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Financial Planning Determinants Among Working Adults During Covid 19 Pandemic

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Abstract

Financial planning of working adults nowadays raised a great concerns as people should grow on par as the country expands economically, especially with the recent economic and social disruption caused by COVID-19 pandemic. Besides, financial planning has become a huge issue addressed by numerous researchers as there are many variables that could influence the individual's financial planning. The purpose of this research is to examine the factors influencing financial planning among working adults during the pandemic. Primary data was derived from a sample size of 260 targeted respondents who's at least 18 years old to 30 years old who works in a company based in Selangor, Malaysia. Purposive sampling applied as the sampling technique. Based on the findings, financial knowledge, financial attitude and financial behavior have a significant impact on financial planning and financial behavior is recognized as the most influential factor to the financial planning of working adults during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Keyword: Financial Knowledge, Financial Attitude, Financial Behavior, Financial Planning, Working Adults, Covid 19

Introduction

COVID-19 pandemic was spreading and taking life all over the world. In fact, as for the time being, it is still in the early stage to quantify total casualties. Besides, based on Gumede (2020) research, it stated that many economists are quite certain on the economic impact of COVID-19 that is likely to be greater than the Great Depression of the 1930s. Statistics from America have indicated the world economy's most important player, paint a very bleak picture as for only three weeks until April, a

total of 16.8 million Americans lost their jobs, which more than the global financial crisis of 2009. Besides, one study projected that 47 million jobs in the United States will be lost, resulting in a 32% unemployment rate (Cox, 2020).

While in Malaysia, government has decided to enforce the Movement Control Order (MCO) all over Malaysia which has resulted to the shutdown and scaling down of Malaysia's economy in a national attempt to slow the spread of the virus. Consequently, more working adults were then vulnerable to adverse economic consequences of the pandemic. It is anticipated that the extension of the MCO would place more pressure on the existing financial distressed on working adults. According to the Department of Statistics Malaysia (2020), the unemployment rate grew from 3.3 percent in February to 3.9 percent in the following month. Also, the Employment Insurance System (EIS) reported COVID-19 resulted in 29% of job losses among workers under age 30 (Mohammad, 2020). While for non-operating firms, a large number of workers had their salaries cut and lost jobs, which lead to unable to pay rent and utility bills (Gomes, 2020). The Economic Times (2020) reported that employees' and management's wages would be reduced based on seniority and this will have a huge impact on working adults, as they will suffer more in resolving expenses.

With the significant increased amount of unemployment and debt, many feel that they are unable to cope with the current standard of living (Lim, 2020). Been, Suari, Knoef and Alessie (2020) stated that those who were affected will suffer even more in the future as debt liabilities increase, especially if debts are not repaid within the timeframe. This economic difficulties have altered the way Malaysians save, spend, manage risks, and invest to support their daily lives (Mohammad, 2020). Despite the government and private sector initiatives, the lack of awareness of how to properly people manage their finances has been evident among Malaysia's working adults (Jay, 2017). This situation seems to be worst when most of the people who lose their jobs during this pandemic do not have enough savings for a month, according to the Malaysian Trades Union Congress statement (Ram, 2020).

This crisis is undoubtedly severe when Department of Statistics Malaysia (2020) revealed the Effects of Covid-19 Survey on Economy and Individuals that show 71.4% of Malaysians who are self-employed have savings that only can last less than 4 weeks. On the other hand, 43% of individuals claimed the savings would last less than two weeks, while only 28% had enough to last for two months. The survey also found that the majority of respondents said they are unprepared if the duration of the MCO was extended.

In addition, even before the COVID-19, the reference to Loke (2015), more than 50% of Malaysians did not adequately plan for their financial emergency and did not comply with the minimum guideline for ensuring emergency funds equal to at least three months' living expenses. As a result, the financial status of young adults during the pandemic is significantly affected without having the appropriate way to cope with the problem.

Welsh and Cheng (2020) shown that apart from being vulnerable to job losses, working adults are also likely to bear a drop in income due to their lack of financial awareness and excessive debt levels. Their report stated that younger households have the lowest median income of any age group, which

makes the situation is tenser as these age groups usually have young families to take care of which leads to additional monthly expenses. Bank Negara Malaysia (2018) reports that young people who make up a large proportion of low-income households are more likely to have inadequate funds at their disposal to meet their debt obligations. As a result, the situation appears to worsen for younger people, with the number of individuals reporting a complete loss of income rising without the proper way to manage their finances during the MCO (Welsh & Cheng, 2020).

