

FINANCIAL SERVICES

Single millennials less financially engaged than other generations: UBS

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Millennials are less engaged with their finances. Image credit: Dior

By SARAH RAMIREZ

Single women are more confident than married women about investing, but unmarried millennial women are less engaged with their finances than those in other generations.

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According to a new report from UBS, more than 60 percent of single millennial women admit to putting other areas of their life above their finances. They also report unhealthy financial habits, with one-third already having dipped into their retirement accounts.

"Among single women, millennial women are the least engaged in their finances and as many as 79 percent expect their spouse to provide financial security," said Emily Rubin, private wealth advisor at **UBS Financial Services Inc.**, New York. "This is counterintuitive, as one would have thought younger women in today's environment would have a stronger sense of empowerment.

"Millennial women are more focused on building their careers and starting families and are reverting to ingrained gender roles in thinking that they will rely on their spouses for financial security and management," she said.

For the report "Single Point of View," UBS surveyed 883 single U.S. women investors across age groups.

Financial expectations

While more than 60 percent of single men feel they are financially knowledgeable, less than half of single or married women share this sentiment.

Forty-five percent of single women report they know a lot about investing, compared to 28 percent of married women. Both demographics feel more confident about making long-term investing decisions, including 67 percent of single women and 55 percent of married women.



More than half of married women feeling confident about long-term investing. Image credit: DPA

Generationally, however, single millennial women are less engaged with their finances than their single Generation X and boomer counterparts.

Sixty-one percent of single millennial women prioritize areas other than finances, compared to 38 percent of single Gen X women and just 28 percent of single female boomers.

At least 90 percent of both Gen X and boomer single women are aware of how much they are saving for retirement, while less than 70 percent of single millennial women have the same awareness.

Single millennials are also forming unhealthy financial habits.

Less than 10 percent of Gen X and boomer women have tapped into their retirement accounts early, while 32 percent of millennial women already doing so. Another 29 percent of millennial women would consider tapping into their retirement savings.

More than 80 percent of single millennial women still hope to get married, and 79 percent expect their future spouses to provide financial support.



Millennial women still expect future spouses to provide financial support. Image credit: UBS

However, long-term financial expectations of single millennial women do not align with what married millennials experience. While more than 80 percent expect to participate in investing, less than 40 percent of married millennial women actually do.

The majority of women also crave conversations with friends and peers about their finances, including 66 percent of single women and 52 percent of married women.

Women's wealth

Although the vast majority of women will eventually be solely responsible for their fiscal well-being, only 40 percent are involved in their long-term financial planning.

Women continue to let their spouses take the lead on financial decisions, according to UBS Global Wealth Management's "Own Your Worth" study of women investors. Globally, less than a quarter of women, 23 percent, take charge of long-term financial planning ([see story](#)).

As more women make their way up to the top of the world's biggest companies, women are becoming a significant

segment of financial services clientele.

In fact, only 2 percent of financial services companies treat woman as an individual segment with their own specific needs. Women, on a macro level, have investment habits and tendencies that set them apart from other segments, which financial services companies can capitalize on ([see story](#)).

"Single women have no one else to rely on, thus have no choice but to get more involved in their finances," UBS's Ms. Rubin said. "Even with this, single women appear to have less confidence in making critical investments decisions compared to their male counterparts.

"As a financial advisor when speaking to women, both married and single, my goal is to educate and make them more comfortable with taking charge of their financial well-being," she said. "Knowing your risk tolerance and understanding your needs and goals will get you a long way to financial confidence."

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