

Spending Patterns of Malaysian Youth during the COVID-19 Pandemic

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ABSTRACT

ARTICLE HISTORY

Received:
27 July 2022
Accepted:
16 August 2022
Published:
30 September 2022

KEYWORDS

COVID-19
Entertainment expenditure
Food expenditure
Spending pattern
Transportation expenditure

Paying attention to spending patterns is essential, especially for the younger generation during the COVID-19 pandemic. Previously, young people spent more money on entertainment activities to fulfil their life satisfaction than life survival. Young people also contributed to the highest number of bankruptcy as they borrowed money to buy non-essential products. The main objective of this study is to determine the significant relationship between the factors that influence spending patterns among the young generation during the COVID-19 pandemic in Malaysia. The research considered testing the factors of expenditures on food, transportation, and entertainment activities. The data were gathered from the distribution of a questionnaire to the respondents. SPSS version 23.0 was used to analyse the data. The results found that food and transportation expenditures significantly influenced the spending pattern during COVID-19, while entertainment expenditures had no significant relationship with the spending pattern. Results also highlighted that food expenditure was the highest influencing factor in spending patterns. This study will help policymakers outline the importance of financial assistance based on the priority needed by society, especially in an unexpected crisis. Further research on factors such as personality, behaviour, and financial knowledge can be explored. Besides, future research can also analyse the data using Partial Least Square-Structural Equation Model (PLS-SEM) to produce a variety of results.

e-ISSN 2600-7274

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1. INTRODUCTION

In 2020, a new coronavirus outbreak (COVID-19) emerged in Wuhan, China which brought unprecedented events worldwide (Chakraborty & Maity, 2020). According to Roll et al. (2021), the COVID-19 pandemic has led to a huge shift in consumer behaviour, mainly declining expenditures. It forced many families to forgo basic needs like food or housing payments. These happened due to widespread and sudden income decline due to job loss. Government restriction activities have influenced consumer spending patterns and led to greater control of viral spread. The restrictions such as mandate business closure, hour restrictions, or occupancy have changed how consumers shop and spend. The pandemic also impacts the younger generations by changing their spending patterns. The United Nations defined youth as a transition from childhood dependence to adult independence between 15 and 24 years (Lenz, 2001). However, in Malaysia, the Youth Societies and Youth Development Act 2007 (YSYDA 2007) defined youth as a person not less than 15 years and not more than 40 years old (Yeon et al., 2016). The spending pattern shows what the young generations are purchasing and how they are likely to spend. As Ochei (2012) mentioned, young people need monitoring and control over their spending decisions. Based on statistics released by the Malaysian Insolvency Department (MDI) in February 2022, 26,477 individuals aged between 25-44 years have been reported to have gone bankrupt from 2018 until February 2022. Among the leading causes that push these young people towards bankruptcy are personal loans (41.70%), hire purchases (15.11%), business loans (13.31%), housing loans (9.62%), and credit cards (8.46%). Since personal loans showed a high percentage of bankruptcy, the spending pattern among the young generation must be given more attention. It is sometimes shown that the younger generation does not plan their finances well, especially in spending, which leads them to borrow money to buy unnecessary goods (Fischer et al., 2017).

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the spending pattern among young people might be different as they are more concerned about purchasing essential products (such as food and medicine) rather than non-essential products (such as gadgets, entertainment, etc.) (Kumar et al., 2020). The spending pattern of the younger generation in Malaysia is becoming more reckless than the older generation (Esmail Alekam, 2018). As the standard of living in Malaysia has increased rapidly, the younger generation has a higher degree of freedom to spend and make their own consumption choices because Malaysia faces lifestyle changes and spending decision difficulties (Alekam, Salleh & Mokhtar, 2018). According to Idris et al. (2013), most of today's younger generation has an immediate orientation and, in many ways, is protected from the reality of the real challenges happening in the world. They further explained that this tendency leads to a lack of financial security and deterioration in the quality of life and creates social problems in the future that can hinder the process of development and progress of the country. In addition, with the introduction of fintech, digital payment can simplify the transactions between sellers and buyers, which may revolutionise buyers' consumption of products or services (Setiawan et al., 2020). Digital payment can affect buyers' spending decisions (Cobla & Osei-Assibey, 2018) and cause overspending (Agarwal et al., 2019). Thus, even though young people are well-planned in their finances, they may spend on unnecessary goods with wisely used digital payment during the COVID-19 pandemic (Kee et al., 2021).

