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**THE RISING OF RETAIL PRICES DURING  
MOVEMENT CONTROL ORDER**

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**ABSTRACT**

*Food is one of life essentials for human and it must have in human life for they to survive. When it comes to life essentials, it is important for human to find ways for those essential keep provided to them. Food becomes energy for human to do chores or working to keep living and surviving the world. However, it is different when the place itself has been infected or having a crisis such as pandemic or war, food becomes number one for them to find. Therefore, there is no such reason for people to abuse the prices of retail of food. The rapid rise in food prices has been a burden on the poor, and more intense when the country is having a big crisis. Reason for retailer to rise their price on retail is burdensome and unnecessary for them to apply. It is because the crisis not only affected on them but other people too who is the buyers. Moreover, when the crisis happened, some of them lose their job and surviving the crisis together as with the retailer. Become survival when they lost their job and have to go through the peak of retail prices just for food. The researchers used qualitative method where is the researchers interview 8 respondents that had experienced the situation itself. The researchers gather the information and socialize with the public to hear their opinion. Being fair and no bias towards any parties, the researchers find out government plays the main role on preventing and investigating the cases due the outbreak of COVID-19. People are confused and concern yet the cases still increasing by time to time and question mark arise when no act have been taken on certain places. Consumers' voice plays major role on keeping government alert regarding the situation and providing solution to solve the issue.*

Keywords: movement control order, commodity prices. Consumer's voice

**1.0 INTRODUCTION**

For the first time in Malaysia's history, Malaysia Prime Minister, YAB Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin, has officially implemented the Movement Control Order (MCO) that has started on 18th of March 2020. The Movement Control Order (MCO) has implemented as a precautionary measure involving the whole world including Malaysia. According to Yassin (2020), Movement Control Order (MCO) also is an initiative of the Malaysian federal government due to the COVID-19 outbreak that has claimed many lives in world. According to Ismail (2020), Restricted Movement Order required the public to not be accompanied with other people during travel, a 10 km travel radius for all travelers and stay at home except for the important and

essential services only.

The Royal Malaysia Police (PDRM) initially warned that all the violators of the MCO's regulation may be subjected to the penalties under the various of Penal Code. During Movement Control Order (MCO), there are still many people who refused to follow and violate the PDRM's instructions.

However, according to Abdullah (2020), the statistic of the new cases increasing day by day. Currently, MCO continues for the 4th phase and it becomes worse when during the pandemic Covid-19, there are some irresponsible retailers selling their groceries at a higher price than usual. They also take advantage on consumers' problems and financial constraints during the compilation of the MCO. Unfortunately, according to Azura (2020), there are several allegations that Indian onions are selling at double a price and more than regular prices in the markets and shops. Furthermore, the prices of fruits and vegetables are also affected. It is even more frustrating when the irresponsible sellers raise prices of daily necessary things during a stressful period and directly giving impact to many consumers that have lost their source of income and have unstable jobs.

The impact greater for the B40 group who are the people mostly running a small business and they need to stop their source of income in order to follow the rules and regulations of MCO and directly cutting the chain of pandemic Covid-19 (Muzzamil, 2020).

## **2.0 PROBLEM STATEMENT**

There have been numerous allegations of rising daily commodity prices at retail outlets throughout the Movement Control Order (MCO) in Malaysia. According to Wahid (2020), several officers have been ordered to investigate the alleged incident and the report said most cases involved foreign-run grocery stores who impose excessive prices on villagers. The cases and complaints have been received nationwide not just in the certain states only. In Kelantan, according to Zahari (2020), KPDNHEP has received a report regarding the rising retail prices involved Pakistanis who run the grocery store by themselves and they were disobedient the responsibility to follow the price guidelines stated by KPDNHEP. They were selling 1kg Chili for RM10.00 instead of RM8.00 as stated in the KPDNHEP price guidelines.

However, there are some actions that will be taken to them. In addition, there were 1,599 complaints regarding food supply and prices for food and beverage products while the other 862 complaints are about face masks. He also stated that 216 cases of misconduct were recorded throughout the MCO which 162 cases reported under the Price Control and Anti-Profit Act 2011 and the other 29 cases under the Supply Control Act 1961. Other than that, 168 compounds were issued worth RM136,950 and a seizure of RM850,031 since the first day of MCO.

