

The Influence Income, Financial Knowledge and Culture on Financial Management Behavior (Study of Cases: Permanent Civil Servant Timor-Leste)

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research is to examine whether these factors affect the financial management behavior of permanent civil servants Timor-Leste. The sample selection technique in this study is accidental sampling. The sample used in this study is 396 respondents, obtained through questionnaires. This study used Smart-PLS 4.0 software to process the data. The results of the analysis showed that income, financial knowledge, and culture have a positive influence on the financial management behavior of permanent civil servants Timor-Leste.

Key word: Income, financial knowledge, culture and financial management behavior.

1. Introduction

A report about financial management of adults survey conducted by United Nations Capital Development Fund (2023) in Timor-Leste shows that financial uncertainty remains a major challenge for the majority of households in Timor-Leste, with a majority of adults (67%) report engaging in budgeting or planning their income and expenditures, concerns regarding financial security persist, even among individuals employed in formal sectors. This indicates disconnect between financial planning practices and the sense of financial stability. Notable disparities in financial management behaviors across different community groups further reflect the influence of income and others factors. These show that awareness among adults about the importance engagement in financial management behavior reflects a lack of attention to long-term financial planning is still minim.

Individual working in the formal sector, such as civil servants in Timor-Leste's public sector, play a significant role in both the economy and society (Belo, Monteiro, *et al.*, 2023). Today's, financial behavior is a critical component in maintaining household economic stability, particularly for civil servants who receive a fixed income. However, limited financial knowledge such as understanding of savings, investments, and related matters is not solely influenced by income, but also by an individual's capacity to manage finances wisely, as well as by deeply rooted cultural norms that shape financial behavior. In Timor-Leste, although permanent civil servants receive regular salaries, they continue to face financial management challenges, often stemming from insufficient financial literacy and cultural influences that affect behavior finance (Ratnawati *et al.*, 2023). Therefore, it is essential to examine the factors that influence the financial management behavior of permanent civil servants as part of a broader strategy to enhance financial literacy.

Prior studies on financial management behavior, producing a range of findings, for instance, the study results partial effect shows that income positively and significantly influences fi-

nancial management behavior, contributing 23.6% to it. In contrast, financial knowledge does not have a significant effect. However, locus of control does have a positive and significant, accounting for 36.4% of financial management behavior (Andriyani and Cipta, 2022). These outcomes highlight the limited explanatory capacity of conventional financial variables and underscore the need to consider additional influencing factors. In this regard, Nordin *et al.*, (2022) advocate of culture into the analysis of financial management behavior to enhance understanding of the differing behavioral patterns between younger and older individuals within behavioral finance models that incorporate local cultural values. Without a clear understanding of the cultural dynamics influencing financial behavior, initiatives risk being implemented by policymakers and financial institutions in ways that are misaligned with the needs and practices of their communities (Opoku-Okuampa, 2024). This is particularly important given that the mechanisms through which culture shapes individual.

Based on this issue and recommendation, this study is particularly concerned with examining whether these factors influence financial management behavior permanent civil servants. Therefore, it aims to investigate the effects of income, financial knowledge, and culture on financial management behavior of permanent civil servants Timor-Leste. Through this approach, an understanding of the influence of income, financial knowledge and culture on financial management behavior can be expanded in the context of Timor-Leste. Such research can contribute not only to academic knowledge a valuable resource for future researchers but also to the development of more effective and relevant financial policies and interventions.

2. Literature review

2.1. Theory of Planned Behavior

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) offers valuable insights into how to influence human behavior by predicting individuals' intended actions based on their goals. TPB extends and refines the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), emphasizing the concepts of compatibility and behavioral intention. According to Ajzen (1991), individuals engage in specific behaviors based on their intentions or goals. These intentions are formed from three main factors: attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. Attitudes are the individual's positive or negative opinion on performing a particular behavior; subjective norms are the perceived social pressure from key individuals in one's social environment; and perceived behavioral control is the level at which the behavior is simple or difficult to perform out. These factors are considered have a significant effect on both intention and actual performance.

2.2. Financial Management Behavior

Financial management behavior refers to an individual's ability to manage finances through planning, budgeting, monitoring, and controlling daily financial resources in accordance with their financial obligations (Purwanto et al., 2023). This competency encompasses the capacity to make both short- and long-term financial decisions. Research indicates that financial management behavior is closely associated with personal financial responsibility, including the prudent management of money and assets to enhance productivity and ensure sustainability (Andriyani and Cipta, 2022; Kholilah and Iramani, 2013; and Varadarajah, 2020). Another perspective defines financial management behavior as the capacity to allocate income effectively across various needs while also preparing for future financial scenarios. To optimize income distribution, meet current demands, and prepare for long-term goals, it is essential to practice sound financial behavior and responsible financial decision-making. Effective financial management enables individuals to achieve personal goals and secure their financial future by fulfilling all financial obligations in a timely manner. According to Rindivenesia and Fikri (2021), as cited in (Purwanto et al., 2023) and (Andriyani and Cipta, 2022), financial management behavior can be assessed using four key indicators: (a) cash flow management, (b) saving and investment, (c) consumption, and (d) loan management. These indicators provide a framework for evaluating how individuals manage their income, control expenditures, save and invest resources, and handle loans or credit. Collectively, they offer a comprehensive view of financial management behavior.

2.3 Income

In daily financial planning, income plays a crucial role. As defined by Hilgert and Luttrell (2023), income refers to the monetary amount received from various sources such as salaries and wages which enables individuals to meet their needs, save, invest, and achieve future financial goals. All sources of income are reflected in the quantification of income, with wages and salaries typically representing the largest share of

total income. Income, as a key variable, significantly influences an individual's financial capacity; thus, one's level of income serves as an indicator of their overall financial capability and has a substantial impact on financial decision-making. Income indicators include salaries and wages (Andriyani and Cipta, 2022). Therefore income is closely related to financial behavior, as making sound and appropriate financial decisions is essential for increasing income, managing expenses, and fulfilling others obligations (Nugrohoa and Panuntun, 2022).

2.4 Financial knowledge

Financial knowledge is regarded as the foundation of financial literacy through which individuals are assisted in making informed decisions and developing sound financial behavior. It can better one's financial knowledge, the more effectively personal finances are managed (Nugrohoa and Panuntun, 2022). According to Kholilah and Iramani (2013), financial knowledge encompasses an individual's expertise in understanding various financial skills and tools. Financial knowledge can be assessed through several indicators, including an understanding of interest rates and credit, knowledge of dividends, budgeting skills, procedures for opening insurance policies, the investment process in mutual funds, stages of investing in deposits, property investment strategies, and familiarity with credit report details (Husna and Lutfi, 2021).

