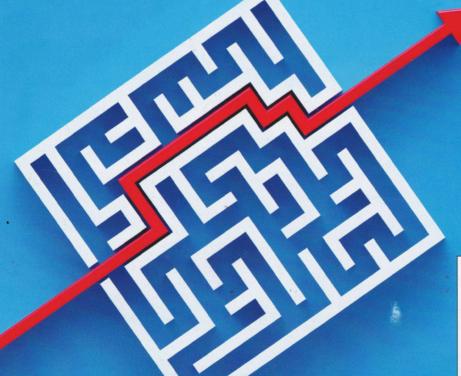
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**Cover Story Smart Beta Funds: Are They The Right Choice?** 



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# Smart Beta Funds: A Smarter Way to Invest

t's a well-known fact, supported by numerous studies, that many large-cap funds in India struggle to outperform their benchmarks. These benchmarks, which can easily be replicated by index funds, often leave investors searching for ways to generate alpha by exploiting market inefficiencies and cyclicality. In this context, Smart Beta funds have emerged as a compelling alternative, offering a balanced approach that combines the stability of passive investing with the innovative potential of active management. Smart Beta funds provide a middle ground—neither fully passive nor overly aggressive.

They enable you to harness proven investment factors that have historically outperformed in various market conditions, without veering too far from the benchmark indices. This makes them an excellent choice for investors looking to fine-tune their risk-return profiles without the stress of market timing and stock picking. However, while Smart Beta funds can be valuable, they are not without their complexities. Investors need to carefully evaluate the underlying factors, as different strategies will perform differently depending on market cycles.

These funds are not a one-size-fits-all solution, but with the right understanding and a clear investment objective, they can be a valuable addition to a diversified portfolio. In this issue's cover story, we delve into how Smart Beta funds work and how to choose one that aligns with your risk appetite. Additionally, we explore how to fund your child's foreign education using mutual funds and examine whether international funds can help hedge currency risk. We hope our insights will help you pick the right choices and guide you on a profitable investment journey.

Shashikant Singh
Executive Editor

## **Loan Against Mutual Funds**

Loan against mutual funds was an interesting topic covered in the last edition. But what are the criteria an investor should look into while availing of loans against MFs?

- Dhanashri Kamble

**Editor Responds:** Thank you for writing to us. Availing of a loan against mutual funds is a smart way to access funds without liquidating your investments. However, not all mutual funds are eligible for such loans. Equity and debt mutual funds qualify, but some categories like liquid funds or ELSS may not. The loan-to-value (LTV) ratio is another crucial aspect, as it determines the amount you can borrow against your holdings.

Interest rates on loans against mutual funds are usually lower than those for personal loans but can vary between lenders. Comparing rates is essential to secure a favourable deal. Additionally, consider the loan tenure, which typically ranges from one to three years. Market fluctuations pose a risk, as a significant drop in the value of your funds could trigger a margin call, requiring additional collateral or partial repayment. While loans against mutual funds offer a flexible financing option, they require careful consideration.

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Interview Kailash Kulkarni

Chief Executive Officer, HSBC Mutual Fund

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