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**OBJECTIVES** 

**HYPOTHESES** 

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY** 

**RESULTS & DISCUSSION** 

FINDINGS

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#### FINANCIAL LITERACY AND ITS' INFLUENCING FACTORS: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY OF INDIAN INVESTORS

#### DR. BIDYUT JYOTI BHATTACHARJEE ASST. PROFESSOR **DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE** B.H.COLLEGE **HOWLY**

#### **ABSTRACT**

Financial literacy among the people plays pivotal role in the process of financial inclusion. Financial literacy is the ability to make informed judgments and to take effective decisions regarding the use and management of money. Research has shown that levels of financial literacy worldwide are unacceptably low. People find it difficult to take decisions regarding personal finance issues confidently and often make mistakes. In India too the levels of financial literacy are very low. An attempt has been made through this paper to determine financial literacy level of respondents and also to examine whether or not the financial literacy is related with the demographic and socio-economic factors of investors. The study observed that overall financial literacy level of respondents is not very high. Financial literacy level has been influenced by age, education, income and nature of employment whereas it does not get affected by gender of the population. Moreover, the study recommended that it is the time for policy makers and regulators to adopt appropriate strategies like introducing subject based on finance in the secondary level of education rather than confining only in commerce based higher level of education and also encourage programs to ensure the higher level of financial literacy amongst the population.

#### **KEYWORDS**

Financial Inclusion, Financial Literacy, Awareness Program, Appropriate Strategy.

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

inancial literacy or financial education can broadly be defined as "providing familiarity with and understanding of financial market products, especially rewards and risks, in order to make informed choices". Financial literacy has assumed greater importance in the recent years, as the natures of financial market have changed and becomes more complex for the investors.

In the context of financial inclusion, the scope of financial literacy is relatively broader and it acquires greater significance since it is concerned with the very access of such excluded groups to finance. In countries with diverse social and economic profile like India, financial literacy is particularly relevant for people who are resource-poor and who operate at the margin and are vulnerable to persistent downward financial pressures. It becomes challenges for those people having either little bit or no knowledge in finance to access financial market resulting into financial exclusion. Therefore, only financial literacy can help and prepare them to face life cycle needs and deal with unexpected emergencies without assuming unnecessary debt.

#### 2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

While investing decision, investors tend to use thumb rules or seek advice from friends and relatives. If they get bad advice, their outcomes will be poor, and they will start to lose faith in the financial sector. A big improvement of financial knowledge of households is necessary so that they participate efficiently in financial markets. Financial literacy plays a significant role in the efficient allocation of household savings and the ability of individuals to meet their financial goals. Therefore, the present study aims to find out the financial literacy level of Indian investors by asking basic questions about financial instruments as well as to identify the factors which influence financial literacy.

#### 3. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Volpe et al. (2002) conducted a study to analyse the investment literacy of online investors. The study included 530 online investors to find out the difference in financial literacy level on the basis of age, gender, experience, education and income and previous online experience. The study came out with the results that level of financial literacy varied with people's age, gender, experience, education and income.

Hussein A. Hassan Al -Tamimi and Al Anood Bin Kalli conducted a research study (2009) on Financial Literacy in UAE. The study finds that financial literacy of UAE investors is well below the needed level. Moreover, a significant difference in the level of financial literacy was observed between the respondents according to their gender. Women were found to have lower level of financial literacy than men.

#### 4. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the study are outlined below (i) To find out the financial literacy level of the individuals (ii) To examine the influencing factor of Financial Literacy

#### 5. HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

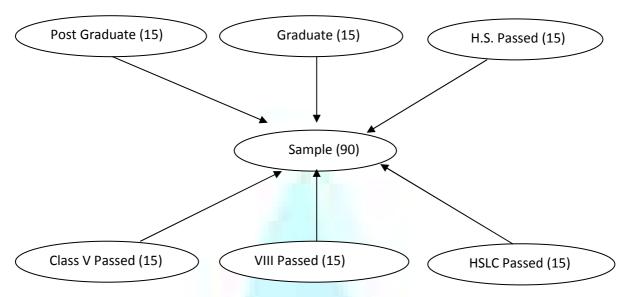
Ho: Financial literacy of an individual is not influenced by age, income, education, profession and gender.