To ensure that spending patterns improve, young people in Malaysia must have sufficient financial knowledge. Insufficient knowledge of prudent money management will cause poor financial management, affecting youth's academic performance, mental health conditions, and physical well-being (Shim et al., 2009). In addition, most young women make spending

decisions on the survival of life (Wamoyi et al., 2020). They spend some money on food and transportation rather than entertainment activities. Thus, this research is aimed to determine the relationship between the expenditure of food, transportation, entertainment, and spending patterns. Furthermore, it also determines the most vital factor that influences spending patterns.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Mitchell (1937) defined spending as an activity of spending or spending money. From that definition, Malelak and Halim (2021) stated that spending behaviour is someone's behaviour in spending or spending money. Each individual has different needs and desires, resulting in different daily spending activities (Tripambudi & Indrawati, 2018). This led to different spending patterns. For example, married young people have different expenses from unmarried young people. The expenditure of married couples is more focused on meeting the needs of their family. Unmarried young people are usually new to doing things for the first time, such as owning a car, credit cards, etc. The spending pattern is the behaviour of a person issuing their income budget to understand the needs and choices for a product or service (Subhani et al., 2012). The intention of an individual to change his spending pattern if he has more money or more opportunities to decide on his decisions does not depend on how much money they or their parents have (Subandi & Basana, 2021). People also spend most of their disposable income on entertainment, food and beverages, education, and leisure activities, according to a study conducted by Potluri et al. (2009).

Birari and Patil (2014) stated that the current spending pattern of youth has changed drastically because of westernisation and high productivity. Moreover, they also said that students belonging to different levels of education differ in expenditure in many categories. They further reported that young men and women have different spending decisions with little in common. Youth spend a large sum of money on shopping, fast food, communications, and transportation. They suggested that youth should cultivate rational spending and save for the future. It is similar to the study by Adamu et al. (2021) that concluded the youth spend most of their income on fast food, shopping, movies, and transportation in Nigeria. Wamoyi et al. (2019) found most young women spend some of their money on basic survival items, such as food, for themselves and their families. Other survival expenses for self and family included medical expenses and, on rare occasions, rent. Furthermore, they are also spending a portion of their money on self-care, such as soaps, lotions, body oils, and sanitary pads, and some buy shoes or clothing for themselves or their child. A study by Kee et al. (2021) found that respondents spent more on groceries than others during the COVID-19 pandemic. They discovered that the overall sale of e-commerce increases because people avoid going out, keep social distance, buy from home, and work from home. Bhati et al. (2020) mentioned that 27.2% of respondents stated that shopping online is their main spending when using cashless payments.

In the Malaysian context, a survey in 2015 by the Asian Institute of Finance found that youth has relatively large spending, especially those involving living expenses. It is then followed by loan repayments and their expenditures for lifestyle items. Other research studies showed that age and compulsive purchasing correlate with young consumers. It is also seen that when there are impulse and compulsive buying conditions, the younger consumer is the answer (Subhani et al., 2011). The National Youth Development Policy of Malaysia defines youth as people aged between 15 and 40 (Yeon et al., 2016). Data obtained from the Department of Statistics Malaysia (2020) stated that the total population of Malaysia was estimated at 32.7 million in 2020. About 11 million, or 35% of the total population in Malaysia, are youth

aged between 20 to 39 years. In a study conducted by Bedgood (2019), it was found that the largest production would be done by young people when they want to set up a household, and this is an opportunity for marketers to improve their marketing strategy. For some time, marketers have adapted their marketing tactics to appeal to this age group, namely consumers aged between 23 and 39. Costin (2019) in his study revealed that most youth would consider social responsibility and environmental friendliness when deciding to spend. Hence, brands face high expectations from youths regarding spending and investment dollars. In the reporting year, 2015, Inland Institutional Capital Partners Corporation stated that youth only tend to lean towards what is considered unique such as delicacies, electronics, or even sports events, before spending.

