

# Empowering Gen Z: The Influence of Financial Literacy on the Financial Behavior of College Students

Jhazmine Abiera<sup>1</sup>, Ma Niña Angela Bacsal<sup>2</sup>, Earn Dabucol<sup>3</sup>, Angelica Gepiga<sup>4</sup>, Maxine Tiongson<sup>5</sup>,  
Marvin C. Lofranco<sup>6\*</sup>

Students, University of Mindanao- Panabo College Faculty, University of Mindanao- Panabo College,  
Panabo City, Philippines

\*Corresponding Author

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2026.100300154>

Received: 16 March 2026; Accepted: 21 March 2026; Published: 30 March 2026

## ABSTRACT

Financial behavior plays a crucial role in achieving personal financial well-being, particularly in the context of the digital economy where financial tools and services are increasingly accessible. This study aims to examine the role of financial literacy in shaping the financial behavior of Generation Z college students, with specific alignment to Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) 1: No Poverty, SDG 4: Quality Education, and SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth. Employing a quantitative descriptive correlational research design, data were collected through structured survey questionnaires administered to 100 Gen Z students at UM Panabo College. Findings revealed that participants demonstrated a high level of financial literacy, with a mean score of 3.68 (SD = 0.73), and exhibited positive financial behavior, with a mean score of 3.76 (SD = 0.66). Statistical analysis indicated a significant positive relationship between financial literacy and financial behavior ( $r = 0.443$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ), accounting for 19.62% of the variance.

These results led to the rejection of the null hypothesis, confirming that financial literacy significantly influences financial behavior among Gen Z college students. The study concludes that enhancing financial literacy equips students with the knowledge and skills necessary to make responsible financial decisions, thereby improving their financial well-being. Recommendations include encouraging students to actively apply financial knowledge in daily decision-making, while educational institutions, policymakers, and families should strengthen financial literacy programs. Future researchers are advised to explore additional factors that may affect financial behavior, thereby contributing to more comprehensive strategies for financial empowerment among young adults.

**Keywords:** Financial literacy, financial behavior, generation Z, college students, financial well-being

## INTRODUCTION

In today's fast-paced and digitally driven world, Generation Z college students face financial decisions earlier than previous generations due to online shopping, e-wallets, and "buy now, pay later" options. Financial behavior, defined as the ability to manage resources through budgeting, saving, and debt management (Winarta & Pamungkas, 2021), is shaped by upbringing, culture, personality, education, income, and personal experiences (Subburayan, 2023). While digital tools offer convenience, they also increase risks of overspending, fraud, and impulsive decision-making.

International studies highlight the importance of financial literacy in shaping financial behavior. In India, income, education, and access to institutions influence household financial practices (Sharma, 2024). In Sri Lanka, financial literacy was the strongest determinant of student financial behavior (Kalinga et al., 2024). Gender differences in the Philippines show men as more financially knowledgeable and risk-tolerant, while women are more conservative and price-sensitive (Damong & Perez, 2024). Among Filipino millennials, financial literacy, efficacy, and attitude strongly influenced spending behavior (Lim & Cordova, 2024).

Regional studies in Davao found that households with high financial behavior experienced moderate financial stress (Gonzaga, 2021), while senior high students practiced cautious spending but were vulnerable to peer pressure (Saripada et al., 2024). Broader evidence shows disciplined saving and budgeting improve household stability (Omar et al., 2019), yet many young people still exhibit poor literacy despite widespread use of digital financial services (Di Noia, 2025). Financial literacy encompasses knowledge of taxation, borrowing, investing, and budgeting (Lofranco & Camasura, 2024), and its absence leads to financial illiteracy (Team, 2025).

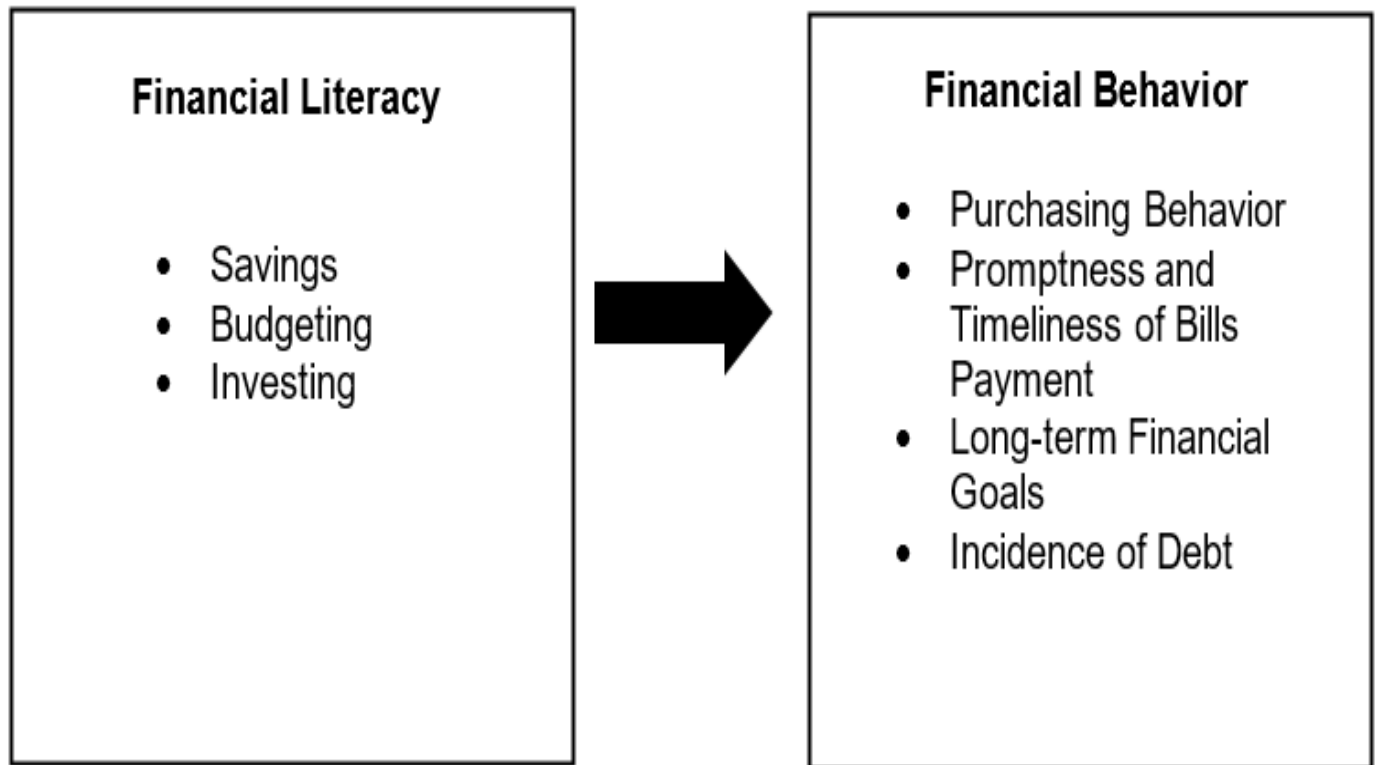
Globally, university students' literacy varies by demographics, with financial courses improving welfare (Ergün, 2017). Low literacy among youth is linked to socio-economic factors such as age, gender, and education (Garg & Singh, 2017). In the Philippines, BSP's 2021 survey revealed only 2% answered all literacy questions correctly, though Gen Z shows relatively higher literacy (FIO, 2021; CEDTyClea, 2024a). Education and social media are emerging sources of financial knowledge (Batara & Formoso, 2021; CEDTyClea, 2024b).