2.5. Culture

2.5.1. Definition of Culture According to Anthropology Koentjaraningrat

Koentjaraningrat (2015) defines culture as the entire system of human ideas, behaviours, and creations within society, acquired and passed down through learning a view also supported by Tjahyadi et al., (2020). Culture encompasses all activities and behaviours that individuals acquire through the learning process. It is often reflected in everyday human behaviour and can be observed in practical aspects of life. One example of culture is the marriage ceremony, as discussed by Tjahyadi et al., (2020) in reference to Koentjaraningrat (2015). In anthropological studies, culture is understood as any behaviour deemed significant enough to be examined from a cultural perspective. Koentjaraningrat (2015) categorizes culture into three interrelated forms: ideas (ideal systems), activities (activity systems), and artifacts (artifact systems). There are:

- a) **Ideal Systems:** As a system of ideas, culture is abstract and cannot be directly visualized or photographed. It exists in the minds of individuals who comprehend it. However, when these ideas are manifested through regulations, traditions, and customs, they become perceptible in everyday life. Social norms illustrate how culture operates as a framework for regulating and guiding human behaviour. These norms are not universally applied but are collectively recognized and followed by members of a particular community.
- b) **Activity Systems:** Culture as a system of activities involves the social behaviours and interactions of

individuals within a community. These actions, which occur regularly and involve interpersonal relationships, represent a more tangible aspect of culture. For instance, communal marriage ceremonies serve as cultural practices in which individuals demonstrate behaviour shaped by cultural influence. Such activities can be directly observed and recorded and are considered concrete examples of cultural expression. These ceremonies reflect shared actions that engage all members of the community and are immediately perceptible.

- c) **Artefact Systems:** This is the most tangible form of culture, expressed through physical objects that can be perceived by the five senses. Artefacts arise from human activities grounded in underlying ideas and concepts. For example, during a traditional marriage ceremony, the exchange of various objects between the couple symbolizes the manifestation of cultural ideas and activities. These physical items serve as representations of the broader cultural system and the values it upholds.

Anthropological attempts to understand how people form society through various social groupings are reflected in cultural elements of human life, like familial connections and social organizations. Koentjaraningrat states the rules and norms of different groups in the environment where each social group lives regulate how they live every day. Families, especially nuclear and other families, are the nearest and most important social units. This demonstrates that the point of culture is to learn how social groups form society. Each community's the organization, from nuclear families to community levels (other families), involves standards and rules that regulate social unity. People work for the tools or goods people require to maintain their social lives and to maintain life. Each community group, from nuclear families to regional levels (other families), has customs and rules that regulate social unity. People work to create the tools or goods people need for their social lives and to maintain life (Tjahyadi, Andayani and Wafa, 2020).

2.5.2. The Hofstede's Culture Dimensions

The four dimensions can be associated with fundamental anthropological and social issues. The first dimension, power distance, is defined as 'the extent to which the less powerful members of institutions and organizations accept the unequal distribution of power. This dimension addresses the issue of social inequality and the degree of authority exercised by one individual over others. The second dimension, uncertainty avoidance, is defined as "the extent to which people feel threatened by ambiguous situations, and have created beliefs and institutions that try to avoid these." It relates to how societies manage uncertainty, particularly in dealing with conflict, aggression, and ultimately, existential concerns such as life and death. The third dimension, individualism versus collectivism, is situated along a cultural continuum. At one end, individualism is defined as 'a situation in which individuals are expected to care for themselves and their

immediate family only,' whereas at the other end, collectivism is described as 'a situation in which individuals are part of in-groups or collectivises that are expected to provide care in exchange for loyalty.' This dimension reflects the individual's relationship with the group and the framing of self-concept, whether articulated as 'I' or 'we. The fourth dimension, masculinity versus femininity, serves to contrast two dominant sets of societal values. Masculinity is defined as 'a situation in which the prevailing values in society are success, money, and material possessions,' whereas femininity is characterized as 'a situation in which the prevailing values are caring for others and quality of life.' This dimension addresses cultural attitudes toward gender roles and their influence on individuals' perceptions of identity (Hofstede and Bond, 1984).

The influence of the individualism versus collectivism elements of personal interests are the prioritize of financial behaviour in cultures that tend to individualistic behaviour. These interests can be pursued independently by financial management, setting objectives, and taking decisions based on personal needs, such as savings, personal investments, or spending on other activities. However, in a collective culture, financial management behaviour is strongly influenced by family or group interests. Financial decisions are decided can be used to support the collective, such as helping families, participating in cultural activities, or fulfilling customary obligations (tradition of life and death). Therefore, individuals prioritize, plan, and then utilize their finances in a way as aligns with their cultural orientation

2.5.3. Culture's influence on Financial Management Behavior in the context of Timor-Leste

In Timor-Leste society, financial behavior is intricately tied to cultural values and enduring social obligations. Traditional practices serve as a crucial foundation, particularly through the "tradition of life," which pertains to events such as engagements and marriages and other events, and the "tradition of death," related to funerals, burials, and other events. These traditions often take precedence in the financial management of individuals and households. Therefore, culture a vital foundation of individual life, particularly through traditional beliefs and social obligations. These beliefs manifest in ceremonial practices that link tradition of life and death, uniting humans, nature, God, and ancestral spirits. Such traditions serve both spiritual purposes and promote communal participation. In rites of life and death, individuals are expected to contribute as a social duty as social obligations reinforce individual roles in fostering solidarity and empowering others through cultural expression.

Timorese culture thus represents a living expression of shared beliefs and responsibilities that sustain communal life. Often, individuals tend to save more, manage, allocate, and use their financial resources to help each other in the community to achieve individual life and death traditions. With this financial support occurring reflects a strong sense of collective solidarity among the Timorese people. This solidarity is reinforced by the moral obligation to share resources, especially among those who have permanent jobs, such as permanent civil servants. As

a result, saving and investment behavior is often delayed, because financial resources are directed to meet socio-cultural demands.

