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# THE DETERMINANTS OF HOUSEHOLD CONSUMPTION PATTERNS IN KLANG VALLEY

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Abstract: People are having difficulty obtaining necessities due to the worrying state of the economy. Household consumption patterns have been the centre of an individual's spending behaviour study in improving an individual's financial planning. The decision of a household over how much to spend or save is a microeconomic issue because it pertains to the individual units of the economy. The research study's main goals were to suggest the dimensions of household spending patterns. A pilot test study was conducted during Matta Fair 2022 at PWTC, Kuala Lumpur. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) 27.0 is employed to identify the relationships between consumption expenditure and household budgeting in improving household consumption patterns. Data are mainly quantitative, where descriptive statistics were conducted to analyze the data. The results of the study demonstrate a substantial relationship between consumption expenditure and household budgeting is significantly related to household consumption patterns. According to this research, a family should practice financial planning and be conscious of developing saving habits rather than spending more money on unnecessary things. Individuals must control their spending behaviour to lead a great and peaceful life.

**Keywords:** Consumption Expenditure, Financial Literacy, Financial Planning, Household Budgeting, Household Consumption Pattern

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## Introduction

Income inequality is a common issue that continuously worrying every country for decades. It is an interesting issue as high-income inequality could be detrimental to the country's economic growth, especially for developing countries such as Malaysia. There have been numerous studies highlighting the detrimental effects of economic disparity. This paper aims to identify the relationship between consumption expenditure (CE) and household budgeting (HB) toward household consumption patterns (HCP) and suggest a new dimension of household spending patterns.

In advanced economies, it is challenging to reduce the income inequality gap due to high living costs, the low minimum wage paid by employers and the global economic crisis. Thus, the enhancement of community well-being and economic development in a country depends on efforts to reduce income disparities (Safari et al., 2019). Rising commodity prices and increasing fuel costs are forcing more Malaysians, especially from low- and middle-income households to make difficult decisions. Despite the lifting of Covid-19 travel limitations, people went from going hungry to staying put at home to save money on fuel and transportation (The News Straits Time, 2022). Therefore, the T20 and M40 groups are projected to shrink, while Malaysia's lowest income group, B40, is likely to become B60 as a result of the rise in the cost of products. According to the Department of Statistics Malaysia Official Portal, the average monthly gross income of households decreased by a negative 10.3%, to RM7,089, compared to RM7,901 in 2019. The decline in average monthly gross income is contributed by those who are experiencing income loss or reduction, particularly those households or individuals with the status of the employee, self-employed and others.

Household consumption patterns are one of the areas that researchers are becoming increasingly interested in, according to several papers that have been written about reducing income disparity. According to a study by Dustmann et al. (2021), income inequality has significantly expanded as a result of converging patterns in housing expenditure and income distribution. Over the past 150 years, research on household spending patterns has shown that significant, non-marginal increases in household income frequently coincide with economic development, which has a pervasive impact on the makeup and amount of household spending across nearly all spending categories. Household spending is the main driver of economic development in the majority of developed countries, where it represents more than half of the GDP. Households tend to instantly change their purchasing habits as their wealth increases and a range of new products enter the consumption basket (Chai, 2018). The decline in national currency is very directly linked to the global economy. Global growth is predicted to decline from 6.0% in 2021 to 3.2% in 2022 and 2.7% in 2023. Besides, it is expected that Malaysia might be affected by the risk of global recession and the United States (US) which is expected to occur next year. Since 2001, its growth profile is the least robust (International Monetary Fund, 2022).

Additionally, Malaysia's currency has declined 7.5% versus the US dollar since the beginning of 2022 (Sinar Harian, 2022). The state of the world economy contributes to the increase in fuel prices and commodity prices. Malaysians are being forced to make difficult decisions regarding their purchases, especially those from low- and middle-income households. Many families have been forced to skip necessities like food or housing payments due to the widespread and abrupt income losses brought on by job loss or reduced work hours (Roll et al., 2022). Good home spending habits are advantageous to both individuals and the entire economy. Hence, Malaysians need to improve their financial management in preparation to survive during this crucial time.



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## **Literature Review**

Two dimensions are suggested in this research as ways to strengthen the HCP. There is a limited study that discusses the direct impact of budgeting and consumption expenditure towards household consumption patterns. The most crucial element of financial literacy is household money (finance) management, which includes budgeting (Habibah et al., 2018). As a result, the following are the main research goals of this study by comprehending both of these dimensions, the analysis contributes to the literature on economics and financial planning.

