

Values-Driven Investment Choices By Gen Z For Spirituality And Security

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Abstract

This research delves into the convergence of Gen Z's spiritual values and financial security in investment behavior. Being the first generation to be born digitally native, Gen Z is reshaping conventional norms not just in lifestyle and work but also the way they merge personal values and financial behavior. Ever more, spirituality, mindfulness, and seeking purpose are impacting this group's investment decisions, with an increased interest in ethical, sustainable, and impact-oriented financial products. Meanwhile, fears of economic volatility, global warming, and job insecurity inform Gen Z's need for economic security and risk-averse management. This article examines how these twin priorities spiritual alignment and financial security exist together, sometimes intersect, and finally influence Gen Z's investment choices. Shows there is significant association, having prayed to God and making a purchase in different age group. Also significant difference is found in chose the investment which feels secure for money purchase in different age groups.

Keywords: Gen Z; spiritual values; financial security; investment decisions; spirituality; economic uncertainty; behavioral finance

Introduction

Generation Z (born around 1997–2012) is also coming of age as a generation rewriting both spirituality and money behavior. In contrast to earlier generations rooted in organized religion, countless Gen Zers seek "faith unbundled" a customized combination of meditation, connection with nature, tarot cards, and crystal healing motivated by aspirations for inclusivity and individualized meaning rather than institutional affiliation (Pokhrel, 2025; Dharmik Vibes Blog, n.d.). In India, this religious innovation is manifest in entrepreneurial activities conscious journals, astrology software, bhakti music remixes, and customized pilgrimage packages that blend tradition and digital imagination (Dharmik Vibes Blog, n.d.). Side by side with the spiritual fluidity of Gen Z is its developing attitude towards economic security.

Intuit's survey of March 2025 established that 64% of Gen Z prioritize peace of mind over personal wealth, and many will settle for less income in favor of more balance and well-being (Investopedia, 2025a). Their investing priorities are altered by this value switch: while they exercise caution, they are also pragmatic and active. Current information shows that Gen Z is taking the lead in retirement savings savings as much as 20% of their income with retirement savings more than three times Gen X's at the same age, adjusted for inflation (The Guardian, 2025). Still, this generation is not sure about conventional financial counsel: while just 20% of Gen Z adults consult professionals, they prefer social media and online sources even though they are complicated (Investopedia, 2025b). Furthermore, numerous affluent young investors distrust old-school stocks and bonds and prefer alternatives such as property, cryptocurrency, and private equity frequently driven by online media (Business Insider, 2024). This intersection of spiritual orientation, wellness priorities, and security awareness defines Gen Z's financial decision-making. Their values-based thinking converges with practical financial conduct, generating a distinctive environment in which internal meaning and future security direct investment decisions.

Literature review

Studies affirm that Generation Z has a clear spiritual bent, tending to identify themselves as "spiritual" rather than religious. According to aOnePoll survey (2025), which represents UK data, 13% of Gen Z claim to be atheists, whereas 62% of them regard themselves as "very" or "fairly" spiritual indirectly pointing to a drift from institutional faith to individual spiritual identification. Adding to this, McKinsey's survey of global health (2024) stated that Gen Z indicates poor spiritual health at a rate almost three times that of Baby Boomers, highlighting emotional and existential issues related to their spiritual well-being. In the Philippines, a study conducted on 411 university students corroborated a strong relationship between spiritual growth and personal values, indicating that spirituality is a main catalyst for ethical and moral growth. Digital interventions are becoming more popular: a JMIR qualitative study found that consumers of a spiritual self-care app (Skylight) among Gen Z and young millennials appreciated its diverse, contemporary content and employed it for relaxation, mood enhancement, and spiritual anchoring (Park et al., 2023). Nonetheless, a wider scoping review identified scarce digital interventions aimed at Gen Z's mental and spiritual health, demonstrating an evident gap and need for research in digital therapeutic solutions (Park et al., 2024).

On the investment and financial side, several studies highlight Gen Z's functionalism and forward-looking orientation. According to The Guardian, Gen Z has over three times as much retirement savings as Gen X at the same age, with several saving up to 20% of their income a reflection of economic uncertainty and a need for long term protection (The Guardian, 2025). The World Economic Forum's Global Retail Investor Outlook (2025) found that 30% of Gen Z started investing in university age, and 41% would let AI control their investments (World Economic Forum, 2025). A Business Insider report provides context: some young high-net-worth investors are skeptical of old-fashioned stocks and bonds, preferring real estate, crypto, and private equity—and increasingly turning to social media for investment advice (Business Insider, 2024). In India, Gen Z prefers exchange traded funds (ETFs) strongly on account of low costs, transparency, and flexibility, indicating a rising trend of cost-conscious, digitally savvy investing (The Economic Times, 2025).