Studies in Timor-Leste show that cultural values influence financial behavior, including saving habits and spending decisions (Belo *et al.*, 2023; Ratnawati *et al.*, 2023). Many individuals prioritize spending on traditional ceremonies, reflecting deep-rooted systems of trust, customs, and social obligations. Consequently, limited resources remain for essential needs like healthcare, housing, and education. Further research indicates that people continue to invest in cultural and family events alongside basic necessities (Robinson, Alex & Johnson, 2021). This underscores the significant impact of traditional beliefs and social obligation especially those tied to tradition of life and tradition of death on individual financial behavior (Palmer, 2007; Belo *et al.*, 2023).

3. Develop Hypothesis

3.1. Influence income on financial management behavior of Permanent civil servant Timor-Leste.

Income from item salaries, dividends, interest, and profit from a business or property are all included in this definition (Hilgert and Luttrell, 2023). People's capacity for meeting their daily requirements, pay for loans, save, and invest for the future is all determined by their income, which is an important element in financial management behavior. Income is assessed based on all sources received by an individual, with wages and salaries typically comprising the largest share. Generally, individuals with higher income levels tend to exhibit more responsible financial management, as adequate financial resources enable more deliberate and informed decisions (Kholilah and Iramani, 2013).

Income is defined as the amount of money received by a person as a result of work or activities carried out, with wages and salaries typically. When income increases, a person's behavior in managing their finances tends to improve. Sufficient money to cover costs and save for unexpected expenses is usually owned by individuals with high and adequate salary levels. Individuals earn a stable income through regular salaries and wages, which may income, influence positively financial management behavior civil servant Timor-Leste. This study are supported by Nisa and Haryono (2022), it was found that income has a significant influence on financial management behavior. Conversely, a study by (Nugrohoa and Panuntun, 2022) indicated that while income positively influence financial management behavior, this influence is not statistically significant.

H₁: Influence positive income on behavior financial management of permanent civil servants Timor-Leste

3.2. Financial knowledge on financial management behavior of permanent civil servant Timor-Leste.

Kholilah and Iramani (2013), financial knowledge encompasses an individual's expertise in understanding various financial skills and tools. Furthermore, Individual an adequate

knowledge of finances enables people to better understand the basics of finance and effective financial management tools, avoid waste, and effectively manage debt, as well as making plans for greater financial stability (Halim and Setyawan, 2021). This individual consciously allocates a portion for savings, investments, or insurance as a safeguard against potential future risks (Brilianti and Lutfi, 2020). This perspective is further reinforced by the findings of Perry and Morris (2005), Nisa and Haryono (2022), and Jennifer and Widoatmodjo (2023) which indicate that financial knowledge has a positive influence on financial management behaviors. Conversely, a study by Nugrohoa and Panuntun (2022) indicated that financial knowledge not influence positively on financial management behavior.

H₂: Influence positive financial knowledge on financial management behavior of permanent civil servant Timor-Leste

3.3. Influence culture on financial management behavior of permanent civil servant Timor-Leste.

Culture a vital foundation of individual life, particularly through traditional beliefs and social obligations. Financial behavior is intricately tied to cultural values and enduring social obligations. Traditional practices serve as a crucial foundation, particularly through the "tradition of life," which pertains to events such as engagements and marriages and other events, and the "tradition of death," related to funerals, burials, and other events. These traditions often take precedence in the financial management of individuals. Financial support is expected during significant events like weddings, funerals, and other customary ceremonies, reflecting a strong sense of collective solidarity among Timorese people. This solidarity is reinforced by moral obligations to share resources, especially among those in stable employment, such as permanent civil servants. The recent research by Belo *et al.* (2023) reveals that cultural customs are associated with strong consumption behaviors, including expenditures related to traditions, marriage, and financial responsibilities following a death. Therefore, people continue to invest in cultural and family events alongside basic necessities (Robinson, Alex & Johnson, 2021). This underlines that culture influences positive on financial management behavior civil servant Timor-Leste.

Define culture as "those traditional beliefs and social obligations transmit fairly maintain in a community from generation to generation reflect in ceremonial practice that connect tradition of life and death" where important foundation in community life. Traditional beliefs reflect ceremonial practices that connect tradition of life and death, creating a bond between humans, nature, God, and ancestral spirits. These traditions encourage active participation the traditions of death and life, people are encouraged to engage and contribute as part of social responsibility. It is often, individuals tend to save more, manage, allocate, and use their financial resources to help each other in the community to achieve individual life and death traditions. With this financial support occurring reflects a strong sense of collective solidarity among the Timorese people. This solidarity is reinforced by the moral obligation to share resources, especially among those who have permanent

jobs, such as permanent civil servants. As a result, saving and investment behavior is often delayed, because financial resources are directed to meet socio-cultural demands. Social obligations reflect the role of individuals in strengthening solidarity and empowering others through cultural practices.

H₃: Influence positive culture on financial management behavior of permanent civil servants in Timor-Leste.

3.5. The research framework

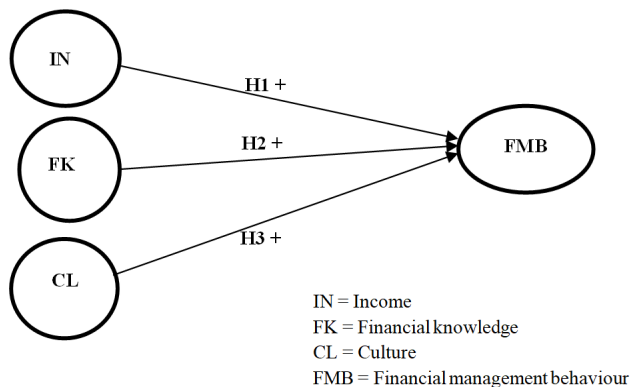


Figure 1: The research framework

4. Research Methods

This research applied a quantitative methods approach to investigate the influence income, financial knowledge, and culture on financial management behavior of permanent civil servants Timor-Leste. This study uses non-probability sampling, specifically accidental sampling, targeting respondents who are most readily available as representatives of the population (Pandey and Pandey, 2015). The total number of permanent civil servants in Timor-Leste was 33,694 people as a population in this survey. Determination of sample size using the slovin's formula (Tejada and Punzalan, 2012):

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + Nd^2} \quad \text{where: } n: \text{Quantity respondents, } N: \text{Population, } d: \text{Margin of error (5\%).}$$

$$n = \frac{33,694}{1 + 33,694 (0.05)^2} = 396 \text{ respondents}$$

The sample calculation used in this survey was 396 respondents, so that the number of respondents in the four districts was proportionally allocated; the districts of Baucau with 53 respondents, districts of Dili with 261 respondents, district of Ermera with 39 respondents and district of Bobonaro with 43 respondents.