Recent Davao studies found varying literacy levels among SME employees (Ducala et al., 2022), teachers (Lopez et al., 2024), and cooperative members (Antenorio et al., 2023). College students demonstrated high literacy but modest saving and spending practices (Peña et al., 2024). Financial literacy enables informed decisions, confidence, and long-term planning (Aleño et al., 2025), though knowledge alone does not guarantee use of formal financial products (Ansar et al., 2023). Evidence consistently shows that literacy improves budgeting, saving, and debt management (Widyastuti et al., 2020; Zulaihati et al., 2019; Lusardi, 2019).

This study, grounded in Self-Efficacy and Goal-Setting theories (Muizzuddin et al., 2023), examines how financial literacy influences the financial behavior of UM Panabo College students. It aligns with SDG 1 (No Poverty), SDG 4 (Quality Education), and SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), aiming to provide empirical evidence that financial literacy empowers Gen Z to make responsible financial choices and avoid impulsive decisions.

**INDEPENDENT VARIABLE**

**DEPENDENT VARIABLE**



**Figure 1. Relationship between Financial Literacy and Financial Behavior of Gen Z Students**

This study aims to determine the role of financial literacy in influencing the financial behavior of Gen Z college students. Specifically, this study sought to answer the following objectives: (1) to determine the level of financial literacy among students by evaluating their savings; budgeting; investing; toward personal finance; (2) to assess their common financial behaviors such as: purchasing behavior; promptness and timeliness of bills payment; long-term financial goals; and incidence of debt and (3) to ascertain the relationship between financial literacy and actual financial behavior through statistical analysis of the survey results, providing insights into how financial knowledge affects students' financial decisions.

The researchers developed a null hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between financial literacy and the financial behavior of college students in UM Panabo College at a 0.05 significance level.

## METHOD

The study involved 100 UM Panabo College students from the Department of Teacher Education (44), Criminal Justice Education (33), and Arts and Sciences Education (33). All participants belonged to Generation Z, familiar with digital financial tools such as online banking and e-wallets (Dimock, 2019). The sample size was deemed adequate for quantitative analysis, providing sufficient statistical power (Ali Memon et al., 2020). Inclusion criteria required students to be enrolled at UMPC, aged 18–24, actively managing their own finances, and without prior structured financial management lessons. Exclusion criteria applied to those outside these parameters. Purposive quota sampling was used to ensure representation of subgroups and alignment with study objectives (Patton, 2025; OECD, 2020; Fleetwood, 2025; Etikan, 2016).

Data were collected using close-ended survey questionnaires, which are efficient for quantitative analysis (Dossetto, 2024). The financial literacy instrument was adapted from Medina (2019), while financial behavior was measured using O'Neil & Xiao (2012). Together, these comprised 66 items across multiple indicators. A pilot test with 30 students ensured validity and clarity (Hassan et al., 2018). Questionnaires were modified to assess knowledge, attitudes, spending, and saving practices. Reliability of questionnaires in quantitative research is well established (Taherdoost, 2016). Findings from pilot testing showed investing as both the highest and lowest literacy indicator, while purchasing behavior ranked highest and bill payment timeliness lowest for financial behavior.

The study employed a quantitative descriptive correlational design, appropriate for systematically describing characteristics without manipulating variables (Babbie, 2020; McCombes, 2023). Structured questionnaires were validated and pilot-tested before administration. Formal approval was secured from UMPC authorities, and informed consent was obtained from participants. Data collection emphasized voluntary participation, anonymity, and confidentiality. Responses were tallied and analyzed using descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, mean, SD) and Pearson's correlation coefficient to determine relationships between financial literacy and behavior (Sabri et al., 2022; Shen et al., 2016). Participants' rights were protected through anonymity and confidentiality. No personal identifiers were collected, and all data were securely stored, accessible only to the research team.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the results of the study based on the data gathered and the analyses conducted. The results show the key findings in relation to the research objectives and variables of the study. And the discussion interprets these findings by explaining their significance.

### The Level of Financial Literacy Among Students of UMPC

The assessment of financial literacy and financial behavior among UMPC college students is based on data collected from a 22-item questionnaire voluntarily answered by the respondents. The financial literacy of students was classified as Agree, with a mean of 3.68 and SD of 0.73, meaning that they agree that they perceive a very good financial literacy. This indicates that the financial literacy among students in UMPC is positive.

People who are financially literate and knowledgeable about financial issues typically behave in ways that are beneficial to their finances (Kwesley et al., 2022). Putri et al. (2024) also highlights that factors like financial literacy, pocket money, and lifestyle greatly affect students' spending, especially those who shop online. Findings reveal that students with higher financial literacy manage their impulse buying better and make thoughtful spending choices. Respati et al. (2023) emphasize that financial literacy and self-confidence lead to responsible money management, with informed learners saving regularly and planning for emergencies. Goyal and Kumar (2023) argue that good financial literacy helps young adults make rational decisions and develop sustainable finance habits.

