

Article

Consumption Patterns In Kuala Lumpur: How Does B40 Group Prioritizing Needs

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Abstract: Expenditure involves allocating money to various items or services to satisfy our needs from different aspects of life. To understand the consumption and expenditure patterns, this study aims to analyze the spending habits of the B40 youth group living in urban areas, specifically in Kuala Lumpur, by examining their specific needs. To achieve the objectives of this study, a research framework on the prioritized needs during shopping or expenditure has been established. These needs include basic needs, protection and health, family, religion, and leisure. Subsequently, the findings of the study indicate that there are differences in priorities during shopping were found, as indicated by respondents to ensure survival in the city. Although basic needs such as home ownership are often discussed, the unaffordability of prices, especially in urban areas, has resulted in home buying not being a major contributor to expenditure breakdowns. This suggests that the type of settlement contributes to the lifestyle and spending habits practiced by youth in urban areas. This study demonstrates that urbanization can affect how youth allocate their money to sustain their livelihoods.

Keywords: Urban; spending patterns; B40; needs; hierarchy; youth

Introduction

The spending pattern is among the aspects that receive considerable attention from various parties, whether from the government itself through appointed research departments or independent research bodies. This is because the spending patterns undertaken will impact the national income and the market that accumulates and markets goods and services to meet the needs of all segments of society.

However, there are various challenges that individuals face when spending based on their income level. These challenges are more pronounced if one belongs to the low-income group. This is due to the fact that low income indirectly reduces purchasing power due to economic factors and increasing prices of goods. The situation becomes even more difficult, especially when residing in urban areas. This is because the demographic variations in urban populations further stimulate demand for basic needs. With a plethora of product offerings inclined to cater to the diversity of backgrounds based on specific identities, this to some extent influences preferences during spending.

In urban areas, the cost of living is a major issue frequently discussed by various parties, both among the people themselves and the government. Bank Negara Malaysia (2015) has classified states in Malaysia into three urbanization levels: high, moderate, and low urbanization. States undergoing high urbanization processes such as Kuala Lumpur, Selangor, and Putrajaya, Penang, Melaka, and Johor indicate a tendency to experience inflationary effects or higher increases in the cost of living compared to other states. The report

also indicates that the income group between the lowest 20 to 40 percent is the most affected by inflation, compared to the group with the highest income level of 60 to 20 percent.

B40 and M40 are terms used in Malaysia to classify households based on their income levels, particularly for economic planning and policy-making. B40 stands for the Bottom 40% of households in terms of income. This group represents the lowest earners in the country and typically includes those who might need financial assistance or support programs. The exact income threshold for the B40 category can vary over time as it is periodically updated by the government to reflect current economic conditions. As of recent data, the B40 group comprises households earning less than RM 4,850 per month. M40 refers to the Middle 40 percent of households by income. This group includes middle-income earners who are not as financially vulnerable as the B40 group but still face economic challenges, especially in urban areas with a high cost of living. The M40 category includes households with monthly incomes ranging from RM 4,850 to RM 10,959 (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2020).

The reasonable income required to reside in urban areas is also highlighted by the Employees Provident Fund (EPF) (2019), which found that, to reside around the Klang Valley, single individuals without a car require at least RM1,870, while those with a car, RM2,490. For married couples without children, they require RM4,420, while those with up to two children, RM5,370 to RM6,620. Elderly couples, on the other hand, require a minimum of RM3,090.

Based on these arguments, it can be understood that the income level indirectly shapes its own spending patterns based on varying priorities. Moreover, when residing in urban areas, urban dwellers face challenges and difficulties in balancing various needs with limited income. In other words, this situation somewhat necessitates a revamp of the existing spending breakdown practiced by the B40 groups to meet needs from various aspects. However, to what extent the spending differences according to the several needs by lower income groups residing in urban areas exist remains a question.

Literature Review

The issue of expenditure and its relationship with income has often been the focus of researchers in the fields of economics and social welfare. Studies on this topic began around the late 1950s with James S. Duesenberry (1949) introduction of the 'Relative Income Hypothesis'. Duesenberry postulated that there is a tendency among individuals to compete with each other in spending, which, in turn, encourages them to strive harder to improve their quality of life. Therefore, when individuals reach a desired standard of living, they are reluctant to lower their living standards even if their income begins to decline.