2.1 Food Expenditure

In 2018, Knoema.com showed that Malaysians recorded \$1,410 (RM5,640) in food spending per capita. As shown in Figure 1, expenditure on food increased from 2009 to 2018. From \$771 (RM3,084) per year in 2009, it became \$1,410 (RM5,640) in 2018 with an annual rate of 7.25%.

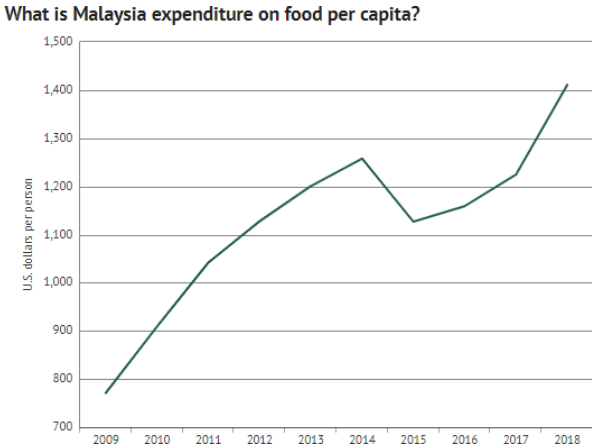


Figure 1 Malaysia’s Expenditure on Food Per Capita

Goyal and Singh (2007) analysed various factors influencing the behaviour of youth spending. They stated that visiting cinemas to watch movies, going sightseeing, having fun and playing with friends are the main factors influencing their visit to the fast-food store. Moreover, Wamoyi et al. (2020) found that most young women spend some of their money on food as basic survival items for themselves and their families.

2.2 Transportation Expenditure

In 2018, Marketingcharts.com released information that youths spent 16.8% of their spending in the year 2017 on transportation, followed by Gen Xers (16.1%) and Baby Boomers (15.9%). The data obtained was a bit surprising because the pattern does not always occur when sorted according to the type of transport. Youth, Gen Xers and Baby Boomers each allocated the same share (1.2%) of their expenses for public transportation and transportation other than vehicle purchases. While there have been a lot of discussions about youth and their impact on the automotive industry since the younger generation spent a larger share of their total annual spending on vehicle purchases (7.5%) than other generations. This is due to the smaller income and expenses, as Gen Xers spend more on average vehicle

purchases (\$ 5,165) than the youth (\$3,825). In the case of Nigeria, youth spend most of their income on transportation, fast food, shopping, and movies (Adamu et al., 2020). In addition, Malaysian youth also spend some of their income on food and transportation compared to other expenditures such as electronics, gadgets, entertainment, and sports activities (Kamardin & Sarif, 2021).

2.3 Entertainment Activities Expenditure

The Youth of the Nations: Global Trends among the Young Generation (Jun 2019) examined the younger generation's digital lifestyle, attitudes, and behaviour. They have found that smartphones are central to the lives of today's younger generation. By the end of 2018, youth, in general, had spent an average of 4 hours and 15 minutes daily on their mobile phones, which is a more extended period than the previous generation. According to Gómez-Gonzalvo et al. (2020), Spanish youth spent an average of €73.42 per year purchasing video games with which 38.6% of them played using a PC, 28.2% used a tablet, 54.5% used a game console and 60.2% used a mobile phone. Furthermore, most of them played sports video games (80.8%), action video games (76.8%), and adventure games (74.9%).

In Malaysia, active social media users increased from 2016 to 2020 (Statcounter, 2020). In March 2020, the social media statistics showed the users of Facebook (77.51%), Twitter (10.65%), Instagram (4.82%), Pinterest (3.63%), YouTube (3.01%), and Tumblr (0.2%). It means the daily life of people change when they feel that social media is essential in their life. Thus, social media affects people's purchase intention, especially among youth (Shi & Ismail, 2021) since information and advertisement have led to youth's decisions on spending when they regularly access various social media platforms. Furthermore, before the COVID-19 pandemic, Lee et al. (2017) mentioned that teenagers in Malaysia are exposed to Korean Pop (KPOP) culture, and they sacrificed their money to buy tickets priced between RM75 to RM200 to attend the big concert at Stadium Melawati, Kuala Lumpur.

