avenues

Fixed Deposits (FDs)

Fixed deposits remain a cornerstone of women's investment portfolios due to their assured returns and negligible risk. Offered by banks and financial institutions, FDs provide a fixed interest rate over a chosen tenure, ensuring predictable income. The principal amount remains protected regardless of market fluctuations, making them ideal for risk-averse investors. Their simplicity, flexible tenures, and ease of management further enhance their popularity among working women.

Gold

Gold enjoys enduring significance as both a financial and cultural asset. Serving as a hedge against inflation and a store of value, it is widely preferred in both physical forms—such as jewellery, coins, and bars—and modern formats like Sovereign Gold Bonds and Gold ETFs. The emotional attachment to gold, combined with its high liquidity, ensures its continued relevance in women's investment portfolios.

Recurring Deposits (RDs)

Recurring deposits offer a disciplined savings approach, allowing investors to deposit a fixed sum monthly and earn interest at a pre-determined rate. This low-risk, predictable option appeals to working women seeking to accumulate funds for planned future needs such as children's education or family events. RDs also help instil a regular saving habit, which is particularly beneficial for long-term financial stability.

Insurance Policies

Endowment and Unit Linked Insurance Plans (ULIPs) are popular among women for their dual advantage of providing life cover and enabling savings or investments. Endowment plans

assure a lump sum at maturity, while ULIPs link returns to market performance. These instruments not only ensure financial protection for families but also assist in meeting long-term goals such as retirement or children's higher education. Additionally, tax benefits under Section 80C add to their appeal.

➤ **Modern Investment Avenues**

Mutual Funds and SIPs

Mutual funds offer a professionally managed and diversified investment avenue suitable for women seeking better returns with manageable risk. Systematic Investment Plans (SIPs) make participation more accessible by allowing small, regular contributions. The advantages of compounding and rupee cost averaging encourage long-term wealth creation. With varied schemes catering to different risk profiles—equity, debt, and hybrid—mutual funds have gained significant traction among working women.

Public Provident Fund (PPF)

The Public Provident Fund remains a favoured long-term, government-backed savings scheme, offering tax-free returns and safety of capital. With a 15-year lock-in period, it is often chosen for retirement planning or securing funds for children's future needs. Its risk-free nature, combined with the ability to make partial withdrawals after a certain period, makes it a balanced choice for those seeking stability with some degree of liquidity.

Stock Market Investments

Though traditionally underrepresented in equity markets, working women are increasingly participating in direct stock investments. Guided by financial advisors or using mobile trading apps, they selectively invest in blue-chip companies or sectors they understand. The potential for high returns attracts women with a higher risk tolerance, while the availability of real-time market information and user-friendly trading platforms encourages greater engagement.

Real Estate

Real estate continues to be viewed as a long-term wealth creation avenue, offering capital appreciation and potential rental income. However, its high entry cost, legal processes, and low liquidity make it less common among individual working women. Those in dual-income households or with substantial savings often explore property investment, especially with government incentives such as reduced stamp duty for women buyers in some states.

Digital Assets and Platforms

The younger generation of working women is showing interest in emerging asset classes such as cryptocurrencies, robo-advisory platforms, and mobile financial applications. While crypto investments are approached cautiously due to volatility, they reflect a willingness to experiment beyond conventional avenues. Robo-advisors offer low-cost, algorithm-driven portfolio management, while financial apps enable micro-investing, goal tracking, and instant transactions—aligning with the fast-paced lifestyles of tech-savvy professionals.

CONCLUSION

Working women are gradually transforming from conservative savers to informed investors. While traditional instruments still dominate their portfolios, increasing financial literacy, digital accessibility, and goal-oriented planning are enabling them to explore modern investment avenues. Financial institutions and policymakers should focus on providing gender-

sensitive investment education and personalized advisory services to further enhance women's participation in the financial markets.

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