**Table 1.** The Level of Financial Literacy Among Students of UMPC

Indicator	Mean	SD	Descriptive Equivalent
Savings	3.90	0.72	Agree
Budgeting	3.82	0.72	Agree
Investing	3.32	1.01	Moderately Agree
<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>3.68</b>	<b>0.73</b>	Agree

As shown in Table 1, the indicator “Savings” has the highest mean with the descriptive equivalent of Agree with a mean of 3.90 and SD of 0.72. This indicates that students know the importance of saving money. Specifically, item #1, “I believe that saving money is necessary,” obtained the highest mean of 4.53 with a descriptive equivalent of Strongly Agree. This implies that saving is widely recognized as necessary and essential among students. Furthermore, it suggests that the awareness and understanding of basic financial principles, particularly the value of saving, are well developed. This further indicates that students possess positive financial attitudes, especially toward future financial security and preparedness for emergencies. Such a high level of agreement reflects that saving is not only understood conceptually but is also valued as a responsible financial behavior.

On the other hand, the lowest means were in items #4 and #5 with the statements, “I put up my savings in a savings account, property, pension house, or in a collective investment scheme” and “I put my investments and savings in banks because I always trust financial institutions,” respectively, which both have a mean of 3.39 with the descriptive equivalent of Moderately Agree. The result of the analysis implies that although students understand good financial practices, their financial literacy has not clearly developed into strong confidence and active utilization of formal financial instruments and institutions. This suggests that while students may possess adequate knowledge and awareness of responsible money management, they may still hesitate to apply this understanding in more complex financial settings, particularly those involving banks, credit services, savings products, and other formal financial systems.

Furthermore, this gap between attitude and actual financial engagement may indicate possible barriers such as limited income, lack of access to financial services, insufficient practical experience, or uncertainty in navigating formal financial procedures. It also suggests that students may prefer informal saving methods or keep money in cash rather than entrusting it to financial institutions. Therefore, while the findings reflect a strong foundation in financial awareness, they also highlight the need for programs and interventions that strengthen students’ confidence, trust, and practical skills in using formal financial products and services.

As discussed by Aleño et al. (2025), financial literacy refers to the knowledge and understanding of fundamental financial concepts, including budgeting, money management, and the ability to distinguish between needs and wants. This level of understanding enables students to make informed financial decisions and manage their resources effectively. Enhancing financial literacy allows students to develop sound money management habits, make prudent financial choices, and become more financially responsible in the long term. Moreover, it increases students’ confidence in handling financial matters, thereby reducing the likelihood of poor financial decision-making. Financial literacy also equips students with essential skills for planning and achieving long-term financial goals, such as saving for education, emergencies, and future investments. Nevertheless, possessing basic financial knowledge does not necessarily result in the active use of formal financial products, such as bank accounts and other institutional financial services. Many individuals either do not open formal accounts or fail to use them regularly, despite understanding basic concepts like saving and budgeting. This behavior is often

influenced by factors such as lack of confidence, limited knowledge of how to use financial products, and low levels of trust in financial institutions. These findings suggest that financial literacy alone may not be sufficient to ensure full participation in formal financial systems (Ansar et al., 2023).

In addition, the “Budgeting” indicator received the second highest mean, with a mean of 3.82 and SD of 0.72, which corresponds to a descriptive equivalent of Agree. This indicates that students generally have an understanding and practice of budgeting, demonstrating the ability to plan and manage their finances responsibly. Specifically, this indicator recorded the highest mean in its item #8, “I am aware of my monthly income/allowance and expenditure,” with a mean of 4.36 and a descriptive equivalent of Strongly Agree. This implies that students are highly conscious of tracking their income and expenses, reflecting strong awareness and control over their personal finances. This is supported by Xiao and O’Neill (2016), who found that exposure to financial education was positively associated with financial capability indicators such as financial behavior and overall financial capability among consumers. In contrast, the lowest mean was observed in item #13, “I spend all the money on everyday needs and do not save anything,” which has a mean of 2.93 and a descriptive equivalent of Moderately Agree. This indicates that while some students may occasionally spend all their money, the majority do not completely neglect saving, showing a moderate but developing discipline in managing their finances. This result is supported by Barus et al. (2025), who found that higher financial literacy positively influences budgeting-related financial behaviors, indicating that individuals with greater financial knowledge are more likely to engage in saving and responsible money management.

Lastly, the indicator with the lowest mean of 3.32 and SD of 1.01, which corresponds to a descriptive equivalent of Moderately Agree is “Investing”. This indicates that, although students possess a good level of financial literacy, their understanding and practice of investing are only moderately developed compared to other financial literacy indicators. Furthermore, investment-related knowledge and behavior remain an area that requires further enhancement. The highest mean under the “Investing” indicator was obtained by the item #21, “I ask suggestions from experts before I invest,” with a mean of 3.66 and a descriptive equivalent of Agree. This result indicates that students demonstrate a positive attitude toward seeking professional guidance before making investment decisions, reflecting cautious and informed financial behavior. This finding is supported by Houts and Knoll (2019), who found that youth with higher financial literacy actively seek expert information before investing. Conversely, the item #18, “I invest in shares or stocks and bonds,” received the lowest mean of 3.02, with a descriptive equivalent of moderate. These findings suggest that students are less actively involved in direct investment instruments, such as stocks and bonds, largely due to limited experience, perceived risk, and insufficient confidence and knowledge regarding these investment options. This observation is consistent with the findings of Bala and Jayanti (2025), who reported that a significant proportion of financially literate youth remain hesitant to engage in direct investment products because of perceived risks and gaps in investment-related knowledge.

**The Level of Common Financial Behaviors Among Students of UMPC**

The 22-item questionnaire the students voluntarily answered is the basis for this study’s evaluation of the financial behavior of college students in UMPC. The financial behavior of students was classified as agree, with a mean of 3.76 and SD of 0.66, meaning that they agree that they perceive a very good financial behavior. This indicates that the financial behavior among students in UMPC is positive. Based on the findings of Mancone et al. (2024), it highlights the vital role of financial literacy programs in improving the financial knowledge and behaviors of children and adolescents. Financial education contributes to the development of enduring positive financial practices among students. Developing personal financial knowledge can strengthen students’ behavior toward budgeting, saving, borrowing, and investing, ultimately fostering greater financial resilience. Overall, students already demonstrate a generally positive outlook toward these financial practices (Encio et al., 2022).

