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Psychological Pathways to Personal Financial Management Behaviour among School Teachers - A Serial Mediation Approach

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Abstract

Background: The study is based on Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) and used psychological factors, including financial attitude (FA), locus of control (LOC) and financial self-efficacy (FSE) and their implications to the personal financial management behaviour (PFMB). A fast-emerging nation like India does not have the in-depth research on such psychological factors influencing financial behaviour particularly among teachers in school, as they are the key actors who develop future generations.

Methodology: The sample size of 514 high school teachers who are teaching in public sector schools in Kerala, India. The data collected during August 2023-March 2024 has used for analysis and the hypotheses related to the study were measured using Structural Equation Modelling (SEM).

Results: The results showed that there was a considerable immediate effect of FA on PFMB. The mediating effect of FSE on PFMB was stronger as compared to the impact of LOC. These factors also act as serial mediators which proves that there is a relation between FA, FSE, LOC and PFMB.

Conclusion: The research highlights that the psychological mechanism that creates belief in teachers to handle their money effectively. Further, the study points out how it implied to policyholders, government and teacher training institutes to focus on these factors to enhance the financial behaviour of the teachers.

Keywords: Personal Financial Management Behaviour, Psychological Factors, Teachers, Serial Mediation, Structural Equation Modelling, India



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INTRODUCTION

With globalism and liberalism, individuals have eminent responsibility in the management of their money and wealth.¹ Intertemporal choices such as retirement savings or debt payments or investments in education have a preeminent impact on individual financial well-being and quality of life.² As it can be frequently seen, these decisions can be affected by different biases in behaviour. The debate to promote healthy financial decision-making have been increased due to various reasons like instable financial market situation, increase in inflation rates, and rapid growth of new financial products and services.³ Hence, personal financial planning becomes quite fundamental in terms of stability and fulfilling future financial requirements.^{4,5} The budgeting, saving, investing, and retirement planning have become important in securing financial security.⁶ Previous studies have demonstrated that a good financial management competence enable individuals not to hit debts or overspend.⁷ No doubt positive financial behaviours have close relationship with increased financial happiness.⁸

There comes the role of financial education as it enhances financial literacy, which is essential for informed choice-making for low-income individuals, especially from developing economies.⁹ Earlier and consistent exposure instils better financial behaviours. Therefore, the financial awareness of teachers is critical to responsibly teach financial topics to students and create responsible financial behaviour among them in future. Further it also proved the role of FSE, perceived financial knowledge, and financial behaviour in improving financial proficiency of teachers.¹⁰

The working adults or pre-retirees have less financial knowledge, and they also perform appallingly in terms of managing their finances as it leads to reduced standards in living after workplace.⁴ The lack of financial skills and knowledge is an alarming problem among the global issues that have become especially evident in developing countries.¹¹ The teachers are often put under significant financial strain because of low wages, rising living expenses, and economic aspects of professional growth and classroom supplies. Unfortunately, only a quarter of higher education institutions teachers are more financially numeracy, which emphasizes the need to get a better educational experience in finances.¹¹ Nevertheless, poor financial literacy among teachers, particularly, investment and insurance, may have a major influence, as it can influence their financial choices, planning, and productivity, in general.¹² On the one hand

this has adverse implications on cash management behaviour of the teachers.

The current study investigates the influence of financial attitude (FA), financial self-efficacy (FSE), and locus of control (LOC) on personal financial management behaviour (PFMB), particularly among high school teachers. Focusing on permanent teachers in public schools in Kerala, the research underlines an important gap in their financial behaviour, a concern given their influence on the financial knowledge and habits of the students. By analysing these psychological parameters, the study aims to understand their role in enhancing financial behaviour among school educators.

