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Investment Behavior of Women Business Owners in Myanmar

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ABSTRACT

Individuals invest in different types of investment based on their preference and risk taking behavior. Depending on their financial knowledge and awareness, tax and social factors and personal factors, their investment decisions are different. The study aims to identify the investment behavior of women business owners in Yangon, to examine factors of investment behavior and to analyze the relationship between them. The studied population is about 2000 woman business owners, members of Myanmar Women Entrepreneur Association (MWEA). The sample was selected by using random sampling method with the sample size of 120 respondents. The result shows that respondents mostly invest in traditional assets such as bank deposits, gold and real estate, rather than modern financial assets such as bonds, stocks and insurance. They mostly used the traditional off-line trading method for investment except for securities trading using on-line means.

Keywords: Investment Behavior, Risk, Attitude, Financial Literacy, Influencing Factors

1. Introduction

Investment is an outgrowth of economic development and the maturation of modern capitalism. Saving and investment are key ingredients to long run economic growth: when a country saves a large portion of its GDP, more resources are available for investment in capital, and higher capital raises a country's productivity and living standard. It is important to consider the status of the government budget for the country economy. When

a government budget deficit crowds out investment, it reduces the growth of productivity and GDP (Mankiw, 2010). For the economy as a whole, from a macro-economic point of view, aggregate investment in the current period is a major factor in determining aggregate demand and, hence, the level of employment (Narayanna, 2012). Savings or investments are powerful tools in the alleviation of poverty.

Investment is important not only for the country as a whole but also for businesses and individuals. Businesses need to make the most out of their profits and savings by putting money into investments that will give extra return year by year. Businesses tend to invest in real estate, government bonds, gold etc. to ensure that their money is secure and growing. Normally, people tend to invest if they have money in hand with the purpose of creating wealth and financial security although there is no guarantee that they will make money from their investments, and they may lose value.

There are many different types of investment strategies

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depending on investors' risk taking behavior: investment portfolios can be low risk, moderate risk or high risk. Investment behaviors can also be different based on investment motives. If the investor has enough financial knowledge and awareness, an appropriate investment portfolio can be determined. However, unless investors have the basic knowledge of portfolio management like "Don't Put All Your Eggs in One Basket", they may face investment failure.

In the past, in Myanmar, a common savings mechanism is accumulating tangible assets such as cash, gold and rice at home. Women often purchase gold as a form of savings, knowing that its price is stable since international markets-not local politics or domestic fiscal and monetary policies-dictate gold prices. Peer savings groups are another popular informal financial tool in Myanmar. Traditionally, there are generally four avenues for investment: gems, gold, cars and property. One report described that poor people often use their money to purchase land, livestock, machinery, and spend for education, transportation and migration to other countries (Proximity Designs & Studio D Radiodurans, 2014).

However, with the emergence of the Yangon Stock Exchange in 2015 and new financial institutions, people in Myanmar started to invest in modern financial products such as insurance, stock, bonds, and foreign exchange (Forex) trading.¹ According to the United Nations Capital Development Fund (ThihaKoKo, 2018), in the five years since 2013, the number of formal and informal savers in Myanmar has risen from 30 % to 50%; however, informal savings including non-cash assets, jewelry or cash on hand are the main channels for savings. Myanmar is drafting a National Savings Mobilization Strategy to encourage citizens to save in order to support continued economic growth and to reach parity with its regional neighbors.

Understanding the factors influencing investment behavior is therefore important for both investors and financial institutions. In order to find out investors' investment behavior, a survey of women business owners in Myanmar was conducted. The status of women in the social and economic spheres has been growing in Myanmar over the past few decades, as women have started to participate

in the labor force, politics and other sectors. To raise the role of women in the economy, the government has drawn up a National Strategic Plan for the Advancement of Women (2013-2022) under which it aims to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women (Myanmar Times, 2017).

Despite the development of a stock exchange for financial products and services in Myanmar, research on their investor behaviors is very limited. This study will be helpful to find out the ideal investment options for business owners. These findings could be useful to financial institutions to devise appropriate strategies and to market appropriate financial products or offer new financial products to investors in order to satisfy their needs.