However, Friedman (1957) presented a different perspective with his 'Permanent Income Hypothesis'. He argued that changes in spending are not easily predictable because each individual's expectations vary. Moreover, individuals consistently spend according to their average expected income over the long term. This expected income level over the long term eventually becomes the "permanent income level," enabling consumers to spend prudently and safely. Ando and Modigliani (1963) developed the 'Life Cycle Hypothesis of Saving', which posits that there is a relationship between the life cycle, income, and household spending needs. They suggested that individuals plan their spending over their lifetime based on their expected future income.

Based on previous studies, several aspects of expenditure and income have been examined. Regarding the issue of moderate-income groups, The Edge (2019) found that middle-income groups face expenditure problems similar to low-income groups. Rusli Latimaha, et al. (2018) identified factors influencing basic expenditure in three major cities with high living costs in Malaysia: Kuala Lumpur, Penang, and Johor. Their analysis found differences in basic needs budgets among single adult households in Kuala Lumpur and Johor Bahru, and among households with both parents working in the three major cities.

Nurshuhada Zainon, et al. (2017), through their study on expenditure on basic needs such as housing, found that the difficulty for middle-income groups in the Klang Valley to own a home is not due to financial inability but rather due to their financial situation being beyond qualification. This issue can be linked to findings by Wan Nor Azriyati Wan Abd Aziz (2011), who discovered cases such as tenants' reluctance to leave low-cost housing flats (subsidized public housing). This situation highlights the difficulty of obtaining affordable housing, forcing individuals to reduce expenses for certain needs to balance other needs. Nur

Jannah, et al. (2020) highlighted that cultural background one embraces shapes their spending patterns. It can be proven that diverse spending, including on oneself and the surrounding community, is not neglected when upholding cultural values as a way of life, even while living in urban areas.

For studies focusing on low-income groups, urban B40 groups are typically considered urban poor and often spend most of their income on basic necessities and utilities (Bank Negara, 2015). In other words, low-income groups do not have financial surpluses because their expenditure is almost equal to their income. This is due to them facing higher inflation pressure compared to higher-income groups. The Credit Counseling and Debt Management Agency (AKPK), as reported by Sabstu (2014), explained that the cost of living issue involving the increase in commodity prices needs to be addressed. Otherwise, the affected groups will experience more pressure, ultimately affecting the well-being of individuals and households.

1. Types of Needs According to Scholars

In ensuring survival, there are certain needs that need to be considered, whether they are given more attention or not. These needs also differ among each other as stated by scholars such as Maslow (1943), Rosenberg (1960), John Burton (1990), and Manfred Max-Neef (1992).

Maslow (1943) is considered the pioneer who discussed the dimensions of human needs. According to him in "A Theory of Human Motivation", there are five types of needs that every human needs and they form a hierarchy. Starting with basic physiological needs, safety, belongingness, esteem, and self-actualization. Marshall Rosenberg (1960) later divided needs into seven in his "Non-violent Communication" model, including physical affection, dependence on someone, honesty and fairness, rights or power over something, play, celebration or mourning, and finally, companionship and spirit in a group. He used an approach that needs are universal and health and survival are important.

This means that individuals in the B40 groups practice almost the same spending patterns despite of different background. Furthermore, Creek's statement (1959, 84) that price is no longer a significant factor in spending decisions when family members have increasing incomes, as purchasing power can be enhanced. The findings are consistent with the research conducted by Nur Jannah et al. (2018), which stated that there is no significant relationship between income and daily expenditure. In other words, an increase in income does not necessarily lead to increased spending.

2. Conceptual Framework

To develop a model of human needs that encompasses both material and non-material aspects relevant to the urban context of the study, this research will adopt the economic approach introduced by Manfred Max-Neef. This approach is supported, among others, by studies conducted by Murray et al. (2005) and Cruz Barreiro (2006) through his doctoral thesis, which examines the theory introduced by Manfred Max-Neef and its contribution to conceptual enlightenment regarding needs closely related to quality of life and policy development.

This choice is made because, while basic needs have often been used in economic studies previously, Manfred Max-Neef formulated the theory of needs to address shortcomings in existing approaches to needs, as basic needs approaches limit understanding of what human needs truly entail. Essentially, the theory of needs is about humans and not just about goods.

