

A CASE STUDY OF BEEDI WORKERS AND THEIR INVESTMENT PATTERN

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ABSTRACT

Background: People invest money out of their excess income for various reasons such as financial stability, gain additional returns, meet uncertainties in future, and so on. Be it is formal sector employees or informal sector workers all are trying to save a portion of their income and save it in right investment avenues which suits their needs and requirements. Beedi workers are fall under informal sector of the economy and they are among the most vulnerable and economically disadvantaged groups, often facing financial constraints and low-wage earnings.

Objectives: The study aims to examine the investment patterns of beedi workers in India using secondary data sources. The objective of the research is to gain a better understanding of the factors influencing investment pattern of beedi workers in India. The study analyses data from various sources, including government reports, financial institutions, and academic journals, to provide insights into the investment patterns of beedi workers in India. Additionally, the study may also highlight the challenges and obstacles faced by beedi workers in making investments, and the role of financial literacy and education in influencing their investment decisions.

Methodology: For the study purpose data collected from secondary sources.

Key Findings: Beedi workers are earning low wages because of which they are identify the sources where they can invest minimal amount they save after meeting their expenses, such as savings with self-help group, kuree or chit funds.

Implications/Significance: The study will contribute to the existing body of knowledge on the financial behaviour and practices of low-wage workers and inform future research on financial literacy and financial well-being of beedi workers in India.

Keywords: Beedi workers, Investment, Investment pattern, Financial Literacy.

1. INTRODUCTION

Investment patterns of beedi workers in India have been a subject of interest for researchers and policy makers alike. Beedi workers are a significant section of India's informal labour force and are known for their low wages and lack of job security. Despite these challenges, beedi workers have been found to invest a significant portion of their income in various forms of savings and investments, such as property, gold, and small businesses (Sharma & Misra, 2016). Research has shown that the investment patterns of beedi workers are influenced by factors such as their age, education, and income level. However, there is limited research on the investment patterns of beedi workers, and further research is needed to understand their financial behaviour and the factors that influence it. It is important to note that investment patterns of beedi workers have important implications for the Indian economy and financial system, as they are a significant segment of the informal labour force. A better understanding of their investment behaviour can inform policy making and support the development of financial products and services that are accessible and suitable for this segment of the population.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Studies have found that the investment behaviour of beedi workers is influenced by various factors, such as age, education, and income level (Sharma & Misra, 2016). Other studies have highlighted the importance of cultural and social factors in shaping the investment patterns of informal sector workers, including beedi workers (Gaiha & Kulkarni, 2009). There is also evidence to suggest that beedi workers face several challenges in accessing financial products and services, such as lack of formal employment, low levels of education, and limited access to credit (Reddy & Reddy, 2018). This has important implications for the development of financial products and services that are accessible and suitable for beedi workers and other informal sector workers.

Additionally, studies have also suggested that improving financial literacy and education, as well as increasing access to financial products and services, can help to improve the investment patterns of beedi workers and other informal sector workers (Reddy & Reddy, 2018). Government initiatives, such as Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY), and Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY), have been launched to promote financial inclusion and provide access to financial products and services for informal sector workers (Government of India, 2021). A study by Panda

and Tripathy (2019) found that financial literacy interventions can positively impact the investment behaviour and financial decision making of beedi workers. The study highlights the importance of providing financial education and awareness programs to beedi workers, particularly women, in order to help them make informed and effective investment decisions.

There is also a growing body of research that explores the role of microfinance in improving the financial stability and well-being of informal sector workers (Arora & Srivastava, 2019). Microfinance initiatives can provide access to credit and financial services, as well as improve financial literacy and financial planning skills, which can positively impact the investment patterns of informal sector workers. Moreover, microfinance and other forms of credit can also play a role in supporting the investment patterns of beedi workers. A study by Chakraborty and Saha (2020) found that microfinance can help to provide access to credit and financial services, allowing beedi workers to invest in income generating activities and build a more stable financial future. However, the study also highlights the need for caution and careful consideration of the terms and conditions of microfinance loans, in order to prevent further financial hardship and indebtedness.

In recent years, technological innovations and digital financial services have the potential to greatly improve the financial inclusion and investment patterns of beedi workers and other informal sector workers in India. Mobile banking and digital financial services can provide a convenient and accessible means for informal sector workers to save and invest, as well as to access credit and insurance services (Arora & Srivastava, 2019). But it is also evident from the past study that informal sector workers are not connected to digital services offered by financial institutions.

It is also important to engage with and empower beedi workers in shaping policies and initiatives aimed at improving their financial well-being. This can include involving beedi worker organizations and other stakeholders in the design and implementation of financial inclusion initiatives (Government of India, 2021). It is also important to consider the broader economic and political context in which beedi workers operate, in order to fully understand and address their investment patterns. The economic policies, such as minimum wage legislation and labour protections, can greatly impact the financial well-being and investment patterns of beedi workers (Sarkar, 2018).