According to Mokhtar, (2020), a retailer was fined RM2,500 for allegedly selling liquid petroleum gas (LPG) or cooking gas beyond the retail price in Petaling Jaya. She also stated that the dealer was fined RM2,500 for committing an offense under the Supply Control Act 1961. KPNDHEP discovered the irresponsible retailer when KPNDHEP runs some investigation at several business premises around Bandar Seri Putra, Kajang. However, only one retailer that selling cooking gas (LPG) beyond the prescribed price by KPNDHEP in that area. Other than that, according to Mamat (2020), KPNDHEP Melaka reported that two cases under the Price Control and Anti-Profitteering Act 2011, after a seller was found selling daily necessities at unreasonable price. These two cases were detected during the duration of the Movement Control Order (MCO) through inspection activities since 18th of March 2020. Lastly, only the price of face mask and eggs are still under control.

### **3.0 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

- a) What are the factors of seller increasing daily commodity prices during the period of Movement Control Order (MCO)?
- b) What is the level of consumer's right awareness during the retail price crisis?
- c) Which strategy that help the most in preventing the crisis and oppression of consumer?

### **4.0 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

- a) To study what are the factors of seller increasing daily commodity prices during the period of Movement Control Order (MCO)?
- b) To identify the level of consumer's right awareness during the retail price crisis.
- c) To determine a good strategy to prevent the crisis and the oppression of consumer.

## **5.0 LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **5.1 The factors of seller increasing daily commodity prices during the period of Movement Control Order (MCO)**

#### **5.1.1 Wholesaler put high price to retailer**

During pandemic struck, government could help but have to act for preventing the chain keeps increasing. Therefore, the order which is movement control order has to be applied to all folks in the country. All outdoor activities need to be stop including all premise. However, when the standard operation procedure has been announced to premises' owner, it is not their right for increasing the price as for recover their profit. Some of them claimed that the wholesaler put the price on high price for them.

The retailer indicted that prices for fish are bought from expensive wholesaler. They continue stated that the increase in prices at the wholesale level led them to claim that they had to sell fish for between RM1 and RM2 higher than the regular price per kilogram (Bahaudin, 2020).

#### **5.1.2 Demand contracted during MCO**

Since the MCO has been announced, less people tend to come out or buy stuffs like usual. Folks obey with the order and just stay at home like the order said, makes demand on stuff engaged. Therefore, when the government allow the retailer to open their premises back, they cannot help but rise the price.

According to Berita Harian (2020), the increase in chicken prices after the implementation of the Seasonal Maximum Price Scheme (SHMMP) was affected by the limited supply factor after the contraction of demand and the impact of the Movement Control Order (MCO) for more than two months.

Minister of Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs, Datuk Alexander Nanta Linggi, said the contractionary demand following business premises, restaurants, hotels and entertainment councils could not operate during the MCO implementation period (Bekalan terhadap permintaan menguncup ketika PKP punca harga ayam naik, 2020). He continued however, he said the issue was a temporary supply cycle phenomenon, and the supply is expected to recover soon.

However, some retailers claimed that they raise the prices because of high demand from customer. According to Harian Metro (2020) the price of chicken allegedly increased sharply over the past week has been attributed to increased demand after business activities reopened following the implementation of the MCO 4<sup>th</sup> Phase. Moreover, Ministry of Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs (KPDNHEP) enforcement director Datuk Iskandar Halim Sulaiman said that when the Movement Control (MCO) was implemented, many raw chickens were immoral.

"When the MCO 4<sup>th</sup> Phase starts, restaurants, shops and hotels were opened and business activity took place, chicken demand began to rise. "So, chicken prices are back to normal and all levels of the supply chain are starting to benefit from farmers, suppliers, wholesalers and retailers," he said (Amri, 2020).

### **5.1.3 Consumers buy too much**

Undeniable during MCO, people tend to buy more than they need for their essentials and shopping without concern to other. Therefore, it would make the stuffs grow lessen and limited. It would make retailer tend to get more profit by increasing the prices.