A recently-released World Bank Group of its *Malaysia Economic Monitor* report that high rates of bankruptcy occur due to borrowing for consumption rather than for wealth accumulation are an increasing concern, especially among younger borrowers with limited financial knowledge and literacy (World Bank, 2020). The report found that in 2012 and 2018, bankruptcies involving personal finance and credit card debt increased by 43% and 104%, respectively. Up to August 2019, a total of 300,908 Malaysians had been declared bankrupt, with 25.3% of those aged 25 to 34 becoming the second largest group to be declared bankrupt (Zainal, 2019).

Even before the pandemic, it is reported that mostly individuals between the ages of 20 and 30 were stuck in personal bankruptcy (Chong & Lam, 2012). This represents the fact that working adults are the largest consumer group, but they also suffered from excessive credit card debt spending at the same time. This support by Sharif, Ahadzadeh and Turner (2020) stated there is low awareness of financial management among working adults. Furthermore, the age of individuals deemed bankrupt is getting younger with more complex financial products and services on the market (Swiecka et al., 2019).

Besides, before the outbreak, Bank Negara Malaysia's (2015) survey found that it was difficult to collect RM1000 from three out of four Malaysians in an emergency. The survey showed most Malaysians prefer to spend on immediate gratification rather than long-term investments. It also showed that only 6 percent of Malaysian workers would be able to live for more than six months if they lost their jobs. Besides, more than 3,000 Malaysians do not have a particular budget plan or financial discipline to manage their expenditures and debt (Sipalan, 2015). Hence, Malaysians are unable to make financial decisions responsible for their financial stability (Ruxyn, 2017).

According to Samad, Ismail, Hussain, Masdek, Zaki, Rahman and Idris (2020), these young adults are affected by the fact that they often spend more than they earn. Adzis, Bakar and Kadir (2017) supported this argument, finding more spending by the younger generation in later periods, as these are primarily due to the inability to manage debt as a result of a hire purchase transaction, mortgages, personal loans, becoming a guarantor, and credit card debt trap. Their need for temporary self-gratification without taking into account the effects of over-indebtedness may lead to an increase in credit card interest charges, default, and, finally, insolvency (Zainal, 2019). This result due to the banking industry's ability to provide loans that allow individuals to spend more than they can afford. In good times, this will lead to incredible figures of economic development, but this paints a misleading and temporary image of prosperity, which is now completely exposed to the pandemic of COVID-19.

This situation indicates that Malaysian working adults are more likely to face financial difficulties during these unprecedented times due to COVID-19. In these circumstances, financial planning is therefore critical, as many working adults have noticed that they are not adequately prepared for it. Clearly that working adults need to mitigate the crisis they might face in the future, a long-term solutions are necessary to fix the problem. In short, young people need to reshape their financial state, which does not facilitate debt growth and reshape their value in such a way that not only material possessions or luxurious experiences are the benchmarks of accomplishment, but the ability to be a better version of themselves in every aspect of life.

For that reason, the habit of managing personal finance appropriately such as putting aside some money to prepare for rainy days, needs to be revived and cultivated, which contributes to emphasizing the importance of financial planning among working adults during COVID-19. Thus, this research is conducted to examine the gender differences in financial planning among working adults during COVID-19 pandemic in Malaysia as well as to explore the relationship between financial knowledge, financial attitude and financial behavior, toward financial planning. The most influential factor influencing financial planning will then be identified. The results will represent the individual's ability, in the midst of the COVID-19 outbreak, to conduct their personal financial planning.

Literature Review

Financial Planning

Financial planning as a financial objective that has developed strategies to achieve the goal (Boon, Yee & Ting, 2011) will bring rewards, including greater flexibility, improved living standards, wise spending patterns, and increased wealth (Pui San, 2016) if it is successfully planned. The key to building a good financial future is the creation of a flexible financial plan and a regular review of the plan. As one of the dynamic process that goes through different phases of life that can alter their needs and priorities accordingly, it is important to always prepare for unexpected events. The “financial shock” such as a sudden loss of a job, a car accident, and others are at all times at potential. However, with proper financial planning, they could easily go through this contingencies by reducing their monthly expenses to protect one’s family and its dependents.

