

Factors Affecting Women's Estate Planning Needs: A Quantitative Survey

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Abstract: *Estate planning is arrangement for the management and distribution of one's assets and wealth after death or in the event of incapacity. It involves creating legally binding documents such as wills, trusts, powers of attorney, and advance directives to ensure that an individual's wishes regarding their property, financial affairs, and healthcare decisions are carried out according to their preferences. It is essential for individuals of all ages and income levels to engage in estate planning to protect themselves and their families in the event of incapacity or death. Consulting with legal and financial professionals can help individuals create a comprehensive estate plan tailored to their specific needs and goals. This study investigates the factors like longer life expectancy, wage gap and career interruptions, Asset ownership and control, Family dynamics and care giving responsibilities, protecting children and heirs that contribute to the necessity for estate planning among women where surveys will be conducted to gather data from a diverse sample of 216 women. The study will examine demographic factors such as age, marital status, educational level, and family structure and conduct the t - test to determine their influence of different on women's estate planning needs. By addressing these factors, stakeholders can develop targeted strategies and educational resources to empower women to make informed decisions about their financial futures and legacy planning.*

Keywords: Estate planning, financial planning, financial security, wealth management, women in estate planning

1. Introduction

Men and women often show differences in investment behaviour, with women generally considered more conservative investors. In rural areas, women may face challenges such as lower confidence levels, increased financial concerns, limited knowledge, and a higher likelihood of spending without proper financial education. Recognizing the importance of financial literacy in adults, it serves as a foundation for crucial financial decisions encompassing credit utilization, savings, investments, retirement planning, insurance choices, and estate planning (Rani, 2017). Estate planning, is a vital financial tool, that empowers individuals to manage their wealth in the event of incapacitation or death. Despite numerous studies on estate planning, there is a need for a systematic review of its measurements. Estate planning encompasses financial planning, wealth distribution, and succession planning, with determinants primarily stemming from demographic and behavioural factors. Efforts to comprehensively understand and address estate planning considerations remain essential (Basir, Ahmad & Rahman, 2023). Both men and women should have the right to a comprehensive education. In modern households, women play a significant role in financial decision - making, including aspects like savings, investments, retirement planning, insurance and utilization, and estate planning. Women are increasingly taking charge of rational resource allocation rather than just focusing on the level of savings. Financial engagement is becoming universal, with individuals participating in various money - building activities. Investment opportunities abound, including bank and post - office schemes, insurance benefits, government issues, real estate, and commodity market products (Megha, Saha, Agarwal & Pareek, 2023). The desire for financial independence and security is particularly obvious among working women. They like to invest their money and savings purposefully to navigate potential challenges at any stage of their lives. Working women have a diverse range of

investment options at their disposal, such as mutual funds, shares, insurance, children's education plans, banking, gold, real estate, and postal services. These options cater to different objectives, including profit generation, security, appreciation, and income stability (Gangwani & Mazyad, 2020). In India, the access to inheritance rights for women is a recent development. Despite the importance of ensuring equal property rights for both genders to address gender disparities, women continue to encounter discrimination in formal, informal, and customary systems when it comes to owning ancestral property. Throughout history, Indian women have very less opportunities and rights to inherit their ancestral land or property. In contrast to Hindu traditional laws, the Muslim Personal Law grants women the right to inherit, with a daughter's inheritance being equal to half of her brother's share of their father's estate. Under the Christian Succession Act, both male and female children inherit property equally. This legislation ensures that daughters have an equal right of inheritance alongside any brothers in their father's or mother's estate if the parents pass away without a will (Kumari, 2019). The recognition of women's right to property is a crucial development issue, with implications for decision - making, income pooling, acquisition, and the overall societal role of women. The Hindu Succession Act of 1956 has significantly enhanced women's rights to property. The previous concept of women inheriting a limited estate has been abolished, and now women are entitled to an absolute estate similar to men when they inherit property (Shivamma, 2018).

2. Literature Review

Basah and Tahir (2019) highlighted the importance of asset transfer during one's lifetime or at death, author also emphasized the crucial role of "estate planning" in individual and family financial management. A considerable number of individuals, particularly women, often lack the necessary knowledge to navigate the legal complexities associated with

asset transfers. The essential document in this decision - making process is a 'will,' which forms the foundation for transferring assets after death. Estates typically encompass various assets such as cash, clothing, jewellery, cars, houses, land, as well as retirement, investment, and savings accounts.

Mishra (2019) revealed the challenges faced by women who take career breaks due to childbirth or childcare responsibilities. Many of these women, upon returning to work, encounter the frightening task of restarting their careers. Financial and estate planning emerges as a crucial tool in addressing these challenges, that offers advantages such as promoting financial wellness, ensuring financial security at every life stage, maximizing personal wealth, and safeguarding income and assets through appropriate insurance planning. It involves planning for liquidity to meet diverse contingencies, building an investment portfolio based on risk - return profiles, addressing debt and liability financing, and securing a sound retirement. Author also emphasizes the wider scope of financial planning, about not only immediate financial concerns but also long - term considerations such as estate planning.