According to Raiham Sanusi (2020), the price of some goods, especially raw materials in the country, is likely to rise as a result of consumer actions that have bought the daily essentials since the Movement Control Order (MCO) came into force.

President of the Malaysian Consumer Movement Association, Darshan Singh, said consumers' attitudes toward excessive purchases of goods would disrupt the supply chain (SANUSI, 2020). Singh continued said that the price hike was also affected by the supply of imports including onions, which had surged as India stopped the export of raw materials to the country.

His statement has been supported by Penang Consumer Association where the president, Mohideen Abdul Kader, said there were allegations that Indian onions were priced at RM6.50 a kg or 53.85 per cent above normal prices in the wet market and grocery stores in the state while other vegetable prices were also affected (Zulkifli, 2020).

## **5.2 The level of consumer's right awareness during the retail price crisis**

### **5.2.1 Less complaints received by KPDNHEP**

As it is known that the price of groceries increases as the MCO implemented. There are some small traders who are not responsible for raising their prices at an unreasonable price. The KPDNHEP has conducted several surveys and raids on several retail outlets and found that some of them increased prices of goods. However, the KPDNHEP does not deny that they have received less complaints about the price of goods despite the cases increasing following raids and surveys. According to Yaakob (2020), the KPDNHEP also strongly encourages consumers to complain about price of goods around their residence.

Undeniable, consumers in Malaysia are still less aware of consumer rights in overcoming the price crisis in Malaysia. The KPDNHEP will also conduct surveys and raids if complaints are received. Then, if consumers do not take seriously the price of goods at the grocery store, then it will benefit the business itself.

### **5.2.2 Incomplete complaints**

Although there are some responsible consumers take the price of goods seriously and continue to complain about the price of the goods. However, most of complaints received by KPDNHEP are incomplete. When the KPDNHEP receives an incomplete complaint, it will directly cause problems to the authorities to perform the task. In addition, consumers must also make complaints based on the strong and complete evidence such as product name, sales price, store name and store address.

Based on Wahid (2020), consumers need to provide complete information when making a complaint to facilitate the investigation process to avoid public dissatisfaction with the ministry when action is not possible due to the lack of accurate information. He added that people should provide accurate reports on the types of goods, premises, and places where the offense occurred to facilitate investigation. The action taken also must not just on the basis of what people say.

Thus, if the information is accurate and valid, KPDNHEP will not compromise and firm action will be taken against the traders especially during at this time when most of the people are in trouble.

### **5.2.3 Retailer protest**

The government's efforts to curb the prices of goods have risen sharply through the price's schemes. The government also have received the support of many, especially daily consumers. However, there have also been some groups who objected and disagreed with the government's plans to curb the rising prices of groceries. The price scheme of the goods is not only to control the prices of groceries but also to eradicate unscrupulous traders during MCO.

According to Ng (2020), it is undeniably to set the prices for perishable foods due to many factors affecting production costs and due to poor pricing. The authorities risk setting prices too high for consumers or too low for manufacturers.

The group that disagreed with the government's precautionary measures was the chicken breeder. Poultry farmers were dissatisfied with the government's move to set price controls on necessities when the MCO entered phase 3.

The chicken breeder also set an example when Malaysia was facing very hot weather and their chickens were less likely to eat. So, the average of their chicken grows at a slower rate and lower food costs. For them, the price of the government-controlled price control scheme does not benefit the size of the chicken (Robin Augustin, 2020).

## **5.3 Good strategy to prevent the crisis and the oppression of consumer**

### **5.3.1 Consumer can do reports towards the disobedient dealers**

Ministry of Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs (KPDNHEP) introduce to the consumer now they can do a report through WhatsApp application on number 019-2794317. This way can be easier rather than using the normal online web and this medium is an upgrade after email, toll-free line and social media Facebook (Ahmad, 2019).