Theoretical Background: Over time, Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) has transpired as a foremost widely acknowledged and cogent theoretical framework for understanding human behaviour.¹³ As it is indicated the three major factors: attitude, perceived behavioural control, and subjective norms influence an individual's intent to involve in a certain behaviour. Attitude refers to the extent to which an individual gauges a behaviour positively or negatively. Subjective norms constitute the perceived societal pressure to perform or avoid the behaviour, and perceived behavioural control reflects the perceived ease or difficulty of executing the behaviour, influenced by past experiences and anticipated obstacles. Notably, perceived behavioural control can significantly impact both intentions and actions. Within TPB, perceived behavioural control and self-efficacy are closely related, as both pertain to an individual's perception of their capacity to complete a behaviour or chain of behaviours.¹⁴ Research suggests that perceived behavioural control can be explained using 2 key components: (1) self-efficacy, which mirrors the perceived easiness or challenge to execute a behaviour, and (2) controllability, which contemplates the range to which the behaviour is under the individual's control.¹⁴ Although TPB has been expanded and validated in a range of scenarios, its application based solely on psychological factors remains limited and underexplored. So, unpacking perceived behavioural control in to 2 constituent components of financial self-efficacy and locus of control can be recognized as unique contribution of internal and external constraints. Hence, this study employs a revised version of TPB, independently considering attitudes, self-efficacy, and locus of control as predictors of behaviour. It is the first attempt to treat financial self-

efficacy and locus of control—considered components of perceived behavioural control—as independent variables to examine their influence on behaviour.¹⁴ Majorly here, FA, FSE, and LOC are explored as key factors in which FSE and LOC are considered as mediators which influences high school teachers' PFMB. The Figure 1 further describes the framework of the study. Here, the FA, FSE and LOC has direct relation with PFMB while FSE and LOC has indirect effect between FA and PFMB.

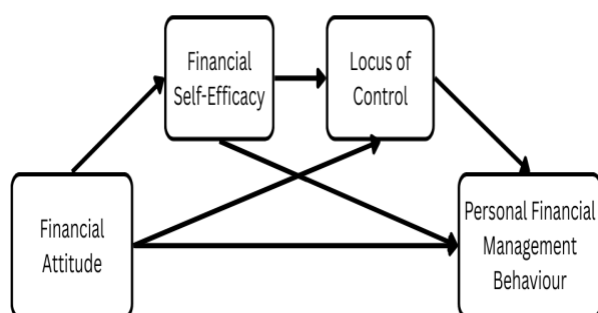


Figure 1. Framework of the Study

Hypotheses Development

FA and PFMB

Financial attitude can be expounded as an individual's orientation toward finance-related matters, reflecting their ability to plan and effectively manage savings.¹⁵ It influences how individuals perceive and manage money, with a positive financial attitude promoting better money management skills.¹⁶ It is further explain that these attitudes are shaped when thoughts, views, and judgments about personal finance are applied to one's mindset and behaviour.¹⁷ Research indicates that FA positively influences financial behaviour across various groups, including students and employees, highlighting that a favourable financial mindset fosters better financial decision-making.^{18,19} Also, studies suggest that individuals with positive financial attitudes engage in better financial practices, while a negative attitude can hinder effective financial management.²⁰ So, applying financial principles to initiate and sustain value through optimal resource allocation and management decisions helps in determining an individual's financial behaviour.²¹ Thus, it is suggested to propose the following hypothesis;

H1: FA has substantial positive impact on teachers' PFMB.

FSE and PFMB

Self-efficacy denotes to an individual's belief in their capacity to perform the behaviours required to achieve certain outcomes. Applying the notion of self-efficacy to personal finance management suggests individuals with higher confidence in their financial abilities are more inclined to view financial difficulties as obstacles to overcome, rather than as risks to evade.^{22,23} It positively influences students' financial behaviour, empowering them to make informed financial decisions and manage their resources efficiently.²⁴ It plays a critical role in personal finance by enhancing an individual's ability to navigate challenges such as taking out online loans and managing money responsibly while also positively influencing debt management strategies.^{25,26} Further women with greater FSE show big confidence in their financial management abilities and are more likely to invest in savings products and are less prone to rely on debt-related products.²⁷ Hence, it arrived at the following hypothesis;

H2: FSE has pronounced positive effect on teachers' PFMB.