Yeo, Lim & Yii (2023) studied that perceived behavioural control is expressed through financial literacy, mental accounting, and financial cognition. The influence of financial satisfaction and financial socialization is channelled through financial literacy, which is influenced by the ability to conduct mental accounting and the aptitude for financial cognition. These elements collectively influence an individual's inclination to participate in financial planning. This intention, in turn, drives the actual practice of financial planning, encompassing six key facets: cash flow planning, tax planning, investment planning, risk management, estate planning, and retirement planning. Financial planning goes beyond merely understanding and predicting individual financial behaviours. It spans a wide range of activities aimed at improving an individual's economic well - being, from managing cash flow to estate planning for the future through estate planning and retirement planning.

Genders & Steen (2017) stated that digital assets, broadly defined as assets accessible and stored in digital form online, have historically been neglected in the domain of estate planning and administration. Challenges arise in this context because of the typical service agreement between users and operator sat digital platform, which explicitly state that agreement relates exclusively to registered users and the operators. Legislative requirements such as the Best Interest Duty for financial planner's face obstacles in compliance, primarily stemming from the absence of sufficient commanding values for managing digital assets within the estate planning and client administration.

Dhandayuthapani & Dhandayuthapani (2023) revealed that estate planning plays a crucial role in the lives of every individual, regardless of gender. However, women in the workforce face some challenges in managing their finances. Effective estate planning for working women includes both short - term objectives such as repayment of debt and saving for vacations, as well as long - term goals like home ownership and retirement. Developing financial plans for future savings requires a detailed consideration of current

income, expenses, savings, insurance, and long - term financial aspirations. In addition to aiding savings, financial planning also serves as a strategic tool for tax purposes, especially for working women. A comprehensive estate planning process involves the identification of financial targets, adjusting for inflation, and formulating investment plans to achieve those targets. To attain their financial goals and secure their future, working women must prioritize estate planning. Women need to address specific healthcare considerations. Advanced healthcare directives can be essential components of estate planning. This involves setting clear financial objectives, creating budgets, saving for retirement, managing debt, making informed investments, and seeking expert financial advice when necessary. It is crucial for women to prioritize their financial security, take control of their financial destinies, and acquire knowledge about personal finance to make informed decisions. By following these guidelines, working women can establish a robust financial foundation and enhance their financial security both now and in the future.

Ismail et al. (2013) found that estate planning includes the preparation for the transfer of one's properties and possessions after death. Five key factors have been identified as significant determinants in this process are knowledge about estate planning, media awareness, observations of estate planning, influence of family, and belief in religion and ethics. The findings of the study suggest that these factors play critical roles in shaping attitudes of an individual toward estate planning. Particularly, knowledge about estate planning appears as the most influential predictor that affects attitude. Estate planning provides an opportunity to include charitable giving in their legacy and ensure that their philanthropic goals are met. This study contributes to existing knowledge by providing alternative perspectives on the determinants influencing attitudes toward estate planning.

Mui'zz Abdullah et al. (2020) found that systematic estate planning is a critical process that ensures optimum utilization of collected assets through a lifetime of a person, particularly for the benefit of their beneficiaries. It is evident that individuals must have a complete understanding of estate planning from the beginning. Delays in estate planning have given rise to many consequences, that emphasizes the requirement for proactive measures. It is important to challenge the usual stigma in community and beliefs that exclusively associate Islamic inheritance with post - death distribution of asset. Therefore, complete planning, considering various sides and steps have becomes important, especially within the context of property distribution. Addressing these considerations, it is essential to navigate the details of estate planning to ensure a seamless transition of assets for future generations.

Toygar, Rohm & Zhu (2013) revealed that this paper researches into the domain of Islamic estate planning as a vital element within the broader scope of financial planning, explaining its deep implications on individuals and the broader societal fabric. The main focus of the study is to examine the current practices and behavioural factors that shape Islamic estate planning. Estate planners meet various challenges concerning digital assets, foremost among them being the identification and valuation of these assets. An

assembly of digital assets, that possess both monetary as well as sentimental value, demand careful consideration. While the monetary value of online bank accounts is easily ascertainable, determining the value of other digital assets poses more intricate challenges.

Gill et al. (2017) Intestate deaths, which occur when individuals pass away without a will, can result in the distribution of assets contrary to the deceased's preferences, posing a significant issue in India where approximately 80% of people do not create a last will. Clear estate planning can help ensure that their wishes are carried out and that all family members are appropriately provided coverage. Those who practice meditation exhibit a more positive outlook on estate planning compared to non - meditators. Factors such as assets, family size, location, education, and gender are identified as positive influencers on estate planning decisions in the Indian context. On the contrary, income, age, size of family, level of education, and gender of participants positively affect level of asset of an individual, while marital status and location show a negative impact on asset levels. This disagreement may be attributed to asset distribution within family's post - marriage and variations in asset levels between urban and rural settings.

Study's Objectives

- 1) To know the Factors affecting the need for Estate Planning for women.
- 2) To ascertain factors that determine the requirement of Estate Planning.