This medium for those consumers that catch a dealer dealing with too expensive and unreasonable price. The reporter just has to include their name, price deal and shops location to easier KPDNHEP in taking their action. In the same time, consumers can make a report through phone call 03-800008000 Malaysia One Call Centre and toll-free line Pusat Informasi dan Gerakan Operasi Strategik (PIGOS) 03-88826088 (Ahmad, 2019).

Furthermore, dealers a compulsory to follow few rules of price tag. First, dealer have to put price tag at each goods or sample goods for each sale. Secondly, must mark each item with a price tag that show the cash price of each unit, unit of weight or measurement of each goods.

Third, If the type or size of the goods cannot be appropriately marked on the item due to type or size, retailers may use a price list to give the description of the goods and prices clearly (KPDNHEP, n.d.).

Besides, the description and price shall be indicated in Bahasa Malaysia and shall be translated if the retailer does not understand Bahasa Malaysia. Fifth, the size and colour must clearly to the consumer or buyer. Addition, prices have to be stated in Ringgit Malaysia. Lastly, customer shall have the access to the prices of goods at all times (KPDNHEP, n.d.).

From all the rules that have been stated if the dealer disobeys the rules, consumer or customer can make a report through the suitable medium that KPDNHEP have been provide (KPDNHEP, n.d.).

### **5.3.2 KPDNHEP have to be strict and monitor dealers' price.**

According to Siti Rohanan Idris (2020), almost 300 reports has been received regarding to the rises of cooking and kitchen needs at grocery stores in Kelantan during Movement Control Order (MCO).

Datuk Seri Dr Mohd Fared Abdul Ghani, the President of Persatuan Pengguna Islam Kelantan (PPIK) said that, from the reports that they received are mostly to the grocery stores that owned by non-local citizen dealer and they sell with expensive price to the consumer. The dealers are Pakistani and Aceh citizen that take advantages in selling daily needs with over expensive price (Idris, 2020).

He also added that, this will give stress to the villagers because had to buy the needs from that grocery shops because the markets are 10 kilometres far from their place. After investigation, they found out that the grocery stores sell with 20 to 30 percent more expensive price than the normal price (Idris, 2020).

“We only can reprimand the dealers and receive reports from the consumers. But, only Ministry of Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs (KPDNHEP) can take action towards the dealers. They have to monitor and be strict towards the dealers that does not obey price control and dealing with expensive price” (Idris, 2020).

### 5.3.3 Price control scheme

KPDNHEP has implemented a price control scheme. This scheme been implemented through every year and it more focus during festive season.

The Festive Season Price-Controlled Scheme (SKHMP) was implemented since year 2000 under the Price Control and Anti-Profiteering Act 2011. The festive season encompasses are Hari Raya Puasa, Chinese New Year, Deepavali, Christmas, Pesta Kaamatan and Hari Gawai (KPDNHEP, Festive Seasons Price Control Scheme Enforcement, n.d.)

Datuk Alexander Nanta Linggi said that 11 goods are included chickens, beef meats, buffalo meats, eggs, pig meats and coconut are included in this price control scheme. This scheme involved three festive seasons which is Hari Raya, Pesta Kaamatan and Gawai Day (Suhaimi, 2020).

“Implementation of The Festive Season Price-Controlled Scheme (SKHMP) are made in few suitable period and goods, to give space for the dealers to restore their business due to Movement Control Order (MCO) and during Movement Control Order with Condition (MCOC). Purpose of scheme are to make sure the goods price that chosen are under control between the ceiling price. Especially during the festive seasons” (Suhaimi, 2020).

He also added that, person that been conviction can be fine RM100,000 or imprisoned not more than 3 years or booth, meanwhile if company been conviction, they will be fine RM500,000 or compound RM250,000 (Suhaimi, 2020).

## 6.0 RESEARCH METHOD (*METHODOLOGY*)

The researchers conduct a method to analyse and to identify the factors of seller increasing daily commodity prices during the period of Movement Control Order (MCO), to determine the level of consumers awareness on their right during the retail price crisis during MCO and to find a good strategy to prevent the crisis of rising prices and the oppression of consumer. The researchers using qualitative research method which the researchers conduct an interview from 8 people who faced the crisis by themselves around Sungai Setar Besar, Penang area. It is used to gain an understanding of underlying reasons, opinions, and motivations from a small sample.