Furthermore, needs and satisfactions are seen as two different sets. While previous researchers referred to needs as unlimited, he argued otherwise. Cultural variations and diversity are not caused by differences in needs but by differences in satisfaction that will provide them with a sense of sufficiency through the use of acquired needs. This is because needs are also related to sufficiency, as someone may be able to fulfill various needs, but sometimes to fulfill a certain need, various satisfactions need to be met.

Therefore, the approach used by Manfred Max-Neef, which includes physiological and sociological needs (material and non-material), is seen as highly relevant to this study's context. However, of the nine needs identified, only five will be utilized in this study. These five needs are basic needs (KE1), protection and health (KE2), family (KE3), religious identity (KE4), and leisure (KE5) as seen in Table 1.

Table 1. The needs

Needs according Max-Neef	Adaptation
1. Basic needs for survival	1. Basic needs (KE1)
2. Protection	2. Protection and health (KE2)
3. Affection	3. Family (KE3)
4. Understanding	4. Religious identity (KE4)
5. Participation	5. leisure (KE5)
6. Leisure	
7. Creation	
8. Identity	
9. Freedom	

The selection of needs, as stated, is based on several reasons. For the item "understanding," it focuses more on the system that needs to exist in the relationship between two individuals, such as techniques or skills, which do not involve the study context. As for the item "creation," it leans more towards an individual's productivity in an organization or group and does not relate to questions of expenditure. The item "freedom" focuses more on the need for equal rights, i.e., how to gain advantages over oneself compared to others. This item is also not relevant to the study context as it leans more towards competition within an organization.

Methodology

This study aims to examine the spending priorities of Malay youths classified into the B40 group, with incomes of RM4,850 and below, and the M40 group, with incomes ranging from RM 4,850 to RM 10,959. In this study, purposive sampling technique was used to determine the criteria of respondents suitable for the study. The respondents in this study consist of youths aged between 20 to 39 years old, who are working and residing in Kuala Lumpur. The age range of 20 to 39 years was chosen because it is assumed that youths in this age group are already working and improving their lives. Out of 550 distributed questionnaires conducted around the Kuala Lumpur area, only 522 were usable, while the rest were damaged. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) analysis will be conducted to determine which needs are given priority by both groups when making expenditures. SEM analysis was chosen because this analysis serves to identify cause-and-effect relationships and whether the relationship between the proposed variables corresponds to the study data (Chua, 2014).

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) is particularly suitable for this study as it allows for the simultaneous analysis of multiple dependent and independent variables, incorporating latent constructs such as financial attitudes and social pressures that impact spending behavior. It provides a comprehensive framework to model complex constructs and their interrelationships, assesses model fit through goodness-of-fit indices, and accounts for measurement error, ensuring robust and reliable conclusions. Additionally, SEM enables detailed path analysis to understand direct and indirect effects among variables and facilitates comparative analysis between the B40 and M40 income groups, making it an ideal tool for examining the spending priorities of Malay youths in Kuala Lumpur.

Findings and Discussions

Descriptive analysis was conducted to review the background of the respondents involved in this study. Out of the 522 respondents involved, all were Malay individuals residing in the Kuala Lumpur area. Based on the conducted questionnaire distribution, the descriptive analysis showed that out of the total respondents (N = 522), more than half, accounting for 57 percent, were female. The age groups involved in this study were divided into two categories: (1) aged 20 to 29 years, and (2) aged 30 to 39 years. More than half, 68 percent of the respondents, belonged to the age group of 20 to 29 years.

Regarding marital status, there were four status groups used: (1) married, (2) married with children, (3) married without children, and (4) divorced or single parent. The analysis indicated that 61 percent of the respondents were single, 21 percent were married with children, 11 percent were married without children, and 1 percent were divorced or single parents.

In terms of the highest educational attainment, nearly half of the respondents had a Bachelor's Degree, accounting for 43 percent, while 28 percent had a Malaysian Higher School Certificate (STPM) or Diploma equivalent, 18 percent had a Malaysian Certificate of Education (SPM), and only 2 percent had the Lower Secondary Assessment (PMR) or other qualifications. Additionally, 7 percent of the respondents had higher degrees.

The analysis revealed several new findings regarding the spending patterns of Malay youth in Kuala Lumpur. Firstly, the overall change in spending patterns will have a significant impact on spending for the types of needs measured in this study, namely basic needs ($\beta = 0.642$), protection and health ($\beta = 0.657$), family ($\beta = 0.562$), religious identity ($\beta = 0.507$), and leisure ($\beta = 0.605$). However, upon examining the effect sizes of the changes for each need, spending on protection and health was found to receive the largest impact, followed by basic needs, leisure, family, and finally religious identity.