## **Household Consumption Pattern (HCP)**

The behaviour of household consumers is a result of how preferences and opportunities interact with different types of limitations. Consumer behaviour and household preference decisions have a significant impact on an economy (Waleed & Mirza, 2020). There are two categories of household consumption: main requirements and supporting needs (secondary). Consumption patterns are human needs in the form of things and services that are allocated to individual interests as well as families based on governance and responsibilities that are realised as primary and secondary needs in daily life, whether it be to meet the need for food, health, education, and entertainment (Rusdiana et al., 2020). People must lower their consumption patterns to a low level of income remains constant and consumption rises, or else the community will face insufficient consumption. According to Asmat Ismail (2022), in times of economic uncertainty, households raise their savings rate by slowing down consumption and economic development, which results in the greater the uncertainty about labour income, the greater the savings of households by making precautionary savings consistently. The consumption pattern is correlated with the size of the family; the fewer family members, the fewer wants there are to be satisfied. Contrarily, the more family members there are, the more requirements there are to be met (Aziz et al., 2019).

Household consumption patterns may affect pay disparity. Growing income inequality in the labour is linked to changing household consumption patterns in the literature on "skills-biased structural change." The wage gap between workers with at least a college degree and those with only a high school diploma or less increased by over 50% in the US economy between 1977 and 2005. It is suggested that this increase in wage inequality is partially caused by changes in household purchasing habits brought on by income, which tend to favour sectors that employ highly trained labour (Chai, 2018). Furthermore, by the level of urbanisation, the distribution of spending groups reveals disparities in preferred expenditures. Urban households spent the most on housing, water, electricity, gas, and other fuels (24.0%) than any other type of household. In contrast, households in rural areas spent the most on food and non-alcoholic beverages 24.4 per cent of total household expenditures (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2020).

## **Household Budgeting (HB)**

Budgeting is a common approach introduced by financial advisors in teaching individuals on managing their expenses. A budget is a financial plan that allows people, businesses, or organisations to set aside money for different purposes such as spending, savings, investments, and debt repayment. In a broader sense, budgeting is the act of allocating cash to multiple accounts and monitoring their use while setting up implicit or explicit expenditure caps, or "budgets" (Zhang & Sussman, 2017). The previous study correlated budgeting to mental accounting Habibah et al., (2018) and Xiao & O'Neill (2018). Households may maintain three separate mental budgets: one for meals, one for outings, and one for savings. Depending on the goal of creating each budget, they always allocate a specific sum of money to it. The amount



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of money allocated to each mental budget, which is maintained mentally distinct from the others, depends on its sources as well (Habibah et al., 2018).

Individuals and households must make a wide range of complex financial decisions that might have long-term repercussions on their financial well-being. It is very important to understand how mental accounting might affect how people manage their finances (Zhang & Sussman, 2018). Additionally, budgeting is a self-control device, especially for households with a lower income and wealth (Antonides et al., 2011). Budgeting allows individuals to avoid making unplanned purchases which control their spending behaviour and avoid debt (Habibah et al., 2018). Furthermore, to satisfy the demands of acquiring goods or services that are on the market, planning household expenses is essential. Fulfilling a person's basic requirements, such as those for food, clothing, shelter, transportation, and education is the aim of every home (Mohd Bakri et al., 2017). Despite the positive impact of budgeting towards an individual, a study by Antonides et al. (2011) found that it can lead to over or underspending.

## **Consumption Expenditure (CE)**

One of the most crucial aspects of being able to manage money is being able to make ends meet and keep track of spending. Spending habits are a crucial area of household economic decision-making (Hoque, 2017). Consumption expenditure had been discussed in previous literature with the majority discussed from the viewpoint of public expenditure (Nwosu et al., 2018), and food expenditure (Zezza et al., 2017). The term "consumption" in economics simply refers to consuming commodities and services, which may include the purchase of long-lasting items like furniture or cars as well as works of art that might appreciate over time (Enbeyle et al., 2020). By using the concept of public expenditure, this study highlights the expenditure from an individual viewpoint. The usage of goods by the household is referred to as consumption. The amount that households spend on various products and services, including the purchase of assets, entertainment, food, and clothing. The notion of the consumption function, which illustrates the relationship between consumption and disposable income, is derived from this definition (Enbeyle et al., 2020).

Previous studies concluded that spending was positively connected with economic growth. Additionally, as household income increases, there may be considerable changes in consumption habits that could shift the economy's industrial structure (Chai, 2018). Therefore, it is also assumed in this study that consumer spending should spur economic expansion.