## **6.1 Types of Method**

### **6.1.1 Qualitative method**

The second phase involved a qualitative interview from 8 public people who had the experience by themselves. The interview session will be conducted around Sungai Setar Besar, Penang area. Furthermore, the interview session will be conducted through a phone call due to the pandemic Covid-19 and the Movement Control Order (MCO). This method is used to gain an understanding of underlying reasons, opinions and motivations based on their own experiences. The informant is one of the sources to investigate the case study among the increasing daily commodity prices during the period of Movement Control Order (MCO).

## **6.2 Data Collection strategy**

### **Interview Type: Semi-Structured Interview**

The researchers conducted semi-structured interview for this research, there are 3 main questions that had been prepared by the researchers to the 8 of informants in order to help obtaining the much-needed information. Researchers also are ready to take any other details information provided by those informants. The researchers had an interview of 8 public people around Penang Area to gain their information according the increases of price during the Movement Control Order (MCO) in Malaysia. The interview session had been conducted through a phone call due to a pandemic situation in Malaysia.

**Stated below is the list of 8 public informants interviewed by the researchers in Penang area: -**

- 1. Salmi binti Mat**
- 2. Hamzah bin Yop**
- 3. Muhammad Firdaus bin Abu**
- 4. Muhamad Fitri bin Mohd Anuar**
- 5. Siti Nabilah binti Radzir**
- 6. Ahmad Lokman Hakimi bin Mohamed**
- 7. Nik Roslina binti Mahmood**
- 8. Roffie bin Ahmad Shah**

### **6.3 Unit of Analysis**

The unit of analysis such as a major part that the researchers are analysing in the study (William, 2020). The unit of analysis for this research is individual because the focus of the researchers is mainly on the public people and the researchers also interviewed each of the informant from the different district of Penang.

### **6.4 Sampling**

#### **6.4.1. Sampling Method: Non-Probability Sampling**

There are two types of sampling which is probability sampling and non-probability sampling. Probability sampling means that each sample has an equal probability of being chosen and the probability of the sample is the representatives of the population. Non-probability sampling technique uses non-randomized methods to draw the sample and the participants are being carefully selected for a purpose. Non-probability sampling involves non-random selection based on convenience or other criteria, allowing you to easily collect initial data (McCombes, 2019). For this research, the researchers will be using non-probability sampling to gather informants which are the public people around Penang.

#### **6.4.2 Purposive Sampling**

Purposive sampling is a type of non-probability sampling that is selected based on characteristics of a population and the objective of the study. Purposive sampling involves random selection, allowing you to make statistical inferences about the whole group (McCombes, 2019). The purposive sampling of this research targets 8 of the public people because the researchers aims to gather their opinion on preferences between assessment and exam oriented. They are the most eligible to give such input because they are well-experienced while buying the basic daily necessities. They know what the usual range price among grocery stores is.

### **6.5 Data Analysis**

#### **Thematic Analysis**

Thematic analysis is one of the most common forms of analysis within qualitative research. It emphasizes, identifying, analysing and interpreting patterns of meaning within qualitative data. Thematic analysis also often understood as a method or technique in contrast to most other qualitative analytic approaches (Caufield, 2019).

## 7.0 FINDINGS

### 7.1 What are the factors of seller increasing daily commodity prices during the period of movement control order (MCO)?

#### 7.1.1 Wholesaler put high price to retailer

According to Salmi binti Mat, she was kind of shook when she looked at the new price whenever she bought at her usual place to buy some stuffs. She has been expected the price will be increasing by the time especially at this moment, but she never expected it would be this high. Salmi binti Mat then asked the owner itself regarding the price and the owner claimed that is because the wholesaler put some new price to retailer.

The situation also happened on Siti Nabilah binti Radzir when she wanted to buy ingredients for her cook and bake. She noticed the price higher on her cook's stuff than her bake. She even claimed and said "I kind of expect this would happen but reason for them to put high price on essential stuff like chickens, fish or even onions are too much. Everyone is having hard time and financial problem now,"

#### 7.1.2 Demand contracted during MCO

According to Hamzah bin Yop, he said "I understand about the current situation now. Since the MCO has been announced, many of us have problem regarding their financial. As for seller, I may assume that they raise the prices because of the demand has been decreasing," he answered the interview more with he heard the seller increasing the price since the stocks are limited and after government announced the Season Price Scheme.