2.4 Research Framework

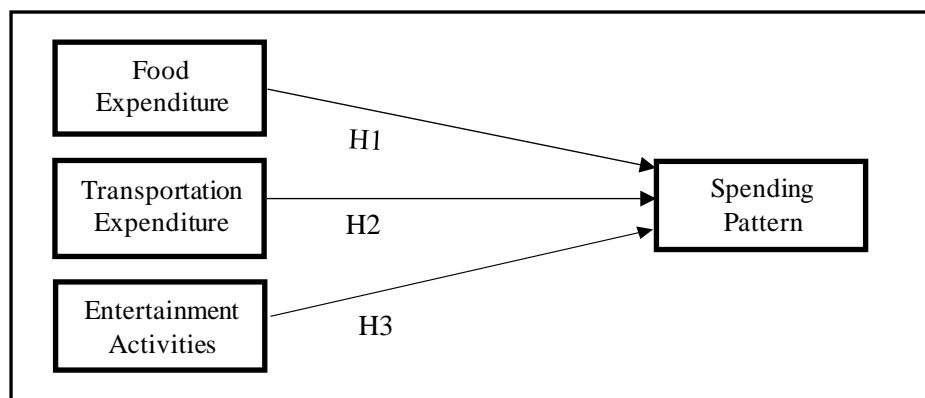


Figure 2 Research Framework

Figure 2 shows a dependent variable, the spending pattern adapted from Adamu et al. (2020). Meanwhile, the independent variables of food, transportation, and entertainment activities are adopted from Razak et al. (2014) with some modifications done by Abawag et al. (2019), Chhabra (2016) and Folorunsho (2015). From the research framework, three hypotheses have been developed which are:

H1: There is a significant relationship between food expenditure and spending patterns.

H2: There is a significant relationship between transportation expenditure and spending patterns.

H3: There is a significant relationship between entertainment activities' expenditure and spending patterns.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Descriptive research describes the variables from the previous study on spending patterns. In this study, the researchers collected data through primary data. Primary data was collected through questionnaires. The questionnaire was adapted from a previous study to measure the variables in the study. A total of 22 questions in bilingual (English and Malay) using the Five-Point Likert scale have been used in the questionnaire. The dependent variable of this study is spending pattern, while the independent variables are food, transportation, and entertainment activities. The questionnaire consisted of five sections. In Section A, the questions asked about the demographic profile, and section B was about the spending pattern (adapted from Adamu et al., 2020). Questions about food expenditure (adapted from Razak et al., 2014 and Folorunsho, 2015) were covered in section C, while section D listed the questions on transportation expenditure (adapted from Razak et al., 2014 and Chhabra, 2016). Section E adapted the expenditure of entertainment activities questions from Razak et al. (2014) and Abawag et al. (2019). Since this research was done during the COVID-19 pandemic for four months, the data were collected by distributing the online questionnaire to Malaysian youths aged between 15-40 using social media, which are WhatsApp applications and Facebook platforms for the entire Malaysian population.

Convenient sampling was used in this study. About 76 feedback questionnaires were received from the WhatsApp application, and 47 feedback questionnaires were obtained from the Facebook platform. However, only 107 questionnaires were used to validate the study. Sekaran and Bougie (2016) stated that if the sample is 100, it can be used to generalise the research findings. The data were analysed using Statistical Package of Social Science (SPSS) software (Version 23.0) to obtain the results. Among the analysis used were frequency distribution, reliability analysis, descriptive analysis, correlation analysis, and multiple regression analysis. Those analyses were used to ensure the research objectives could be achieved.

4. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULT

4.1 Frequency Distribution Results

A total of 107 questionnaires out of 113 were received (94.7%) through an online survey from respondents in Malaysia through the WhatsApp application and Facebook. The table showed that 70.1% were female and 29.9% were male. On the marital status of the respondents, 39.3% were single. Most of the respondents, 57.9%, were married. Table 1 also illustrates the age range of the respondents, of whom 2.8% were aged 15-20 years old while 49.5% were aged 21-30 years old, and 47.7% were aged 31-40 years old. In addition, the finding on employment showed that 27.1% worked in the government sector, 30.8% worked in the private sector, 26.2% were self-employed, and 15.9% were students. The analysis of education level results showed that most respondents had a bachelor's degree, 43%, 34.6% with diplomas, 12.1% had a Master's or PhD qualification, and the least level

of education was secondary level with 10.3%.
The results from the frequency distribution analysis are shown in Table 1.