According to the Malaysia Financial Planning Council (2004), individuals can understand the consequences of each financial decision and ways to manage their finance through their financial planning on credit and cash management, investment, risk management, insurance, tax planning, retirement, and estate planning as part of the components in the financial planning. It is important to earn extra capital, particularly during economic turmoil or unemployment. It is also regardless of the age. The emergence of COVID-19 pandemic as an unforeseeable occurrence all over the world, has arisen the circumstances such as sudden job losses, unemployment, or wage cuts in which can only be resolved with financial planning (Bluestein, Duffy, Ferreira, Cohen, Cinamon & Allan, 2020). A contingency plan, such as setting up an emergency fund or reducing monthly expenses, would also be able to help individuals protect their families and their loved ones in the future (Pui San, 2016).

Mishra (2015) described financial planning is a path map for the achievement of one's own financial goals and aspirations. The key components of financial planning include (1) Budgeting, (2) Expenditure Planning, (3) Liquidity Planning, (4) Personal Finance Planning or Debt Planning, (5)

Investment Planning, (6) Retirement Planning, (7) Insurance Planning, (8) Estate Planning, and (9) Tax Planning. It helps to enhance financial well-being, maintaining financial stability at any stage of life or unexpected occurrence, optimizing personal capital, preserving income and assets through appropriate insurance planning, and building an investment portfolio through appropriate risk planning.

Meanwhile, Vincent Kwo, President of the Malaysian Financial Planning Council, stressed that it is necessary for working adults to figure out their cash flow for the next six to twelve months and to understand the ins and outs of their income and expenses. Nor Akmar Yaakub, Head of the Department of Financial Education at the Agency for Credit Counseling and Debt Reduction (AKPK), advises against debt relief in the current pandemic, particularly for expenditure purposes, and suggests that young adults will take the crisis as an opportunity to learn about the importance of financial planning to build a comprehensive emergency fund (Lim, 2020).

Stephen Yong, CEO of the financial education platform of MyPF, said that in times of crisis, it is critical to have sufficient cash reserves, not only to cover personal and business expenses but also to take advantage of opportunities for market investment. Meanwhile, Jordan Peh, Yes Financial Sdn Bhd's associate director, reminds young working adults not to reduce their retirement savings and lose sight of their mid-to-long-term financial goals (Lim, 2020). However, in relation of Awanis (2013) and Ulbrich and Krik (2017) research, they explained that the mistakes young adult made were due to lack of financial knowledge, which would prolong the repayment of student loans, the accumulation of unpaid debts, high credit card balances, and their inability to save. In other response, David and Yetmar (2010) and Lee et al. (2019) found personal financial planning's attitudes of young adults showed that most respondents felt that financial planning was important and they were interested in creating a financial plan but a very few of them felt had the skills and experience required to create their financial plan.

Besides, there was a result of a study showed that personal financial planning in Malaysia is still very much in its infant stage (Mokhtar et al., 2018). This is due to many still do not possess a sufficient understanding of the importance of personal financial planning and other opportunity even though they are aware of its importance for their ease and well-being in the future (Citi, 2008). This paper, therefore, explores the factors influencing the financial planning of working adults and how this represents the individual's ability, in the midst of the COVID-19 outbreak, to conduct personal financial planning.

Influencing Factors of Financial Knowledge, Financial Attitude and Financial Behaviour

Gender

Financial planning was also associated with gender. A study by Glass and Kilpatrick (1998) shows that the accumulation of savings has been linked to gender with women saving less than men. However, Wilska and Haanpa (2005) found that both genders spend about the same amount of money. Nevertheless, Jain and Mandot (2012), found that there is no relationship between the gender of investors and the degree of risk-taking capacity. But it was contrast with the study conducted by Jawaheer and Manual (2016) whereby their findings stated that gender has an impact on making investment decisions since it is one of the financial behavior's components. This happen when females will spend on everyday purchases for the family such as groceries.

On the other hand, according to Stollak, Vandenberg and Steiner (2019), they found that women have better budget management than men while males will spend less frequently but on more expensive things such as electronic and technology items. Thus, the results of those studies display that the association between gender and financial planning is present (Farrar, Moizer, Lean & Hyde, 2018). In Malaysian context, data by AKPK (2018) revealed that women in Malaysia are more likely to plan their spending as compared to men. Therefore, it is important for this research, at the same time try to reveal the association of gender in financial planning among working adult during pandemic Covid 19. Hence, the research suggest the hypothesis for gender and financial planning test as;

H₀: There is no significant difference between genders in financial planning among working adults during COVID-19.

H₁: There is a significant difference between genders in financial planning among working adult during COVID-19.