**Table 2.** The Level of Common Financial Behaviors Among Students of UMPC

Indicator	Mean	SD	Descriptive Equivalent
Purchasing Behavior	4.15	0.69	Agree
Promptness and Timeliness of Bills Payment	3.74	0.92	Agree
Long-Term Financial Goals	4.07	0.70	Agree

Incidence of Debt	3.09	1.14	Moderately Agree
<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>3.76</b>	<b>0.66</b>	Agree

Out of the four indicators shown, "Purchasing Behavior" obtained the highest mean of 4.15 and SD of 0.69, which corresponds to a descriptive equivalent of Agree. This high score suggests that students are deeply aware of how their spending choices impact their financial health, with a specific emphasis on the item, "Before I buy something I carefully consider whether I can afford it," which recorded a leading mean of 4.38. Such data indicates that students consistently practice a "budget-first" mentality, performing a mental audit of their finances to avoid impulsive purchases and ensure they live within their means. This disciplined behavior is supported by Fitrah (2024), who found that higher financial awareness directly reduces impulsive buying, and is further reinforced by Xiao, Porto, and Mason (2020), who noted that students with stronger financial knowledge are more likely to avoid risky spending. Overall, these findings demonstrate that students are using cautious purchasing habits as a primary strategy to maintain financial stability and avoid the pitfalls of debt.

In comparison, the lowest mean was in the item #5 with the statement, "I keep track of my expenditure and income" which has a mean of 3.84 with the descriptive equivalent of Agree. The result of the statement signifies that although students tend to be budget-conscious, they are less consistent in actively tracking their expenses and income. Asandimitra and Kautsar (2024) revealed that although students show financial awareness, many fail to consistently track their expenses, leading to gaps between financial awareness and financial management behavior.

For the third indicator, "Long-Term Financial Goals," the results showed the second highest mean with an overall score of 4.07 and SD of 0.70 which corresponds to a descriptive equivalent of Agree, which indicates that students generally have a strong understanding of long-term financial goals. This suggests that many students are aware of the importance of planning ahead and thinking about future financial needs, such as saving, budgeting, and preparing for major expenses. The highest mean under this indicator was found in item #12, "I believe that having financial goals is necessary," which obtained a mean of 4.39 with a descriptive equivalent of Moderately Agree, showing that most students agree that financial goals are important. This implies that students value setting goals because it helps them stay focused and make better financial decisions over time. Having clear goals may also help students avoid unnecessary spending and encourage them to prioritize saving and planning. This finding is supported by IJSAT (2025), which stated that students with clear financial goals are more likely to make consistent financial decisions because goal-setting helps guide financial behavior and supports long-term planning. Similarly, Lusardi and Mitchell (2019) emphasized that individuals who are more aware of financial planning are more likely to make better long-term financial choices, which further supports the idea that goal-setting plays an important role in developing responsible financial behavior among students.

However, the lowest mean under the Long-Term Financial Goals indicator was item number sixteen, "I find it more satisfying to spend money than to save it for the long term" with a mean of 3.60 and a descriptive equivalent of Agree. This implies that students are less inclined to prioritize immediate spending over long-term saving. In the study of OECD (2024), students with higher financial literacy are more likely to save, implicitly showing that without literacy students lean toward spending rather than saving.

Among the four indicators presented, the second indicator, "Promptness and Timeliness of Bills Payment" is the third highest mean of 3.74 and SD of 0.92 associated with the descriptive equivalent of Agree. This indicates that students have a very good idea of promptness and timeliness of bills payment, however it is not often performed as much as the first two highest indicators. The highest mean in this indicator was the item #8 with the statement, "I pay my bills when they arrive", which has a mean of 3.88, and is associated with the descriptive equivalent of Agree. This implies that students are aware of their billing obligations and the corresponding due dates, and are responsible in settling their financial obligations. Based on the research of Castleman and Meyer (2019), students frequently prioritize immediate financial needs over long-term financial goals. In the hustle of daily life, it is easy to let immediate needs take center stage. Bills need to be paid, groceries must be bought, and unexpected costs, such as car repairs or medical expenses, often arise (Ban et al., 2024). From a psychological perspective, individuals naturally focus on urgent concerns because addressing them provides immediate relief and satisfaction, even if it delays long-term financial planning (Simonse et al., 2024).

Conversely, the lowest mean under this indicator was item number nine, “I pay my bills until they are due” with a mean of 3.57 and a descriptive equivalent of Agree. This suggests that some students may still experience challenges in managing due dates or prioritizing bill payments. A study of university students found that many students consider managing bills and finances one of the hardest parts of adult life when at university. According to Zhang and Fan (2022), a substantial proportion of student’s report feeling overwhelmed by financial responsibilities and many admit they’ve missed payments due to insufficient funds, highlighting real difficulties with tracking and prioritizing financial obligations.

The last and lowest mean indicator is “Incidence of Debt,” with a mean of 3.09 and SD of 1.14 which corresponds to a descriptive equivalent of Moderately Agree, which suggests that students have a moderate level of agreement with statements related to debt and generally show low to average exposure to debt.

The highest mean under this indicator was obtained by item #18, “I rely my expenses or needs on mortgages,” with a mean of 3.32 and a descriptive equivalent of Moderately Agree, indicating that most students do not strongly depend on mortgages to support their daily needs and expenses. This is expected because mortgages are usually connected to homeownership, which is not common among students. Conversely, item #21, “I have much debt right now,” received the lowest mean of 2.74 with a descriptive equivalent of Agree, which implies that many students do not see themselves as having a high amount of debt at present. This result may mean that students are either avoiding borrowing, receiving support from their families, or only experiencing limited debt such as small personal loans or student-related expenses.

These findings are supported by Mezza et al. (2016), who explained that college students rarely rely on mortgages because they often lack stable income and credit history, and instead depend more on student loans or family support. Furthermore, Letkiewicz and Heckman (2018) found that student loans among young adults contribute to lower early homeownership, which further supports the result that mortgages are not commonly used as a financial resource during the college years.

**Significant correlation between financial literacy and financial behavior among students of UMPC**

**Table 3.** Significant correlation between financial literacy and financial behavior among students of UMPC

Variable	Mean	SD	Description	R- value	P- value	Decision
Financial Literacy	3.68	0.73	Independent Variable			
				0.443	0.000	Ho is Rejected
Financial Behavior	3.76	0.66	Dependent Variable			

**R=0.443; R<sup>2</sup>=0.196**

Table 3 shows the correlation between financial literacy and financial behavior among the college students of UM Panabo College. The results indicate that financial literacy has a mean of 3.68 and SD of 0.73 which corresponds to a descriptive equivalent of Agree, which means that students generally have good knowledge and understanding of financial concepts such as saving, budgeting, and managing money.