II. Literature Review

Investment can be viewed as deferred consumption, that is, income earned but not consumed and kept for future consumption. The concept refers to the immediate commitment of resources, money or otherwise, in the expectation of reaping future benefits irrespective of the form it takes. Its key attribute is the sacrificing of something of value now for future benefit later (Bodie, Kane, & Marcus, 2001).

An investment refers to any money or income not consumed but kept aside, either in a financial institution or invested in the capital market, real estate or any other production activity with a view to generating higher future income and/or increasing its innate value in the future (Investment Finance Essays, 2013). Investment behavior is crucial to an investor's future and the decision is dependent on many factors (Ansari & Moid, 2013). Most researchers have examined the risk taking behavior of investors and they mainly focused on the relationship between risk taking behavior and demographic factors, financial literacy and tax benefits.

A. Financial Literacy and Investment Behavior

Financial literacy plays an important part in our daily life, such as managing personal finance, investment, etc. Danes & Haberman (2007) defined financial literacy as

¹ The Ministry of Planning and Finance has permitted foreign insurers to operate in the country since January 2019. Because of the liberalization of insurance sector in Myanmar, there are about 24 insurance companies including foreign-owned.

an individual's ability to obtain, understand, and evaluate information, which is relevant to decision making by understanding of the financial consequences that occur as the effect of the development in the complexity of the global finance. Bhushan(2014) conducted a survey of the relationship between financial literacy and investment behavior which showed that the level of financial literacy affects awareness regarding financial products as well as investment preferences towards financial products. Also, respondents having low financial literacy primarily invest in traditional and safe financial products and do not invest much in those financial products which are comparatively more risky and can give higher returns. This result is in line with the findings of VanRooij et al. (2012) which shows that individuals with lower financial literacy are much less likely to invest in stocks, which is a modern financial instrument.

B. Financial Attitude and Investment Behavior

In making investment decisions, it is important to consider financial attitude as an influencing factor. Financial attitude is defined as a state of mind, opinion, or judgment about finance(Pankow, 2003). The theory of Planned Behavior presented by Ajzen (2014) provides a model that can predict an individual's intention to engage in a behavior at a specific time and place. The theory was intended to explain all behaviors over which people have the ability to exert self-control. The key component to this model is behavioral intent. Behavioral intentions are influenced by the attitude about the likelihood that the behavior will have the expected outcome, and the subjective evaluation of the risks and benefits of that outcome. Attitudes refer to the degree to which a person has a favorable or unfavorable evaluation of the behavior of interest. It entails a consideration of the outcomes of performing the behavior(Wayne, 2018). Sondari&Sudarsono(2015) tested the applicability of the theory of planned behavior in predicting intention to invest and found that attitudes toward investment and subjective norms significantly influenced the intention to invest.

C. Social Factors and Investment Behavior

The most popular and essential theory that is needed

to be considered is Behavioral Finance Theory. Behavioral finance is the study of the influence of psychology on the behavior of investors or financial analysts. It also includes the subsequent effects on the markets. It focuses on the fact that investors are not always rational, have limits to their self-control, and are influenced by their own biases. Behavioral Finance Theory described that investors make cognitive errors that can lead to wrong decisions. There are some decision making biases and errors in Behavioral Finance such as self-deception, heuristic simplification, social influence and emotion(Corporate Finance Institute, 2019).

Social factors can influence investor behavior. Venkateshraj(2015) studied the investment pattern of employed women. The study covers factors influencing the investment pattern, financial literacy level, risk profile of financial products and the type of financial products preferred. The study discovered that Internet has replaced newspapers and magazines as the most preferred source of investment information. It was found that friends and relatives continue to be an important source for investment information. This finding is aligned with the research of Shanmugham and Ramya(2012).

D. Tax Factors and Investment Behavior

Taxes are important influences on investment returns. It is important that the investors understand how to manage their portfolio to minimize the tax burden. Singh and Vanita(2002) studied mutual fund investors' perceptions and preferences and found that tax exemptions significantly affected investor behavior. Venkateshraj(2015) also found that respondents were aware of the tax benefits available for certain investment products, and that a majority preferred to invest in provident fund and life insurance products to claim the tax benefit.