Table 1. Proportionally allocated respondent

NO	District	Respondents (%)	Total Respondents
1	Dili	13,430/20,374 x 100 = 65,92%	65,92% x 396 = 261
2	Baucau	2,736/20,374 x 100 = 13,43%	13,43% x 396 = 53
3	Ermera	2,019/20,374 x 100 = 9,91%	9,91% x 396 = 39
4	Bobonaro	2,189/20,374 x 100 = 10,74%	10,74% x 396 = 43
TOTAL		100%	396

Timor-Leste is represented by four regions in this study: District Baucau represents east, District Ermera represents central, Bobonaro represents west, and Dili represents mixed, as these districts reflect the diversity of the national population. The method of data collection is to distribute questionnaires measured on a likert scale (1= Not more agreed, 2= Disagree, 3 =Neutral, 4 =Agree, 5 = properly agree) to all variable to obtain data at the preference level for each answer. The scales for income, knowledge and financial behavior were adopted from instruments that have been validated by previous studies or developed. But the culture variable was developed by the researcher according to the Timor-Leste context. Before conducting the pilot-testing for validity and reliability test with IBM SPSS Statistics 23 of the research instrument in District of Dili. Research instruments are questionnaires:

Table 2. Questionnaire for Assessing income

Code	Variable	Indicator
IN1	Income	The income I receive each month can meet my life needs
IN2		The income I receive per month is fixed amount
IN3		Income is now in accordance with my volume of work
IN4		I only save from my basic wage income, but I don't save income from other sources.
IN5		The total income I have received is the most I spend on the needs of the home
IN6		The income I earn can be spent on the needs of the children at school.
IN7		Income that I have obtained is not to be used for tradition of death and life
IN8		The income I get is not enough to use for family needs

Source (Arista, 2022),

Table 3. Questionnaire for assessing financial knowledge

No.	Variable	Indicator
FK1	Financial knowledge	I am well aware of basic financial terms such as budget plans, interest, dividends, savings and divisional management
FK2		I know how to manage money
FK3		I know about saving money
FK4		I know about investment
FK5		I know how to assess the risk of investment opportunities
FK6		I know how to assess the return on investment opportunities
FK7		I know the calculation of the simple rate
FK8		I know about credit or debt

Source; (Arista, 2022, Nusron, Lulu Amalia and Budiarto 2018, and Firli and Hidayati, 2021)

Table 4. Questionnaire for assessing culture

Culture dimension	Code	Indicators
A traditionalist belief is a ceremonial concept of traditions of death and tradition of life which promotes involvement and contributions in community, and behaviors and activities that link human creations with nature, God and spirit of the dead.	CL1	Faith in culture gives importance to my daily life
	CL2	I regularly participate in and contribute money and goods to help build a traditional house.
	CL3	I feel that the construction and renovation of the holy house and the inauguration event require donations of money and goods.
	CL4	I regularly participated and contributed to <i>barlake</i> ceremony
	CL5	I regularly participate and contribute money and goods to the ceremony of the funerals
	CL6	I regularly participated and contributed money and things to make a grave, and a hand washing ceremony.
	CL7	I regularly participate and contribute money and goods to the sacred ceremony.
	CL8	I often participate and contribute money and goods for the new corn and new rice ceremonies.
	CL9	I regularly participate and contribute money and goods to the day of de-

Social obligation is a behavior that refers to individuals taking part in and empowering others in society through traditions of death and tradition of life.		ceased
	CL10	I regularly participate and contribute money and goods to the marriage ceremony in my community.
	CL11	I regularly participate and contribute to the ceremony of the funerals in my community
	CL12	I regularly participate and contribute money and goods to the ceremony of the celebration of the year of life in my community.
	CL13	I don't participate and regularly contribute money and goods to the eye washing ceremony in my community.
	CL14	I regularly participate and contribute money and goods to the ceremony pre-wedding in my community.
	CL15	I regularly participate and contribute money and goods to the <i>serimonia despedida</i> in my community.

Table 5. Questionnaire for assessing financial management behavior

Code	Variable	Indicator
FMB1	Financial management behavior	I always compare the price of goods when to buy them
FMB2		I pay my debt at the time
FMB3		I spend the money in accordance with the budget plan that I have made
FMB4		I have started to think about investing
FMB5		I put some money for saving
FMB6		I put money on unexpected spending
FMB7		I put the budget on the most important needs

Source; (Arista, 2022, Nusron, Lulu Amalia and Budiarto 2018, and Firli and Hidayati, 2021)

The method of data analysis in this research was to use linear regression analysis techniques using the SMART-Partial Least Square (Edeh, Lo and Khojasteh, 2023). An accidental sampling technique was employed to distribute questionnaires to permanent civil servants who voluntarily agreed to participate as respondents. Each participant was asked to complete a

questionnaire assessing the influence of income, financial knowledge, and cultural factors on financial management behavior. A total of 396 questionnaires were distributed, specifically permanent civil servants employed in government institutions.

SMART-PLS 4.0 was used to evaluate reliability and validity, as well as to test the proposed hypotheses. Reliability was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha (CA) and Composite Reliability (CR). Convergent validity was evaluated by examining indicator loadings (outer loadings) and Average Variance Extracted (AVE). Hypothesis testing involved analyzing path coefficients, including T-values and P-values, based on the results of a bootstrapping procedure to determine direct effects (Edeh, Lo and Khojasteh, 2023).

5. Result

5.1. Characteristic of Respondents

A total of 396 questionnaires were distributed, specifically permanent civil servants employed in government institutions in Timor-Leste. The descriptive analysis of research respondents was based on data collected from 396 permanent civil servants through questionnaire distribution. The sample comprised 261 respondents from the Dili District, 53 from the Baucau District, 39 from Ermera District, and 43 from Maliana District. The data are presented in tabular form to facilitate ease of interpretation and understanding.

This descriptive analysis offers insights into the demographic characteristics of the respondents. The results of the analysis are presented: The study's respondents were primarily male, with a total of 202 individuals, representing 51% of the overall sample. In terms of marital status, the vast majority 339 respondents, or 86% were married, while only 57 respondents, accounting for 14%, were unmarried. Most respondents were within the age range of 34 to 41 years, totaling 124 respondents, which constitute 32% of the sample. Regarding education, a significant portion of respondents were undergraduates, comprising 242 respondents, or 61%. The findings highlight the civil state that respondents have in providing valuable information about good financial management behavior (Table 6).

