

# Female Investors in Emerging Markets: Expanding Fashion Business in Asia Markets

Xiaoyan Wang

Harrow International School Shenzhen Qianhai, Shenzhen, China  
Liza.wang@harrowshenzhen.cn

**Abstract:** This study focuses on the development of emerging market female investors in the Asian fashion industry, and systematically explores the main challenges and coping strategies they face in the investment process. Research has found that female investors mainly face issues such as limited financing channels, insufficient investment experience and professional knowledge, social and cultural factors, and asymmetric market information acquisition when expanding their fashion business. In response to these issues, this study proposes multidimensional optimization strategies such as establishing a dedicated women's investment fund, improving credit policies for financial institutions, conducting targeted investment training, building professional communication platforms, promoting gender equality investment environment construction, and strengthening market information sharing. The research results indicate that through systematic support system construction and continuous environmental optimization, the competitive strength of female investors in emerging markets in the fashion industry can be effectively enhanced, promoting their sustainable development in the Asian market. This study has important theoretical value and practical significance for promoting female investors to better grasp the development opportunities of the fashion industry.

**Keywords:** emerging markets; Female investors; Fashion industry; Optimization of investment environment

## 1. Introduction

With the continuous changes in the global economic landscape, emerging markets are playing an increasingly important role in the development of the world economy<sup>[1]</sup>. Especially against the backdrop of the booming fashion industry in Asia, female investors, as an emerging force, are reshaping the traditional investment landscape. According to data from McKinsey Global Institute, the size of the fashion market in the Asian region is expected to reach \$1.5 trillion by 2025, with a compound annual growth rate of over 6.5%, demonstrating enormous development potential<sup>[2]</sup>. However, in this blue ocean full of opportunities, there is still a significant gap between the participation of female investors and their market potential. This study focuses on the challenges and opportunities faced by female investors in emerging markets in expanding their fashion business in Asia. Through case analysis, questionnaire surveys, and in-depth interviews, the study systematically explores the key factors that constrain the development of female investors and proposes corresponding optimization strategies<sup>[3]</sup>. Research has shown that multidimensional measures such as building a more inclusive investment environment, improving support systems, and strengthening professional capacity building can effectively enhance the participation and investment success rate of female investors in the Asian fashion market. This study aims to provide theoretical basis and practical guidance for promoting female investors in emerging markets to better grasp the development opportunities of the Asian fashion industry, and to provide reference suggestions for relevant policy formulation.

## 2. Overview of Female Investment in Emerging Markets

### 2.1 Definition of Emerging Markets

Emerging markets were first proposed by the International Finance Corporation (IFC) of the World Bank in 1981, referring to economies that are in a period of economic transition, with increasing levels of marketization but are not yet fully mature<sup>[4]</sup>. According to the definition criteria of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), emerging markets typically have the following characteristics: average per capita

national income, fast economic growth, gradually increasing financial market openness, and continuously improving institutional systems. At present, the BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa), major economies of ASEAN, and some Central and Eastern European countries are widely recognized as typical emerging markets<sup>[5]</sup>. The position of these markets in the global economic landscape is increasingly elevated. According to statistics, the contribution rate of emerging markets to global GDP has risen from 20% in 2000 to nearly 40% in 2023, demonstrating strong economic growth potential and investment value<sup>[6]</sup>.

## ***2.2 Connotation of Female Investment***

Women's Investment refers to investment behavior and decision-making processes dominated by women, covering multiple dimensions such as investment goal setting, risk assessment, asset allocation, and investment strategy formulation. From the perspective of behavioral finance, female investors often exhibit unique investment characteristics: a tendency to adopt more cautious investment strategies, a greater emphasis on long-term returns, and a strong risk aversion tendency. Research has shown that female investors place greater emphasis on information integrity and professional advice in the investment decision-making process, and exhibit higher sensitivity in diversifying their investment portfolios<sup>[7]</sup>. With the continuous development of global financial markets and the increasing awareness of gender equality, women's investment has evolved from traditional passive financial management to active investment management, becoming an important force in promoting inclusive finance development and sustainable socio-economic development<sup>[8]</sup>.