Table 1 Frequency Distribution Result

Socio-Demography	Variable	N = 107	%
Gender	Male	32	29.9
	Female	75	70.1
Age	15-20	3	2.8
	21-30	53	49.5
	31-40	51	47.7
Marital Status	Single	42	39.3
	Married	62	57.9
	Divorced	3	2.8
Employment	Government	33	30.8
	Private	28	26.2
	Self- Employed	28	26.2
	Students	18	16.8
Education Level	Secondary Level	11	10.3
	Diploma	37	34.6
	Bachelor's Degree	46	43.0
	Master's/ Ph.D.	13	12.1

4.2 Reliability Results

Sekaran and Bougie (2013) stated that a reliability test is used to measure the consistency of the items. In Table 2, all variables are reliable given the range of Cronbach Alpha value being close to 1. Since all values are larger than 0.7, all variables are considered reliable (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). The reliability results are shown in Table 2.

Table 2 Reliability Results

Variables	Cronbach Alpha	No. of Items	Reliable
Spending Pattern	0.982	6	✓
Food	0.969	6	✓
Transportation	0.977	5	✓
Entertainment Activities	0.978	5	✓

4.3 Descriptive Statistics Results

The mean and standard deviation results were analysed using descriptive analysis. Table 3 shows that food expenditure had the highest mean with a value of 3.0935 and a standard deviation of 0.91522. It was followed by transportation expenses (mean = 2.9196; SD =

1.07663). The lowest mean was entertainment activities expenses, with a mean value of 2.4355 and a standard deviation of 0.98625.

Table 3 Descriptive Statistics Result

Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation
Spending Pattern	2.8832	1.10346
Food	3.0935	0.91522
Transportation	2.9196	1.07663
Entertainment Activities	2.4355	0.98625

Table 4 Results of Descriptive Statistics for Spending Patterns

Items	Mean	Std. Deviation
My income is enough to fulfil my monthly spending.	3.3551	1.06623
I spent more on food and beverages.	2.7850	1.15765
I spend more on transport.	2.7358	1.24640
I participate, and I am a member of high-class entertainment events.	2.0654	1.04855
I spent more than saved every month.	3.1028	1.02731
I do a part-time job to cover my spending.	3.2523	1.33242

Table 4 shows six questions representing the spending patterns of youth. From the table, the highest mean is “*My income is enough to fulfil my monthly spending*”, which was 3.3551. This means that most of the respondents agreed that their monthly spending did not affect their income. The lowest mean score was “*I participate in high-class entertainment events*”, which was 2.0654. Most of the respondents disagreed with the statement because sometimes, to participate in entertainment activities, they do not need to spend more money and rarely choose high-class entertainment.

In Table 5, there are six items of spending patterns on food expenditure. From the table, the highest mean was “*I prefer eating meals at home*”, which was 4.4299. It means most respondents agreed that they spend money on food based on necessity and affordability. Then, the lowest mean was “*I usually eat at restaurants or fast-food chain for dinner*”, which was 2.2150. Most respondents disagreed that they always have dinner at a restaurant or fast-food chain.

Table 5 Results of Descriptive Statistics for Food Expenditures

Items	Mean	Std. Deviation
I compare prices when I spend money for food.	3.8692	1.03781
I don't hesitate to spend my money on food.	3.5607	1.07438
I usually eat at restaurants or fast-food chains for breakfast.	2.2523	0.98185
I usually eat at restaurants or fast-food chains for lunch.	2.2336	1.03322
I usually eat at restaurants or fast-food chains for dinner.	2.2150	0.9979
I prefer eating meals at home.	4.4299	0.74114

Table 6 Results of Descriptive Statistics for Transportation Expenditures

Items	Mean	Std. Deviation
I spend a portion of my money on fuel consumption for my own vehicle.	3.1121	1.10169
I prefer walking rather than using a vehicle when I go to a nearby place.	2.9252	1.17923
I prefer taking public transport to go to campus or the workplace.	2.5981	1.21204
I usually pay the exclusive fare when using public transport.	2.2523	0.99141
I rarely spend a portion of my money on transportation fares as I have my own vehicle.	3.7103	1.12442