Moreover, based on interview with Muhammad Firdaus bin Abu, he stated that at his place, people are talking about one of the markets that sell chicken with high price which is RM7.80 and stick with the price even when some of the buyer already complaint to him. He said, "at first I shook and speechless because it is the usual place that I used to buy and when I make complaint, they still stick to the price,".

Furthermore, the situation same happened at Nik Roslina binti Mahmood's area. She finds out food price and retail price at her area keep increasing. She added in her interview, "Since I cannot go pass more than 10KM, the only solution for me is stores around my place which is rural area. I noticed that they increased the price because this is the only option for us, residents at this rural area to buy essential stuff,".

### 7.1.3 Consumers buy too much

Based on interview with Ahmad Lokman Hakimi bin Mohamed, he said he asked the owner of one of his usual stores regarding the increasing of retail prices, he did not even shock when the owner said he increased the price because people tend to buy too much. He added “I agree when he said people buy too much than their needed. Some of them tend to be panic buyer during MCO and that makes situation now worst,”.

Moreover, according to Muhammad Fitri bin Mohd Anuar, he said in his interview, “whenever I went to mall or retail store, I always saw older man or woman buy stuffs, filling their cart. Even once, I saw a man take plenty of pack rice until the rack is empty. I assume he was a cook or owner of a restaurant but regarding the situation now, I don’t think so. Besides, it is not reasons for him to empty the rack just for him alone,”

However, situation is different on Roffie bin Ahmad Shah. He is agreed with retails price keep increasing because of consumers buy too much. He stated that when consumers buy too much, they are re-filling their stocks at home for a month. “People who already have family tend to buy too much because they buy those for one month. Therefore, they would not come out or go to supermarket repeatedly for buying those stuff because they already restocked,” he said. Roffie bin Ahmad Shah also added somehow, they buy many stuffs than others because they may do something or sell something. For example, they sell some cakes, dishes or many more.

**Conclusion remark:** To conclude, the increasing of retail prices happened when the demand contracted due the outbreak. It is difficult and critical time for retailers to maintain their business. According to BERNAMA (2020), the increase in chicken prices after the implementation of the Seasonal Maximum Price Scheme (SHMMP) was affected by the limited supply factor after the contraction of demand and the impact of the Movement Control Order (MCO) for more than two months. Retailers tend to do that because the demand was decreasing, and the stocks are limited. They think but rise the prices could recover back their business and increasing people demand on them.

However, researchers also found that panic buyer also one of the factors of retailer rise the price. According to Raiham Sanusi (2020), the price of some goods, especially raw materials in the country, is likely to rise as a result of consumer actions that have bought the daily essentials since the Movement Control (MCO) came into force.

People tend to buy too much and make the stocks getting lesser and limited for time. Researchers also found that some of them tend to buy more because they buy those stuffs for a month and usually the big family tend to do that.

## **7.2 What are the level of consumer's right awareness during the retail price crisis ?**

### **7.2.1 Small amount of complaints**

According to Muhamad Fitri bin Mohd Anuar, he said “ honestly, I've never complained at the KPDNHEP office yet I asked the store supervisor about the rising prices. During the MCO, everyone are in need of savings especially for those who lose their daily income”. He also added that he might still buy stuff there because of the time and the distance constraints to find another store.

Based on Salmi binti Mat, she would still buy at the same store even though she noticed the price changed. Thus, she also has lodged a complaint to KPDNHEP online about the increase in prices around her residential area during the MCO. She also added, “I had no other choice since the MCO did not allow me to get to the store beyond 10km. Among the other ways I try to curb the problem is by buying some items online as they are more reasonably priced”.

Furthermore, according to Lokman Hakimi bin Mohamed, he said that it is difficult to make a complaint during an MCO that prevents people from leaving the house and traveling less than 10km. He also said that no one will buy groceries in expensive stores especially when the MCO is implemented.