LOC and PFMB

The level of control an individual exerts over their ability and their beliefs regarding their achievements is known as locus of control. Individuals who believe in their ability to solve financial problems are more likely to enhance their financial management skills and make informed financial decisions.²⁸ People who possess an internal LOC tend to take initiative in managing their finances by setting clear financial goals, developing budgets, consistently saving, and making thoughtful investment choices.²⁹ Driven by the belief that their efforts will lead to favourable financial results, they actively manage their resources and take steps to ensure long-term financial security.³⁰ Thus, the hypothesis stated here is;

H3: LOC has a significant positive impact on teachers' PFMB.

Mediating role of FSE and LOC

Research highlights, FSE as a key mediator between financial socialization and financial behaviour in young adults, indicating that stronger FSE enhances positive financial behaviours shaped by family financial socialization, ultimately influencing overall financial outcomes.³¹ Studies suggest that individuals with higher financial literacy tend to exhibit greater FSE, leading to

improved financial management and investment decisions.³² Additionally, FSE mediates the relationship between FA and financial behaviour, reinforcing the direct impact of FA on behaviour while strengthening this connection.³³ On the other hand, LOC also plays a crucial role as a mediator in various psychological and behavioural contexts, shaping the relationships between different factors and their outcomes. Studies show that when combined with financial literacy, LOC significantly impacts financial behaviour among students and market traders, suggesting that a strong sense of control over financial outcomes enhances financial management.³⁴ Specifically, FSE mediates the relationship by transforming attitude to sense of competence which creates the confidence in executing financial behaviour while LOC helps to create a mindset where individual view financial outcomes as manageable rather than accidental. Together, FSE and LOC bridge that translates a teachers' attitude in to sustained execution of management behaviour. Hence, this study delivers the following hypotheses;

H4: FSE mediates the relationship between FA and PFMB of high school teachers.

H5: LOC mediates the relationship between FA and PFMB of high school teachers.

H6: FSE and LOC serially mediate the link between FA and PFMB of high school teachers.

The researcher scrutinizes the influence of psychological factors like FA, FSE, and LOC on PFMB. It majorly examines the immediate relationship between FA and PFMB, followed by the effects of FSE and LOC on PFMB. Then explores the mediating role of FSE on FA and LOC, as well as between FA and PFMB. Also answers the mediating effect of LOC in the relationships between FSE and PFMB, and FA and PFMB. Finally, the study evaluates the serial mediation effect of FSE and LOC in the relationship between FA and PFMB.

METHODOLOGY

Study Design: The cross-sectional research design was employed with a questionnaire-based approach to explore the mediating role of psychological factors among school educators in Kerala, India. Data collection took place between August 2023 and March 2024, with participants selected based on the criterion of permanent employment. The questionnaire was structured into three sections. In the first section, participants confirmed their eligibility based on the inclusion criteria. Only those who responded 'Yes' proceeded to the

subsequent sections. The second section assessed FA, FSE, LOC, and PFMB through a series of statements. The final section gathered demographic information, including gender, age, marital status, education level, years of work experience, number of dependents, and income level. The sample size was calculated from the total population of permanent high school teachers in public sector schools in Kerala during academic year 2023-2024, which was 42,989. Using Yamane's formula, the required sample size was determined to be 396 which was calculated at 95% confidence level with 5% error margin.³⁵