Financial Knowledge

Financial knowledge is the most important role in managing the money earned by one person. Financial knowledge, financial literacy, and financial education are used interchangeably in both literature and the media (Hutson, 2010). Financial knowledge is defined as the extent to which the individual's knowledge of financial planning is critically applied in real life (Hutson, 2010). This statement is strong when Boon et al. (2011) found that financial knowledge's levels had a positive relationship with financial planning and a useful indicator of an individual's financial decision. It happened when individuals with a high level of financial knowledge are more centered to prevent adverse effects that poor financial planning could have on their lives. A well-understanding of financial knowledge is necessary for effective money management (Scott, 2010)

According to Minakshi (2009), financial knowledge is important to help vulnerable people to make a more active contribution to their personal economic growth. There is a strong and historic correlation between financial knowledge and wealth accumulation as people who better understand their financial sector are more likely to accumulate wealth (Behrman, Mitchell, Soo & Bravo, 2012). It help to empower individuals to make educated and effective decisions about their financial resources (Lusardi & Tufano, 2015). It is even considered as the greater aid when it comes to complex financial products, such as investment instruments, variable annuities, and variable life insurance (Han & Jang, 2013). When it comes to global situation, Jamal, Ramlan, Karim, Mohidin and Osman (2015) stated that lack of financial knowledge has been described as a widespread issue at the global level, including developed economies. Amagir, Groot, van den Brink and Wilschut (2020) recommended that an increased level of financial knowledge can make a difference in risk perceptions for investment avenues. Individuals with a lower level of financial literacy who do not pursue innovative financial strategies will not have sound financial planning and handle financial plans with no serious consideration and commitment.

The need for greater financial knowledge among vulnerable young adults is never more visible than during crises. Half of all respondents would face financial distress if they had to cover an emergency

cost of \$1,000 or less in the next 30 days, according to Charles Schwab's Financial Literacy Survey (2020). Also, the President of the Charles Schwab Foundation said financial knowledge is a survival skill that everyone needs, which gives learners the opportunity they need to make good decisions, as the pandemic demonstrates how important basic personal finance capabilities are in preparing for the unexpected scenario.

COVID-19 has put many Malaysians in financial distress as most of them are burdened to try to solve their difficulties due to a lack of financial knowledge (Shah et al., 2020). Therefore, the study on financial knowledge to determine adults financial planning during pandemic is conducted.

Financial Attitude

Ajzen (1991) identified that financial attitudes are the outcome of certain behavior of a decision-maker and the attitude can be entrenched through their economic and non-economic beliefs. According to Eagly and Chaiken (1993), attitude is a psychological tendency expressed by assessing a particular entity with some degree of benefit or disadvantage. When Godwin (1994) analyzed the impact of financial attitudes on financial planning by setting attitudes as an independent variable, he found that the greatest predictor of cash flow management was a positive approach to planning. They argued that relational reactions represent attitudes that have a tendency or disagreement to influence an individual's attitude. Attitudes linked to financial knowledge and can be synergistic in the creation of results (Moore, 2003).

According to Lai and Tan (2009), the attitudes of Malaysians towards financial planning have shown that people handle money seriously. Other scholars such as Drozdeck (2005) see the performance in financial planning as more of an attitude, character, or habit. Drozdeck (2005) claimed financial planning is based on an attitude of concentration, motivation, increasing experience in financial, psychological profiling, and practice management while gaining professional expertise. Quality in personal financial planning requires a practice of first-knowledge before knowing, specialization, organizing and preserving tidy records, keeping one's word, and of reading and learning. According to Jogerson, 2017, students who were financially influenced by their parents had higher financial knowledge, attitude, and behavior scores.

To enhance financial literacy among generations, Hence, Bhushan and Medury (2014) concluded that the focus should be on developing favorable financial attitudes among the people of the country. Then only, the real benefits of any financial education program can be achieved. This is supported by Khurram and Malik (2019) who revealed that there is a positive correlation between young people's attitudes towards financial planning, which suggests that young people are aware of and have positive attitudes towards personal finances. This statement is strong when Mien and Thao (2015) similarly found a positive relationship between financial attitudes and financial planning. The authors concluded that irregular financial conduct would lead to an increase in individual psychological well-being stress rates due to the inability to cope effectively with the high psychological costs of debt.

Nonetheless, a negative attitude will weaken their financial decision-making power (Shim, Xiao, Barber, & Lyons, 2009; Sohn, Joo, Grable, Lee, & Kim, 2012). The aforementioned literature review supports that financial attitude is a necessary determinant to identify the financial planning of

individuals, and it also influences the level of financial planning which in this context is the personal financial planning of working adults during the COVID-19 pandemic. Overall, financial attitude can be defined as a personal inclination towards financial matters. It is an ability to plan and maintain a savings account that matters.