While Nik Roslina binti Mahmood said,“in my opinion, the process of making complaints sometimes takes a long time and it is one of the reasons why people do not make complaints during the MCO or before the MCO. Plus, when the government set the SOP to not stay out of the house for more than 10km it has caused many irresponsible traders to take it for granted and increase their price”.

### **7.2.2 Lack of knowlegde to make a complaint**

According to Hamzah bin Yop, he honestly said that he do not know how to make a complaint to the KPDNHEP. Moreover, “the KPDNHEP also less of spread on what action that the consumers should take during the MCO if prices rise. However, I know that every consumer can complain if there is a price increase in certain stores,” said Hamzah.

### 7.2.3 No solid evidence

While based on Muhammad Firdaus bin Abu, if he finds a store that raises the price of essentials he definitely will make a complaint. “I once complained to the KPDNHEP office but before the MCO was implemented. However, my complaint was rejected because there was no solid evidence to say the price of the goods went up,” he said. Firdaus also added that he did not take pictures of the price but only talked about the price of the goods.

### 7.2.4 Less price sensitive

According to Siti Nabilah binti Radzir, she said, “I am not willing to buy things at stores that increase their prices. But, sometimes I didn’t notice that there was a price increase there. After making a payment then I noticed the price increased”. She also admit that not checking the price tag makes her to buy the goods from an irresponsible sellers.

### 7.2.5 No action taken by the people

According to Roffie, his family didn't complain about the price increase. Instead, he just switched stores to buy groceries. He also added that he never intended to make a complaint and only hand it to the authorities to carry out their duties.

**Conclusion remark:** To conclude, most of the people are still lack of awareness in consumers’ right and they are willing to buy groceries from an irresponsible seller because they do not know how to make a complaint. Yet they only make a small complaint to the store supervisor. Based on Muhammad Yusri Muzamir (2020), consumers need to provide complete information when making a complaint such as the store name, address, and type of the products. Furthermore, the KPDHEP also strongly encourages consumers to complain about price of goods around their residence (Yaakob, 2020).

Moreover, the government-imposed SOP distance restrictions that do not allow any party to travel from their house within a radius of 10km is one of the reason why KPDNHEP received less of complaints. This is directly will benefited the traders who took advantages of the people during the MCO.

### **7.3 Which strategy that help the most in preventing the crisis and oppression of consumer?**

#### **7.3.1 Consumer do reports towards the disobedient dealers**

According to Muhammad Fitri bin Mohd Anuar, he agrees that consumer have to do report toward disobedient dealers. At the same time, consumers have to take knowledge in how making reports to KPDNHEP.

While Nik Roslina binti Mahmood accord that she agrees that consumer have to do the reports but KPDNHEP have to upgrade the method of making complaints in meaning of take fast action and give notification or updates toward the consumers reports. In this way, the consumer can feel more understanding the importants of making a complaint about the disobedients dealers.

#### **7.3.2 KPDNHEP have to be strict and monitor dealers' price**

Based on Siti Nabilah bin Radzir, the strictness of KPDNHEP are very importants in prevent the crisis and oppression of consumers. She added that, there are few times that she saw the KPDNHEP attendant just checking the dealer's price and asked the dealer to change the price without taking any action toward the dealer. In this case, it might not happen once but it can be happening many times and in any states. "We cannot tolerate we dealers that put unreasonable price because they are brave to do it if they are no action taken towards them".

According to Muhammad Firdaus bin Abu, after the rejection of his complaints because of no solid evidence, it shows that KPDNHEP are strict to the dealers and customers. In the same time, he suggest that KPDNHEP can make a further investigation toward the complaints that are no solid evidence or uncomplete reports.

#### **7.3.3 Price control scheme**

According to Ahmad Lokman Hakimi bin Mohamed, price control scheme is the most way that can help in preventing the crisis. This is because, dealers have to follow the governments rate of price. This is scheme is very useful in this time being like during Movement Control Order (MCO). In the same time, price control scheme is also being use in festive season that usually in that time people would go buying some cooking stuff in a large amount to celebrate their festive days.

