

Personal Finance Strategies to Achieve Long-Term Financial Goals and Economic Independence

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Abstract:

This study aims to examine personal finance strategies applied by individuals in an effort to achieve long-term financial goals and build economic independence. The research method used is a combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches, including in-depth interviews and questionnaire surveys. Primary data was obtained through interviews with respondents who had implemented personal finance strategies, as well as a survey of a representative sample of the community. Secondary data is collected from the analysis of related documents and literature, as well as statistical data from official sources. The results showed that respondents had various long-term financial goals, such as retirement preparation, financing children's education, and wealth building. They have implemented a comprehensive personal finance strategy, covering budget management, debt management, emergency fund formation, and investment portfolio development. This strategy is adjusted to the risk profile and time frame for achieving each individual's financial goals. The implementation of effective personal finance strategies has helped respondents achieve long-term financial goals gradually and increase their economic independence. The main supporting factors are financial awareness, self-discipline, and family support, while the challenges faced include income fluctuations, rising living costs, and economic uncertainty. The findings of this study can be a reference for the wider community in managing personal finances effectively to achieve long-term financial goals and build economic independence.

Keywords: Personal Financial Strategy, Long-Term Financial Goals, Economic Independence, Financial Management.

1. Introduction

Economic independence and achieving long-term financial goals are aspirations that many individuals aspire to. In this context, personal finance strategy plays a crucial role. In today's era of globalization and digitalization, the ability to manage personal finances effectively is increasingly an urgent need. This is due to several factors, including global economic uncertainty, inflation, changes in economic policy, and changing trends in the labor market (Bahri, 2024).

Economic independence is not only about having enough income to meet daily needs, but also about building and maintaining assets that can provide financial security in the future. It covers various aspects such as debt management, investments, savings, and retirement planning. With the right personal finance

strategy, individuals can achieve their long-term financial goals, such as buying a home, funding children's education, or retiring comfortably (Johan, 2024).

However, many individuals still struggle to plan and implement effective financial strategies. This can be caused by a lack of knowledge about financial management, consumptive habits, and a lack of discipline in managing finances. Therefore, a deep understanding of the basic concepts of personal finance and the application of the right strategies are indispensable (Kadir et al., 2024a).

This research will discuss various personal finance strategies that can be used to achieve long-term financial goals and economic independence (Zainurrofiq et al., 2023). The main focus will be on practical techniques that individuals can apply in their daily lives to manage income, control expenses, save, and invest wisely. Thus, it is hoped that this study can provide a comprehensive and applicable guide for individuals who want to achieve economic independence and achieve their financial goals.

In addition to the factors mentioned earlier, technological developments also play an important role in personal finance. Financial apps, online investment platforms, and various other digital tools have made managing finances easier and more affordable for many people (Wish, 2023). However, this convenience also comes with new challenges, such as cybersecurity risks and information overload that can confuse users.

In Indonesia, awareness of the importance of financial literacy is increasing, but there is still much that needs to be done. The National Survey on Financial Literacy and Inclusion conducted by the Financial Services Authority (OJK) shows that the level of financial literacy in Indonesia is still relatively low compared to developed countries. This indicates the need for more intensive and extensive education on the importance of good personal financial management.

Global economic crises, such as those that occurred in 2008 and the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, are also a reminder of the importance of having good financial planning. Many individuals do not have enough emergency savings or investments to cope with difficult times. Therefore, planning finances well is becoming increasingly relevant in the face of future uncertainties (Ramin, n.d.).

The purpose of this study is to identify and develop effective personal finance strategies to help individuals achieve their long-term financial goals. This research will also discuss how to overcome obstacles that are often faced in the implementation of financial strategies, such as lack of discipline, consumptive temptations, and economic uncertainty. With a better understanding of personal financial management, individuals are expected to be able to make smarter and more strategic decisions in managing their finances.

This research will also examine various financial planning methods, including budget planning, debt management, investment strategies, and the importance of asset diversification. In addition, this research will highlight the importance of

financial education early and how good financial habits can be formed from a young age.

Thus, this research aims to make a significant contribution in improving financial literacy and helping individuals achieve better economic independence. With the right personal finance strategy, it is hoped that individuals can be better prepared to face future financial challenges and achieve their financial goals more effectively and efficiently.