5.2. Validity and Reliability

The validity and reliability analysis in this study demonstrates that the research meets the required reliability standards, as indicated by Composite Reliability and Cronbach's Alpha values exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.70 (Hair *et al.*, 2017). The Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values for each construct surpass this benchmark, confirming the acceptability of the instrument's reliability. Furthermore, the Composite Reliability values exceed the corresponding Cronbach's Alpha values, reinforcing that all constructs fulfill the reliability requirements for using Smart PLS (Edeh, Lo and Khojasteh, 2023).

Table 6. Characteristics of the respondents

Characteristics	Quantity	(%)
Gender		
Male	202	51%
Female	194	49%
TOTAL	396	100%
Marital status		
Married	339	86%
Single	57	14%
TOTAL	396	100%
Age	Frequency	(%)
18 - 25	32	8%
26 - 33	82	21%
34 - 41	124	32%
42 - 49	84	21%
50 - 57	47	12%
58 - 65	19	5%
66 - 73	5	1%
TOTAL	396	100%
Education	Quantity	(%)
Master	8	2%
Bachelor	242	61%
Diploma	49	13%
Secondary	97	24%
TOTAL	396	100%

In terms of validity, the study demonstrates strong convergent validity, as all indicators for both exogenous and endogenous variables exhibit loading values above 0.70, confirming their high validity (Hair *et al.*, 2017). Convergent validity is crucial to ensure that the indicators accurately represent the underlying constructs. The results affirm that the constructs are valid and appropriately measured, thereby supporting the robustness of the research model. Following the removal of invalid indicators, a reanalysis was conducted using Smart PLS 4.0 to achieve improved data outcomes. The outer model was subsequently re-estimated without the excluded indicators, marking the second iteration of the outer model after the elimination of invalid items. The diagram below illustrates the iterative process of the PLS algorithm.

Based on figures 2, the initial step in evaluating the model involves assessing convergent validity by examining the factor loadings of each indicator. Indicators with loading values below 0.60 are excluded from further analysis. For example, several indicators related to income, culture, and financial management behavior were removed due to insufficient loading values. Specifically, within the income construct, indicators IN4, IN5, IN6, IN7, and IN8 fell below the 0.60 threshold. Likewise, in the cultural construct, indicators C10 through C15 did not meet the required standard. Additionally, indicators FMB1 and FMB2, associated with financial management behavior, were also excluded due to low factor loadings.

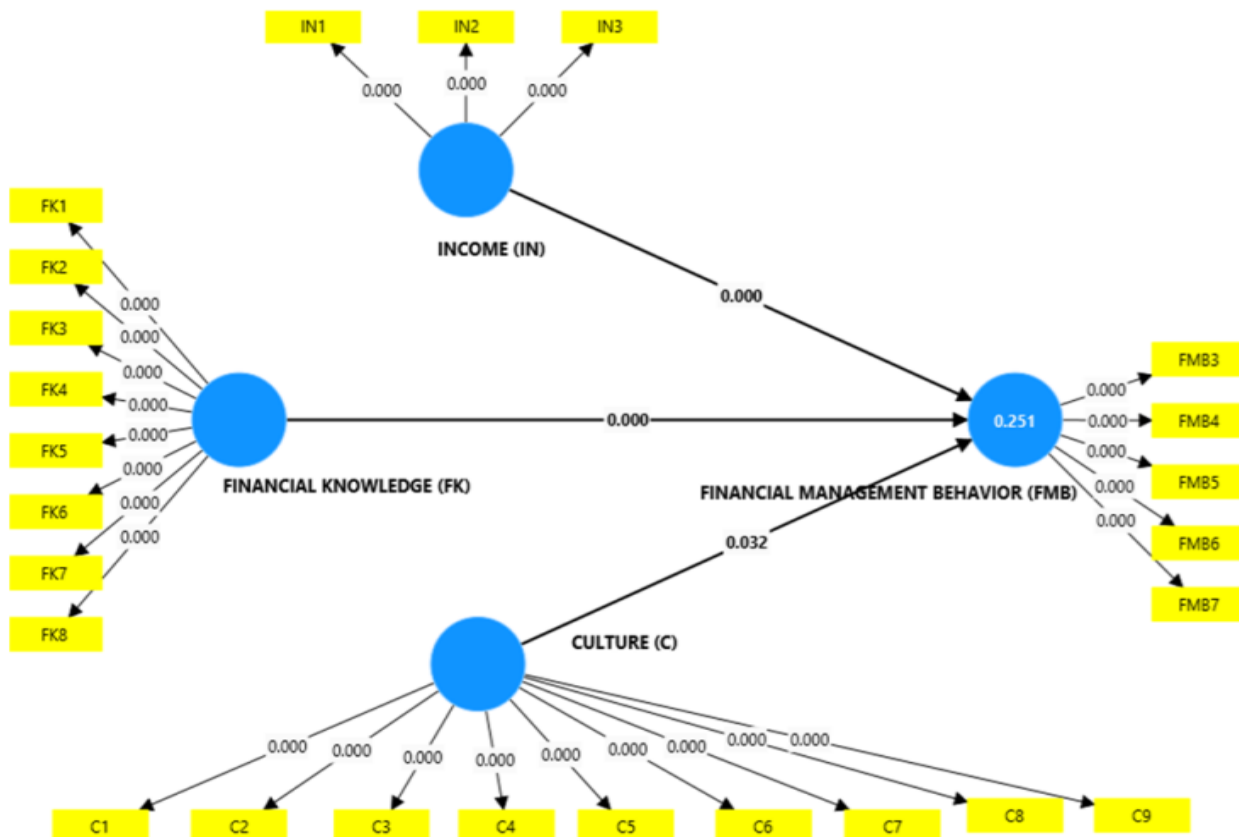


Figure 2. Outer loading for convergent validity derived from Algorithm SMART-PLS 4.0

The re-estimation results shown in Figure 2 indicate that all factor loadings exceed 0.60, confirming their validity. As a result, the estimated instruments can be effectively used to manage the research data, demonstrating that the criteria for the conversion validity test have been satisfied.