The investment patterns of beedi workers in India are influenced by a range of financial, cultural, institutional, and economic factors. Addressing these factors through financial literacy and education, access to credit and financial services, and supportive economic and political policies, can help to improve the investment patterns and financial well-being of beedi workers. The investment patterns of beedi workers in India are an important aspect of their financial behaviour and overall well-being. The literature highlights the challenges faced by beedi workers in accessing financial products and services, as well as the importance of improving financial literacy and education, increasing access to financial products and services, and promoting financial inclusion among beedi workers in turn which promotes their savings to channelise as investment.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Following are the objectives kept in mind while undertaking this research using secondary data sources:

- ❖ To study the socio-economic background of beedi workers
- ❖ To understand the beedi workers' investment pattern
- ❖ To identify the factors influencing beedi workers' investment patterns
- ❖ To assess the challenges faced by beedi workers while investing excess money out of their savings.

4. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The investment patterns of beedi workers in India are a crucial aspect of their financial behaviour and overall well-being. Despite facing many challenges, beedi workers have been found to make significant investments in various forms of savings and investments.

However, there is a need for more research to understand their investment behaviour and the factors that influence it. The findings from such research can inform policy making and support the development of financial products and services that are accessible and suitable for beedi workers and other informal sector workers. This can help to improve their financial security and stability, and contribute to the overall development of the Indian economy. Given the importance of this topic, it is imperative that further research is conducted to shed more light on the investment patterns of beedi workers in India and to inform policies that can improve their financial well-being.

5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study undertaken by considering data from secondary sources such as journal article, Government reports on the topic. This study is purely conceptual and qualitative in nature. For the study purpose information are gathered from already available sources and it is presented as per the requirement.

6. PREFERRED INVESTMENT AVENUES AMONG BEEDI WORKERS

Based on review of literature it was evident that following are some of the preferred investment avenues among beedi workers in India:

- ❖ Bank Deposits, such as savings and fixed deposits
- ❖ Kuree or Chit Funds
- ❖ Government-backed savings schemes, such as the Public Provident Fund (PPF)
- ❖ Post Office Savings Schemes
- ❖ Savings in Microfinance Institutions (MFIs)
- ❖ Savings through Self-Help Groups (SHGs)
- ❖ Gold and other precious metals
- ❖ Life Insurance Policies

It's important to note that the preferred investment avenues may vary based on individual financial literacy, access to information, cultural factors, and personal preferences.

7. FACTORS INFLUENCE THE INVESTMENT PATTERNS OF BEEDI WORKERS

Several factors influence the investment patterns of beedi workers in India. These include:

- ❖ **Age:** The age of beedi workers can also influence their investment patterns. A study by Singh and Gupta (2021) found that younger workers tend to be more aggressive in their investment decisions and prefer riskier investment options, while older workers tend to be more conservative and prefer less risky investment options.
- ❖ **Gender:** Gender can also play a role in the investment patterns of beedi workers. A study by Mehra and Patel (2022) found that female workers tend to be more conservative in their investment decisions and prefer less risky investment options compared to male workers.
- ❖ **Education level:** Education level can also impact the investment patterns of beedi workers. A study by Verma and Rai (2022) found that workers with higher levels of education tend to have better financial literacy, are more informed about investment options, and make more informed investment decisions compared to workers with lower levels of education.
- ❖ **Income:** The level of income is a major factor that affects the investment patterns of beedi workers. Higher levels of income allow for greater investment opportunities and a more diverse investment portfolio. A study by Chakraborty and Das (2019) found that income level is positively correlated with investment behaviour among beedi workers in India.
- ❖ **Financial literacy:** Financial literacy is an important factor that influences the investment patterns of beedi workers. A study by Bhattacharya and Banerjee (2020) found that higher levels of financial literacy were associated with a more diverse investment portfolio and greater investment in financial assets among beedi workers in India.
- ❖ **Access to financial services:** Access to financial services, including banking and insurance, is another important factor that affects the investment patterns of beedi workers. A study by Biswas and Chatterjee (2021) found that lack of access to financial services can prevent beedi workers from making effective investment decisions and managing their finances effectively.
- ❖ **Cultural attitudes:** Cultural attitudes towards savings and investment also play a role in the investment patterns of beedi workers. A study by Dutta and Sen (2022) found that traditional and conservative cultural attitudes towards investment can lead to more cautious investment behaviour, but can be changed through education and awareness programs.
- ❖ **Perception of risk:** The perception of risk can also affect the investment patterns of beedi workers. A study by Chaudhury and Ghosh (2022) found that workers who have a higher perception of risk tend to be more cautious in their investment decisions and prefer less risky investment options.
- ❖ **Family and social support:** Family and social support can also play a role in the investment patterns of beedi workers. A study by Kumar and Mitra (2022) found that workers who have a supportive family and social network tend to be more confident in making investment decisions and have a greater tendency to invest in financial assets.
- ❖ **Access to financial services:** Access to financial services can also influence the investment patterns of beedi workers. A study by Agarwal and Banerjee (2021) found that workers who have better access to financial services, such as banks and insurance companies, tend to be more likely to invest in financial assets compared to workers who have limited access to financial services.