#### Methodology

This study adopts and adapts previous literature to develop the questionnaire and uses a quantitative methodology to obtain and analyse its data as a pilot test. The purpose of this pilot test was conducted is to determine the validity and reliability of the questions. One hundred questionnaires were distributed during MATTA Fair 2022 at PWTC, Kuala Lumpur, targeting individuals working in the tourism industry. 35 per cent of the response rate is used for data analysis in SPSS. The survey occurred in tourism industries such as accommodation, travel companies, attractions, etc. The selection of these types of the industry was based on the fact that tourism is one of Malaysia's leading industries, as it contributed 6.7 per cent of the country's GDP in 2019 and so employed nearly a quarter of the country's workers (Statistica, 2022). However, the COVID-19 outbreak recently has had a disproportionately negative impact on the tourism sector. COVID-19's effects have decreased intra-country travel and have contributed to the tourism industry's financial losses (Gossling et al., 2020).

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Besides, Klang Valley is the central urban area of Selangor and is known as a busy city. The issue of the cost of living in Klang Valley is highly impacted compared to the other states in Malaysia (World Bank, 2020). All the factors are quantified using a 5-point Likert scale, and each response must assess the statements on a 5-point Likert scale, from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to analyse the data and perform descriptive and statistical inferential analyses.

#### **Results**

## **Demographic Analysis**

As shown in **Table 1**, the respondents' demography comprises 57.1% and 42.9% of males and females, respectively. Most of them are from the age group of 35-39 years (28.6%), followed by the age group of 25-29 years (25.7%), then 30-34 years (22.9%), 40-44 years old (14.3%), 45-49 years old (5.7%) and the lowest is 50-55 years consisting of only 2.9%. The majority of the respondents are Malay (77.1%), followed by Chinese (11.4%), other races (8.6%) and Indian (2.9%). Most of the respondents have a Diploma or Bachelor's Degree (42.9%) respectively, followed by Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM) and Master's Degree (5.7%) and only 2.9 per cent who possess a PhD.

Additionally, 62.9 per cent are from the B40 group, and 37.1% are from the M40 group. The data shows that 25.7% of them have an income range of less than RM2500, 20.0% have an income range of RM2501-RM3169, 14.3% have an income range of RM8500-RM10959, 11.4% have an income range of RM3970-RM4849 and RM7100-RM8699, 8.6% have an income range of RM 4850-RM5879, 5.7% have an income range of RM3170-RM3969 and 2.9% have an income range of RM5880-RM7099. Most are married (57.1%) and single (42.9%). Besides, their spouse is employed (40.0%), while the rest are unemployed (17.1%). Most of them still have no children yet (54.3%), followed by having three children (20.0%), having one child (11.4%), having two children (8.6%), and having four children or more than four children (2.9%), respectively. Travel and tourism recorded the highest number of respondents, 42.9%, followed by medical and wellness, accommodation, and agritourism, 20.0%, 17.1% and 8.6%, respectively. Furthermore, heritage, arts and culture recorded the same number of respondents with entertainment and recreation, which are 5.7%. Lastly, the data recorded that the highest number of respondents who works in the tourism industry is less than two years or 2-5 years of service (20.0%), correspondingly followed by 6-8 years of service.

**Table 1: Demographic Characteristic of Respondent (N=35)** 

Items		Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender:	Male	20	57.1
	Female	15	42.9
Age:	25 – 29 years old	9	25.7
_	30 - 34 years old	8	22.9
	35 - 39 years old	10	28.6
	40 – 44 years old	5	14.3
	45 – 49 years old	2	5.7
	50 - 55 years old	1	2.9



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Race	Malay	27	77.1
	Indian	1	2.9
	Chinese	4	11.4
	Others	3	8.6
Education Level:	Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM)	2	5.7
	Diploma	15	42.9
	Bachelor Degree	15	42.9
	Master Degree	2	5.7
	Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)	1	2.9
Household Income	B40 Group ( <rm4850)< td=""><td>22</td><td>62.9</td></rm4850)<>	22	62.9
Classification:	M40 Group (RM4850-RM10970)	13	37.1
Monthly	Less than RM2500	9	25.7
Household Income:	RM2501-RM3169	7	20.0
	RM3170-RM3969	2	5.7
	RM3970-RM4849	4	11.4
	RM4850-RM5879	3	8.6
	RM5880-RM7099	1	2.9
	RM7100-RM8699	4	11.4
	RM8700- RM10959	5	14.3
Marital Status:	Single	15	42.9
	Married	20	57.1
Spouse	Employed	14	40.0
Employment:	Unemployed	6	17.1
	Not Applicable (NA)	15	42.9
Number	No children	19	54.3
of Children:	1 child	4	11.4
	2 children	3	8.6
	3 children	7	20.0
	4 children	1	2.9
	More than 4 children	1	2.9
Tourism Industry:	Heritage, Arts and Culture:	2	5.7
•	Agritourism:	3	8.6
	Accommodation:	6	17.1
	Entertainment and Recreation:	2	5.7
	Travel and Tourism:	15	42.9
	Medical and Wellness:	7	20.0
Year of Service:	Less than 2 years	7	20.0
	2 – 5 years	7	20.0
	6 - 8 years	6	17.1
	9 - 10 years	3	8.6
	11 – 13 years	4	11.4
	14 – 15 years	4	11.4
	More than 15 years	4	11.4