E. Demographic Factors and Investment Behavior

Many studies have shown that the demographic profile of investors is an influencing factor among others. Sadiq and Ishaq(2014) analyzed the effect of demographic factors on the behavior of investors during the choice of investment. It was found that there is an association between demographic characteristics and the level of risk

tolerance. Results showed that demographic factors like investor's age, academic qualification, income level, investment knowledge, and investment experience have significant effect on the behavior of investors. There is a positive correlation between the investor's academic qualification, income level, and investment knowledge and investment experience with their level of risk tolerance during the choice of investments. Those findings are in line with the results of Venkateshraj(2015).

III. Research Methods

A. Data Collection and Analysis

Primary data was collected from women business owners in Yangon by using well-structured questionnaires. The questionnaires were adopted from the study of Venkateshraj(2015). To collect the primary data, the researcher conducted personal interviews with the members by attending the association meeting. While attending the meeting, the structured questionnaires were distributed to the members directly. Then, a face-to-face interview was conducted after finishing the meeting. Simple random sampling was used for drawing samples. Before making the personal interview, a pilot study was conducted by contacting 20 woman business owners in order to test the effectiveness of the questionnaires.

The demographic factors of age, marital status, education, occupation, working experience, working sector, monthly income and family size of the women are identified. Then the other factors (financial literacy, financial attitude, social factors, tax factors and risk-taking behavior of respondents) are examined based on the respondent's level of agreement with structured questions measured on a five-point Likert scale. The five point Likert scale was used to interpret the responses whereby the scores of "Strongly disagree" and "Disagree" were represented by mean score equivalent to 1 to 2.5 on Likert scale ($1 \leq \text{disagree} \leq 2.5$). The scores of 'Neutral' were equivalent to 2.6 to 3.5 on the Likert scale ($2.6 \leq \text{Neutral} \leq 3.5$). The scores of "Agree" and "Strongly agree" were equivalent to 3.6 to 5 on the Likert scale ($3.6 \leq \text{Agree} \leq 5$). The detailed questions regarding investment behavior and antecedent factors are attached in the Appendix.

The variable of *financial literacy level* is measured by respondent knowledge on bond, interest rate, stock market, and portfolio management and consumer purchasing power. For the *financial attitude* variable, women's preference and confidence in taking risk on investments, financial management attitude, and attitude concerned with financial outcome are used. *Social factors* include consultation with family members, friends, and financial adviser, social motivation for investment and sources of information for investment. *Tax factors* cover the tax benefits and tax savings for investments.

Descriptive statistics are used for the analysis. Descriptive statistics give a picture about the demographic profile, the level of financial literacy, financial attitude, social factors, tax factors and investment behavior which can be summarized in terms of mean, standard deviation, and frequency. To analyze the relationship between them, correlation analysis is employed in this study.

B. Population and Sample

This study focuses on woman business owners working in different sectors in Yangon Region, who are members of the Myanmar Women Entrepreneurs Association. The Myanmar Women Entrepreneurs Association (MWEA) is a non-Government, non-profit association founded in 1995. Its aim is to unite and bring into focus the role and capabilities of Myanmar women entrepreneurs. There are about 2,000 active members of the Association, who are women entrepreneurs and managers in the manufacturing, trading and service businesses. Women in the Association have achieved success in the economic and social sectors, with 42 having already received ASEAN awards. About 150 members were asked and 120 members (5% of total members) completely responded to the survey questions.