2. Research Methods

This research uses a qualitative approach to identify and analyze effective personal finance strategies in achieving long-term financial goals and economic independence. Qualitative research methods are chosen to gain an in-depth understanding of the personal finance experiences, perceptions, and practices of individuals. Here are the details of the research methodology to be used (Adlini et al., 2022):

1. Research Design

This study uses a qualitative research design with a case study and phenomenological approach. This design was chosen because the purpose of the research is to uncover the subjective experience and deep understanding of individuals regarding their personal financial strategies.

2. Research Participants(Yuliani, 2018)

- a. Population: The population in this study is adult individuals in Indonesia who have a fixed income and are striving to achieve long-term financial goals.
- b. Samples: Samples will be taken by purposive sampling to ensure that participants have relevant experience and knowledge related to the research topic. Participants will consist of various demographic groups such as age, income, and education level.

3. Research Instruments

- a. In-depth Interviews: The main instrument in this study is in-depth interviews conducted in a semi-structured manner. This interview is designed to dig up information about the participants' financial habits, investment strategies, debt management, and long-term financial goals.
- b. Participant Observations: Researchers will also conduct participant observations to understand the context and environment in which financial decisions are made.
- c. Documentation: Collection of relevant personal documents such as financial records, budget plans, and investment reports from participants to support interview and observation data.

4. Data Collection Procedures

- a. Interview: Interviews will be conducted face-to-face or through online communication platforms. Each interview will be recorded with permission from the participant to ensure the accuracy of the data.

- b. Observation: The researcher will observe the participants' financial environment, including how they make day-to-day financial decisions, interact with banks or financial institutions, and manage their expenses.
- c. Documentation: The collection of relevant financial documents will be carried out with permission from the participants to provide additional evidence and enrich the research data.

5. Data Analysis Techniques

- a. Thematic Analysis: Data from interviews, observations, and documentation will be analyzed using thematic analysis. Researchers will identify the key themes that emerge from the data and categorize them to understand patterns and relationships between themes.
- b. Data Triangulation: To improve the validity of the data, researchers will use data triangulation techniques by comparing information from various sources (interviews, observations, and documentation).
- c. Member Checking: The researcher will check members with participants to ensure accurate data interpretation and get feedback.

6. Validity and Reliability

- a. Validity: To ensure validity, the researcher will use data triangulation and member checking. In addition, the researcher's self-reflection regarding personal bias and influence in the research will be carried out continuously.
- b. Reliability: To ensure reliability, researchers will use consistent procedures in data collection and analysis and record all research steps in detail.

With this qualitative research methodology, it is hoped that the research can provide in-depth and holistic insights into effective personal finance strategies in achieving long-term financial goals and economic independence.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Results

3.1.1 Revenue and Expense Management

Managing income and expenses effectively is key to achieving a healthy financial balance. The first step that needs to be taken is to create a detailed monthly budget. In this budget, individuals must record all their sources of income, whether from salaries, side businesses, or other sources. Next, record all routine expenses, such as basic necessities (food, shelter, transportation), obligations (installments, bills), as well as other expenses that may not be fixed, such as entertainment and vacation (Habibi & Zakiah, 2023).

After creating a budget, the next step is to monitor daily expenses. This can be done by recording each purchase and comparing it to the budget that has been made. This way, individuals can see where they are spending more money than planned and look for ways to reduce it. In addition, it is important to set priorities in spending. Prioritize spending on

basic needs and obligations first before allocating money to secondary wants or needs (Assuri, 2022).

Managing savings is also an important part of financial management. It is recommended to set aside a portion of your income for emergency savings that can be used in urgent circumstances, such as job loss or sudden medical needs. In addition, saving for long-term goals, such as children's education or retirement, should also be a priority. Setting aside money automatically each month into a savings account can help ensure that the savings are actually being made.

Finally, debt management is also very important. Avoid unnecessary debt and focus on paying off existing debts. If you have several debts, prioritize repaying the debt with the highest interest first. Thus, the interest expense to be paid can be reduced as quickly as possible. Avoiding overuse of credit cards can also help prevent the buildup of uncontrolled debt.

With these measures, individuals can better manage their income and expenses, achieve a healthy financial balance, and prepare for a more stable future.

In addition, it is also important to continue to educate yourself about personal finances. Many resources are available, such as books, online courses, and seminars on financial management. A better knowledge of how to manage money can help individuals make wiser financial decisions and avoid common mistakes that can be detrimental.

It's also important to have clear financial goals. These goals could be buying a house, starting a business, or planning for a comfortable retirement. With clear goals, individuals can create more purposeful and motivated plans to achieve them. For example, if your goal is to buy a house, you can start saving for a down payment and understand the process of buying a property.