Table 7. Value Cross Loading (Iterasi Algorithm PLS)

	CL	FK	FMB	IN
C1	0.660			
C2	0.797			
C3	0.666			
C4	0.652			
C5	0.798			
C6	0.792			
C7	0.737			
C8	0.709			
C9	0.737			
FK1		0.604		
FK2		0.752		
FK3		0.753		
FK4		0.783		
FK5		0.745		
FK6		0.734		
FK7		0.756		
FK8		0.684		

FMB3	0.740
FMB4	0.717
FMB5	0.824
FMB6	0.723
FMB7	0.731
IN1	0.805
IN2	0.853
IN3	0.830

As shown in Table 3, all indicators are considered valid, with factor loadings exceeding the minimum threshold of 0.60. The highest loading is observed for indicator IN2, with a value of 0.853, while the lowest is FK1, with a value of 0.604. These results confirm that all questionnaire indicators meet the required validity criteria.

Table 8. Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

Average Variance Extracted (AVE)	
Income (IN)	0.688
Financial knowledge (FK)	0.530
Culture (CL)	0.532
Financial management behavior (FMB)	0.559

Table 4 indicates that all constructs within the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value exceed 0.50. The lowest AVE value for financial knowledge is 0.532. Therefore, the constructs related to income, financial knowledge, culture, and financial management behavior are considered valid.

The final test results indicate that the composite reliability for all constructs exceeds the threshold of 0.70, with the lowest value recorded at 0.776. This confirms that all constructs function effectively as measurement instruments. Similarly, Cronbach's Alpha values for all constructs also surpass 0.70, with the income variable having the lowest value at 0.773. These findings demonstrate that the reliability of all constructs is satisfactory. Overall, the results confirm that all variables meet the established criteria for reliability testing.

Table 9. Reliability test

Variables	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability
Income (IN)	0.773	0.776
Financial knowledge (FK)	0.873	0.880
Culture	0.890	0.892
Financial management behavior (FMB)	0.803	0.809

5.4. R-Values for Inner Model Testing

The inner model analysis is conducted to examine the relationships among variables. In this study, the parameter utilized is the R-squared (R^2) value. R-squared serves as an indicator of the strength of the influence between the variables and is also instrumental in assessing the predictive capability of the model. The R-squared values are categorized as follows: values above 0.75 indicate a strong influence, values between 0.50 and 0.75 suggest a moderate influence, and values below 0.25 reflect a weak influence, as noted by Hair *et al.* (2017).

Table 10. Result value R-Square: Smart-PLS 4.0

Variable	R Square	R-square adjusted
Financial management behavior	0,256	0,251

According to the adjusted R-squared test in table 10, the dependent variable in this study financial management behavior was influenced by income, financial knowledge, and culture. These factors accounted for 25.1% of the overall variations, leaving 74.9% attributed to other variables. This indicates a weak influence. This indicates that income, financial knowledge, and culture have a weak and significant effect on financial management behavior permanent civil servant Timor-Leste.

5.5. Hypothesis Test

This study tests hypotheses using SMART-PLS 4.0 to assess the direct influences between variables. The purpose of the influence analysis is useful for testing the hypothesis of the influence between the exogenous variable on the endogenous variable seen from the value of T-Statics > 1.96 (with 5%), the original sample value, and the probability value (P-value): if the value of P-Value < 0.05 is significant, if the value of P-value > 0.05, is not significant (Edeh, Lo and Khojasteh, 2023).

Table 11. T and P Values for Hypothesis Test (Direct Effect)

	STDEV	t-Statistics	P-Values	Descriptions
C -> FMB	0.049	2.149	0.032	Positive & significant
FK -> FMB	0.042	9.576	0.000	Positive & significant
IN -> FMB	0.044	3.864	0.000	Positive & significant

As shown in the table above, the three independent variables in this study exert a significant influence on the dependent variable, as indicated by a p-value < 0.05 and t-statistics > 1.96. A positive effect of the independent variables is also observed, given that the value of the original sample is positive. The conclusions regarding the magnitude and direction of these effects are directly presented:

- The influence income variable (X1) on financial management behavior (Y) is indicated by a t-statistic of 3.864, which is greater than 1.96. This suggests that an increase in income is associated with an increase in financial management behavior. Furthermore, the p-value is 0.000, which is less than 0.05, confirming that the influence income on financial management behavior of permanent civil servants Timor-Leste is positive. Hypothesis X1 has been accepted.
- The influence financial knowledge variable (X2) on financial management behavior (Y) is positive. The t-statistic for this relationship is 9.576, which is greater than 1.96, indicating a positive. This means that as the financial knowledge increases, financial management behavior also improves. Additionally, the p-value is 0.000, which is less than 0.05, confirming that the influence financial knowledge on financial management behavior of permanent civil servants Timor-Leste is positive. Hypothesis X2 has been accepted.
- The influence culture variable (X3) on financial management behavior (Y) is demonstrated by a t-statistic of 2.149, which is positive and exceeds the critical value of 1.96. This suggests that an increase in the culture variable is associated with an improvement in financial management behavior of permanent civil servants Timor-Leste. Furthermore, the relationship between the culture variable and financial management behavior is reinforced by a p-

value of 0.032, which is below the threshold of 0.05.

Therefore, influence culture on financial management behavior is positive. Hypothesis X3 has been accepted.

Based on these findings, conclude that all variables income, financial knowledge and culture, influence positive on financial management behavior of permanent civil servants Timor-Leste.

6. Discussion

The results support the first hypothesis (H1), which asserts that income has a positive influence on financial management behavior of permanent civil servants Timor-Leste. This conclusion is substantiated by the p-value of 0.02 for the income variable, which is below the 0.05 significance threshold. Permanent civil servants are receiving a fixed monthly income determined by the nature and volume of their work, which can positively influence the financial management behavior of Timorese civil servants. For them, income is an important component to cover essential expenses such as daily living expenses, family support, social obligations, and participation in cultural traditions of life and death. In addition, they even have the capacity to allocate financial resources wisely in various areas such as saving, investing, and general financial planning. This study is supported by Nisa and Haryono (2022), it was found that income has a significant influence on financial management behavior. Where a stable income allows them to manage their finances more effectively, including budgeting, saving, and controlling expenses. As a result, salary plays a central role in shaping financial management behavior (Andriyani and Cipta, 2022; Budiono, 2020 and Perry and Morris, 2005).

The findings are consistent with the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), which provides a theoretical foundation for understanding the influence of personal income on individual behavior. The TPB, behavior is guided by intentions shaped by individual goals and social factors, including the nature of income received. A positive attitude toward financial management stems from recognizing the importance of managing a fixed income responsibly through saving, investing, and minimizing debt. Such attitudes cultivate financial discipline and accountability, enabling individuals to make prudent financial decisions. This capacity is often strengthened by income stability. Consequently, permanent civil servants are better positioned to formulate concrete financial plans.