# **Household Consumption Pattern**

Questions were asked on the two-way close-ended questions (yes/no). This type of question refers to dichotomous variables, where it refers to a variable that only has two unique values (Berg, n.d.). Seven questions were asked regarding the HCP.



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**Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of HCP** 

Statement	Frequency	Percentage (%)
HCP1. Do you have a loan?		(70)
Yes	28	80.0
No	7	20.0
HCP2. Do you rent or own your house?		
Rent	9	25.7
Own	26	74.3
HCP3. Do you have a vehicle at home?		
Yes	33	94.3
No	2	5.7
HCP6. Do you have internet coverage at		
home?		
Yes	29	82.9
No	6	17.1
HCP7. Do you have Astro at home?		
Yes	5	14.3
No	30	85.7
HCP8. Do you have video streaming		
services at home (e.g., Netflix, Viu, etc)		
Yes	15	42.9
No	20	57.1
HCP9. Do you have a yearly family		
vacation?		
Yes	14	40.0
No	21	60.0

**Table 2** shows that 80.0% of the respondents have loans, while only 20.0% are free from the loan. Besides, 74.3% of the respondents own their house while the rest rent a house (25.7%). In addition, most of the respondents at least have a vehicle at home (94.3%) and the minority do not own a vehicle (5.7%). The highest number of respondents who make a budget for their monthly groceries is in the range of RM0-RM500 (48.6%), followed by RM501-RM1000 (25.7%), RM1001- RM1500 and RM1501- RM2000 (11.4%) and the lowest is RM2501-RM3000 (2.9%). Furthermore, Table 2 recorded that most of the respondents' total utility expenses per month are in the range of RM0-RM500 (77.1%), followed by RM501- RM1000 (11.4%), RM1001- RM1500 (5.7%), and the lowest are RM1501- RM2000 and RM2501-RM3000 (2.9%). Most respondents have an internet connection at home, while others do not have internet coverage at home (17.1%). It is recorded in Table 2 that 14.3% of respondents are using Astro at home, while 85.7% of respondents are not using Astro at home. Other than that, it shows that 42.9% of respondents are subscribing to video streaming services at home, and 57.1% of respondents are not subscribing to video streaming services at home. Lastly, Table 2 shows that 40.0% are having their yearly family vacation while the other 60.0% do not have an annual family vacation.





## **Household Budgeting**

Seven questions on a 5-point Likert scale were presented to the respondents. The mean value ranging from 4.11 to 3.29 shows the significance of household budgeting towards household consumption. The practices of monitoring electricity bills recorded the highest value (M - 4.11, SD - 1.132), and purchasing electricity-saving appliances also being agreed by the respondent (M - 3.34, SD - 1.371), which coherent with the previous study that discusses the importance of electricity saving towards household expenditure (Wang et al., 2018; Wen et al., 2022). From Table 3, it can be concluded that the practices of budgeting adopted by the respondents, which include calculating commitment (M - 3.94, SD - 1.083), cost estimation (M - 3.74, SD - 1.01, and M - 3.57, SD - 1.145), money allocation (M - 3.71, SD - 1.073), and record keeping (M - 3.29, SD - 1.178).