Also, don't forget to consider investing. Saving alone may not be enough to achieve some long-term financial goals. Investing in instruments such as stocks, bonds, or mutual funds can help increase the value of your money over time. However, it is important to understand the risks involved and invest according to your risk profile.

Regular check-ups of financial health are no less important. At least once every six months, evaluate your budget and financial plan. Review whether there are any changes in income or expenses that need to be adjusted, and make sure you're still on track to achieve your financial goals.

Seeking advice from a financial professional can also be very beneficial. A financial advisor can provide guidance tailored to your personal situation and help identify opportunities or risks that you may not

be aware of. They can also assist in tax planning, investment strategies, and debt management.

Finally, it is important to have a disciplined and consistent attitude. Managing finances is not always easy and can require sacrifices. However, by being disciplined in following a budget, saving regularly, and investing wisely, individuals can build a strong financial foundation and achieve a healthy financial balance.

Sure, here is a table that summarizes the key steps in managing income and expenses to achieve a healthy financial balance:

Step	Description	Tips
1. Create a Monthly Budget	Record all sources of income and routine expenses.	Use an app or spreadsheet to monitor your budget.
2. Monitor Daily Expenses	Record each purchase and compare it to your budget.	Keep the purchase receipt and record it immediately after shopping.
3. Prioritize Expenses	Prioritize basic needs and obligations before secondary needs.	Use the 50/30/20 method: 50% for needs, 30% for wants, 20% for savings and debt repayment.
4. Set aside savings	Set aside some of your income for emergency savings and long-term goals.	Automate transfers to savings accounts every month.
5. Manage Debt	Avoid unnecessary debt and focus on paying off existing debts.	Pay the debt with the highest interest first.
6. Self-Education About Finance	Improve your knowledge of financial management.	Read a book, take an online course, or attend a seminar.
7. Determine Financial Goals	Have clear goals for your financial future.	Create a detailed plan to achieve each goal.
8. Consider Investing	Investments to increase the value of money over time.	Understand the risks and adjust them to your risk profile.
9. Conduct Regular Evaluations	Evaluate financial health regularly.	Conduct an inspection every six months.
10. Consult with a Professional	Get advice from a financial advisor.	Look for a licensed and experienced advisor.
11. Discipline and Consistency	Maintain discipline in following budgets and financial plans.	Stay focused on long-term goals despite the temptation to deviate.

By following these steps and tips, individuals can manage their income and expenses more effectively and achieve a healthy financial balance.

3.1.2 Planning and Budgeting

The process of short-term and long-term financial planning for individuals is an important step towards achieving financial goals. For the short term (1 year ahead), individuals need to make a monthly budget by recording all income and expenses. This helps identify short-term financial goals, such as paying bills, saving, and reducing debt. Individuals also need to adjust expenses according to income to achieve these goals, as well as monitor budgets regularly and make adjustments if necessary (Kadir et al., 2024b).

Meanwhile, for long-term financial planning (the next 5-10 years), individuals should determine long-term financial goals, such as preparing

for retirement, children's education, or buying a home. Furthermore, the allocation of financial resources needs to be adjusted to achieve long-term goals, for example through investment. Individuals also need to estimate future living costs and manage finances according to projections, as well as adjust long-term financial plans periodically according to changing conditions.

In compiling a monthly budget, individuals should record all income, such as salaries, bonuses, and other income, as well as identify and record all routine expenses, such as rent, utility bills, installments, and daily shopping. In addition, it is necessary to set allocations for savings, investments, and emergency funds. This monthly budget should be monitored regularly and adjusted if necessary.

For an annual budget, individuals should estimate annual income, including salaries, bonuses, and other income, as well as identify large expenses that occur once a year, such as taxes, insurance, and maintenance costs. Next, individuals need to plan for allocations for long-term goals, such as retirement preparation, children's education, or home purchases. This annual budget must be prepared by taking into account fluctuations in income and expenditure during the year, and be checked and adjusted periodically according to changes in financial conditions (Dhamayantie & Fauzan, 2017).

a. Short-Term Financial Planning:

In short-term financial planning, the main focus is on cash management and optimizing the use of financial resources in the next 1 year. Important things that need to be done include:

- 1) Set realistic short-term financial goals, such as reducing debt, increasing savings, or preparing for an emergency fund.
- 2) Estimate all sources of income, both from salaries, bonuses, and other income.
- 3) Identify all routine expenses, including living expenses, installments, and monthly bills.
- 4) Allocating a budget for daily needs, debt payments, savings, and short-term investments.
- 5) Monitor budget realization periodically and make adjustments if there are deviations.
- 6) Develop strategies to address the gap between income and expenses, such as cutting costs or finding additional sources of income.

b. Long-Term Financial Planning:

Meanwhile, long-term financial planning focuses on achieving more strategic financial goals in the next 5-10 years. Some of the key steps are:

- a) Determine specific, measurable, and achievable long-term financial goals, such as preparing for retirement, children's education, or buying a home.
 - b) Estimate the costs required to achieve these goals based on projected inflation and estimated income growth.
 - c) Allocating funds consistently through savings and investments that match the risk profile and time horizon.
 - d) Choosing the right investment instrument, such as deposits, mutual funds, or stocks, to achieve the desired return target.
 - e) Adjust long-term financial plans periodically according to changing conditions, such as changes in salaries, living expenses, or government policies.
 - f) Consider diversifying your investment portfolio to mitigate risk.
- c. Preparation of Monthly and Annual Budgets:

In addition to short-term and long-term planning, the preparation of a regular financial budget is also very important. Here are the steps:

1) Monthly Budget:

- a) Record all income and expenses in detail every month.
- b) Categorize expenses, for example for basic needs, transportation, entertainment, and others.
- c) Allocating funds for savings and short-term investments.
- d) Monitor the realization of the monthly budget and make adjustments if necessary

2) Annual Budget:

- a) Estimate total annual income based on salary, bonuses, and other sources of income.
- b) Identify large expenses that occur once a year, such as taxes, insurance, and maintenance.
- c) Planning budget allocations for long-term goals, such as children's education or retirement preparation.
- d) Prepare an annual budget by considering fluctuations in income and expenses over the course of a year.
- e) Checking and adjusting the annual budget periodically according to changes in financial conditions.

Effective financial management through planning and budgeting allows individuals to achieve financial goals, manage risks, and better prepare for the future.

Well, here is a table that can help summarize information about planning and preparing individual financial budgets:

Component	Short Term (1 Year)	Long Term (5-10 Years)
Purpose	- Reducing debt - Increasing savings - Preparing an emergency fund	- Preparing a retirement fund - Children's education - Buying a house

Inclusion	- Salary - Bonus - Other income	- Projected salary increase - Income from investments
Expense	- Living expenses - Installments - Monthly bills	- Inflation-adjusted living costs - Children's education costs - Home maintenance costs
Budget Allocation	- Daily necessities - Debt payments - Savings - Short-term investments	- Long-term savings and investments - Insurance premiums - Costs related to long-term goals
Monitoring	- Monthly budget adjustment - Strategies to overcome gaps	- Annual budget adjustment - Diversification of investment portfolio

This table provides an overview of the important components in the planning and preparation of individual financial budgets, both in the short and long term. Hopefully, this table can be an initial guide to manage finances in a more structured and effective way.

3.1.3 Savings and Emergency Funds

a. Saving Habits and Savings Allocation

Individual saving habits in Indonesia are quite varied, but in general the trend shows that the level of savings of the Indonesia people is still relatively low compared to developed countries. Based on data, the average Indonesia people set aside around 10-15% of their income to save. However, this proportion is still far from the recommendation of financial experts who suggest 20-30% of income is allocated to savings. The main obstacle faced is the high cost of living, making it difficult to set aside a larger fund to save. Financial education and good budget planning are the keys to improving saving habits among the community.

b. The Importance of Emergency Funds and How to Collect Them

An emergency fund is essential to anticipate unforeseen events, such as job loss, high medical costs, or property damage. Without an emergency fund, individuals can be trapped in serious financial trouble. Financial experts suggest that an emergency fund can at least cover 3-6 months of routine expenses, and the larger the emergency fund, the better. The way to collect an adequate emergency fund is to set aside a regular amount of money from each income, starting from a small amount such as 5-10% of income, then gradually increasing it according to ability. Additionally, take advantage of bonuses, salary increases, or other additional income to supplement your emergency

fund, and keep these funds in a segregated account so that they are not eroded for daily needs.

c. The Importance of Long-Term Savings

In addition to emergency funds, long-term savings are also very important to ensure future welfare. This savings can be used for purposes such as:

- 1) Retirement preparation
- 2) Children's education fees
- 3) Property or business investment
- 4) Holidays and leisure destinations