This financial situation mirrors findings from the study by Husniyah et al. (2017), which highlighted that the low-income group, approximately below RM3,850, faces high expenses and has very limited financial resources for spending. Referring to the report issued by Bank Negara (2015) based on the Household Income and Basic Amenities Survey 2014 and 2009, and the Household Expenditure Survey 2014 and 2009, these findings are consistent with the data presented, indicating minimal differences in spending levels based on the income received.

Demographic factors play a crucial role in shaping spending patterns, reflecting diverse needs and priorities among different groups. The predominance of female respondents (57 percent) may steer spending towards family-oriented and health-related expenses, as women often prioritize these areas. Age is another critical factor, with the majority (68 percent) falling in the 20-29 age group. Younger individuals are likely to focus more on leisure and basic needs, given their early career stages and social lifestyle preferences. Marital status further delineates spending behavior; single individuals (61 percent) may allocate more towards personal leisure and health, while married individuals, especially with children, prioritize family needs. Educational attainment significantly impacts financial decisions; nearly half of the respondents with a Bachelor's Degree (43 percent) might show a higher inclination towards health and protection expenditures due to better financial literacy. Lastly, income levels critically influence spending patterns. The low-income group, earning below RM3,850, experiences high expenses and limited financial resources, often prioritizing basic needs and health over other expenditures. Understanding these demographic influences helps in comprehensively analyzing and predicting spending behaviors within specific population segments.

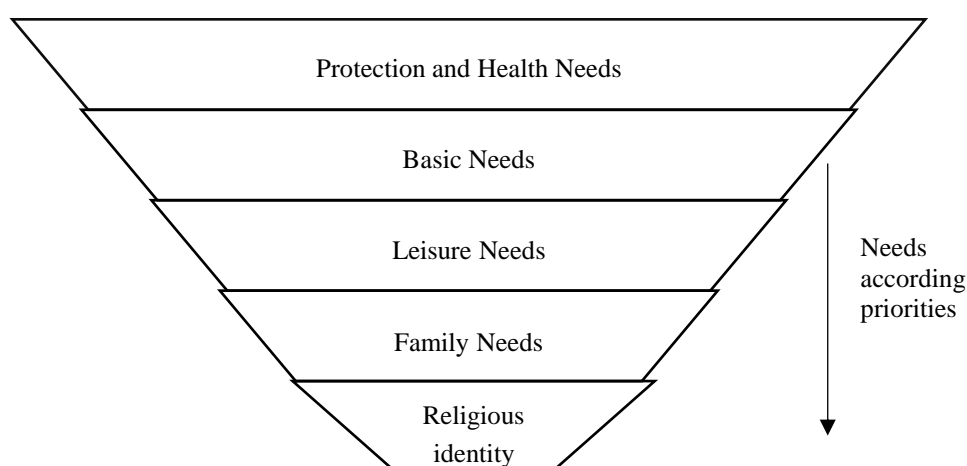


Figure 1. Spending Patterns of B40 and M40 Youth according to specific needs

Figure 1 illustrates the spending priorities of urban Malay youth. Spending on protection and health needs receives more attention compared to basic needs involving food, housing, transportation, and clothing; leisure time, family, and religion. This finding contradicts Maslow's theory (1943) and Solomon's opinion (1996) regarding basic needs being a priority over others.

Furthermore, this study also disagrees with Max-Neef's statement (1992) that there are no needs superior to others. However, the findings align with Creek's assertion (1959) that spending priorities change for certain reasons. This is because when faced with financial constraints in meeting needs, individuals must choose which needs to prioritize.

1. Basic Needs

When the ability to meet basic needs becomes crucial for a more comfortable daily life, spending to fulfill these needs is no longer a priority. This is due to the increasing prices of basic necessities such as housing, essential goods, clothing, and transportation (including petrol costs) in urban areas. The withdrawal of subsidies for basic necessities also leads to price hikes, for example, the price of cooking oil has increased by up to 60 percent, from RM14.70 to RM23.70 per 5-kilogram bottle (Malaysiakini, 2016). This increase in cooking oil prices will indirectly raise food prices at restaurants, leading to higher household spending overall, especially on food, as household spending on dining out is higher than eating at home (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2017).