Research indicates that attitude towards money may frame financial planning among youth. Individual's positive attitude towards finance and money can affect their behavior to achieve financial planning and enhance financial knowledge. Nonetheless, a negative attitude will weaken their financial decision-making power (Shim, Xiao, Barber, & Lyons, 2009; Sohn, Joo, Grable, Lee, & Kim, 2012). The result financial management study shows that financial attitude significantly have positive affect on financial management behavior (Adiputra, 2019) The aforementioned literature review supports that financial attitude is a necessary determinant to identify the financial planning of individuals, and it also influences the level of financial planning which in this context is the personal financial planning of working adults during the COVID-19 pandemic. Overall, researcher decided to study on financial attitude as one of the determinants among Malaysian citizens financial planning.

Financial Behaviour

On the other hand, many researchers have surveyed financial management behavior, investment behavior, bill payment behavior, savings behavior, credit card behavior, and budget behavior to find out the level of personal financial planning of individuals. In India, Agarwalla, Barua, Jacob and Varma (2013) conducted a survey of 1,000 young people employed in urban India to determine their financial knowledge, financial attitudes, and financial behavior. The result indicates that about 24 percent of respondents had high financial information and around 68 percent had positive financial behavior. On another study found that human behavior as the pertinent to financial decision-making and money management such as constructing an appropriate budget programmed and controlling it, quick payment of bills, and regular saving nature. It is called as financial behavior (Bhushan & Medury, 2014; Kalekye & Memba, 2015). OECD (2013) stated that financial behavior is very important and a fundamental component of financial planning. For Atkinson and Messy (2012), a positive financial behavior of individuals such as appropriate planning for expenditures and caring financial stability enhances their financial planning level, whereas negative financial behavior like largely depending upon credits and loans weaken their financial well-being. Bhushan and Medury (2014) concluded that to enhance the financial planning level of working adults, the government should focus on building positive financial behavior and attitude along with financial knowledge.

A well-informed and financially educated people can make better choices for their families and thereby contribute to greater financial stability and well-being (Hilgert & Hogarth, 2003; Herawati, Candiasa, Yadhnyana & Suharsono, 2018). There is also a need to consider the financial skills and abilities to working adults, as their financial behavior can have a direct effect on their future lives and their well-being. One previous study have focused on financial planning for university students. It was found that many of them struggle to schedule their expenditures and unexpectedly face financial difficulties (Annabi, Gonzalez & Muller., 2018; Daud, Norwani & Yusof., 2018; Johan, Rowlingsonn & Appleyard, 2020). University students exhibit higher debt, severe use of credit cards, high stress, and low financial satisfaction due to lack of financial management skills (Bapat, 2019; Falahati, Paim, Ismail, Haron & Masud, 2011; Norvilitis et. al, 2006).

The unemployment rate, if factored in would reduce consumer spending, as household pay and disposable incomes have come to a halt. As a result, good financial planning and positive financial behavior have always been the key to better financial conditions (Adam, Frimpong & Boadu, 2017; Stromback, Lind, Skagerlund, Vastjall, Tinghog, 2017; Arifin, 2018). COVID-19 has affected young adult financial behavior in many ways, especially in terms of spending, from conspicuous to responsible spending (Zwanka & Buff, 2020). Therefore, young adults may be unprepared to adequately handle psychological costs associated with financial difficulties result in COVID-19 (United Nations, 2020).

In Malaysia context, Financial behavior association on financial planning is studied.

To examine the relationship of financial knowledge, financial attitude and financial behavior with financial planning among working adults during COVID-19, the following hypotheses was developed.
 H_0 : There is no relationship between financial knowledge, financial attitude and financial behavior with financial planning among working adults during COVID-19.

H_1 : There is a relationship between financial knowledge, financial attitude and financial behavior with financial planning among working adults during COVID-19.

To determine the most influential factors influencing financial planning among working adults during COVID-19, the following hypotheses was formed:

H_0 : There is no influential factors of financial knowledge, financial attitude and financial behavior towards influencing financial planning among working adults during COVID-19.

H_1 : There is an influential factors between financial knowledge, financial attitude and financial behavior towards influencing financial planning among working adults during COVID-19.