Sampling Procedure: The sample consisted of public sector high school teachers instructing classes 8 to 10 in Kerala, India. A multi-stage stratified proportionate sampling technique was initially employed, followed by simple random sampling for participant selection. The 14 districts of Kerala were divided into three major zones South, Central and North where the district with higher number of schools from each zones are selected. Hence, Thiruvananthapuram (South Zone), Ernakulam (Central Zone), and Malappuram (North Zone) are selected, as these districts have a higher concentration of schools. Within each selected district, further stratification was conducted based on District Educational Offices (DEO), selecting the DEOs with the highest number of schools: Thiruvananthapuram DEO (n=78), Aluva DEO (n=96), and Malappuram DEO (n=69). The required sample size of 396 was proportionally distributed across these DEOs which makes necessary samples from each selected districts as Thiruvananthapuram (n=127.11), Ernakulam (n=156.44) and Malappuram (n=112.44). To facilitate data collection these numbers are rounded to the nearest multiple of 10, finalizing the sample size at 410: Thiruvananthapuram (n=130), Ernakulam (n=160), and Malappuram (n=120). A total of 600 questionnaire was circulated i.e. 200 each for 3 districts to avoid potential non-response bias, incomplete surveys and outliers which are common issues of self-reported data. But only 545 were received back creating a response rate of 90.8%, of which 514 were deemed valid for analysis as remaining 31 surveys were having incomplete responses making it 85.7% valid response rate. This guarantee that final usable dataset remains well above the required power analysis requirement even after rigorous data cleaning.

Measures: FA was determined using six items acclimated, which have statements such as "I can afford

to put money aside for future spending now.”¹ FSE was ascertained using five items adapted which include statements such as “I have confidence in my ability to manage my finances.”³⁶ LOC was calculated using five items adapted which include statements like “My financial situation depends on my control of the problem.”³⁷ While PFMB was assessed using 11 items, including statements such as “I always stayed within my budget or spending plan.”³⁸ A 5-point Likert scale was used to rate each item, with 1 indicating strongly disagree and 5 indicating strongly agree.

RESULTS

Descriptives: The sample included 115 male and 399 female respondents. Among them, 44% were aged between 41 and 50 years, while 90.7% were married. Additionally, 72.6% held a postgraduate degree, 27% had 5–10 years of work experience, and 55.3% had more than three dependents. Regarding income, 36.8% of respondents reported an annual income between ₹5 lakh and ₹7.5 lakh. The comprehensive demographic composition of the respondents is presented in Table 1.

Table 1 – Demographics

Characteristics		Freq uenc y (n)	Perce ntage %
Gender	Male	115	22.4
	Female	399	77.6
Age	Below 30 Years	40	7.7
	30-40 Years	173	33.7
	41-50 Years	226	44
	Above 50Years	75	14.6
Marital	Married	466	90.7
Status	Unmarried	33	6.4
	Divorced	11	2.1
	Widowed	4	0.8
Educational	Graduate	141	27.4
Qualification	Post-graduate	373	72.6
Years of Work	Less than 5 years	121	23.5
	5-10 years	139	27.1
	11-15 years	130	25.3
Experience	More than 15 years	124	24.1
Dependents of Family	0	19	3.6
	1	62	12.1
	2	149	29
	3 or more	284	55.3
Annual Income	Less than 5 lakhs	138	26.8
	5 -7.5 lakhs	189	36.8

7.6 – 10 lakhs	153	29.8
More than 10 lakhs	34	6.6

Sample Validity, Reliability, and EFA: The collected data was analysed using SPSS 25. All constructs exhibited strong internal consistency with Cronbach’s alpha and composite reliability (CR) values ranging between 0.78 and 0.87. Additionally, as presented in Table 2, convergent validity for all the constructs falls within the limit. Based on earlier studies, convergent validity may still be considered acceptable when the AVE falls below 0.5, provided the CR is above 0.6.^{39,1} Convergent and discriminant validity are confirmed in this study, as all constructs reported CR values above 0.7. HTMT values remained below the 0.85 threshold.⁴⁰(Table 3).