H<sub>1</sub>: Financial literacy of an individual is influenced by age, income and education, profession and gender.

#### 6. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study based on primary and secondary data. The primary data collected through field survey where as secondary data was collected from books and journals. A questionnaire was prepared to test basic and advanced financial knowledge and sent to a sample of 90 respondents covering three villages of Barpeta district of Assam. The study followed stratified sampling method and statistical tools like Average, Correlation and Regression have been used for analyzing the data. The hypothesis was tested by using student t-test technique.

#### SAMPLE DESIGN: ON THE BASIS OF RESPONDENT EDUCATION (Stratified Sampling Technique)



#### 7. PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS

Apart from the questions asked to test the financial knowledge of the respondents, demographic data has also been collected which is depicted in the Table 1. From the table it is observed that 30% of the respondents are female and 70 % percent are male. In respect of annual income, around 24 % are in the income slab of Rs 40,000 to Rs 1,00,000, 19 % are having income slab of Rs.1,00,000-3,00,000, 29 % are in the income slab of Rs 3,00,000-6,00,000 and 28 % are in the income slab of Rs 6 lacs and above annually. With respect to age, around 20 % of total respondents fall in the age group of 20 to 39 years, 46 % of the respondents are in the age group of 40 to 49 years and around 34 % of the respondents are in the age group of 50 to 59 years. In terms of profession, around 43 % of respondents doing business, 13% engaged in services, 8% of respondents are labour, 22% are engaged themselves in the agriculture and farming activities and 13% of the respondents are servant.

**TABLE 1: RESPONDENT'S PROFILE** 

Characteristics	Number	Percentage
Gender	110111001	T C. Gentuage
Male	63	70
Female	27	30
Annual Income		
40,000- 1,00,000	22	24
1,00,000-3,00,000	17	19
3,00,000-6,00,000	26	29
6,00,000 & onwards	25	28
Age		
20-39	18	20
40-49	41	46
50-59	31	34
Profession		
Business	39	43
Service	12	13
Labour	7	8
Farmer	20	22
Servant	12	13

Source: Field Survey

#### 8. ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

#### **8.1 FINANCIAL LITERACY LEVEL**

The study asked basic as well as advanced questions about the financial instruments to the respondents to know their financial literacy level. The table exhibits the respondent awareness level in form of percentage.

TABLE 2: RESPONDENTS AWARENESS RELATING TO FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

Question Subject	Respond (In %)	Question Subject	Respond (In %)
Savings Account	98	National Savings Certificate	78
Difference between Saving Account and Current Account	54	Tax Benefit in NSC	74
Life Insurance Policies	83	Nomination in NSC	45
Nomination and Assignment	53	Maturity period of NSC	34
Income Tax Benefit in Fixed Deposit	68	Heard about Mutual Funds	58
Minimum Period for Investing in Fixed Deposit	52	Invested in Mutual Funds	26
Nomination in Savings Account & Bank Fixed Deposit	46	Tax Benefit in Mutual Fund	24
Post Office Savings	80	Heard about SENSEX/National Stock Exchange	61
Heard about Public Provident Fund	43	Use information available on SENSEX/NSE	24
Minimum Amount to be deposited in PPF	36	Invested in shares	23

The study shows respondents have different levels of financial literacy for different financial instruments as shown in the table above. Almost all the respondents are aware about saving bank account and its operations. But only 54% of the respondents are aware about the difference between saving and current account. The respondents are more aware about the instruments like life insurance policies, post office for saving, national saving certificate. On the

other hand it has been seen that the respondents are little aware about advanced financial instrument like Mutual Fund, Capital Market, Stock Exchange and Share etc.

#### **8.2 ECONOMETRIC ANALYSIS**

In this section, the interrelationship between the variables of age, income, education and financial literacy is examined by applying correlation matrix analysis and through multiple regression technique the influencing factor of financial literacy has been measured.