Table 1 shows the summary of demographic profiles of respondents. The majority of respondents (36.7%) were from the age group of 41 - 50 years, followed by those who were from the age group of 51 - 60 years. It was found that the majority of women are married (66.7%). The majority the respondents has a family size of more than six people (40%), followed by a family size of four to six (38.3%). Most of the respondents are graduates (62.5%) followed by those who have post-graduate degrees (31.7%). The majority of respondents (81.7%) work in

Table 1. Demographic Profile of Respondents

No	Variable	Categories	Number	Percent %
1.	Age	Below 30 years	18	15
		31 - 40	29	24.2
		41 - 50	44	36.7
		51 - 60	23	19.2
		Above 60 years	6	5
2.	Marital Status	Single	40	33.3
		Married	80	66.7
3	Dependent People	< 3	86	71.7
		3 - 6	16	20.7
		7 - 9	9	7.4
4.	Number of Children	≤ 2	113	94.2
		3 - 4	7	5.8
5.	Family Size	1 - 3	26	21.7
		4 - 6	44	38.3
		>6	48	40
		Under Graduate	7	5.8
6.	Highest Education	Graduate	75	62.5
		Post-Graduate and above	38	31.7
		Manufacturing	22	18.3
7.	Nature of Job	Trading / Service	98	81.7
		<5 years	19	15.8
8.	Years of working experience	5 - 10 years	25	20.8
		11 - 15 years	30	25
		16 - 20 years	13	10.8
		>20 years	33	27.5
		<30 Lakhs	66	55
9.	Monthly income(Kyats)	31 - 50 Lakhs	25	20.8
		> 50 Lakhs	29	24.2

Source: Survey Data, 2019

the trading and service sector, and most of the respondents have over 20 years working experience (27.5%). It can be observed that 55% of the respondents have a monthly income of less than 30 lakhs MMK and 24% have monthly income in the range of above 50 lakhs.

IV. Results and Discussion

A. Investment Practices of Respondents

In order to find out the respondents' investment behav-

ior, questions on investment awareness, risk perception on investment, actual investment held, trading method, and investment purpose were asked and analyzed using descriptive statistics.

It can be seen from Table 2 that the majority of respondents are aware of real estate as an investment (84.2%), followed by bank deposits (82.5%) and gold (79.5%) respectively. Awareness of postal savings and the share market is moderate (around 50%) and awareness about bonds is low.

Although the women are aware about most of the investment avenues, it does not directly lead to the actual investment. Table 2 also depicts the actual investments held by the respondents. Although the awareness about

Table 2. Investment Awareness and Investments Held by Respondents

Types of Investment	Awareness		Investments Held	
	Number	Percent (%)	Number	Percent (%)
Real Estate	101	84.2	56	46.7
Bank deposits	99	82.5	76	63.3
Gold	95	79.2	58	48.3
Commodities	82	68.3	55	45.8
Foreign Exchange Market	75	62.5	38	31.7
Insurance	71	59.2	33	27.5
Share Market	62	51.7	5	4.2
Postal savings	61	50.8	28	23.3
Bonds	44	36.7	1	0.8
Others	25	20.8	15	12.5

Source: Survey Data, 2019

real estate is highest, actual investment in real estate is only at a moderate level of 46.7%. It can be assumed that people lost interest in the real estate market in Myanmar although the real estate market was active before 2010. Investment in the share market (4.2%) is quite low compared to the moderate awareness level of the share market.

Bank deposits (63.3%) are the most preferred investment held by the women, as the bank deposit is a comparatively risk-free asset followed by gold (48.3%), real estate (46.7%) and commodities (45.8%). It can also be seen that gold is one of the most preferred investments for women; they buy gold not only for investment but also for fashion. Myanmar women like to wear gold as jewelry on special occasions according to their traditions. Investments held in the form of insurance and foreign exchange currency are 27% and 32%, respectively, followed by postal saving at 23%. The least preferred types of investment are bonds (0.8%) and shares (4.2%) respectively.

Overall, the survey indicates that women are more interested to invest in traditional investment avenues rather than the modern financial instruments. This may be due to the fact that the modern financial instruments were introduced to Myanmar people in 2010s and people are still unfamiliar with those avenues.

It can be observed from Table 3 that the majority of respondents (29.2%) are investing in at least two assets. Investments in four and above assets are 26.7% followed by investment in three assets (25.8%). Investment in one asset is uncommon. This result suggests that Myanmar

Table 3. Portfolio Diversification Behavior of Respondents

No. of Portfolio	Number	Percent (%)
1	22	18.3
2	35	29.2
3	31	25.8
4 and above	32	26.7
Total	120	100

Source: Survey Data, 2019

women business owners are good at diversifying the investment portfolio by investing in more than one investment avenue.