Similarly, financial behavior has a mean of 3.76 and SD of 0.66 with a descriptive equivalent of Agree, which suggests that students also practice positive financial actions, such as planning their spending and making careful financial decisions. The correlation result shows an R-value of 0.443 and a P-value of 0.000, which indicates that there is a significant relationship between the two variables. This means that as students’ financial literacy increases, their financial behavior also tends to improve. Because the P-value is lower than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected, leading to the conclusion that financial literacy is significantly related to financial behavior.

In addition, the computed value shows that 19.62% of students’ financial behavior can be explained by their level of financial literacy, while the remaining 80.38% may be influenced by other factors such as family background, income, financial experiences, peer influence, and personal attitudes toward money. Therefore, the

findings in Table 3 show that financial literacy has a meaningful influence on financial behavior, and improving students' financial knowledge may help them develop better financial habits.

As stated by Widyastuti et al. (2020) stated that financial literacy helps individuals make better financial decisions. Since people are constantly faced with financial choices to meet their daily needs, applying appropriate financial behavior becomes necessary. Similarly, Zulaihati et al. (2019) also found that financial literacy has positive implications for financial behavior, as individuals with higher knowledge in budgeting, saving, and managing money tend to adopt responsible financial practices. Supporting this, several studies emphasize that financially literate individuals are more likely to avoid unnecessary debt, build savings, and plan for long-term goals (Lusardi, 2019).

The study of Andarsari and Ningtyas (2019) states that financial literacy and financial behavior have a significant effect on each other. In fact, an individual's financial literacy plays an important role in shaping wealth equity. As a result, an individual's financial conduct improves with increasing financial literacy. Moko et al. (2022) discovered an association between financial literacy and financial behavior. They argued that in order to make sound financial decisions and achieve personal financial well-being, one must have the confidence, knowledge, skills, attitude, and behavior known as financial literacy. In this sense, people's financial behavior is influenced by how they manage, treat, and utilize their available financial resources (Eloriaga et al., 2022). Therefore, a high degree of financial literacy among individuals may lead to improved financial behavior. It has been demonstrated that financial literacy affects financial behavior, particularly in borrowing, debt management, saving, and investing (Lusardi, 2019). In particular, the study discovered that those who are financially educated are more likely to invest for stability in their finances and are less likely to be in debt.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the statistical analysis of the research findings, here are the conclusions: (1) the level of financial literacy among students of UMPC has a grand mean of ( $x=3.68$ ;  $SD = 0.73$ ) corresponding to the descriptive equivalent as agree; indicating they perceive a very good financial literacy and that the financial literacy among students in UMPC is positive; (2) financial behavior of the respondents has a grand mean of ( $x=3.76$ ;  $SD = 0.66$ ) which correlates to the descriptive equivalent of agree, meaning that they agree that they perceive a very good financial behavior and that the financial behavior among students in UMPC is positive; (3) the  $r$ -value is 0.443, while the  $p$ -value is 0.000. This implies that the null hypothesis is rejected, leading to our conclusion that a significant relationship exists between financial literacy and financial behavior among the college students of UM Panabo College. The researchers made the following recommendations based on the findings and conclusions of the study: (1) Generation Z College students should use the knowledge they learned from this study as an encouragement to take part in making their own financial decisions, helping them become more aware, responsible, and disciplined when it comes to managing their own finances amidst rapid technological advancements, since the findings show that financial literacy significantly influences financial behavior. (2) These results can help educational institutions like UM panabo college, DepEd, and CHED improve and create financial literacy programs so that students have a better grasp of financial ideas like saving, budgeting, investing, and debt management, which were found to contribute to better financial behavior among Generation Z students. (3) Policymakers can utilize this study to create evidence-based strategies that encourage Generation Z to improve their financial literacy and adopt more responsible financial habits, considering that the study revealed a significant relationship between financial literacy and financial behavior. ; (4) The results can help families develop good financial practices, including keeping tabs on spending, setting long-range objectives, and staying away from pointless debt, since financial behavior can be strengthened through guidance and financial awareness. ; and (5) Future researchers can use the findings of this study as supporting evidence and also as a guide in developing new studies that are related to this research, particularly by exploring other factors that may influence the financial behavior of Generation Z students beyond financial literacy.

## Ethical Considerations

Formal approval to conduct the study was obtained from the administration of UM Panabo College. All participants provided informed consent, and the study adhered to ethical principles of voluntary participation,

anonymity, and confidentiality. No personal identifiers were collected, and data were securely stored for academic purposes only. The authors declare no conflict of interest in relation to this study.

### Data Availability

The data supporting the findings of this study are available upon reasonable request from the corresponding author. Due to privacy and confidentiality agreements with participants, the raw survey responses are not publicly available. However, aggregated statistical results and analysis outputs can be shared for academic and research purposes.

### Revisions

All reviewer comments were carefully addressed in the revised manuscript. A detailed response letter accompanies the resubmission, outlining how each comment was considered and incorporated into the updated version of the paper.

### Copyright and Licensing

This article is published under the Creative Commons Attribution License (CC BY 4.0), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