In Table 6, five items represented the spending patterns in transportation expenditure. The highest mean score of 3.7103 was for “*I rarely spend a portion of my money on transportation fares as I have my own vehicle*”. It means most respondents agreed that they spend money on their own vehicles rather than public transportation. This correlates with the second-highest mean score for “*I spend a portion of my money on fuel consumption for my own vehicle*”. The lowest mean score was for the statement, “*I usually pay the exclusive fare when using transportation*”, with 2.2523. Most respondents disagreed that they spend their money on exclusive fares for public transport.

Table 7 shows five mean scores representing the spending patterns on entertainment activities. The highest mean score was for “*Entertainment, and Sports activities are very important to me*”, with 3.3364. It means most of the respondents agreed that spending on entertainment activities would make them enjoy their life and manage stress. The lowest mean score was 1.9813, for “*I don't hesitate to pay for expensive tickets to watch the latest entertainment shows*”. Most of the respondents did not agree that they spend more of their money on paying expensive tickets to watch entertainment shows.

Table 7 Results of Descriptive Statistics for Entertainment Activities

Items	Mean	Std. Deviation
Entertainment activities are very important to me.	3.3364	0.94113
I don't hesitate to spend my money when it comes to entertainment events.	2.5234	1.02189
I spend a portion of my money in high prestige entertainment activities.	2.2056	1.05274
I subscribe and pay for entertainment channel every month.	2.1308	1.07356
I don't hesitate to pay for expensive tickets to watch the latest entertainment shows.	1.9813	1.04594

4.4 Multiple Linear Regression Results

The multiple linear regression analysis was conducted to analyse the correlation of determination (R^2) and analysis of variance (ANOVA). Table 8 shows the result of R^2 .

Table 8 Correlation Determination (R^2)

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error
0.994 ^a	0.989	0.988	0.11898

The value of R^2 was 0.989, which concluded that it had a fit linear model to the set of observations and highly resulted in the power of the entire regression equation. As shown in Table 8, the result of the R^2 value was close to the fitted regression model. The value of 0.989 represented that 98.9% of spending patterns among youths in Malaysia are explained by food expenditure, transport expenditure, and entertainment activities expenditure and only 1.1% are explained by other variables. Thus, it significantly resulted in changes in the expenditure on food, transportation, and entertainment activities, which are highly influenced by the changes in spending patterns among youth in Malaysia during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Table 9 ANOVA

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	127.624	4	31.906	2253.893	0.000 ^b
Residual	1.444	102	0.014		
Total	129.067	106			

Table 9 shows the result of ANOVA. It indicates that F-test was 2253.893, and the significant value (p -value) was 0.000. The result shows that the model was fit due to the p -value being less than the alpha value of 0.05. It indicated that the model exists.

Table 10 Coefficients

Model	Unstandardised Coefficients			Sig.
	B	Std. Error	t	
(Constant)	-0.346	0.064	-5.453	0.000
Food	0.458	0.079	5.792	0.000
Transport	0.297	0.077	3.880	0.000
EntertainmentActivities	0.103	0.059	1.735	0.086

Table 10 shows the results of coefficients for all independent variables. From the result of unstandardised coefficients, the multiple regression model is presented as an equation below:

$$Y = -0.346 + 0.458 (\text{food}) + 0.297 (\text{transportation}) + 0.103 (\text{entertainment activities})$$

It means that every 1 unit increase in spending pattern will increase 0.458 food expenditure, 0.297 transport expenditure and 0.103 entertainment expenditure.

Table 10 also shows the hypothesis testing results by looking at the variables' *t*-value and significant value (*p*-value). From Table 6, the *t*-value of food was 5.792, and the *p*-value was 0.000. This shows that food expenditure significantly influences the spending pattern during the COVID-19 pandemic because the *p*-value is less than 0.05. Thus, hypothesis H1 is supported. Meanwhile, the *t*-value of transportation expenditure was 3.880, and the *p*-value was 0.000, less than 0.05. It indicates that during the COVID-19 pandemic, transportation expenditure significantly influences the spending pattern among youths. Therefore, hypothesis H2 is supported. Lastly, the *t*-value for entertainment activities expenditure was 1.735, and the *p*-value was 0.086. It indicates that entertainment activities expenditure during the COVID-19 pandemic does not significantly influence the spending pattern among youths in Malaysia as the *p*-value is more than 0.05. Thus, hypothesis H3 is not supported.