Table 4 describes the trading methods used by the participants. The participants prefer traditional offline channel to trade all investment avenues except in share market investment. The respondents mainly used online trading channel for the share market (69%). Thus it appears that women have adopted online trading as the technology has advanced in Myanmar.

Table 5 describes the purpose of investment as indicated by the respondents. Results indicate that the women business owners seem to consider regular earning return as the main purpose of investment (50.8%) followed by the purpose of getting high return (35.8%) and just for safety (31.7%). The participants also consider that their children's education is one of the main purposes for investment. It thus can be assumed that women mainly consider earning as the major purpose for investment rather than other purposes.

Table 4. Trading Method used by Respondents

Type of Investment	Online Channel		Traditional Offline Channel		Both	
	Number	Percent (%)	Number	Percent (%)	Number	Percent (%)
Share Market	31	68.9	12	26.7	2	4.4
FE Market	23	35.9	33	51.6	8	12.5
Real Estate	20	30.7	43	66.15	2	3.07
Gold	20	24.7	54	79.0	7	8.6
Commodities	18	24.0	38	50.7	19	25.3
Bank deposits	19	20.7	60	65.2	13	14.1
Insurance	8	13.8	48	82.8	2	3.4
Postal savings	4	8.3	44	91.7	0	0
Bonds	2	7.4	25	92.6	0	0

Source: Survey Data, 2019

Table 5. Main Purpose of Investment of Respondents

Purpose	Number	Percent (%)
High Return	43	35.8
Regular Earning Return	61	50.8
Just for Safety	38	31.7
For Marriage	7	5.8
For Children Education	34	28.3
Retirement Plan	16	13.3

Source: Survey Data, 2019

To understand the first consideration in decision making of the women, the results of this survey question are shown in Table 6. Table 6 indicates that the majority of participants consider firstly the safety of capital (40.8%), while 23.4% of participants think fulfilling personal needs (post retirement need, children education, marriage etc.) is the first priority. High return and liquidity needs are the first consideration for fewer respondents.

Table 7 displays that the majority of participants (37.5%) hold their investments more than one year before withdrawing profit. This is followed by 36.7% of respondents who hold investments less than one year, and 25.8% of respondents who state they hold investments for exactly one year.

Table 8 shows that the frequency of investment review varies across the participants. The majority of respondents review their investments monthly (48.3%), followed by a review period of occasionally and yearly at 15% each, respectively. Results indicate that Myanmar's business women tend to check their investment situation frequently.

Table 6. First Consideration of Respondents in Investment Decision

Factors	Number	Percent (%)
Liquidity	19	15.8
Safety of capital	49	40.8
High return	15	12.5
Convenience to purchase	2	1.7
Trends in financial market	7	5.8
Personal Needs	28	23.4
Total	120	100

Source: Survey Data, 2019

Table 7. Duration of Investment Period for Respondents

Investment Period	Number	Percent (%)
Less than one year	44	36.7
One year	31	25.8
More than one year	45	37.5
Total	120	100

Source: Survey Data, 2019

Table 8. Frequency of Investment Review

Frequency	Number	Percent (%)
Monthly	58	48.3
Quarterly	17	14.2
Yearly	18	15.0
Occasionally	18	15.0
Rarely	9	7.5

Source: Survey Data, 2019

B. Antecedents of Investment Behavior of Respondents

To further analyze the investment behavior of respondents, they were asked about their agreement to various statements related to the following factors. The factors of interest are financial literacy, financial attitude, social factor, tax factor and risk-taking behavior. The following tables show financial literacy, financial attitude, social factors, tax factors and risk-taking behavior of the respondents based upon the survey results.

For the financial literacy, the larger the score is, the more literate the respondents are. The level of financial literacy is identified by the financial knowledge and awareness on the stock and bond, mutual fund, interest rate and portfolio concept. The scores are varied among the women entrepreneur; however, the average mean score of 3.05 indicating that the respondents are neither literate nor illiterate from the financial aspect.