Before testing the hypotheses, the researchers conducted an Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) to uncover the inherent structure of the variables. This analysis was performed to group unique items based on factor loadings and cross-loadings, as shown in Table 2, allowing for an assessment of the correlations between the items of the three independent variables and the dependent variable. A Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) value is 0.854 which is greater than 0.80 and a Bartlett’s chi square value is 4075.244 which has p-value of less than 0.05 imply that the dataset exhibited sufficient scale variance (above 50%) and demonstrated significant correlations among the study variables. The factor loadings from the EFA of the 20 items, obtained after varimax rotation, confirmed the unidimensionality of the items. Each item exhibited a strong association with one of the four identified factors, as indicated by their positive values, which are above 0.5, manifesting a high degree of influence in their corresponding constructs. Each item demonstrated a strong association with one of the four identified factors, as indicated by their positive factor loadings, all exceeding 0.5, confirming their significance within their respective constructs. However, as presented in Table 2, one item from the FA construct i.e. FA2, one from the LOC construct i.e. LOC1, and five from the PFMB construct i.e. PFMB1, PFMB2, PFMB3, PFMB9, and PFMB11 were removed due to low factor loadings below 0.5. The removed items were either too diverse in nature or create semantic noise. But irrespective of this, the content validity remains intact as the remaining items still capture the core theoretical domain of each construct.

Table 2 – Items used for Assessment of Measurement Model

Constructs/Items	Factor Loading	Cronbach's Alpha	CR	AVE
<i>FA (She et al., 2021)</i>		0.785	0.785	0.478
FA1	0.768			
FA3	0.794			
FA4	0.773			
FA5	0.735			
<i>FSE (Lown, 2012)</i>		0.877	0.877	0.589
FSE1	0.785			
FSE2	0.780			
FSE3	0.836			
FSE4	0.818			
FSE5	0.815			
<i>LOC (Sumarwan and Hira, 1993)</i>		0.818	0.822	0.543
LOC2	0.712			
LOC3	0.772			
LOC4	0.864			
LOC5	0.832			
<i>PFMB (Dew and Xiao, 2011)</i>		0.865	0.865	0.518
PFMB4	0.747			
PFMB5	0.746			
PFMB6	0.797			
PFMB7	0.792			
PFMB8	0.754			
PFMB10	0.710			

Common Method Bias (CMB)

Table 3 – HTMT Matrix

Constructs	1	2	3
1. FA			
2. FSE	0.179		
3. LOC	0.166	0.209	
4. PFMB	0.327	0.296	0.235

Harman's single-factor test was conducted to understand that the data collected was not affected by CMB.⁴¹ An EFA using principal axis factoring without rotation was done, where all the items were loaded into a single factor portraying a variance of 22.78%. It is well below the 50% threshold, indicating that CMB did not pose an issue in this research.