Based on Salmi Bin Mat, she agrees that price control scheme can help consumer from oppression. Salmi said that, if the price raise without proper reason their family would ban the market and never go again. But if the price control scheme been used, she would be happy because she can go to any market that are near to her house and if she caught market that does not follow the price scheme, she can do report to KPDNHEP.

Furthermore, Hamzah Bin Yop said that since he does not know how to do the complaint and report, he agrees with price control scheme. In this way, the scheme is being use for the whole Malaysia and he acknowledge that every dealer has to follow the price scheme or else they will be compound. Roffie bin Ahmad Shah said that “I am extremely agree with the price control scheme. Since that if the price control scheme been used my family and I do not have to keep on changing the groceries stores because of the expensive price matter. In this way can help saving my time and money.”

**Conclusion remark:** In conclusion, there are 4 over 8 interviewee that agreed with price control scheme. Researchers believe that, they agree with the strategy because this is the easiest way and government have power to control the price of markets. This is one of the governments role in taking care the nation rights. According to Fauzi Suhaimi (2020), price control scheme made in few suitable period and goods. The purpose of this scheme is to make sure the goods price that chosen are under control between the ceiling price. Furthermore, person that been conviction can be fine RM100,000 or imprisoned not more than 3 years or booth, meanwhile if company been conviction, they will be fine RM500,000 or compound RM250,000.

## 8.0 Conclusion and Recommendation

When Malaysia has officially implemented the Movement Control Order (MCO) that has started on 18th of March 2020 by the Prime Minister, YAB Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin, The Movement Control Order (MCO) has implemented as a precautionary measure involving the whole world including Malaysia.

Movement Control Order (MCO) also is an initiative of the Malaysian federal government due to the COVID-19 outbreak that has claimed many lives in world. Movement Control Order required the public to not be accompanied with other people during travel of 10KM travel radius for all travellers and stay at home except for the important and essential services only.

To conclude, the researchers studied on what are the consumers' action towards the irresponsible seller who rise the price of the basic commodity, identified why people are still willing to buy groceries from the irresponsible seller and determined why some of the consumer refuse to make a report as what as KPDNHEP directed during the Movement Control Order (MCO) in Malaysia.

According to the research that has been conducted, the researchers' found that most if the people tend to buy more than usual as they thought that they need more stuffs to survive the MCO. The high demand on retails make retailers could help but increasing the prices just because the stuffs itself have become limited. The researchers agreed that people should be concern and tolerate with each others in this case before the cases become hectic than usual.

During the MCO, not only retailer is having hard time to recover profit but also others people especially people from B40. It is good for every one of community being tolerate and responsible to each other for surviving together in this silent war.

Moreover, the researchers suggested to communnity that there is no reason for them to buy more stuff that they need until it is hard for other to buy their needs. According to minister itself, the minister already stated that suppliers for all folks are adequate during the MCO. Therefore, being consideration among each other could lead to harmony and peace life style during this crisis.

Other than that, the researchers find out that, people should acknowledge the price on the price tag first before buying the groceries. It will make sure the consumers aware with the control price by KPDNHEP. Undeniable, there have been numerous complaints about the rising prices received by the KPDNHEP but almost all of them have been incomplete and the authorities have failed to patrol.

This has shown that many Malaysians are still not aware of the consumer right to make complaints properly. One of the best ways to correct a complaint should be through strong evidence such as product name, product price, store name and store address. However, there are still many users who have made incomplete complaints and have no evidence to convey the rumors.

Despite that, reseachers also found that most of the consumer refuse to make a report as what as KPDNHEP directed because they do not know how to make a proper complaint. This also has shown that KPDNHEP need to expand and disseminate their important data for future use and the consumer uses.

Reseachers find out that, KPDNHEP should be more strict in making any investigation towards the irresponsible dealers. In the same time, they should rush more frequently especially during festive seasons. This will frightening the irresponsible dealers to charge unreasonable price to the consumer.

Lastly, price control scheme is the most effective way in control the irresponsible dealers that always deal with unreasonable price. Goverments should undertake this way more frequently.

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