Methodology of the Study

The study is empirical in nature. 216 is the sample size. Structured questionnaire was prepared to collect the data. Mean and t - test was applied to find the outcome of this research. Convenience sampling is the method of sampling.

3. Result of Demographics

Table 1. Show respondent's Age details, 26–30years are 33.80%, 30– 34years are 28.70%, and those who are above 34 years are 37.50%. With regards to Marital Status, 40.28% are single, 27.78% are married, and 31.94% are separated. Looking at the educational level, graduates are 35.65%, post - graduates are 27.31% and professionals are 37.04%. About family structure of participants, 55.09% are from joint families, and 44.91% are from nuclear families.

Table 1: Details of Participants

Variables	Number of Respondents	%
Age		
26–30years	73	33.80
30 – 34years	62	28.70
Above 34 years	81	37.50
Total	216	100
Marital Status		
Single	87	40.28
Married	60	27.78
Separated	69	31.94
Total	216	100
Educational Level		
Graduate	77	35.65
Post - Graduate	59	27.31
Professional	80	37.04
Total	216	100
Family Structure		
Joint Family	119	55.09
Nuclear Family	97	44.91
Total	216	100

Table 2: Factors affecting the need for Estate Planning for Women

Serial No.	Statement of Survey	Mean	T - Value	Sig.
1.	Women having a longer life span compared to men, they must plan for a longer retirement period ensuring their assets are sufficient to support them	4.21	18.096	0.000
2.	Estate planning becomes vital to ensure there are provisions for dependents and to manage potential caregiving responsibilities	4.29	19.415	0.000
3.	Proper estate planning helps in determining how these assets will be distributed, minimizing probable conflicts or legal issues	4.10	16.819	0.000
4.	For business women, proper estate planning is vital to ensure the smooth transfer of business assets and continuity of business operations	4.17	17.528	0.000
5.	Women need to address specific healthcare considerations. Advanced healthcare directives can be vital elements of estate planning	4.13	17.207	0.000
6.	Clear estate planning can help ensure that their wishes are carried out and that all family members are properly provided coverage	4.03	15.420	0.000
7.	Estate planning involve strategies for protecting assets, including considerations for potential creditors, claims, or divorce	4.23	18.588	0.000
8.	Estate planning provides an opportunity to include charitable giving in their legacy ensuring that their charitable goals are met	4.09	16.545	0.000
9.	A kind estate plan lets you hire guardians for minor children, or to set up complete financial guidelines for the asset distribution	3.15	2.249	0.013
10.	Women often want to maintain family harmony after their death which makes it more important to have a well - prepared estate plan	3.19	2.899	0.002

Table 2. Shows mean value of “Factors affecting the need for Estate Planning for Women” the first statement is Women having a longer life span compared to men, they must plan for a longer retirement period ensuring their assets are sufficient

to support them with the mean score of 4.21, Estate planning becomes vital to ensure there are provisions for dependents and to manage potential care giving responsibilities is the second statement with mean value of 4.29, Proper estate

planning helps in determining how these assets will be distributed, minimizing probable conflicts or legal issues has scored mean value of 4.10. Fourth statement is, for business women, proper estate planning is vital to ensure the smooth transfer of business assets and continuity of business operations it has scored mean value of 4.17, fifth statement is Women need to address specific healthcare considerations. Advanced healthcare directives can be vital elements of estate planning with the mean of 4.13, next statement is Clear estate planning can help ensure that their wishes are carried out and that all family members are properly provided coverage the mean is 4.03. Estate planning involve strategies for protecting assets, including considerations for potential creditors, claims, or divorce is the seventh statement that have scored the mean value of 4.23, Estate planning provides an opportunity to include charitable giving in their legacy ensuring that their charitable goals are met with the mean value of 4.09. The last two statements are A kind estate plan lets you hire guardians for minor children, or to set up complete financial guidelines for the asset distribution and Women often want to maintain family harmony after their death which makes it more important to have a well - prepared estate plan with the mean score of 3.15 and 3.19 respectively. T - value of survey statements in context of Factors affecting the need for Estate Planning for Women are identified as significant as t - value of all statements are positive and significant as significant value is less than 0.05.

4. Conclusion

Effective estate planning is strongly correlated with sound money management, strategic investment planning, and comprehensive financial preparation. The impact of age, marital status, education, and family structure is noteworthy, demonstrating a significant influence on estate planning behaviours. When examining the moderating effects of age and income on the link between attitudes toward personal financial planning and retirement planning behaviors, only age emerged as a significant influencer, particularly in relation to attitudes toward estate planning. Surprisingly, individuals with lower attitudes toward estate planning, especially among the older age group, exhibited a higher likelihood of engaging in estate planning behaviours compared to their younger counterparts. Moreover, age was observed to partially moderate the relationship within the proposed framework, specifically in the context of estate planning. It is crucial to underscore the importance of estate planning in providing for dependents and addressing potential caregiving responsibilities. While this study sheds light on certain factors, it is plausible that there are additional variables yet to be explored within this research framework. T - value of survey statements in context of Factors affecting the need for Estate Planning for Women are identified as significant as t - value of all statements are positive and significant as significant value is less than 0.05.

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