**Table 3: Items of Household Budgeting** 

Items	N	Mean	Std.
			<b>Deviation</b>
I calculated food spending.	35	3.57	1.145
I estimated how much it would cost to commute to work.	35	3.74	1.010
I allocate some money for shopping every month.	35	3.71	1.073
I calculated the total commitment every month.	35	3.94	1.083
I keep a record of every purchase I make.	35	3.29	1.178
I buy electricity-saving appliances to reduce monthly electricity bills.	35	3.34	1.371
I make sure the lights are turned off if they are not in use to reduce monthly electricity bills.	35	4.11	1.132

## **Consumption Expenditure**

**Table 4** shows seven items as a measurement of consumption expenditure. Respondents were asked on a 5-point Likert scale, with the mean value ranging from 3.00 to 4.17. Respondents agreed on the habit of comparing prices during purchases (M - 4.17, SD - 0.89), avoiding impulse buying (M - 4.00, SD - 1.00), home-cooked (M - 3.86, SD - 1.14), spending money on food (M - 3.54, SD - 0.98), and ability to afford a vacation every year (M - 3.46, SD - 1.197). Additionally, they somewhat agreed that their household expenses exceed their income (M - 3.11, SD - 1.051) instead of spending money on vehicles to fulfil self-satisfaction (M - 3.00, SD - 1.11).

**Table 4:** Items of Consumption Expenditure

Items		Mean	Std.
			Deviation
My household expenses exceed my income.	35	3.11	1.051
I will consider whether it is a necessity or a desire before	35	4.00	1.000
making a purchase.			
I prefer to cook at home rather than buy outside food.	35	3.86	1.141
I rather spend my money on the vehicle after fulfilling my	35	3.00	1.111
basic needs for self-satisfaction.			
I rather spend my money on food than anything else.	35	3.54	.980
I compare prices when shopping for purchases.	35	4.17	.891
I can afford to spend money to go on vacation with my family	35	3.46	1.197
every year.			



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## **Discussion**

The findings of this study found that household budgeting and consumption expenditure influence the household consumption pattern. Respondents agreed that the practices of household budgeting assist them in monitoring their consumption patterns. Since the family's financial circumstances affect budgeting, it is used more frequently by less wealthy respondents (lower household income, lower net worth of the home, and fewer savings) than the rich. If there is sufficient funding, there may be less need for mental budgeting to save and maintain control over spending (Antonides et al., 2011). These findings show a relationship between household budgeting and household consumption pattern.

The researcher also found that consumption expenditure significantly impacts household consumption patterns. From the results, it shows that the attitude of an individual moulds the way their spending patterns, which aligned with the previous study by Ismail (2022) where consumption expenditure is influenced by consumers' behaviour. Furthermore, this study reveals that the B40 group practices both budgeting and consumption expenditure, parallel with the findings by Nwosu et al. (2018). Mostly the respondents have a monthly budget to assist them in managing their money and avoiding impulse buying. Lastly, the previous study shows that having a good consumption pattern will influence income inequality. This is also supported by Swensson & Tartanac (2020), where income is improved when food consumption is improved.

In general, those who are having financial difficulties usually know less about money, have a hard time getting access to the data they need to make decisions, and lack financial expertise (Dewi et al., n.d.). Thus, it is crucial to raise financial literacy because people should be financially knowledgeable before using financial services. According to Cudmore et al. (2010) and Navickas et al. (2014), financial literacy is crucial for young people and has a favourable effect on their finances. Low financial literacy is still a problem that has to be fixed on a worldwide scale because it can lead to poor financial decisions and the incapacity to withstand economic shocks (Tschache, 2009).

### **Conclusions**

The analysis supports the understanding that household budgeting and expenditure can strengthen household consumption patterns and indirectly improve income inequality. Knowledge of budgeting and spending is essential to instill savings habits and avoid unproductive debt, which can help manage household consumption patterns (Aziz et al., 2019). In addition, income restrictions are applied to all consumption such as consumption schedules or consumption outlooks in home economics that contain critical concepts of the relationship between income and expenditure. This is because the basic premise is that consumption increases as disposable income does. According to this research, financial planning practices and awareness of saving habits in a family are important to avoid spending more money on unnecessary things. Financial planning may benefit a person's well-being, according to earlier studies by Lusardi and Mitchell (2007), Bucher-Koenen and Lusardi (2011), Mokhtar et al. (2018), and Soepding et al. (2021). Besides, financial decision-making, including decisions about investments, financial risk tolerance, saving, borrowing, and lifestyle choices, is influenced by financial literacy, which also has an impact on how people manage their money and deal with financial difficulties.

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The presence of prudent financial practices, such as budgeting for income, living costs, and savings in addition to investment and retirement planning, may theoretically make people feel more at ease, especially for their well-being (Tilai et al., 2022). For instance, effective financial planning prevents violent behaviour, anxiety, and deteriorating health (Downing, 2016). To live a wonderful and serene life, people must restrain their spending habits. As the focus of the study is in the Klang Valley region, it would be a great idea for future research to incorporate additional regions for more accurate empirical findings.

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