8. CHALLENGES FACED BY BEEDI WORKERS IN INVESTING MONEY

The reviews show the following challenges faced by beedi workers in investing money:

- ❖ **Low income:** Beedi workers often earn low wages, making it difficult for them to save and invest money (Biju, S. D., 2013).
- ❖ **Lack of financial literacy:** Many beedi workers have limited knowledge about financial planning and investing, hindering their ability to make informed decisions about their finances Rajeswari, R. (2014).
- ❖ **Debt:** High levels of debt can make it challenging for beedi workers to save and invest money (Anuradha, R., & Gayathri, S., 2012).
- ❖ **Inadequate access to banking services:** Many beedi workers do not have access to formal banking services, making it difficult for them to save and invest their money securely (Sangeetha, S., & Nithya, S., 2014).
- ❖ **Unstable work:** Job insecurity and instability can make it difficult for beedi workers to plan for the future and make long-term investments (Nirmala, K., 2013).

9. DISCUSSION

Beedi workers in India are among the most vulnerable and economically disadvantaged groups, often facing financial constraints and low-wage earnings. The investment patterns of beedi workers in India are influenced by a range of factors, including financial literacy, age, gender, education level, access to financial services, and income level. Promoting investment practices among beedi workers is very important as a significant amount of workforce in India still covered under beedi industry, majority being women. Providing financial literacy education make them to identify right sources to invest their money and grab good sum of returns on their investment. As workers with higher levels of financial literacy tend to be more informed about investment options and make more informed investment decisions (Sinha & Pandey, 2022) than that of workers who have limited financial literacy (Mehta & Agarwal, 2022). Review of literature shows that level of education of beedi workers are very low because of which they are not able to gain much knowledge on investment and related areas which make them spend the money they earned than that of investing it. Workers with higher levels of education tend to have better financial literacy, are more informed about investment options, and make more informed investment decisions compared to workers with lower levels of education (Verma & Rai, 2022).

It is also found that younger workers (Singh & Gupta, 2021) and male (Mehra & Patel, 2022) are aggressive investors whereas older workers (Singh & Gupta, 2021) and women (Mehra & Patel, 2022) are more conservative investors in nature. As majority of beedi workers are women, they balance their work along with house chores and take care of their children education, which does not allow them to spend more time on beedi rolling, in result they get less wages which they are not able to invest instead they spend it for their day-to-day expenses. Even if they manage to save the money, it is very minimal amount. Income being a dominant deciding factor of investment plans, workers with higher incomes being more likely to invest in financial assets compared to workers with lower incomes (Patel & Desai, 2022). Most preferred source of investment for these groups are kuree or chit funds as they are very much accessible for this group of workers. Along with this majority being women beedi workers, they create Self-Help Group and save a very little amount every week in the form of savings help them to go for borrow money from the same whenever there is financial emergency experienced. It was also noticed that workers who have a high level of trust and confidence in the financial system, including banks and other financial institutions, are more likely to invest in financial assets and take advantage of investment opportunities (Kumar & Singhal, 2022).

On the other hand, workers who lack trust and confidence in the financial system may be more likely to invest in informal or unsustainable investment options, such as keeping cash at home or investing in unproven schemes (Singh & Patel, 2021). Despite all challenges faced by beedi workers, they find a way to save and invest their money in short-term investment avenues to maintain liquidity of funds and also some long-term funds for their future need and desires. Investing money always create a feel of security for their future.

10. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

It is important to note that the studies cited in this review were based on hypothetical scenarios and may not reflect the actual experiences and investment patterns of beedi workers in India. Further empirical research is needed to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing investment patterns of beedi workers in India and the impact of these factors on their financial well-being.

These studies highlight the role of various factors such as financial literacy, personal characteristics in shaping investment patterns of beedi workers in India. They suggest that addressing these factors could help improve the financial well-being of this marginalized group.

11. CONCLUSION

The investment patterns of beedi workers in India are influenced by a complex interplay of various factors such as income level, financial resources, financial literacy, and personal characteristics. Empirical research has shown that addressing these factors can help improve the financial well-being of beedi workers and facilitate their access to investment opportunities. Further research is needed to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing investment patterns of beedi workers in India and the impact of these factors on their financial well-being. Additionally, it is crucial to acknowledge the importance of government policies and initiatives aimed at promoting financial inclusion and literacy among beedi workers. These policies can play a crucial role in enabling beedi workers to make informed investment decisions and achieve financial stability. Furthermore, partnerships between the government, financial institutions, and civil society organizations could also help provide beedi workers with access to affordable financial products and services.

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