Measurement and Structural Model Analysis

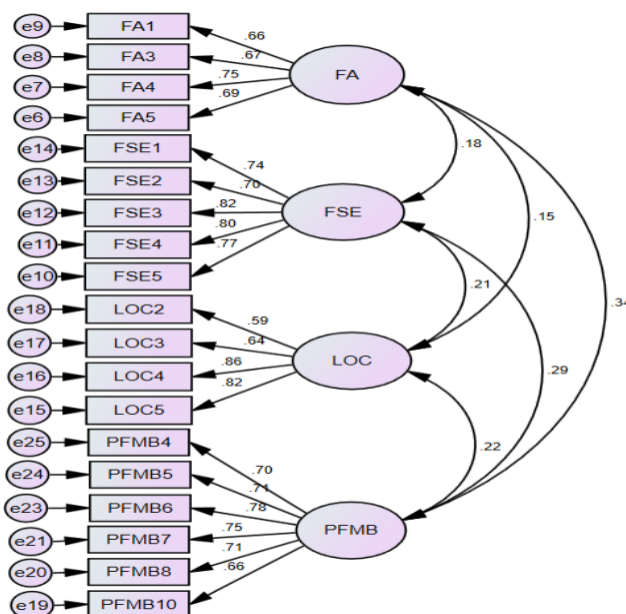


Figure 2: Confirmatory Factor Analysis

After verifying the suitability of the data, the researchers executed a CFA using AMOS 24.0 to validate the measurement model across all constructs. Various indices for fitting the model were applied to appraise how competent the model aligned with the dataset. The four-factor model illustrated in Figure 2, consisting of 20 items, demonstrated an acceptable fit based on modification indices, yielding the following values: CMIN/DF = 1.963 which indicates good fit, range is less than 3, CFI = 0.965 (greater than 0.90 indicates acceptable fit), GFI = 0.946 (greater than 0.90 indicates acceptable fit), AGFI = 0.930 (greater than 0.90 indicates acceptable fit), NFI = 0.931 (greater than 0.90 indicates acceptable fit), TLI = 0.958 (greater than 0.95 indicates good fit), and IFI = 0.965 (greater than 0.90 indicates good fit).

After CFA, SEM was oversaw using AMOS 24.0 to examine the conceptual model, with results indicating a strong model fit. The designed structural model and hypotheses were evaluated through 5000 replications using the bootstrapping technique. The chi-square statistic, a fundamental fit index, served as the basis for evaluating other indices. Absolute indices, such as the goodness-of-fit index (GFI) and the adjusted goodness-of-fit index (AGFI), confirmed the model's adequacy. Relative indices, which compare the model's chi-square with that of a null model (where measured variables are uncorrelated) which is less than 3 (1.96), included Bollen's Incremental Fit Index (IFI), the Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI), and the Bentler-Bonett Normed Fit Index (NFI). All three indices (NFI, TLI, and IFI) exceeded 0.90 (0.931, 0.958, 0.965), reinforcing the model's validity. Furthermore, Bentler's Comparative Fit Index (CFI) and the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) affirmed the model's strength, with CFI exceeding 0.90 (0.965) and RMSEA remaining below 0.08 (0.043), indicating a well-fitting model compared to the null or independent model.

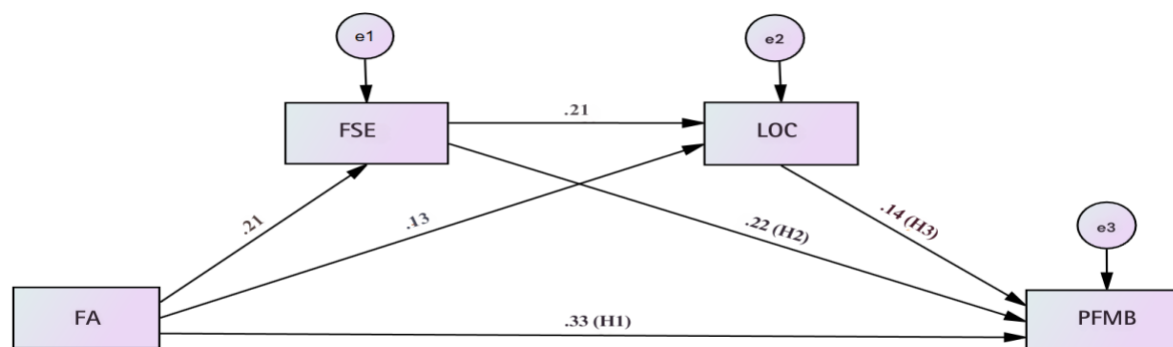


Figure 3: Imputed Structural Equation Modelling

Hypothesis Testing

To understand the predictive power of the model, the Squared Multiple Correlation (R^2) were calculated on the endogenous variables. The results shown that model explains 23.9% of the variance in PFMB while FSE shown 7.1% and LOC shown 4.5%. This clearly indicates that primary dependent variable PFMB has moderate effect size. This further confirm the serial mediation of FSE and LOC which provides statistically competent explanation of teachers' financial behaviour. The imputed SEM model provides a more concise analysis, with standardized coefficients from the SEM analysis revealing a direct and prominent effect of FA on PFMB, as shown in Figure 3. Similarly, FSE and LOC, as independent variables, exhibited a significant influence on PFMB. Thus supports H1, H2 and H3. When interpreting the serial mediation analysis within the SEM model, it was observed that FSE acted as a mediator in the interrelation between FA and the PFMB of teachers, positively supporting H4.