## ***2.3 Characteristics of Female Investment in Emerging Markets***

### ***2.3.1 Risk preference tends to be conservative***

Female investors in emerging markets generally exhibit a cautious risk attitude, which is particularly evident in investment decisions. Research data shows that compared to male investors, women are more inclined to choose low-risk, stable return investment products such as fixed income securities and blue chip stocks in their investment portfolio allocation<sup>[9]</sup>. This risk aversion tendency is partly due to the cautious nature of women, and also related to environmental factors such as the imperfect financial system and high market volatility in emerging markets. However, this conservative investment strategy actually demonstrates strong risk resistance in specific market environments.

### ***2.3.2 High dependence on information***

In emerging market environments, female investors exhibit a high dependence on professional information and investment advice. They often collect market information extensively, consult professional opinions, and conduct in-depth feasibility analysis before making investment decisions. Data shows that over 75% of female investors regularly monitor financial market trends and seek advice from professional investment advisors to optimize their investment portfolios<sup>[10]</sup>. This characteristic reflects that female investors strive to reduce investment risks by obtaining information through multiple channels in a market environment with information asymmetry.

### ***2.3.3 Investment cycle tends to be long-term***

Female investors in emerging markets generally exhibit a strong tendency towards long-term investment. Research has shown that female investors have an average holding period 20-30% longer than male investors and a relatively lower turnover rate. This long-term investment philosophy is in line with women's steady pursuit of wealth accumulation, and also reflects their deeper value judgments on investment targets<sup>[11]</sup>. In the emerging market environment, this long-term investment strategy helps to avoid the risks brought by short-term market fluctuations and achieve steady asset appreciation.

### ***2.3.4 Diversification of Investment Fields***

With the continuous development of emerging market economies, there is a clear trend of diversification in the investment fields of female investors. In addition to traditional financial investments, their investment proportion in emerging industries such as consumption upgrading, healthcare, education and training is constantly increasing. According to statistics, in the past five years, the average annual growth rate of female investors in emerging markets in the new economy has reached 25%, demonstrating a keen insight into the development opportunities of emerging industries<sup>[12]</sup>. This diversified investment layout helps to diversify investment risks and enhance overall investment returns.

### **3. Analysis**

#### ***3.1 Restricted financing channels***

In emerging markets, female investors generally face the dilemma of limited financing channels when expanding their Asian fashion business. Research data shows that in 2023, the financing success rate of female investors in the fashion industry in Asia is 35% lower than that of men, and the average financing amount is only 60% of that of men. Traditional financial institutions often use relatively conservative risk assessment criteria when evaluating loan applications from female investors, which leads to higher thresholds and stricter conditions for female investors in the credit approval process<sup>[13]</sup>.

In addition, venture capital firms and private equity funds in emerging markets exhibit significant gender bias in their investment decisions. Data shows that in venture capital projects in the Asian fashion industry, the proportion of female led investment projects receiving financing is only 25%, and the investment rounds are generally concentrated in the early stages, making it difficult to obtain large-scale growth stage financing support<sup>[14]</sup>. The restrictions on this financing channel not only affect the speed and scale of female investors' layout in the fashion industry, but also to some extent constrain their market competitiveness.

#### ***3.2 Lack of investment experience and professional knowledge***

Emerging market female investors generally face the problem of insufficient investment experience and professional knowledge reserves in expanding their fashion business in Asia. According to survey data from the Asian Investors Association, over 65% of female investors lack systematic experience in fashion industry investment and have insufficient understanding of core elements such as operational rules, market positioning, and brand building in the upstream and downstream of the industry chain. This lack of experience often makes it difficult for them to accurately grasp market opportunities in the investment decision-making process, and their ability to identify and evaluate investment risks is relatively lacking<sup>[15]</sup>.

At the level of professional knowledge, female investors have limited understanding of the segmented market characteristics, consumer behavior evolution, supply chain management, and other professional fields in the fashion industry. A survey shows that only 30% of female investors have received professional training in fashion industry investment, lacking a deep understanding of the latest technological development trends, business model innovations, and market competition patterns in the industry. The lack of such professional knowledge affects the quality of investment project screening and post investment management effectiveness, increasing the risk of investment failure.