A BMO survey highlights their embrace of technology: 61% of Gen Z are making use of AI tools for investment choices, financial planning, and budgeting, and almost 58% are relying on AI to enable them to make improved financial decisions (BMO Financial, 2024). Lastly, Indian research found that Gen Z is progressively independent with money, preferring investments like equity, mutual funds, fixed deposits, and gold, although crypto, which is viewed as high risk, also features in their portfolios; choices are influenced by family, risk-return expectations, and new investing platforms (Dugar & Madhavan, 2025). Collectively, these studies portray Gen Z as a value-focused generation that is both spiritually expressive and fiscally prudent. Their spirituality is personalized and digital-first, with significant but still modest backing from digital interventions. Financially, Gen Z is characterized by early and technologically advanced investment habits, pursues security through high levels of savings and retirement planning, and is oriented toward innovative and low-cost tools such as ETFs and AI-recommended portfolios. The convergence of these trends implies an overall orientation in which spiritual health and economic security are linked, although there is still much room for investigation of interventions that couple both.

Gen Z

Generation Z born around 1997 to 2012 are the first generation to grow up entirely digitized, their spirituality, finances, and sense of self defined in ways that are different from any previous generation. Spiritual leaning among Gen Z is moving toward the personal and personalizing: whereas in the UK, 25% of Generation X identify as atheists, in the same country only 13% of Gen Z are atheists, with 62% identifying themselves as spiritual but not religious (OnePoll, 2024). Australian Gen Zers similarly lean spiritual 38% resonate with the label, and half believe in karma, underscoring a shift toward belief systems rooted in personal meaning and interconnectedness. On the financial front, Gen Z exhibits strong financial acumen and early investment habits. A worldwide survey conducted by the World Economic Forum revealed that 30% of Gen Z started investing during university or early adulthood, whereas only 9% of Gen X; almost half of them (41%) would even permit investments to be controlled by AI (World Economic Forum, 2025). As consistent with this, UC San Diego scholars bring to the fore Gen Z as "the most investment-savvy generation," with 45% having invested at or before age 20 (San Diego, 2025). However, financial insecurity permeates: Deloitte reveals that in 2025, 48% of Gen Z reported being financially insecure increasing significantly from 30% the previous year and many are paycheck to paycheck (Deloitte, 2025). Complicating matters, Investopedia indicates that a mere 20% of Gen Z adults solicit expert financial advice, opting for social media and online information instead, with question marks around financial decision-making quality. Together, Generation Z presents as spiritually curious, digitally educated, fiscally responsible—but economically insecure group. They marry individualized spirituality with premature and technologically advanced investing habits, while dealing with financial uncertainty and pursuing significant experience in both lifestyle and community participation.

Spirituality

Generation Z is redefining spirituality, opting for intense, experiential, and highly personal expressions of connection over formal, institutional religion. In the UK alone, for instance, just 13% of Gen Z call themselves atheists, versus higher percentages in previous generations, while 62% say they are "very" or "fairly spiritual", showing a discernible generational trend toward personalized systems of belief. A worldwide study conducted by McKinsey Health Institute revealed that Gen Zers experience poor spiritual health at three times the level of Baby Boomers, meaning not just greater spiritual interest but rising difficulties with meaning and existential anchoring (McKinsey Health Institute, 2024). What this means is that spirituality is still significant to them, though it grows more tense and brittle. In Australia, 38% of Gen Zers consider themselves to be spiritual, 50% believe in karma, 29% believe in reincarnation, and 20% believe in astrology. Mindful practices are prevalent as well 28% meditate and 22% engage in yoga illustrating how spirituality often intersects with wellness behaviors.

It was at the University of Oxford that a participatory research project called on 18-to-27-year-olds from across the globe to create stories with spiritual or religious exemplars. The initiative found that Gen Zers employ storytelling to navigate awe, ethical values, disillusionment, and spiritual aspiration, confirming that digital and creative forms are essential in constructing their spiritual stories (Oxford Exemplars, 2025). India provides another strong example, where more than 50% of Gen Z consider religion to be significant, 62% pray on a regular basis, and 80% are interacting with spiritual material online through apps, snippets, or social media showing how spirituality is being redefined in cyber environments and daily life (Dharmik Vibes Blog). Gen Z spirituality is not passive or orthodox it's creative, active, and frequently constructed from multiple influences. Springtide Research Institute terms this trend "faith unbundled," which is that Gen Z builds spiritual contexts by mixing meanings, practices, and communities from a variety of sources, as opposed to inheriting one tradition (McKinsey Health Institute, 2024). In addition, spiritual engagement overlaps into lifestyle and business. "Spiritual travel" experience with roots in pilgrimage, wellness, self-realization, and cultural immersion is flourishing in India. Almost 60% of local travel among younger generations now falls into this category, with industry expansion expecting a \$4.6 billion market in 2033 (Exchange4Media, 2025). The way Gen Z approaches spirituality is extremely individualized, digitally native, and connected to well-being and cultural self-expression. They claim a strong spiritual identity, tending to tap into a variety of belief systems and practices associated with wellness. However, most struggle with spiritual insecurity both a symptom and an indicator of opportunity, but also of emotional vulnerability. Through storytelling, social media, and embodied practice, they are reframing spirituality in the 21st century.