### REFERENCES

1. Aleño, S. M., Basañes, K. H., De Dios, F. a. R., & Bacatan, J. (2025). Social Influence and Financial Literacy as Predictors of Savings Behavior Among Junior High School Students. *European Journal of Economic and Financial Research*, 8(8). <https://doi.org/10.46827/ejefr.v8i8.1910>
2. Ali Memon, M., Ting, H., Cheah, J.-H., Thurasamy, R., Chuah, F., & Cham, T. H. (2020). Sample Size for Survey Research: Review and Recommendations. *Journal of Applied Structural Equation Modeling*. [https://jasemjournal.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Memon-et-al\\_JASEM\\_Editorial\\_V4\\_Iss2\\_June2020.pdf?fbclid=IwY2xjawMzp8pleHRuA2FlbQIxMQABHuAHXJm7u1\\_udmqpfd8y425QL88qVJHbm43MA2AFPjUUqfBCIMWFQjXPzi7J\\_aem\\_8ReYENgKwgkvmPRguN6ew](https://jasemjournal.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Memon-et-al_JASEM_Editorial_V4_Iss2_June2020.pdf?fbclid=IwY2xjawMzp8pleHRuA2FlbQIxMQABHuAHXJm7u1_udmqpfd8y425QL88qVJHbm43MA2AFPjUUqfBCIMWFQjXPzi7J_aem_8ReYENgKwgkvmPRguN6ew)
3. Andarsari, P. R., & Ningtyas, M. N. (2019). The role of financial literacy on financial behavior. *JABE (Journal of Accounting and Business Education)*, 4(1), 24. <https://doi.org/10.26675/jabe.v4i1.8524>
4. Antenorio, D. F. S., Lintogonan, C. D., & Mendez, M. L. S. P. (2023). Assessing financial literacy among members of agricultural cooperatives in Cateel, Davao Oriental: A Quantitative approach. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Applied Business and Education Research*, 6(7), 3515–3532. <https://doi.org/10.11594/ijmaber.06.07.23>
5. Ansar, R., Chekima, B., Lada, S., Lim, M. F., & Bouteraa, M. (2023). Determinants of personal financial management practices among Malaysian youth. *Asian Economic and Financial Review*, 13(12), 996–1007. <https://doi.org/10.55493/5002.v13i12.4931>
6. Asandimitra, N., & Kautsar, A. (2024). Student expense tracking systems and financial awareness: A study on behavioral consistency. *Asian Journal of Advanced Research and Reports*, 19(9), <https://doi.org/10.47611/jsrhs.v13i4.8130>
7. Babbie, E. (2020). The practice of social research. Google Books. <https://books.google.com.ph/books?id=KrGeygEACAAJ&lpg=PP1&pg=PR8#v=onepage&q&f=false>
8. Bala, R., & Javanti, Prof. N. (2025). Financial Literacy and its Influence on Youth Investment Decisions. <https://erj.in/journal/index.php/ierj/article/view/4856/5918>
9. Ban, T. K., Nerkar, S. R., Darware, S. A., Zaki, S. N. B. M., Malaysia, U.S., Taufik, N. a. a. B. M., Malaysia, U.S., Abdullah, H. N. B., Malaysia, U.S., Renyue, Z., Malaysia, U.S., Padam, C., Kee, D. M. H., & Malaysia, U.S. (2024). Analyzing savings behavior among university students: A case study of Bank's financial education initiatives. *International Journal of Accounting & Finance in Asia Pasific*, 7(3), 361-375. <https://doi.org/10.32535/ijafap.v7i3.3361>

10. Barus, I. I., Chandra, J., Fitriani, H., Nindiasari, A. D., & Sudarmanto, E. (2025). The effect of financial literacy, financial attitudes, and financial planning on student financial behavior in West Java. *West Science Business and Management*, 713-3(03), 725. <https://doi.org/10.58812/wsbm.v3i03.2240>
11. Batara, J. M. T., & Formoso, N. D. T. (2021). Building a financially literate Philippines: a study on the determinants of financial literacy among Filipino adults. <https://selib.upd.edu.ph/etdir/items/b1d93114-bd0f-447c-8819-440bb3aed24d>
12. Castleman, B., & Meyer, K. (2019). Financial constraints & collegiate student learning: A behavioral economics perspective. *Daedalus*, 148(4), 195-216. [https://doi.org/10.1162/daed\\_a\\_01767](https://doi.org/10.1162/daed_a_01767)
13. CEDTyClea. (2024a). Young adults more financially literate vs other age groups, BSP study shows. *BusinessWorld Online*. <https://www.bworldonline.com/banking-finance/2024/07/04/605983/young-adults-more-financially-literate-vs-other-age-groups-bsp-study-shows/>
14. CEDTyClea. (2024b). Leveraging social media to promote financial literacy. *Business World Online*. <https://www.bworldonline.com/research/2024/03/11/580636/leveraging-social-media-to-promote-financial-literacy/>
15. Damong, G., & Perez, N. C. (2024). Financial behavior between male and female: a systematic literature review. *Journal of Social Sciences and Management Studies*, 23–34. <https://doi.org/10.56556/jssms.v3i4.1051>
16. Dewi, V., Balian, I., Tanimukti, I., & Sastrooredjo, P. (2019). Financial literacy and financial behavior among college students. In *Routledge eBooks* (pp. 96–100). <https://doi.org/10.1201/9780429202629-19>
17. Di Noia, C. (2025). Empowering young people in the digital financial age: The role of financial literacy. *Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development*. <https://www.oecd.org/en/blogs/2025/03/the-role-of-financial-literacy.html>
18. Dimock, M. (2019). Defining generations: Where Millennials end and Generation Z begins. *Pew Research Center*. <https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2019/01/17/where-millennials-end-and-generation-z-begins/>
19. Dossetto, F. (2024). Open-ended questions vs. close-ended questions: examples and how to survey users. *hotjar*. <https://www.hotjar.com/blog/open-ended-questions/>
20. Ducala, B. J., Anuber, S. M., & Espinoza, Z. (2022). Financial literacy towards business performance among SME employees in Davao City. <https://repository.umindanao.edu.ph/handle/20.500.14045/1290?>
21. Eloriaga, E. F., Roxas, F., Cuaresma, R., & Cabauatan, R. (2022). A Study on Financial Literacy and Financial Behavior of Young Professionals in Metro Manila. *International Journal of Research in Engineering, Science and Management*, 5(1). <https://journal.ijresm.com/index.php/ijresm/article/view/1713>
22. Encio, L. T., Pescos, R. P., Pudadera, P. G., Jr., Andana, J. C., Arnaiz, M. D., Cartagena, J. K. S., Jarbadan, J. A. P., Posing, D. V., & Ramos, K. M.L. (2022). Financial attitude towards budgeting, saving, borrowing, and investing among students of a private higher education institution. *Central Philippine University Institutional Repository*. [https://EncioLT\\_2022.pdf?sequence=1](https://EncioLT_2022.pdf?sequence=1)
23. Ergün, K. (2017). Financial literacy among university students: A study in eight European countries. *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, 42(1), 2–15. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ijcs.12408>
24. Etikan, I. (2016). Comparison of convenience sampling and purposive sampling. *American Journal of Theoretical and Applied Statistics*, 5(1), 1. <https://doi.org/10.11648/j.ajtas.20160501.11>
25. Financial Inclusion Office [FIO]. (2021). 2021 Financial Inclusion Survey. In *Banko Sentral Ng Pilipinas*. <https://www.bsp.gov.ph/Inclusive%20Finance/Financial%20Inclusion%20Reports%20and%20Publications/2021/2021FISToplineReport.pdf>
26. Fitrah, N. (2024). The influence of financial stress on college students' online impulsive shopping behavior. *Journal of Psychology and Consumer Behavior*, 9(2), 55-68. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2047173418809712>
27. Fleetwood, D. (2025). Quota Sampling: Definition, Types, steps & Examples. *QuestionPro*. <https://www.questionpro.com/blog/quota-sampling/>
28. Garg, N., & Singh, S. (2017). Financial literacy among youth. *International Journal of Social Economics*, 45(1), 173–186. <https://doi.org/10.1108/ijse-11-2016-0303>
29. Gonzaga, M. (2021). The Influence of Financial Behavior towards the Household's Financial Stress. <https://www.theijbmt.com/archive/0937/1457784065.pdf>