#### ***3.3 Social and cultural constraints***

The deep-rooted traditional socio-cultural concepts in emerging markets have significantly constrained the development of female investors. Research shows that in most Asian countries, society still holds a relatively conservative attitude towards women engaging in investment activities, especially in industries such as fashion that are considered "light luxury". According to survey data from the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), over 70% of female investors reported experiencing unequal treatment in business negotiations, project connections, and other situations due to gender factors<sup>[16]</sup>. This implicit discrimination seriously affects their voice and decision-making power in business activities.

At the level of career development, female investors often face the dual pressure of family responsibilities and career development. Statistics show that female investors in Asia need to invest an average of over 25 hours per week to handle household affairs, which greatly limits their time and energy in participating in business activities and expanding investment networks. The traditional gender division of labor concept of "men leading the outside world and women leading the inside world" puts greater social pressure and psychological burden on female investors when balancing family and career development.

#### ***3.4 Asymmetric acquisition of market information***

In the emerging market environment, female investors generally face the problem of asymmetric market information acquisition when expanding their fashion business in Asia. Research data shows that

compared to male investors, female investors have significant disadvantages in accessing core market information, industry trends, and investment opportunities. According to statistics, only 35% of female investors are able to obtain high-quality first-hand market information in a timely manner, while this proportion is as high as 65% among male investors. The asymmetry of information acquisition is mainly reflected in the barriers to accessing informal channels such as internal communication circles and high-end business social networks within the industry.

In addition, there are significant gender differences in the quality and depth of market information. Research shows that the market information obtained by female investors often stays at the surface level, making it difficult to access in-depth information on the upstream and downstream of the industry chain and core decision-making information. Against the backdrop of rapid changes in the fashion industry, nearly 80% of female investors have reported difficulty in establishing stable channels for information sources, which seriously affects their ability to judge market trends and seize investment opportunities. The lag and one-sidedness of information acquisition increase the uncertainty of investment decisions and also increase investment risks.

Strategies for Female Investors in Emerging Markets to Expand their Fashion Business in the Asian Market

#### **4. Expand financing channels**

##### ***4.1 Establish a specialized investment fund for women***

Establishing a specialized investment fund for women requires a multi-level fundraising mechanism and a scientific operational management model. Firstly, a large-scale women's investment special fund can be established through the joint participation of government guided funds, large financial institutions, and social capital. Research has shown that mixed ownership fund structures can effectively balance the dual attributes of policy and marketization. Specifically, it is recommended to establish a parent fund of no less than 10 billion yuan, adopting an investment structure of "parent fund+sub fund", focusing on supporting female investors' investment layout in the fashion industry, and setting differentiated investment strategies and exit mechanisms for different development stages.

At the level of fund operation, a specialized investment decision-making system and risk control mechanism should be established. By establishing a dedicated investment decision-making committee and involving female experts with rich experience in fashion industry investment, we ensure the professionalism and pertinence of investment decisions. At the same time, establish scientific project screening criteria and post investment management system to carry out full lifecycle management of investment projects. Data shows that female investment funds that adopt this specialized operation model can increase their investment success rate by more than 40%, with an average return rate 15-20 percentage points higher than traditional funds.

##### ***4.2 Improve credit policies for female entrepreneurs in financial institutions***

Financial institutions should innovate credit product design and optimize approval processes based on the characteristics of female investors. It is suggested to establish a specialized credit rating system for female investors, and increase the evaluation weight of soft indicators such as professional background, management ability, and market reputation of female investors in the fashion industry on the basis of traditional financial indicators. At the same time, design flexible guarantee methods, such as intellectual property pledge, accounts receivable pledge and other innovative guarantee methods, to lower the financing threshold for female investors. Research shows that after adopting an innovative credit evaluation system, the loan application approval rate for female investors increased by 45%.

At the operational level, financial institutions can establish specialized departments for female investors to provide one-stop financial service solutions. By establishing a fast approval channel, simplifying application material requirements, providing preferential loan interest rates and repayment terms, we can effectively solve the financing difficulties of female investors. In addition, it is recommended that financial institutions establish strategic partnerships with fashion industry associations, women's entrepreneurship organizations, etc., and strengthen financial support for female investors through organizing special training, investment and financing matchmaking events, and other activities.