For the financial attitude, the larger the mean score, the more confirmed their financial attitude is on investment. The respondent agreed on every statement regarding preference of investment, regarding safety, having confidence on their investment, belief on investment as an option to get additional income and blaming no one for investment losses as shown by the high score level. Therefore, it

is concluded that the respondents' financial attitude is appropriate for investment with high level on average (4.07).

For the social factors of women in respect of the investment, the bigger the mean score, the more dependent the respondents are on the social factors. The study found that they take the advice of family members, colleagues and also financial experts to get information for investment decisions. The average score is with mean value of 3.39 that indicates a moderate level of social influence on investment decisions of women.

For the tax factor, the bigger the mean score is, the more significant the tax factors are for investment decisions. The respondents agreed that they always consider tax benefits when they take investment decision such as gold, real estate, stock, bank deposit which are overall averaged at the moderate level of 3.26.

Finally, for the risk-taking behavior of the respondents, a majority of respondents strongly agreed that they consider risk before making investment as shown by the highest mean score of 4.20 followed by preference on well performing investment avenues, having readiness to take risk with enough information and desire safe investment, which means that they are aware on the investment risk. The statements of preference on the risky and fluctuating assets range from ranging 3.00 to 3.32. Thus, overall, re-

Table 9. Financial Literacy Influences on Investment Behavior of Women

Description	Mean	Std. Deviation
Buying a company stock usually provides a safer return than stock mutual fund.	2.56	1.333
When interest rate rises, the bond price falls.	2.53	1.577
Company stocks are riskier than bonds.	2.77	1.704
When investors spread their money among different assets, the risk of losing money decreases.	3.56	1.269
When prices of all goods have doubled in the future, your purchasing power will be lower.	3.82	1.012
Average	3.05	

Table 10. Financial Attitude Influences on Investment Behavior of Women

Description	Mean	Std. Deviation
You prefer to invest rather than spending.	3.92	.881
Safety is the main motto of Investment.	4.03	.907
You are confident enough to manage your investment.	4.27	.686
Investment offers an additional income.	4.08	.747
You never blame others for any investment losses.	4.06	.882
Average	4.07	

spondents' risk-taking behavior is moderate.

Table 14 shows the relationship among each antecedent factor influencing the investment behavior of the respondents. All the factors are positive relationships with each factor; among them, financial attitude, financial literacy and risk-taking behavior are strongly correlated. Therefore, it implies that their financial literacy, financial

attitude can encourage risk-taking behavior and at the same time the behavior increase the literacy and attitude of women entrepreneurs. Tax factors have a positive but weak correlation with other factors. The relationship between social factors and financial attitude, literacy, and risk-taking behavior are also weak.

Table 11. Social Influences on Investment Behaviors of Women

Description	Mean	Std. Deviation
You always consult with your family before making investment.	3.69	.968
You always consult with friends/colleagues before making investment.	2.94	.015
Family is the main motivation factor to do investment.	3.50	.970
You normally search information for investment in Internet.	3.36	.951
Financial advisor's advice is crucial in investment process.	3.48	.053
Average	3.39	

Table 12. TaxInfluences on Investment Behaviors of Women

Description	Mean	Std. Deviation
You always consider tax benefits when you take investment decision.	3.72	.735
Tax saving investments such as share market, bank deposit are the most attractive investments.	3.24	1.061
You still invest in Gold and Real Estate even Government collect tax on them.	2.83	.976
Average	3.26	

Table 13. Risk-TakingInfluences on Investment Behavior of Women

Description	Mean	Std. Deviation
You always consider levels of risk before making investment.	4.20	.784
You prefer to invest in risky investment avenue.	3.00	1.152
You are ready to take risk if you have sufficient information.	3.19	.829
You prefer to invest in well performing investment avenue.	3.36	.907
You are interested to invest in highly fluctuating avenues.	3.32	.923
You always yearn for investment to be safe even it gives lower return.	3.10	1.152
Average	3.36	

Table 14. Correlation between Investment Behavior Factors

Correlation coefficient	Financial Literacy	Financial Attitude	Social Factor	Tax Factor	Risk-taking Behavior
Financial Literacy	1.000	.994	.076	.176	.995
Financial Attitude	.994	1.000	.080	.175	.999
Social Factors	.076	.080	1.000	.048	.082
Tax Factors	.176	.175	.048	1.000	.180
Risk-taking Behavior	.995	.999	.082	.180	1.000