#### 8.2.1 Correlation Matrix

The correlation matrix table shows that the there are interrelationship between financial literacy and age (r=.631; p=.028), financial literacy and income (r=.702; p=.003), financial literacy and education (r=.988; p=.000), financial literacy and profession (r=.613; p=.004). The value of p shows the relationships are statistically significant at either 5% level or 1%level. Therefore, the relationships are statistically significant and the null hypotheses of the study regarding the relationship are rejected. But no statistically significant relationship has been found in between the financial literacy and gender of the people (r=-.034; p=.491).

#### CORRELATION MATRIX

	Gender	Age	Income	Education	Profession	Literacy
Gender	1.00					
Age	684**	1.00				
	(.004)					
Income	516**	.698**	1.00			
	(.000)	(.003)				
Education	007	.239*	.691**	1.00		
	(.456)	(.034)	(.000)			
Profession	518**	.480**	.840**	.580**	1.00	
	(000)	(.000)	(.000)	(.000)		
Literacy	034	.631*	.702**	.988**	.613**	1.00
	(.491)	(.028)	(.003)	(.000)	(.004)	

<sup>\*\*</sup> Indicates 1% level of significance and \* Implies 5% level of significance: The figures within the brackets are values of p

#### 8.2.2 Multiple Regression Analysis

To examine the impact of selected variables (Age, Income, Education, Profession) on financial literacy; the multiple regression technique has bee applied. The financial literacy level being considered as dependent variable and other variables fitted in the regression equation as independent variable.

 $Y = a + bx_1 + bx_2 + bx_3 + bx_4 + bx_5 + c$ 

Y= Literacy Level,  $x_1$  = Gender  $x_2$  = Age  $x_3$  = Income  $x_4$  = Education,  $bx_5$ = Profession,

a= constant, b= regression coefficient and c= standard error

The regression table exhibits that financial literacy is influenced by age and education ( $\beta$ =.053) and statistically significant at 5% level of sig ficance. It implies that with the increase of age the person develops knowledge on financial instrument through informal education. Similarly, educated per person develops knowledge on financial instrument through informal education. Similarly, educated per person develops knowledge on financial instrument through informal education.

#### **Regression Coefficients**

		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardi zed Coefficien ts		
Model		В	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	.366	1.033		.354	.724
	GENDER	319	.295	027	-1.080	.283
	AGE	3.50E-02	.017	.060	2.065	.042
	INCOME	6.660E-07	.000	.029	.625	.533
	EDUCATIO	2.990	.084	.953	35.701	.000
	PROFESSI	.173	.112	.050	1.541	.127

a. Dependent Variable: LITERACY

#### **Anova Analysis**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	2530.297	5	506.059	821.298	.000 a
	Residual	51.758	84	.616		
	Total	2582.056	89			

a. Predictors: (Constant), PROFESSI, AGE, EDUCATIO, GENDER, INCOME

b. Dependent Variable: LITERACY

#### **Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.990 <sup>a</sup>	.980	.979	.78

a. Predictors: (Constant), PROFESSI, AGE, EDUCATIO, GENDER, INCOME

#### 9. FINDINGS AND SUGGESTIONS

- The study reveals that maximum respondents have knowledge on bank savings accounts
- A large section of respondents have knowledge about basic financial instruments like life insurance policies, public provident fund and national saving
- The study observes that some of the respondents are aware about the advance financial instruments like existence of capital market, mutual fund.
- Therefore, it can be recommend that financial literacy or knowledge on finance depends on the age, income, and education of the people. The person belongs to lower income group or having lower level of education restrict them from using financial transaction.
- To improve the current low levels of financial literacy, the government should introduce devise and encourage programs that simplify financial decisionmaking as well as provide sources of reliable financial advice.
- Introduce subject based on finance in the secondary level of education rather than confining only in commerce based higher level of education.
- Develop global guidelines and standards for financial literacy initiatives and consumer protection frameworks in financial markets and help out stakeholders in implementing those rules and standards.

#### 10. CONCLUSION

From the above analyses, it can be concluded that overall financial literacy level among all the respondents is not encouraging. This shows that in our country people are still not much aware about their finance related issues. The results suggest that level of financial literacy varies significantly among respondents based on various demographic and socio-economic factors. It can be concluded that financial literacy level gets affected by education, income, age, and nature of employment and place of work. Overall it can be concluded that financial literacy level is low in our country and necessary measures should be taken by government to increase awareness about financial related matters.

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