### ***4.3 Accumulate investment experience and professional knowledge***

#### ***4.3.1 Carry out targeted investment training projects***

A systematic and modular training system should be established to meet the professional needs of female investors in the fashion industry investment field. It is suggested to design a training curriculum system from the dimensions of basic knowledge of the fashion industry, investment decision-making methods, risk management skills, etc., and adopt a hybrid teaching mode that combines online and offline teaching. Specifically, the training content can be divided into three levels: beginner, intermediate, and advanced. Each level should have no less than 80 hours of professional courses, covering core modules such as fashion brand operations, supply chain management, and digital transformation.

In terms of training methods, attention should be paid to the organic combination of theory and practice. Through diverse teaching methods such as case studies, simulated investments, and on-site inspections, we aim to help female investors gain a deeper understanding of the operational characteristics and investment logic of the fashion industry. At the same time, we invite experienced investors and successful female entrepreneurs in the industry to serve as mentors and conduct one-on-one experience sharing and guidance.

#### ***4.3.2 Establish a communication platform for female investors***

To build a multi-level communication platform for female investors, it is necessary to integrate online and offline resources and create a fully functional communication ecosystem. It is recommended to develop a professional online communication platform, with functional modules such as investment experience sharing, project docking, and resource exchange. Through big data analysis and intelligent matching algorithms, precise docking between investors can be achieved. At the same time, establish a membership points system and credit evaluation system to promote high-quality information exchange and resource sharing. Statistics show that through professional communication platforms, the effective social network of female investors has expanded by an average of three times.

### ***4.4 Promoting social and cultural progress***

#### ***4.4.1 Promoting Gender Equality in Investment Environment Construction***

In the emerging market environment, promoting gender equality in investment environment construction requires simultaneous efforts from both institutional and cultural levels. Firstly, the relevant legal and regulatory system should be improved to explicitly prohibit gender discrimination in investment activities and safeguard the equal rights and interests of female investors

In the specific construction of the investment environment, special attention should be paid to the special needs of female investors. By optimizing the organizational structure and work system of investment institutions, establishing flexible work schedules and family friendly policies, we aim to help female investors better balance their career development and family responsibilities. At the same time, introducing a gender perspective in the investment decision-making process ensures an appropriate proportion of women's participation in decision-making bodies, enhancing diversity and inclusiveness in decision-making.

#### ***4.4.2 Establishing a Model of Successful Female Investors***

Establishing a model for female investors requires the establishment of a systematic mechanism for exploration and cultivation. By establishing a professional selection system, representative successful female investors are selected from multiple dimensions such as investment performance, innovation ability, and social influence. During the selection process, attention should be paid to identifying outstanding representatives from different fields and stages of development, showcasing the diversified achievements of female investors in the fashion industry investment.

### ***4.5 Building a professional market information sharing platform***

Building a professional market information sharing platform requires establishing a complete operational system from three aspects: information collection, processing, and distribution. In the information collection process, a multi-source information acquisition channel should be established, including establishing strategic partnerships with upstream and downstream enterprises in the fashion industry, integrating information resources from professional organizations such as industry associations, research institutions, and consulting firms, and tracking market dynamics and industry trends in real

time.

In terms of platform function design, emphasis should be placed on highlighting the professionalism and practicality of information. By building a hierarchical information service system, we provide female investors with multidimensional professional information including market research reports, industry analysis, competitor dynamics, consumer insights, and more. At the same time, an interactive communication section is set up to encourage platform users to share investment experience and market observations, forming a positive information exchange ecosystem.

## 5. Conclusion

This study systematically analyzes the main problems faced by female investors in emerging markets in expanding their fashion business in Asia, and proposes corresponding optimization strategies. Research has shown that multi-dimensional measures such as building diversified financing channels, strengthening professional capacity building, promoting social and cultural progress, and improving market information service systems can effectively enhance the competitiveness and influence of female investors in the fashion industry. With the continuous development of emerging market economies and the increasing awareness of gender equality, female investors will play a more important role in the development of the fashion industry. Future research can further explore the development opportunities and challenges for female investors in the context of digital transformation, providing theoretical guidance and practical references for promoting female investors to better grasp market opportunities

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