As of 2024, the trend of rising prices for basic necessities continues. According to recent reports, the price of a 5-kilogram bottle of cooking oil has reached RM35.00, representing a further increase of nearly 50 percent since 2016. Additionally, the cost of housing has seen an average annual increase of 5 to 7 percent, while transportation costs have risen due to fluctuating petrol prices, which have seen an increase of approximately 20 percent over the past two years. These ongoing price hikes significantly impact household budgets, with an increasing portion of income being allocated to essential goods and services.

Additionally, the proliferation of food delivery services indirectly contributes to increased spending on dining out. This is because the increased availability of these services is driven by customer demand. Various companies offer food delivery services such as Foodpanda, dahmakan, Mammam, DeliverEat, honestbee, GrabFood, Deliveroo, and Bungkusit. These companies are in addition to fast-food chains like Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC), McDonald's, Domino's, and Pizza Hut, which already offer delivery services. Moreover, there are food premises around residential areas that offer food delivery services with low or no delivery charges, depending on the quantity of food ordered.

Food delivery services are not limited to prepared meals; there are also delivery services for frozen goods and "kitchen essentials" offered by companies like HappyFresh and services provided by TESCO to allow customers to order and receive groceries based on selected delivery times. There are also personal shopper services that assist in purchasing kitchen essentials for a nominal service fee ranging from RM5 to RM10, depending on the distance. The variety of available conveniences indicates that the increasing availability of service facilities leads to a rise in the demand for dining out, indirectly increasing overall daily spending for urban residents.

Regarding housing issues, despite being a primary need, unaffordable prices make it difficult for urban residents to own or rent homes. This is because although the government has implemented policies to build low-cost houses priced between RM25,000 and RM42,000 per unit, depending on the location, and eligibility for purchase is limited to those with incomes between RM750.00 and RM1,500.00 per month, the number of low-cost housing units offered is significantly less than the demand (Abdul Rahman Embong, 2011). Even though those with moderate incomes are ineligible to purchase low-cost houses and cannot afford high-priced homes, houses priced below RM300,000 are scarce or nonexistent in the Kuala Lumpur market. This problem is also attributed to the effects of development around Kuala Lumpur, which focuses heavily on building new cities, commercial and industrial premises. This construction indirectly increases the urban population while simultaneously reducing areas available for housing construction (Wan Nor Azriyati Wan Abd Aziz, et al. (2011).

To obtain information on current rental prices, searches were conducted through websites such as 'mudah.my,' 'mudah property,' and 'ibilik,' which serve as advertising platforms for finding rental houses and rooms around Kuala Lumpur. For houses with 3 bedrooms and 2 bathrooms covering an area of 1000 to 1400 square feet, rental prices range from RM1700 to RM2200 and above. For room rentals, the master bedroom is priced at around RM500 to RM650, the medium-sized room ranges from RM400 to RM550, while the small room is approximately RM350 and above.

For houses with 3 bedrooms and 2 bathrooms covering an area of 600 to 926 square feet, rental prices range from RM600 to RM1400, with some offering up to RM1500. Room rental rates vary, with the master bedroom priced between RM300 and RM450, the medium-sized room ranging from RM280 to RM350, and the small room between RM170 and RM250. The prices offered also depend on whether the property is furnished, partially furnished, or unfurnished, in addition to differing based on the facilities available within and around the residential area, such as swimming pools, gyms, Light Rail Transit (LRT) stations, bus stops, and parking spaces. Typically, residential areas with easy access to public transportation command higher prices.

To reinforce the issue of spending and the level of affordability for urban youth, the dilemmas and hardships faced by urban residents due to rising living costs are supported by a report from Bank Negara (2017), emphasizing that individuals, especially singles, require at least RM2700 per month to sustain life in Kuala Lumpur, while married couples without children need RM4500 and married couples with two children need RM6500.

2. Protection and Health Needs

The findings of this study indicate that protection and health needs will be prioritized when budget constraints occur. This is because healthcare spending will always increase due to rising costs determined by factors such as technological changes, insurance subsidies, population growth, and resource constraints. Therefore, income capacity will be a significant factor influencing healthcare spending (Nor Aini Idris, et al. 2011). Murallitharan Munisamy et al. (2018), citing findings from the World Health Organization (WHO), argue that healthcare expenditure is indeed an important issue, especially for low- and middle-income groups. This is because they use the out-of-pocket (OOP) method to pay for healthcare expenses. This statement is supported by Husniyah et al.'s (2017) study, which outlines that savings are significantly correlated with financial resources for healthcare needs. Individuals facing health problems will spend more to address health risks in order to achieve a prosperous life. While healthy individuals will spend minimally to maintain their health, they will have the opportunity to save money for better healthcare financing.