Source: Survey Data, 2019

V. Conclusion

The objective of the study was to investigate behavior of the MWEA members in making investment. The survey results on the financial literacy and attitude of the women indicate that the owners have a moderate level of financial literacy but a high level of investing confidence and attitudes that support investing. The correlation results describe that financial literacy, financial attitude and risk-taking behavior among the women business owners are strongly and positively related with each other. The results of the study support earlier research findings that attitude toward investment significantly influences the intention to invest (Sondari & Sudarsono, 2015).

Myanmar women usually prefer to invest in the traditional investment avenues like bank deposits, real estate and gold. They are still unfamiliar with modern investment avenues such as share market and bonds. The respondents also invest in more than one investment i.e., investment portfolio in order to avoid taking risk and they mainly use traditional offline channel for their investment. The women consider getting financial purpose rather than non-financial purpose. A majority prefer regular earning return than the high return since they first consider safety of investment. The most selected options of the woman business owners are the assets giving financial return without much risk. Hence, the women business owners are in likelihood of moderate risk taking in their investments.

The results of the study are therefore very supportive for banks and non-bank organizations to create the innovative but less-risky financial product portfolio or services which could give the regular earning returns from their investment. There is the opportunity for investment organizations to sell financial products like fixed deposit and postal saving services and also life and non-life insurance with the new and creative form of return from the insurance policy. On the other hand, there is a little interest of these business owners in the stock exchange market of Myanmar, thus the stock exchange commission of Myanmar should try to enhance the awareness of the potential group. Finally, financial literacy is very important in making investment decisions by the women, so seminars or workshops concerning the financial sector should be held by financial institutions.

There are some limitations of the study. First, the study only focused on the investment behavior of women

from the MWEA Association. Data about other business owners who haven't been members would be very useful to identify their investment behavior and the influential factors. Another constraint is that the effects of investment behaviors on women's wealth and their social effects were not analyzed; this is a topic for future study. Finally, further research could investigate macro-economic variables like government policy changes and market rate changes as well as how demographic characteristics (e.g. income level, work experience) moderate the relationship between financial literacy and investment behaviors among the women business owners.

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Appendix

Research Survey Questionnaire

The purpose of collecting data is for the academic research. I seek your kind assistance in completing the attached questionnaires which would take approximately 10 minutes of your valuable time. All the data collected will be treated as confidential and will be used for the research only.

Section A -Demographic Profile

1. Age (in years)

- Below 30 years 31 - 40 41 - 50 51 - 60 Above 60 years

2. Marital Status

- Single Married Separated

Answer 3 only if married and applicable

3. Number of dependent people in your family _____

Please specify - Number of Children(s) _____ Others _____

4. Highest Education

- Under Graduate Graduate Post Graduation and above Others (please specify) _____

5. Occupation

- Self-Employed (Business) Self-Employed (Professional) Others (please specify) _____

6. Years of working experience

- Less than 5 years 5 - 10 years 11 - 15 years 16 - 20 years more than 20 years

7. Monthly income is in the range of

- Less than 20 Lakhs 21 - 30 Lakhs 31 - 40 Lakhs 41 - 50 Lakhs above 50 Lakhs

8. How many people live in your house hold including yourself

- Less than 3 Less than 4 Less than 5 5 and above

Section B - Practice of Investment

9. Mark the products about that you are aware of (*not necessarily that you have invested*)

- Real estate Share market Commodities Bonds Insurance Postal savings
 Bank deposits Foreign Exchange Market Gold Others

10. Rate the risk level of each of the investments on a scale from

	No Risk 1	Low Risk 2	Moderate Risk 3	High Risk 4	Very High Risk 5
Real Estate					
Share Market					
Commodities					
Bonds					
Insurance					
Postal savings					
Bank deposits					
Foreign Exchange Market					
Gold					
Others					