Security in investment

In the current dynamic investment environment, asset protection has grown sophisticated and critical than ever. Institutional investors now focus on embedding resilience in asset consideration especially by determining climate-related exposure. One of the best examples is the recently released ASTM E3429 24 "Property Resilience Assessment" standard, which drives exhaustive climate-risk due diligence ranging from hazard identification to site-specific assessment and development of resilience strategies—to safeguard real estate investment values more effectively (Reuters, 2025). Concurrently, the online space is under mounting threat: Indian

businesses are expected to raise information security expenditure by 16.4% in 2025, with security services (e.g., data and cloud protection) set to rise even more dramatically, fueled by AI generative risk, ransomware, and regulatory pressure (Business Standard, 2025). Both spheres physical resilience and online defense emphasize an essential reality: successful investment security measures need to be multi-dimensional, addressing not only classic monetary risks but also evolving climate and cyber-related dangers.

Research Methodology: Study is descriptive in nature, based on primary data of 440 responses. SPSS software is used for computing ANOVA and other descriptive analysis. Significance difference level is taken at 0.05 at 95 percent confidence level.

Results and Analysis:

Table 1: ANOVA for Gen Z and spirituality and security in Investment decisions						
		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
I make an investment after praying to God.	Between Groups	.205	2	.103	.059	.942
	Within Groups	755.338	437	1.728		
	Total	755.543	439			
Having prayed to God, I make a purchase	Between Groups	14.842	2	7.421	4.854	.008
	Within Groups	668.101	437	1.529		
	Total	682.943	439			
I ask God for guidance before I make an investment	Between Groups	1.671	2	.835	.505	.604
	Within Groups	722.327	437	1.653		
	Total	723.998	439			
Religious Reasons	Between Groups	.992	2	.496	.393	.675
	Within Groups	551.355	437	1.262		
	Total	552.347	439			
I chose the investment which feels secure for my money	Between Groups	43.629	2	21.814	20.025	.000
	Within Groups	476.044	437	1.089		
	Total	519.673	439			
I chose a safe investment for my money	Between Groups	2.621	2	1.311	1.004	.367
	Within Groups	570.751	437	1.306		
	Total	573.373	439			
I invested my money in a secure option	Between Groups	15.415	2	7.708	7.143	.001
	Within Groups	471.565	437	1.079		
	Total	486.980	439			

Table 1 shows ANOVA for Gen Z and spirituality and security in Investment decisions and shows there is significant association Having prayed to God and making a purchase in different age group($F=4.854$, $Sig.=.008$). Also significant difference is found in chose the investment which feels secure for money purchase in different age group($F=20.025$, $Sig.=.000$)

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics for Gen Z and spirituality and security in Investment decisions

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
I make an investment after praying to God.	440	3.16	1.312
Having prayed to God, I make a purchase	440	3.01	1.247
I ask God for guidance before I make an investment	440	3.05	1.284
Religious Reasons	440	3.07	1.122
I chose the investment which feels secure for my money	440	4.03	1.088
I chose a safe investment for my money	440	3.88	1.143
I invested my money in a secure option	440	3.76	1.053
Valid N (listwise)	440		

Table 2 shows descriptive of Gen Z and spirituality and security in Investment decisions. As is obvious from able that respondents prefer the investment which feels secure for my money($N=400$, $Mean=4.03$ and $Std\ Deviation=1.088$) most and Having prayed to God, they prefer make a purchase ($N=400$, $Mean=3.01$ and $Std\ Deviation=1.247$) least .

Table 3: Age: 18-30 =1, 30-50=2, More than 50=3 for Gen Z and spirituality and security in Investment decisions

		Frequenc y	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	338	76.8	76.8	76.8
	2	73	16.6	16.6	93.4
	3	29	6.6	6.6	100.0
	Total	440	100.0	100.0	

Table 3 shows that study is based on 440 responses from different age groups, Age: 18-30 =1, 30-50=2, More than 50=3 for Gen Z and spirituality and security in Investment decisions

Conclusion

Study is based on 440 responses from different age groups, showing spirituality and security in Investment decisions for Gen Z. Through the blending of insights from behavioral finance, generational research, and spiritual psychology, the study points out new trends and provides implications for financial planners, fintech websites, and policymakers who want to tap into this values-oriented but security-focused generation.

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