These findings, as highlighted by Husniyah et al. (2017), have observed the relationship between healthcare financing and employment sector and age, where older and higher-income workers have better healthcare financing compared to younger workers and those in the low-income group. There are several assumptions about the spending tendencies of youth for these needs. Although government health clinics like community clinics (formerly known as 1Malaysia clinics) are often located in low-cost areas for easy access, population density in low-cost areas leads to overcrowding in these clinics. This is driven by the residents' desire to obtain low-cost medical care. As a result, some residents have to turn to private clinics where healthcare costs are higher.

Protection needs exist in various forms such as savings, investments, and assets. Regarding savings issues, in Malaysia, the culture of saving is still at a low level and is not commonly practiced among workers, as stated by Husna Sulaiman and Jariah Masud (2012, p. 241). This situation may occur due to high debt behavior among urban communities, where the surplus money cannot be saved but is instead used to pay off debts.

According to a study conducted by Bank Negara Malaysia and the Federation of Malaysian Consumer Associations (FOMCA) (2017) analyzing the debt rate for urban poor, vehicle hire purchase debt is the most common debt (41.9 percent), followed by housing (36.9 percent), personal (29.9 percent), credit cards (15.1 percent), and education (12.6 percent). The high vehicle hire purchase debt is supported by data obtained from the Malaysian Automotive Association (MAA), which indicates that this type of debt is often incurred before festivals, especially Hari Raya Aidilfitri (Utusan Malaysia, 2016). However, the overall debt made is still low, and Bank Negara (2018) records that household debt has been decreasing from the first quarter of 2015 to the fourth quarter of 2017. This situation is due to lower loan rates offered by banks to customers for non-residential property purchases and personal financing.

Although the culture of indebtedness is still prevalent, people still save and invest in various forms. Bank Negara Malaysia and FOMCA (2017) state that urban poor groups save and invest, with the Employees Provident Fund (EPF) being the highest form of investment (67.7 percent), followed by Tabung Haji (34.5

percent), investment link (18.2 percent), and unit trust shares (15.9 percent). Following the high percentage of savings for EPF, which serves as a retirement fund, it proves that this method is chosen by most workers. However, the culture of saving in EPF needs attention. This is because research conducted by EPF shows that retirees can deplete their savings within three years after retirement.

With the increasing life expectancy at birth in Malaysia, which is 77.4 years for females and 72.7 years for males (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2017), and assuming that a person can live up to the age of 75 (Malaysiakini, 2017), coupled with minimal savings, it will undoubtedly burden them. This is because, upon retirement, Malaysians are expected to live for another 15 years, and their EPF savings, retirement funds, and personal savings will be their support and source of dependence to continue their lives.

The need for health, which includes medicines and supplements, is more necessary in old age than in young age, causing more money to be spent on this need. Whether they like it or not, with the additional needs that cannot be ignored in old age, it forces them to reduce spending on other needs such as repairing and buying houses and performing the Hajj pilgrimage.

The financial situation of the future explains the possibilities that will occur if social security interests are not given enough attention. Aware of this issue, urban Malay youth are expected to increase spending on protection and health needs. They believe that high social security will help them lead a better life in the future. If they are involved in accidents or diagnosed with illnesses that require high costs, their subscribed health insurance will cover these medical expenses. Therefore, they do not need to struggle to pawn and borrow money to pay for these costs. In addition, by saving for future needs, they can use it in case of emergencies.

3. Family Needs

Malay society is enriched with cultural values that promote harmony in family relationships. Moreover, since ancient times, traditional Malay society has emphasized social values aimed at strengthening family ties (Wan Abdul Kadir Wan Yusof, 2000, pp. 41-42). Values and norms in Malay culture also do not deviate from the teachings of Islam, which are synonymous with Malay society. This is because the Malay community is recognized as someone who practices Islam, follows Malay cultural customs, and speaks Malay as stipulated in Article 160 of the constitution.