Based on the beta value, it shows that the highest beta was for food expenditure ($\beta=0.458$), followed by transportation expenditure ($\beta=.297$) and entertainment activities expenditure ($\beta=.103$). It clearly showed that food expenditure was the most influential factor in spending patterns among youths in Malaysia during the COVID-19 pandemic. Meanwhile, expenditure on entertainment activities was a minor factor influencing the spending patterns among youths in Malaysia during the pandemic. In summary, the statistical results concluded that hypotheses H1 and H2 are supported, and H3 is not supported.

5. DISCUSSIONS

From the results, the research objective has been met when it shows the positive relationship between expenditure on food, transportation, and entertainment activities and spending patterns. However, the entertainment activities expenditure has no significant relationship with spending patterns during the COVID-19 pandemic. It shows that food expenditure significantly influences spending patterns during the COVID-19 pandemic and is also the most influential factor in spending patterns. It means that the younger generation prioritises life's survival when making spending decisions during COVID-19 (Kee et al., 2021). This result is consistent with Knoema.com (2018) finding that the trend of per capita food expenses increased by 7.25% annually from the year 2009 to the year 2018. Wamoyi et al. (2020) found that most young women spent money on food as an essential survival item for themselves and their families. The same goes for the findings of this study, whereby the respondents are predominantly female. The results also align with Adamu et al. (2021) that young people spend their money more on fast food, and during COVID-19, people spend more buying groceries than on unnecessary goods (Kee et al., 2021).

The result also shows that transportation expenditure significantly correlates with spending patterns. It is the second important factor as the government restrictions mandate business closure and change in the working environment from working from the office to working from home (Roll et al., 2021). It means that the money spent on transportation is reduced. The transitions happened drastically when they spent both their work and leisure hours at home. In this situation, the younger generation spent a portion of their money on delivery and e-hailing services. The result is also in line with the information presented by Marketingcharts.com (2018) that youth spent 16.8% of their spending in the year 2017 on transportation as compared to Gen Xers (16.1%) and Baby Boomers (15.9%). Kamardin and Sarif (2021) also highlighted that Malaysian youth allocate their income to buying food and spending on transportation compared to entertainment activities. This finding does not support the relationship between entertainment activities expenditure and spending patterns among the younger generation in Malaysia. Youth feel that entertainment activities are the least priority, after food and transportation.

6. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the spending pattern among the younger generation in Malaysia during the COVID-19 pandemic has drastically changed. They are spending more on food and transport expenditures than entertainment. During the pandemic, the younger generation was more concerned about spending their money on essential goods for the survival of their lives and families. Before the COVID-19 pandemic in Malaysia, they sacrificed spending their money on entertainment activities to fulfil their life satisfaction. The implication of this research is to give additional knowledge and literature to future researchers. This research also offers implications for society as they must plan their finances well for unexpected situations like the COVID-19 pandemic. They must spend their money on buying food and paying for transport. Other than that, it will help the policymakers to outline the importance of financial assistance based on the priority needed by society, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. This research can be explored for future research by considering other factors such as personality, behaviour, and financial knowledge. Those factors will affect spending patterns differently as individuals have different personalities, behaviour, and levels of financial expertise. The other method of analysis can also be considered, like Partial Least Square-Structural Equation Model (PLS-SEM), which can enhance the results with further analysis.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We would like to thank Universiti Teknologi MARA, Kelantan Branch, for allowing us to present this paper at the International Joint Conference 2021.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

NI and WYR carried out the introduction and literature review sections. NI collected and refined the data and performed the data analysis using Statistical Package of Social Science (SPSS) software (Version 23.0). AA wrote the data methodology section. NI and AA wrote the discussion and implication sections. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

DECLARATION OF CONFLICTING INTERESTS

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

FUNDING

The authors received no financial support for this article's research, authorship, and/or publication.

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