Research Methodology

A non-probability sampling approach called purposive sampling technique is used to get the desired sample size and the respondents were given specific information that the researcher needed. A number of 260 representative sample size of the working adult in this study had answered a self-administered questionnaire in data collection. The questionnaire was hand-coded and analyzed by using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (Statistical software SPSS 23). In this research, there are no restrictions on any individual occupations as long as the respondents comply with the criteria set out before. Since the research is intended to examine financial knowledge, financial attitude, financial behavior, and financial planning, individuals at least at the age of 18 years old were selected as they are already began their financial planning. With this technique, the researcher purposively choose the respondents who have the relevant information and know surely about their age and their financial status as well as their financial capability from the researcher's point of view. Reliability Analysis (Cronbach Alpha), Factorial Analysis, Independent Sample t-test, Pearson Correlation and Multiple Linear Regression analysis were then conducted.

Repondents Profile

The highest respondents in this study are apparently among the male which represents 50.4% or 131 respondents while female respondents account for 49.6% or 129 out of 260 respondents. About 89% of the respondents age from 21 to 30 years followed by 11% of participants' ages range from 18 to 20 years. Based on the data, around 66.5% of total respondents have Bachelor's Degree qualification,

20% of the respondents with Diploma, 7.7% have only high school qualification, and lastly, 5.8% of total respondents possess Master's Degree. The participants earn around RM2000-RM2999 per month with the percentage of 81.2%, followed by 15.8% who earned an income range of RM1000-RM1999 whereas, those who earn RM3000-RM3999 contribute to 3% of total respondents in this study.

Reliability Test

Table-1: Reliability Test for Variables

	Cronbach Alpha	N of items
Dependent Variables		
Financial Planning	0.841	27
Independent Variables		
Financial Knowledge	0.865	6
Financial Attitude	0.658	5
Financial Behavior	0.795	5

To determine the reliability of each question, score of Cronbach's Alpha is examined. Based on the results shown in the Table-1, it indicated that all questions which have been asked in the research were acceptable and reliable for further research by means of each variable scored over 0.6. The Cronbach's Alpha value for independent variable question of financial attitude is 0.658 followed by 0.795 for financial behavior and 0.658 for financial attitude. On the other hand, the reliability test for financial planning as the dependent variable that comprise of 27 questions, demonstrated the value of 0.841. Thus, it can be concluded that all variables are acceptable to proceed for further research and good to be conducted in a reliable manner. Therefore, this study confirmed the proposed framework which consist of three independent variables (financial knowledge, financial attitude, financial behavior) and one dependent variable (financial planning). Factor analysis will then be tested for validity description.