30. Goyal, K., & Kumar, S. (2023). Financial literacy and financial behavior. In Edward Elgar Publishing eBooks (pp. 19–31). <https://doi.org/10.4337/9781803922652.00010>
31. Hassan, Z. A., Schattner, P., & Mazza, D. (2018). Doing a pilot study: Why is it essential? <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC4453116/>
32. Houts, C. R., & Knoll, M. A. Z. (2019). The Financial Knowledge Scale: new analyses, findings, and development of a short form. *Journal of Consumer Affairs*, 54(2), 775–800. <https://doi.org/10.1111/joca.12288>
33. IJSAT. (2025). Financial aspirations and decision making among students: The mediating role of financial habits. *International Journal of Science, Arts and Technology*, 16(3). <https://doi.org/10.71097/IJSAT.v16.i3.7945>
34. Kalinga, N. M., Perera, N. E., & Malshakalinga@sjpAcLk, N. (2024). The determinants of financial behavior of the final-year undergraduates of the University of Sri Jayewardenepura. *International Journal of Social Statistics*, 1(01). <https://doi.org/10.31357/ijss.v1i01.7480>
35. Kwesley, E. E. P., Anastasia, N., & Basana, S. R. (2022). The Effect of Financial Literacy on Financial Management Behavior in the Community of Kupang. *Global Conference on Business and Management Proceedings*, 111–122. <https://doi.org/10.35912/gcbm.v1i1.15>
36. Letkiewicz, J. C., & Heckman, S. J. (2018). Homeownership among young Americans: A look at student loan debt and behavioral factors. *Journal of Consumer Affairs*, 52(1), 88-114. <https://doi.org/10.1111/joca.12143>
37. Lim, C. T., & Cordova, W. (2024). Decoding the eco-financial mindset: financial literacy, attitudes, and efficacy measures and the spending behavior of Filipino millennials. *BIO Web of Conferences*, 93, 05010. <https://doi.org/10.1051/bioconf/20249305010>
38. Lofranco, M. C., & Camasura, R. R. (2024). A Mixed-Methods sequential explanatory design comparison between financial literacy and financial stress of junior high school teachers in Davao region. *TWIST Journal*. <https://twistjournal.net/twist/article/view/260>
39. Lopez, A. C., Manguio, I. D., & Bauyot, M. M. (2024). Teachers' financial literacy in basic education: a case study in Davao City, Philippines. *Journal of Economics Management and Trade*, 30(7), 80–95. <https://doi.org/10.9734/jemt/2024/v30i71227>
40. Lusardi, A. (2019). Financial literacy and the need for financial education: evidence and implications. *Zeitschrift Für Schweizerische Statistik Und Volkswirtschaft/Schweizerische Zeitschrift Für Volkswirtschaft Und Statistik/Swiss Journal of Economics and Statistics*, 155(1). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s41937-019-0027-5>
41. Lusardi, A., & Mitchell, O. S. (2019). The Economic Importance of Financial Literacy: Theory and evidence. *Journal of Economic Literature*, 52(1), 5–44. <https://doi.org/10.1257/jel.52.1.5>
42. Mancone, S., Tosti, B., Corrado, S., Spica, G., Zanon, A., & Diotaiuti, P. (2024). Youth, money, and behavior: the impact of financial literacy programs. *Frontiers in Education*, 9. <https://doi.org/10.3389/educ.2024.1397060>
43. McCombes, S. (2023). *Descriptive Research Design | Definition, Methods & Examples*. Scribbr. <https://www.scribbr.com/methodology/descriptive-research/>
44. Medina, E. J. (2019). Draft 2 Financial Literacy Survey Questionnaire new. Scribd. <https://www.scribd.com/document/415561374/Draft-2-Financial-Literacy-Survey-Questionnaire-New>
45. Mezza, A., Ringo, D. R., Sherlund, S., & Sommer, K. (2016). Student loans and homeownership. *Federal Reserve Board, Finance and Economics Discussion Series*, 2016-010. <https://doi.org/10.17016/FEDS.2016.010r1>
46. Militante, L. G., & Apolinario, R. (2025). The influence of financial literacy on the budgeting or spending behavior of Grade 12 ABM students. *Ennoia Interdisciplinary Research and Development*. <https://ennoia-asste.org/index.php/asste/article/view/17>
47. Mireku, K., Appiah, F., & Agana, J. A. (2023). Is there a link between financial literacy and financial behaviour? *Cogent Economics & Finance*, 11(1). <https://doi.org/10.1080/23322039.2023.2188712>
48. Moko, W., Sudiro, A., & Kurniasari, I. (2022). The effect of financial knowledge, financial attitude, and personality on financial management behavior. *International Journal of Research in Business and Social Science* (2147-4478), 11(9), 184–192. <https://doi.org/10.20525/ijrbs.v11i9.2210>