11. Your current investments are in (tick the appropriate ones)

Real Estate	<input type="checkbox"/> Land	<input type="checkbox"/> Detached House	<input type="checkbox"/> Apartment
Share Market	<input type="checkbox"/> YSX		
Commodities	<input type="checkbox"/> Metal	<input type="checkbox"/> Oil	<input type="checkbox"/> Livestock
	<input type="checkbox"/> Others (please specify) _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural products	
Bonds	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 years Bond	<input type="checkbox"/> 3 years Bond	<input type="checkbox"/> 5 years Bond
Insurance	<input type="checkbox"/> Life	<input type="checkbox"/> Non-Life	
Postal savings	<input type="checkbox"/> Time Deposit	<input type="checkbox"/> Saving Deposit	
Bank deposits	<input type="checkbox"/> Time Deposit	<input type="checkbox"/> Saving Deposit	
Foreign Exchange Market	<input type="checkbox"/> USD	<input type="checkbox"/> Euro	<input type="checkbox"/> Others
Gold	<input type="checkbox"/> Gold Bar	<input type="checkbox"/> Gold Coins	<input type="checkbox"/> Gold Jewelry
Others			

12. Which channel do you use when you invest in assets?

	Online Channel	Traditional Offline Channel
Real Estate		
Share Market		
Commodities		
Bonds		
Insurance		
Postal savings		
Bank deposits		
Foreign Exchange Market		
Gold		
Others		

13. (a) Main purpose of making investment

Financial Purpose	<input type="checkbox"/> High Return	<input type="checkbox"/> Earn Regular Return	<input type="checkbox"/> Just For Safety
Non-Financial Purpose	<input type="checkbox"/> For Marriage	<input type="checkbox"/> For Children Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Retirement Plan
	<input type="checkbox"/> Others (please specify) _____		

(b) Rank the Factors that influence you while taking investment decision in order of importance.

(Rank 1 to 8)

- Liquidity Safety of capital High return Convenience to purchase
 Trends in financial market Children's education / marriage For post-retirement expenses
 Others (please specify) _____

14. (a) How often do you review your investments?

- Occasionally Monthly Quarterly Yearly Rarely

(b) Normally, how long does it take to earn money (yield) from your investment?

- Less than One Year One Year More than One Year

Part C - Antecedent Factors

Social Factors

Read the following statement and put a tick mark based on the degree of agreeability (Â).

No	Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
15.	You always consult with your family before making investment.					
16.	You always consult with friends/colleagues before making investment.					
17.	Family is the main motivation factor to do investment.					
18.	You normally search information for investment in Internet.					
19.	Financial advisor's advice is crucial in investment process.					

Financial Attitude

Read the following statement and put a tick mark based on the degree of agreeability (Â).

No	Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
20.	You prefer to invest rather than spending.					
21.	Safety is the main motto of Investment.					
22.	You are confident enough to manage your investment.					
23.	Investment offers an additional income.					
24.	You never blame others for any investment losses.					

Financial Literacy

Read the following statement and put a tick mark based on the degree of agreeability (Â).

No	Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
25.	Buying a company stock usually provides a safer return than stock mutual fund.					
26.	When interest rate rises, the bond price falls.					
27.	Company stocks are riskier than bonds.					
28.	When investors spread their money among different assets, the risk of losing money decreases.					
29.	When prices of all goods have doubled in the future, your purchasing power will be lower.					

Tax Factors

Read the following statement and put a tick mark based on the degree of agreeability (Â).

No	Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
30.	You always consider tax benefits when you take investment decision.					
31.	Tax saving investments such as share market, bank deposit are the most attractive investments.					
32.	You still invest in Gold and Real Estate even Government collect tax on them.					

Section D - Investment Behavior

Read the following statement and put a tick mark based on the degree of agreeability (Â).

No	Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
33.	You always consider levels of risk before making investment.					
34.	You prefer to invest in risky investment avenue.					
35.	You are ready to take risk if you have sufficient information.					
36.	You prefer to invest in well performing investment avenue.					
37.	You are interested to invest in highly fluctuating avenues.					
38.	You always yearn for investment to be safe even it gives lower return.					

Thank you for your patience and time in answering the questions!