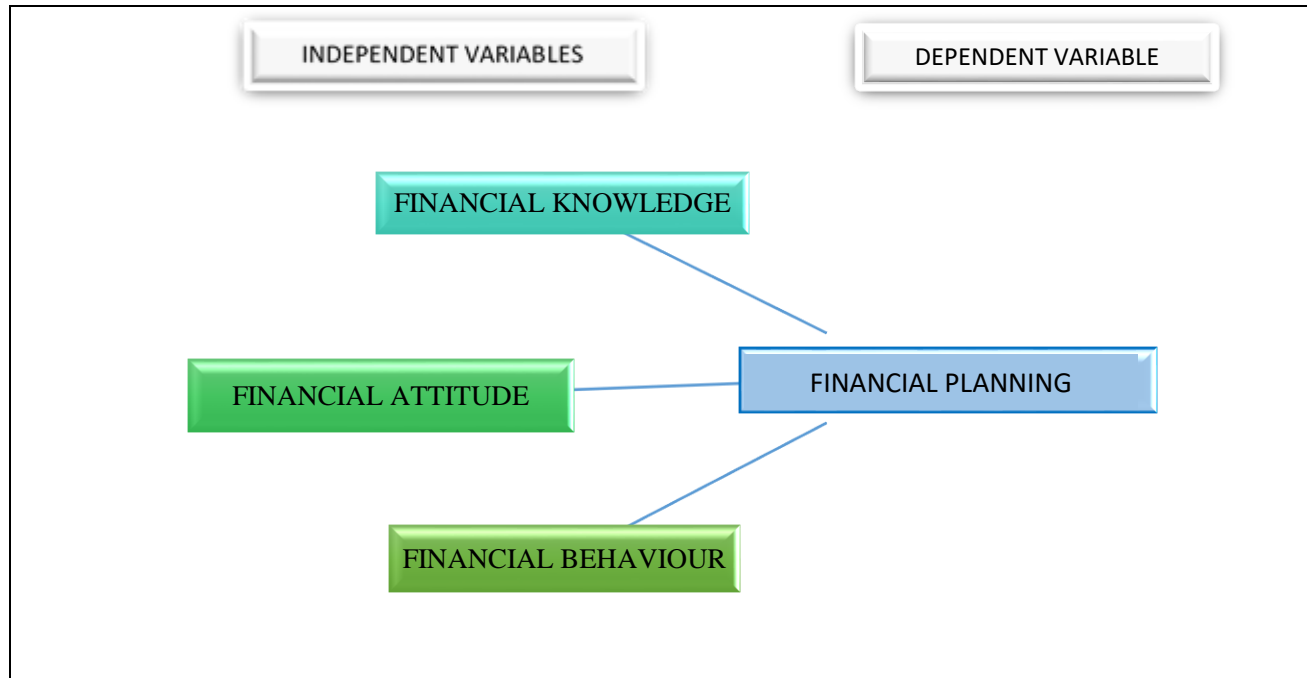


Figure 1: Theoretical Framework

Factorial Analysis

Table-2: Summary KMO and Bartlett's Test

Variables	No of Items	KMO	Bartlett's Test of Sphericity
Financial Knowledge	6	0.840	0.000
Financial Attitude	5	0.645	0.000
Financial Behavior	5	0.806	0.000
Financial Planning	27	0.908	0.000

Sample appropriateness for all of the variables of financial knowledge, financial attitude, financial behavior and financial planning were measured using Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin, **Table-2**. KMO calculated the sample adequacy, and concluded that 0.645, 0.806 and 0.904 to be successful in evaluating the factor for data reduction as all of the KMO values were higher than the acceptable value of 0.50. Besides, table 2 indicates that all of the variables' sample were strong enough to be used as sampling for the sphericity test of Bartlett Test data value is 0.000. Therefore the sigma value requirement of less than 0.05 factor analysis fulfilled the validity test.

Result and Discussion

Table-3: Independent Sample t-test

Category	Mean	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means	
		F	Sig	t	Sig. (2-tailed)
Male	104.2901	4.339	0.038	0.383	0.702
Female	103.5504				

Based on Table 3 above, the two-tailed significance for financial planning indicates that the p-value is 0.702 which is greater than 0.05. This connoted that there is no significant difference between gender and financial planning among working adults during COVID-19. Thus, to answer the first objective, this study will reject the alternative hypothesis as there is no significant difference between gender and financial planning among working adults during COVID-19 and it is fail to reject the null hypothesis. The findings of this study exhibit similar results from previous study as Berggren and Gonzalez (2010), Mazlifah (2011) and Walzack and Kamieniecka (2018). By applying the Pearson Correlation Coefficient Test, the second objective of the analysis will be addressed.

Table-4: Pearson Correlation Coefficient

Pearson Correlation Coefficient		Financial Planning
Financial Knowledge	Pearson Correlation	.669**
	Sig.(2tailed)	.000
	n	260
Financial Attitude	Pearson Correlation	.642**
	Sig.(2tailed)	.000
	n	260
Financial Behavior	Pearson Correlation	.758**
	Sig.(2tailed)	.000
	n	260

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2- tailed)

Based on table 4, the coefficient of association between financial planning and financial knowledge is 0.669 with a significance value of 0.000, which is less than 0.05 at the 5 percent level of significance. The findings suggest that, after accounting for the relationship between financial knowledge and financial planning among working adults, it was found that financial knowledge was of positively related to financial planning. This outcome is comparable to several of previous study (Boon et al, 2011; Ali, Rahman & Bakar, 2014; Adam et al., 2017, Amagir et al, 2020). Financial knowledge such as any information, programme, or ability discusses financial principles and subjects is therefore could inform and enhance positively to individual’s financial planning.

The correlation value of financial attitude and financial planning is 0.642 with 0.000 for p-value and it is below than 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, it shows that financial attitude have positive relationship with financial planning among working adults during COVID-19. This finding has been reinforced by previous studies as well, whereby the financial attitude characteristic of personality, has a major positive relationship with financial planning (Jorgensen, 2007; Ali et al., 2015; Mien & Thao, 2015, Adiputra, 2020). Workers attributes as financial attitude have a substantial effect on financial planning (Ibrahim. Harun & Isa, 2009). The way working adults manage their money during COVID-19 may correlated with their effective financial planning.