49. Muizzuddin, M., Taufik, T., Ghasarma, R., Putri, L., & Adam, M. (2023). Financial Literacy; Strategies and Concepts in understanding the Financial Planning with Self-Efficacy Theory and Goal Setting Theory of Motivation Approach. <https://www.econjournals.com/index.php/ijefi/article/view/4792>
50. O'Neil, B., & Xiao, J. (2012). Financial Behaviors Before and After the Financial Crisis: Evidence from an Online Survey. Human Development and Family Science Faculty Publications. [https://digitalcommons.uri.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=&httpsredir=1&article=1002&context=hdf\\_facpubs](https://digitalcommons.uri.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=&httpsredir=1&article=1002&context=hdf_facpubs)
51. OECD (2024), PISA 2022 Results (Volume IV): How Financially Smart Are Students?, PISA, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/5a849c2a-en>.
52. OECD. (2020). OECD/INFE 2020 International Survey of Adult Financial Literacy. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. [https://www.oecd.org/content/dam/oecd/en/publications/reports/2023/12/oecd-infe-2023-international-survey-of-adult-financial-literacy\\_8ce94e2c/56003a32-en.pdf](https://www.oecd.org/content/dam/oecd/en/publications/reports/2023/12/oecd-infe-2023-international-survey-of-adult-financial-literacy_8ce94e2c/56003a32-en.pdf)
53. Omar, S. K., Mokhtar, M., & Arshad, A. S. (2019). Exploring Saving Behaviour of Pre-Degree Students: A Study of Universiti Teknologi MARA Selangor Dengkil Campus. <https://ir.uitm.edu.my/id/eprint/43730/1/43730.pdf>
54. Patton, Michael Quinn, PhD - TEI | The Evaluators' Institute. (2025). TEI | the Evaluators' Institute. [https://tei.cgu.edu/people/michael-quinn-patton-phd/?fbclid=IwY2xjawMk5JVleHRuA2FlbQIxMQABHkWM56k0VmK\\_0ADpUX\\_57BKnzEGmRUUi-v\\_a0h8d-c8QfvrLt87rZ6Qhz0UY\\_aem\\_zQN1GiUWbV6CagcC\\_qHJXg](https://tei.cgu.edu/people/michael-quinn-patton-phd/?fbclid=IwY2xjawMk5JVleHRuA2FlbQIxMQABHkWM56k0VmK_0ADpUX_57BKnzEGmRUUi-v_a0h8d-c8QfvrLt87rZ6Qhz0UY_aem_zQN1GiUWbV6CagcC_qHJXg)
55. Peña, H. D., Puzon, H. J., Villamil, C., & Culajara, C. L. B. (2024). Financial Literacy and Financial Stress among College Students within Davao Region. *Asian Journal of Education and Social Studies*, 50(6), 509–522. <https://doi.org/10.9734/ajess/2024/v50i61428>
56. Putri, P. D. D., Lestari, B. a. H., & Ridhawati, R. (2024). The Influence of Financial Literacy, Pocket Money, and Lifestyle on the Financial Behavior of College Students who Use Online Shopping Platforms. *International Journal of Asian Business and Management*, 3(1), 59–76. <https://doi.org/10.55927/ijabm.v3i1.7774>
57. Respati, D. K., Widyastuti, U., Nuryati, T., Musyaffi, A. M., Handayani, B. D., & Ali, N. R. (2023). How do students' digital financial literacy and financial confidence influence their financial behavior and financial well-being? *NURTURE*, 17(2), 40–50. <https://doi.org/10.55951/nurture.v17i2.154>
58. Sabri, M. F., Wahab, R., Mahdzan, N. S., Magli, A. S., & Rahim, H. A. (2022). Mediating effect of financial behaviour on the relationship between perceived financial wellbeing and its factors among Low-Income young adults in Malaysia. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 13. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.858630>
59. Saripada, N., Balindong, F. A., Pailan, M. G., Dalipe, M. R., Tuazon, M. B., & Pondang, K. (2024). Financial Literacy and Spending Habits among Senior High School Students. [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/383206321\\_Financial\\_Literacy\\_and\\_Spending\\_Habits\\_among\\_Senior\\_High\\_School\\_Students](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/383206321_Financial_Literacy_and_Spending_Habits_among_Senior_High_School_Students)
60. Sharma, D. (2024). Decoding Financial Behaviour: An Analysis of urbanised households in India using AIDIS 77th round. arXiv (Cornell University). <https://doi.org/10.48550/arxiv.2412.01867>
61. Shen, D., Fernando Ortega, Hernando, A., & Chang, W. (2016). Pearson Correlation. ScienceDirect. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/topics/computer-science/pearson-correlation>
62. Shi, W., Ali, M., & Leong, C. (2024). Dynamics of personal financial management: a bibliometric and systematic review on financial literacy, financial capability and financial behavior. *International Journal of Bank Marketing*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/ijbm-06-2023-0359>
63. Simonse, O., Van Dijk, W. W., Van Dillen, L. F., & Van Dijk, E. (2024). Economic predictors of the subjective experience of financial stress. *Journal of Behavioral and Experimental Finance*, 42, 100933. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbef.2024.100933>
64. Subburayan, B. (2023). Financial Behavioural of Individual Life. Reader's Blog. [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/369506261\\_Financial\\_Behavioural\\_of\\_Individual\\_Life](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/369506261_Financial_Behavioural_of_Individual_Life)
65. Taherdoost, H. (2016). Validity and reliability of the research instrument; How to test the validation of a Questionnaire/Survey in a research. *SSRN Electronic Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3205040>
66. Team, C. (2025). Financial literacy. Corporate Finance Institute. <https://corporatefinanceinstitute.com/resources/wealth-management/financial-literacy/>

67. United Nations (2015). The 17 Goals of Sustainable Development. <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>
68. Widyastuti, U., Sumiati, A., Herlith, H., & Melati, I. S. (2020). Financial education, financial literacy, and financial Behaviour: What does really matter? *Management Science Letters*, 2715–2720. <https://doi.org/10.5267/j.msl.2020.4.039>
69. Winarta, S., & Pamungkas, A. S. (2021). The role of financial behavior, financial attitude, financial strain, and risk tolerance in explaining financial satisfaction. *Advances in Economics, Business and Management Research/Advances in Economics, Business and Management Research*. <https://doi.org/10.2991/aebmr.k.210507.077>
70. Wong, S. K. Y., Misiran, M., Yusof, Z. M., & Supadi, S. S. (2022). Impact of Financial Literacy Level on Financial Behavior among Higher Education Students: A Case Study in KDA University. *EDUCATUM Journal of Social Sciences*, 8(1), 43–52. <https://doi.org/10.37134/ejoss.vol8.1.5.2022>
71. Xiao, J. J., & O'Neill, B. (2016). Consumer financial education and financial capability. *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, 40(6), 712–721. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ijcs.12285>
72. Xiao, J. J., Porto, N., & Mason, N. M. (2020). Financial education, financial knowledge, and risky financial behaviors of college students. *Journal of Financial Counseling and Planning* 31(1), 7-21 <https://doi.org/10.1891/JFCP-18-00049>
73. Zhang, Y. & Fan, L. (2022). *Journal of Financial Counseling and Planning*, Volume 33, Number 3, 2022, 324–343 2022. Association for Financial Counseling and Planning Education. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1891/JFCP-2021-0039>
74. Zulaihati, S., Susanti, S., & Widyastuti, U. (2019). Teachers' financial literacy: Does it impact on financial behaviour? *Management Science Letters*, 653–658. <https://doi.org/10.5267/j.msl.2019.9.014>