The initial assumption of this study that Malay youth still consider family needs (parents and siblings) even when living separately is completely off. This is because the study findings show that family needs will only be prioritized after leisure needs can be fulfilled. Referring back to the contribution of money from children to parents, the amount is only a small part of the percentage of parental income compared to other sources of income (Husna Sulaiman & Jariah Masud, 2012). Although parents may have their own savings obtained from EPF savings or unit trust investments, the contribution of money from children is still very low.

Ironically, for parents who do not have other assets, the lack of financial resources from children will undoubtedly make it more difficult for them to meet their needs. However, looking at the current social environment, not all elderly people rely solely on money contributions from their children because there are also elderly people who work to support some of their expenses. A survey conducted at fast food premises around the Kuala Lumpur area, besides the salary for Persons with Disabilities (PWD), there are also elderly people aged 50 and above working at the premises until late at night. If job opportunities in their residential areas are difficult to obtain, financial problems will worsen in line with what Husna Sulaiman and Jariah Masud (2012) stated, which is that jobs to support the income of retirees are very important to help provide household necessities.

In terms of family relationships, it is indeed the responsibility of children to take care of their parents. As they age, parents will spend more time on religious and volunteer activities (Husna Sulaiman & Jariah Masud, 2012, p. 241). However, with the high cost of living in urban areas and the increasing existing expenses, children are unable to send a lot of money back to the village because of living separately to allocate larger expenses compared to living together. In urban settings, the financial burden is typically higher, making it challenging for children to provide substantial financial support to their parents. Conversely, in rural areas, family support expectations may be different. The cost of living is generally lower, and it is more common for extended families to live together or in close proximity. This proximity can lead to more direct, non-monetary support, such as shared resources and daily assistance. Consequently, while urban children might

struggle to send money back home, rural families might rely more on in-person support and shared responsibilities.

4. Religious Identity Needs

Malay society and Islam are two entities that are often intertwined. Islamic teachings are applied in every behavior and are used as values, norms, beliefs, and guidelines in daily life. Religion also emphasizes what needs to be done and what needs to be avoided. He must practice what is prescribed (obligatory, mandatory, or halal) and avoid what is forbidden (haram). This is the path to Allah's favor. However, as attested by many of its tenets, Islam also affects life in the community. Basically, the idea of communal living embodies an individual's responsibility to his society and the community's obligations to its members (Mohd Taib Osman, 1989, p. 49).

Islam teaches that in every income earned, there is a portion that needs to be spent for others. Moreover, Allah also promises that for every 1 spent on others, we will receive a return of 700 times. There are three types of giving for the needs of others, namely zakat, charity, and endowment (Syadiyah Abd Shukor, et al. 2016). Zakat refers to the charity obligation to help other Muslims, which is calculated based on 2.5 percent of annual wealth. Charity, on the other hand, is a voluntary act and does not necessarily involve money, and its recipients are not limited to Muslims. Endowment is the donation of property for the needs of others and is permanent. In addition to the expenses as mentioned, expenses for attending religious classes, lectures, and prayer equipment are also considered part of religious spending used in the context of this study.

Malays believe that there are many benefits to doing good and spending on others, including gaining blessings, mercy from Allah, and increased sustenance (Syadiyah Abdul Shukor, et al 2016). The rewards for doing good to others are also agreed upon by Western society, where it can provide satisfaction and happiness to the doer (Dunn & Norton, 2014).

Unfortunately, the research findings found that the B40 group in urban areas do not prioritize religious needs. Findings that indicate higher incomes are more involved in charitable activities compared to low-income groups (Lee & Chang, 2007; Syadiyah Abdul Shukor, et al 2016) are not consistent with the findings of this study. Findings that are inconsistent with previous findings indicate that there may be areas of research that were not included in the study, including the effects of urbanization and the cost of living. Busy work, limited income sources, and diverse needs lead to financial allocations for these needs being ignored either consciously or unconsciously.

Rationally, when faced with hardships, we will seek solace in God and practice religious teachings to enjoy blessings and life pleasures. However, this is not done by the B40 group in urban areas. These findings provide a new dimension to the study of religious spending, namely the busyness with worldly affairs, the hardships of life, and doubts about which group the contribution money will reach, causing urban residents to pay less attention to the importance of religious needs in life.

5. Leisure Needs

Leisure needs involve spending on activities done in leisure time such as renting and buying equipment, entertainment tickets, and more. Typically, leisure activities are carried out on weekends and public holidays. It can be considered as an escapism need to escape momentarily from problems and work pressures, as stated by Stockhausen (1998, p. 1675), leisure as non-work activity that contributes to the health and wholeness of a person.