Lastly, the correlation coefficient between financial planning and financial behavior is 0.758 with a p-value of 0.000 and below than 0.05 level of significance. Hence, the result indicating a significant positive relationship between the financial behavior and financial planning. This result demonstrated the majority of working adults exhibited positive financial behavior, such as self-discipline in dealing with household finance and personal money. At the same time, they were more likely to make timely payment of bills, evaluate product affordability, set financial goals, carefully evaluate financial goods, and rely on savings or assets rather than borrowings in times of crisis. These findings were similar to the results of the OECD survey on several countries and supported by previous study conducted by Agarwal et al. (2013). Since the result of Pearson coefficients, exhibit all of the variables have positive coefficient value with all of the p-value of variables below than five percent level of significance. Therefore, the result has answered objective two of this study when the indication showed that all of the independent variables of the study (financial knowledge, financial attitude and financial behavior) have a significant positive relationship with the dependent variables financial planning. Thus, this study reject null hypotheses and failed to reject alternative hypothesis.

Table-5: Multiple Regression Model Summary of the variables

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.832 ^a	.692	.688	8.67569

Table-5 displays the related values in the sense of both the overall model fit and the point regression model estimation. The R value of 0.832 reveals a strong correlation between the independent variables and the dependent. According to Table-5, the R square is 0.692 or 69.2 per cent is the coefficient of determination which explains variation on the dependency variable by varying independent variables when measuring the accuracy of the capacity of the model. It is therefore indicates that 69.2 percent of the dependent variable from the independent variables chosen is clarified and the remaining have not been considered. The Adjusted R Square of 0.688 represents 68% of variance of the criterion variable even after the number of predictor variables in the model has been taken into account.

Table-6: Multiple Regression Analysis

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	14.217	3.799		3.743	.000
Financial Knowledge	.676	.183	.180	3.694	.000
Financial Attitude	1.411	.200	.302	7.052	.000
Financial Behavior	2.382	.219	.499	10.890	.000

a. Dependent Variables: Financial Planning

To ensure the correlation between the dependent variables and independent variables, Table-6 will indicate the close association between independent variables and dependent variables in the standardized Beta Coefficient. The relationships between all independent variables of financial knowledge, financial attitude and financial behavior among working adults during the COVID-19 have been significant and have greatly influenced on their financial planning. Therefore, the study concluded that all of the independent variables are positively significant towards financial planning among working adults during COVID-19. Referring to the beta value of financial behavior which indicates 0.499 as the highest value as compared to other independent variables, therefore reflecting that financial behavior influence the most towards the implantation of financial planning. This followed by financial attitude with beta coefficient of 0.302 and lastly financial knowledge with beta coefficient of 0.180. The study may therefore infer that the independent variable has contributed significantly to every aspect of financial planning. This study reject null hypotheses and failed to reject alternative hypothesis as this study exhibit financial behavior to represent the most positive significant influential factors in the in the financial planning among working adult during COVID-19.

Multicollinearity Test

Variance inflation factor (VIF) is also conducted to detect the existence of multicollinearity between financial knowledge, financial attitude and financial behavior.

Table-7 Variance Inflation Factor (VIF)

Model	Collinearity Statistics	
	Tolerance	VIF
Financial Knowledge	.505	1.980
Financial Attitude	.657	1.522
Financial Behavior	.574	1.742

Dependent Variables: Financial Planning

According to Coefficients Output of Collinearity Statistical value **Table-7**, it is to summarize that there is no high correlations between the study's independent variables, with positive correlation within the range of 1 to 10 and yet not very high. The VIF value for financial knowledge, financial attitude and financial behavior were 1.980, 1.522 and 1.742 respectively. Therefore, this study opines that the variables stand autonomously and there is no multicollinearity symptoms between each other with minimal problem only and it is in control.

Conclusion

As the study aim to examine the gender differences in financial planning among working adults during COVID-19 pandemic in Malaysia, it can be concluded that there is no difference between male and female working adults in their financial planning. Consecutively, all of the independent variables which include financial knowledge, financial attitude and financial behavior have significantly great influence towards performing personal financial planning among working adults, hence answering objective number two. Lastly, financial behavior was identified as the most influential independent variable factor towards financial planning which then, answering objective

number three of the study. As the findings indicate that financial behavior is the largest contributor towards financial planning, educators and professionals could plan related programs to enhance financial practices among young working adults to prepare themselves to cope with an unexpected event such as the coronavirus crisis. Results also indicated that most of them have started their planning for their insurance, investment and retirement. They also have satisfactory knowledge on saving and credit management which may help them to prevent from being effected by current pandemic condition. Wider number with specific targeted respondent such as B40 as tier of income within specific region could be aimed for more generalize result with immediate respondent during the crisis itself might support more significant result.

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