The second hypothesis of the study posits that financial knowledge has a positive influence on financial management behavior. This is supported by a p-value of 0.000, which is below the 0.05 significance threshold. The findings suggest that, particularly among Timor-Leste's permanent civil servants, financial literacy plays a significant role in promoting good financial management practices. Financial literacy serves as a strong foundation for understanding basic financial concepts such as credit management, interest, savings, and financial planning. As a result, permanent civil servants are better equipped to manage their finances effectively through budgeting, tracking expenses, and controlling cash flows. Those with

a strong understanding of financial concepts tend to prioritize long-term financial well-being. This suggests that civil servants with higher financial literacy are more likely to engage in prudent financial decision-making and demonstrate responsible financial behavior. Ultimately, higher levels of financial literacy lead to financial management behaviors. This perspective is further reinforced by the findings of Perry and Morris (2005), Nisa and Haryono (2022), and Jennifer and Widoatmodjo (2023) which indicate that financial knowledge has a positive influence on financial management behaviors. The findings are consistent with the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), which provides a theoretical foundation for variables related to financial knowledge. According to TPB, an individual's behavior is driven by intention or purpose, which is shaped by informational factors such as experience, media exposure, and knowledge. Therefore, the more financial information a person possesses, the more positively and effectively they are likely to behave in managing their daily financial allocations.

The results indicate that the third hypothesis (H3) is that influence positive culture on financial management behavior. This conclusion is supported by the p-value for the cultural variable, which is 0.045, demonstrating that it is less than 0.05. Influence culture on the financial behavior of permanent civil servants in Timor-Leste, including in their views on financial conditions. In this context, financial management behavior is influenced by culture with the traditional beliefs and strong social obligations in society. Permanent civil servants, for example, often feel obliged to contribute in the form of money or goods to support various customary events such as engagements, weddings, funerals, and other ceremonies. This cultural system is organized into two large groups, namely life traditions and death traditions, both of which have important values in maintaining social balance which are considered part of social responsibility that cannot be ignored.

Research shows that permanent civil servants use money and goods for the system of life traditions and death traditions that exist in society. Such as building and re-building a sacred house that takes into account the obligations that need to be accompanied by financial priorities, engagement, marriage, funerals, and other ceremonies. This tradition has been passed down from generation to generation, with the groom's family taking responsibility for organizing all basic needs. This behavior is directed at collective obligations. This culture is a value system that unites society through respect for ancestral heritage and collective practices. The root of this culture is traditionalism, which is a guideline in establishing relationships between humans, nature, and God, and maintaining order in the family and community. This belief also strengthens cross-generational bonds and social identities within the extended family. Thus, culture push individuals tend to save more, manage, allocate, and use their financial resources to help each other in the community to achieve individual life and death traditions. With this financial support occurring reflects a strong sense of collective solidarity among the Timorese people. This solidarity is reinforced by the moral obligation to share resources, especially among those who have permanent jobs, such as permanent civil servants. And also demonstrate typical financial management behaviors in society.

According to Koentjaraningrat (2015) in Syakhrani & Kamil, (2022), the rules and norms of each group shape daily life. Families, particularly nuclear and extended families are among the closest and most important social units. This illustrates how culture teaches us about the influence of social groups on society. Each community, from families to larger groups, follows rules that promote social unity. Culture can be defined in three forms: artifacts (artifact systems), actions (activity systems), and ideas (ideal systems). When we refer to culture as an activity system, we focus on the actions people engage in throughout their social lives. Repeated actions and social interactions give rise to this system. This aspect of culture is visible, recordable, and concrete. For example, a communal marriage ceremony illustrates how culture shapes behavior. People act according to shared beliefs and traditions during such ceremonies. These events reflect culture because they involve ongoing actions that others can observe and participate in, such as weddings and other social gatherings that emphasize community involvement.

The research findings align with the definitions of individualism and collectivism. Individualism is characterized as a situation where people primarily care for themselves and their immediate families. In contrast, collectivism refers to a context where individuals view themselves as part of a larger group. This distinction highlights the dependence of individuals on their social groups, as noted by Hofstede & Bond, (1984). In Timor-Leste, this reality indicates that civil servants tend to be more collectivist, where financial management behavior is significantly influenced by the interests of the group or family. In such contexts, financial decisions are made jointly, considering how they can support family members, contribute to social activities, or fulfill customary obligations, such as those related to tradition of death and life events. This reflects how individuals prioritize, plan, and utilize their financial resources based on their cultural values by their cultural orientation.

Culture is an important thing, especially in the context of traditional beliefs and social obligations. Traditional beliefs in Timor-Leste are reflected through ceremonial traditions of life and death and connect humans with nature, God, and ancestral spirits. These traditions encourage active involvement and contribution in the community, making it an important part of collective life. On the other hand, social obligations describe the role of individuals in strengthening and empowering others through these cultural practices. Thus, the culture in Timor-Leste is very strong because it combines traditional beliefs with social responsibilities in society. These values influence how individuals manage and make decisions about finances. Thus, culture is an important factor that influences financial management behavior. This research, supported by Belo et al., (2023) explains that traditional beliefs and customs through birth and death ceremonies have formed individual behavior in everyday life, as permanent civil servants prioritize regular wages, planning for investments, and prioritizing emergency needs for tradition of life and death. Because culture is defined as everything related to thoughts, customs, and habits that are difficult to change (Syakhrani & Kamil, 2022).

7. Conclusion

Research conducted on permanent civil servants indicates that income, financial knowledge, and culture significantly and positively influence on financial management behaviors of these employees. The findings, discussions, and data analysis suggest that all hypotheses have been supported:

- a) The results indicate income positively influences financial management behavior. Most permanent civil servants have fixed monthly incomes based on the volume of work they perform. For permanent civil servants, income is a vital aspect of their lives, as it constitutes the majority of their monthly earnings. This income is typically adequate to cover essential expenses, including daily living costs, family support, social obligations, and participation in cultural activities. In practical terms, their earnings are meant to sustain regular personal endeavors. This financial stability enables employees to better manage their budgets, save money, and control their spending. Consequently, salary emerges as one of the primary factors influencing the financial management behavior of permanent public servants in Timor-Leste. It equips them with the skills to utilize their funds wisely across various financial activities, including saving, investing, and overall financial management. Thus, it demonstrates that an increase in individual income positively affects financial management behavior.
- b) Financial management behavior is positively influenced by financial knowledge. This implies that, especially for Timor-Leste's permanent public servant, financial knowledge is important for encouraging sound financial management behavior, serves as an adequate basis for understanding basic financial concepts such as credit management, interest, savings, and financial planning. As a result, the majority understand how to properly manage finances, including how to budget, maintaining records of expenditures, and managing cash flow for employees. In addition, this knowledge acts as a foundation for more thoughtful and well-thought-out financial decisions. Nearly 86% of permanent public servants have demographic traits that also have an impact on this degree of awareness and are used indirectly to affect financial management behavior. Higher financial knowledge leads to improved financial management behavior.
- c) Culture has positive influence on financial behavior of permanent civil servants in Timor-Leste. This context; financial management behavior is influenced by traditional beliefs and strong social obligations in society. Traditional beliefs are reflected in ceremonial practices that link life and death traditions. Permanent civil servants, often feel obliged to contribute in the form of money or goods to support various customary events such as engagements, weddings, funerals, and other ceremonies for the system of life traditions and death traditions that exist in society. Such as building and rebuilding a sacred house, engagement, marriage, funerals, and other ceremonies. This tradition has been main-

tained and passed down from generation to generation. This behavior is directed at collective and individual obligations. It is often, individuals tend to save more, manage, allocate, and use their financial resources to help each other in the community to achieve tradition life and death. Study by (Belo, Freitas, *et al.*, 2023) reveal that permanent civil servants continue to consider their regular salaries to be more valuable than income from alternative sources and meticulously plan their monthly budgets, viewing their salaries as an investment. Additionally, they consistently allocate funds for emergency situations, such as traditions related to life and death (*lia moris and lia mate*).

8. Implication

8.1. Theoretical implications

This research has enhanced our understanding of the implications of financial management behavior as related to planned behavior theory, Hofstede's cultural dimensions, and Koentjaraningrat's cultural theory:

- a) Research findings show the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), which serves as a theoretical framework for understanding personal income variables. According to the TPB, an individual's behavior is influenced by their intentions and goals, which are shaped by social factors, including the type of income they receive. Positive attitudes towards financial management arise from recognizing the importance of responsibly managing fixed wages, such as through savings and investments. This ability is often enhanced by having a stable income. As a result, permanent civil servants are able to create concrete plans and take action in their financial planning and management.
- b) Research finding show that planned behavior theory (TPB), which serves as a theoretical basis for variables related to financial knowledge. A person behaves because he is affected by an intention or purpose, which is created by the existence of information variables such as experience, media exposure, and knowledge, according to the TPB. Therefore, a person's behavior in daily financial allocation will be more positive and have a stronger effect on financial management the more financial information they possess.
- c) Research find that theory of Koentjaraningrat (2015) in Syakhrani & Kamil, (2022), the rules and norms of each group shape daily life. Families, particularly nuclear and extended families are among the closest and most important social units. This illustrates how culture teaches us about the influence of social groups on society. Each community, from families to larger groups, follows rules that promote social unity. Culture can be defined in three forms: artifacts (artifact systems), actions (activity systems), and ideas (ideal systems). When we refer to culture as an activity system, we focus on the actions people engage in throughout their social lives. Repeated actions and social interactions give rise to this system. This aspect of culture is visible, recordable, and concrete. For

example, a communal marriage ceremony illustrates how culture shapes behavior. People act according to shared beliefs and traditions during such ceremonies. These events reflect culture because they involve ongoing actions that others can observe and participate in, such as weddings and other social gatherings that emphasize community involvement.

- d) Culture has positive influence on financial behavior of permanent civil servants in Timor-Leste. This context; financial management behavior is influenced by traditional beliefs and strong social obligations in society. Traditional beliefs are reflected in ceremonial practices that link tradition of life and death that exist in society. It is often, individuals tend to save more, manage, allocate, and use their financial resources to help each other in the community to achieve tradition of life and death.
- e) The research findings show the definitions of individualism and collectivism. Individualism is characterized as a situation where people primarily care for themselves and their immediate families. This distinction highlights the dependence of individuals on their social groups, as noted by Hofstede & Bond, (1984). In cultures that emphasize individualism, financial management behaviors tend to focus on personal interests. This often entails making independent financial decisions based on individual needs, such as personal investments, savings, and other expenditures. However, in cultures that prioritize collectivism, financial management behavior is significantly influenced by the interests of the group or family. In such contexts, financial decisions are made jointly, considering how they can support family members, contribute to social activities, or fulfill customary obligations, such as those related to tradition of death and life.

8.2. Practical implications

From a practical perspective, the financial management behaviors of permanent civil servants are influenced by their income, financial knowledge, and culture. The practical implications of this research include the following:

- a) The ability of permanent civil servants to effectively meet needs, prepare budgets, and plan for savings or investments is influenced by their fixed monthly income. When this income is consistent throughout the month, financial management is typically conducted in a more organized way, especially when supported by sufficient financial knowledge.
- b) The ability of permanent civil servants to make financial decisions must be rational, such as managing good budgets, avoiding debt, and choosing appropriate investment instruments and understanding basic financial concepts, largely determined by the financial knowledge they have. Long-term-oriented financial management behavior is influenced by financial knowledge.
- c) Meanwhile, regarding life and death traditions, this context frequently pertains to expenditure allocation. In this context, financial management behavior mirrors the collective values individuals uphold in their daily lives. Consequently, it is crucial to examine the impact of culture on

financial management, considering not only pertinent academic research but also providing practical implications to improve financial literacy and enhance the welfare of permanent civil servants Timor-Leste.

9. Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations can be made the following are 1). The National Parliament should initiate discussions and enact legislation to regulate cultural ceremonies, particularly those connected to life and death traditions, to mitigate their adverse effects on families and communities. This effort should be guided by a draft prepared by the Government, incorporating public consultations. Furthermore, it may involve parliamentary hearings featuring experts, community leaders, and other pertinent stakeholders. 2). To the Government: The Ministry of Justice should draft legislation to set limits on the maximum value of goods and money exchanged in life and death traditions. This legislation should be developed on the basis of public consultations held within communities across the country, aimed at identifying the benefits and drawbacks of these cultural practices. 3). Community Leaders: Leaders in each community should document traditional laws to safeguard cultural heritage and traditions, while also using this process to promote community-level dialogue and consensus on regulating life and death traditions, as well as other expenses associated with cultural ceremonies.

10. Limitation and Future Research

For further researchers, it is recommended that research be conducted on other subjects and variables that also have the potential to influence financial management behavior of permanent civil servant Timor-Leste.

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