Table 4 – Assessment of Structural Model

Hypotheses	Constructs	Std. Beta	SE	CI		P Value
				Lower	Upper	
H1	FA → PFMB	0.33	0.038	0.254	0.401	0.001***
H2	FSE → PFMB	0.22	0.043	0.138	0.306	0.001***
H3	LOC → PFMB	0.14	0.040	0.059	0.214	0.002***
H4	FA → FSE → PFMB	0.048	0.014	0.024	0.080	0.001***
H5	FA → LOC → PFMB	0.029	0.012	0.010	0.056	0.003***
H6	FA → FSE → LOC → PFMB	0.006	0.003	0.002	0.013	0.001***

***p value <0.01

Source: Compiled by Author

Moreover, LOC acts as a mediator between FA and PFMB, which supports H5. Interestingly, both FSE and LOC functioned as serial mediators between FA and PFMB, which stressed the salience of cognitive factors in sculpting the financial behaviour of school teachers. In simpler terms, when examining the indirect effect of FA on PFMB through the serial mediation of FSE and LOC, both factors denoted a significant impact, thus accepted H6. The significance level of the serial mediation effect was 0.006, which is relatively weak compared to the direct effect of FA on PFMB (0.33). These results suggest that at an individual level, both FSE and LOC effectively function as mediators. However, when combined, they significantly influence teachers' PFMB (Table 4).

DISCUSSION

Grounded in the TPB, this research inspects how FA, FSE, and LOC affect PFMB among high school teachers. The outcomes designate a favourable association between FA and PFMB among high school teachers in Kerala, India, suggesting that teachers with a good FA are more likely to participate in responsible PFMB. The preceding work, which emphasizes that an active workforce with higher FA tends to show better PFMB, such as asset allocation and building.^{42,19} It indicates that their views and beliefs about money play a key role in guiding responsible financial decisions. Further, the study confirms a substantial link between FSE and PFMB, alongside LOC and PFMB, accentuating the crucial role of psychological factors in tailoring teachers' financial behaviour. These findings reinforce the notion that personality traits contribute to behavioural outcomes.^{33,42} This reveals that self-efficacy towards managing money improves the confidence of the teachers in handling money efficiently.

The mediation analysis validates the independent mediation roles of FSE and LOC between FA and PFMB. Specifically, the results signify that FSE has a solid positive persuade on teachers' LOC and significantly mediates the FA and LOC relationship, recommending that FSE inflate the positive impact of FA on LOC. Thus, teachers' financial attitude through their confidence in handling financial tasks leads to control over their financial activities. Similarly, FSE plays a decisive mediating role between FA and PFMB.³¹ This clearly states that the teacher's confidence in completing the financial tasks can lead to positive financial behaviour, especially through financial attitude. But the socio-cultural factors like collective family decision may constrain this relationship especially in state like Kerala. Furthermore, the study demonstrates a direct positive interconnection between LOC and PFMB, while also confirming that LOC acts as a mediator in both the FA and PFMB. This suggests that LOC functions as a psychological catalyst for improving financial behaviour.^{42,43} Thus, teachers' positive financial mindset through their control over the internal and external influence on the financial matters helps to attain better financial behaviour. And their confidence in handling financial tasks with this control can also lead to good financial behaviour. But absolute income level can act as constraint as teachers with both low salary and LOC may lack the financial management behaviour like investing due to lack of disposable income. Also, cultural dynamics like male overhand in investing can also barrier

the female teachers in lacking positive financial behaviour irrespective of their LOC.⁴⁴ Surprisingly, FSE emerged as the strong predictor than LOC which may be because external conditions like salary and benefits are uniform for all teachers, hence the variance in PFMB is better explained by internal belief rather than perceived controllability of financial environment.