This study shows that leisure needs are not a priority and will be fulfilled if protection and health needs, and basic needs can be provided. This finding is consistent with the Household Expenditure Survey report (2016), which shows that spending on recreation and culture needs is the second smallest expenditure. In urban areas, the high cost of living forces urban residents to work hard to earn higher incomes so that basic needs can be met. The increasing number of e-hailing services proves that the demand for additional jobs is increasing. Based on an online survey, among the leading e-hailing services in Malaysia are Grab and UBER (UBER service has been discontinued in Southeast Asia). In addition, other e-hailing companies that are seen to compete with existing leading companies include MyCar, Diffride, Jomrides, MULA, Dacsee, Riding Pink, PICKnGO, EZCab, Tumpang, Quulo, Zeepon, and Frenzt. Each of these companies offers attractive benefits

to recruit drivers, such as what Diffride does. This company only charges a fee of RM5, and the rest of the income earned can be fully enjoyed by the driver.

Unknowingly, the offers to seize opportunities to increase income cause leisure needs to be given less attention. This data is supported by the Khazanah Research Institute report (2018), which states that self-employment income contributed 15.6 percent of the total income earned for the year 2016, and this amount is higher than the income from investments and transfers, for example, financial assistance from the government like the Cost of Living Aid (formerly known as 1Malaysia People's Aid) and also from family members.

These needs are quite important as they serve the well-being of life. However, if they feel they cannot afford current spending needs, seeking or doing additional work is another alternative for most households. Some even have to do more than one job. They work in offices during the day, while at night, they do e-hailing services. The effects of busy work, husbands and wives, and parents not having quality time together with family members. (Bank Negara Malaysia & Federation of Malaysian Consumer Associations (FOMCA), 2017).

Due to time constraints for leisure activities outside the home, this situation creates a form of entertainment at home (in-house entertainment). This statement is supported by the emergence of applications such as Netflix, iflix, Viu, and Astro First. These applications provide users with the option to choose their favourite shows or movies according to the country. For example, Astro First is a platform that brings new films to television broadcasts at home, whether films from abroad or local films. The variety of film options offered allows users to "watch movies" only from home at a lower cost, between RM10-RM15, depending on the type of film. These films can also be watched repeatedly within a week. Likewise, with the 'watch' application that allows households to re-watch favourite dramas online with a payment of RM10 per month or RM96 for a year.

These findings indicate that there are youths who must put aside their desires for entertainment and leisure outside the home due to time constraints and congested environments. This situation is driven by the desire to enjoy quality holidays with friends or family. Not only that, but these findings also show that youths spend more time with friends in nature because the leisure time available is spent socializing with partners.

Conclusion

Overall, this study aims to examine the spending practices of youth in the B40 group residing in urban areas. Based on the findings from field research, it has revealed a new dimension in the prioritization of needs for youth groups when spending, contributing to the understanding of spending patterns. Navigating life in challenging urban environments demands prioritizing essential needs. This is crucial as it ensures that these needs can be met within the available income. The findings indicate that despite housing being the primary need, the high cost of living in cities leads youth from the B40 group to choose renting over buying. Consequently, spending allocation for protection and health needs, for example, can be increased due to the surplus from lower housing expenditure. However, the pursuit of income also leads to a neglect of leisure needs, despite residing in urban areas offering various forms of entertainment. This indirectly demonstrates a high level of survival instinct among youth in both groups. Regarding family needs, the practice of family values rooted in Malay culture does not deter these youth from continuing to serve their families despite limited income. Through these findings, it is evident that spending to meet various needs within a community is measured based on its importance to that community.

By understanding spending aspects in relation to income and social factors, the government can formulate more targeted policies and assistance, aligning with the realities and desires of urban youth in the B40 group. Additionally, this study will help youth organize their needs according to their priorities, in line with their urban lifestyle and income levels. Consequently, social problems expected to arise from spending issues can be better addressed, assisting these groups in enjoying a more prosperous life. This study focuses on spending issues for specific needs within the lives of youth in the B40 group, given their susceptibility to the cost of living in cities, which indirectly affects spending. To enhance this study, future research could focus on other factors expected to provide more detail on spending issues, such as environmental factors, gender, types of residential areas, and income levels.

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