Significantly, the study brings out the serial mediation effects of FSE and LOC between FA and PFMB. The findings highlight that FA improves FSE, which in turn strengthens LOC, ultimately leading to strong PFMB among teachers. In addition, a strong FA stimulates FSE, and high FSE amplifies LOC, thereby elevating teachers' financial behaviour. This indicates the psychological mechanism as positive FA does not directly transfer to PFMB rather it initiates cognitive cascade. Firstly, strong FA fosters teachers to engage with financial information (FSE) and this creates more self-belief. This later make teachers feel more capable over their financial environment where this sense of control act as the psychological catalyst that drives the actual execution PFMB. So, the financial beliefs of the teachers through their confidence in managing money and control over the influences regarding the financial matter together emerge as significant predictors of financial management behaviour.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

This research prospects both the immediate and mediated influence of FA on PFMB, encompassing FSE and LOC as sequential mediators. This approach is specifically novel, as no study has been conducted previously in India that has ever examined these relationships in this manner. The broad relevance of the study has crucial implications, especially for high school teachers, as deciphering their abilities to manage finances shows a significant relationship with their overall financial well-being. The study instils unique theoretical contribution which extends TPB, where FSE and LOC has been considered as components of perceived behavioural control. From a policy standpoint, government agencies and decision-makers should take these insights into account when developing strategies to enhance financial management behaviours. Accentuating the psychological aspects of decision-making in money matters is crucial for cultivating positive financial habits. To magnify financial attitudes, specific policies that focus on hardening personality traits such as FSE and LOC are important as both play a pivotal role in the fruitful management of money. This

can be done by the intervention of education departments as they can conduct peer-led mentoring programs where financially experienced teachers can share their strategies on money management. Further, the schools can provide teachers with real time view of their financial standing by simply showcasing their retirement data and benefit tracking through workplace wellness initiatives strengthen their LOC. A key insight is that shaping psychological aspects of the teachers towards the money handling with good financial education can significantly enrich their financial attitudes, which is strongly associated with more disciplined financial management behaviours. Hence, teacher training institution can provide mandatory financial courses for the skill development of budding teachers. Additionally, the teachers perform not only as educators but also as role models and have been responsible for serving as financial role models for their students to enhance their financial practices. Their competence to manage money consciously not only benefits their well-being but also improves the financial habits of future generations. The significance of FSE and LOC as mediators in crafting financial behaviour outlines the importance of psychological elements. Teachers' can practice various psychological tricks such as 24 hour wait rule or questioning the real need of spending money helps in reduction of unnecessary expense and impulse buying behaviour. Further, gamification apps can be used by teachers to practice and strengthen the money attitude.

Despite its contributions, the study has various limitations that accelerate ways for further research. For instance, to develop the broader application of these findings, similar research should be organized both within and outside of India. The study's sample, which solely includes high school teachers, especially from one state, may not fully represent the diverse working population. Further, there is limitations on casual inferences acquired using cross-sectional study. To overcome this limitation, it is necessary to conduct longitudinal studies. Future studies should inculcate a greater variety of samples across different socio-economic and macroeconomic backgrounds to test the universality of the findings. Furthermore, expanding this probe to multiple provinces across India would help authenticate the conclusions drawn. Future investigations could also explore how this conceptual framework applies to different demographic groups and

settings, emphasizing a more collective understanding of determinants of financial behaviour.

Declarations

Ethical Consideration: This study was conducted in accordance with the ethical standards of the institutional research committee. The approval granted from the doctoral committee and Head, Department of Commerce and Management, Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham, Kochi Campus as per university's research protocol. Further to ensure the rights of participants, informed consent was obtained from every participant. To protect the confidentiality of participants personal information like name or specific school names was not collected.

Conflict of Interest: None

Acknowledgement: During the preparation of this work, the authors used ChatGPT and Grammarly to improve the English language, grammar and overall readability of the manuscript. After using these tools, the authors reviewed and edited content as needed and take full responsibility for the accuracy and integrity of the final publication.

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