Financial experts suggest that individuals can set aside at least 10-15% of their income for long-term savings. The earlier a person starts saving, the greater the chance of obtaining optimal results in the future.

d. Effective Saving Strategies

Some savings strategies that can be considered include:

- 1) Create a financial budget and prioritize savings
- 2) Take advantage of the autodebit facility or automatic transfer to the savings account
- 3) Saving in various instruments such as deposits, mutual funds, or stocks
- 4) Maximizing the benefits of savings through special programs such as retirement savings or housing savings

With the right strategy, savings can grow faster and provide optimal benefits in the future. Emergency Fund as a Financial Safety Net Emergency funds function as a financial safety net that can be used when unexpected situations occur. Some of the key benefits of an emergency fund include:

- 1) Avoid relying on high-interest loans or loans
- 2) Maintain financial stability in the face of job loss or unexpected expenses
- 3) Allows one to take strategic opportunities or decisions without worrying about financial issues

How to Determine the Adequate Amount of Emergency Funds
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amount of emergency funds needed depends on the situation of each individual, but in general it is recommended:

- a) 3-6 months of routine expenses for individuals or families with one source of income
- b) 6-12 months of routine expenses for individuals or families with multiple sources of income

This amount can be adjusted based on factors such as age, family dependents, job stability, and assets owned. We hope this

additional explanation can provide a more comprehensive picture of the importance of savings and emergency funds for long-term financial well-being. Please let me know if you have any other questions.

e. Benefits of Long-Term Savings

In addition to retirement preparation, children's education costs, and investments, long-term savings also provide other benefits, including:

- 1) Financial Flexibility: Savings give you flexibility in dealing with future changes in your financial situation, such as a career change, a relocation, or an investment opportunity.
- 2) Protection against Inflation: By keeping funds in instruments that provide yields higher than the inflation rate, you can maintain your purchasing power in the future.
- 3) Access to Financing: Having enough savings can make it easier for you to get a loan or credit with better terms if needed.
- 4) Peace of Mind: Knowing you have enough funds for the future can provide a sense of security and lower levels of financial stress.

f. Effective Saving Strategies

In addition to maximizing the proportion of income saved, here are some other strategies to save effectively:

- 1) Savings Automation: Connect savings accounts with payroll accounts so that some funds are instantly transferred every month.
- 2) Instrument Diversification: Spread your savings across several instruments such as deposits, mutual funds, or stocks to get optimal returns.
- 3) Take advantage of incentives: Take advantage of savings programs that provide incentives such as rewards, bonuses, or higher interest.
- 4) Gradual Planning: Start small and gradually increase according to your ability to get used to saving.

g. The Role of Emergency Funds

An emergency fund is essential because it can:

- 1) Preventing High-Interest Debt: With an emergency fund, you don't have to rely on high-interest loans when facing an emergency situation.
- 2) Maintaining Financial Stability: An emergency fund can help you stay financially stable when facing job loss or unexpected expenses.
- 3) Provides Flexibility: An emergency fund gives you the freedom to take risks or strategic decisions without worrying about financial problems.

Here's a table that compares some of the savings strategies and their benefits:

Saving Strategies	Benefit
Savings Automation	- Facilitate the discipline of saving - Prevent money from "leaking" for other expenses
Instrument Diversification	- Optimal returns - Minimizing risk
Utilization of Incentives	- Get additional bonuses or rewards - Higher savings interest
Phased Planning	- Getting used to saving - Increasing the amount of savings gradually

And here's a table that compares the roles of emergency funds:

The Role of Emergency Funds	Benefit
Preventing High-Interest Debt	- No need to rely on high-interest loans
Maintaining Financial Stability	- Stay financially stable in the face of unexpected situations
Providing Flexibility	- Freedom to take risks or strategic decisions without worrying about financial problems

Hopefully, these tables can provide a clearer picture of various saving strategies and the benefits of having an adequate emergency fund. Please ask if you need additional information.

3.2 DiscussionTop of Form

This study aims to analyze effective personal finance strategies in achieving long-term financial goals and economic independence. Based on the results of the analysis, several important points can be discussed as follows:

a. The Importance of Financial Planning

The results show that careful financial planning is the main foundation for achieving long-term financial goals. This planning involves setting a budget, managing debt, and allocating investments appropriately. Research has found that individuals who have a written financial plan tend to be more disciplined in managing their income and expenses, so they are better able to achieve their financial goals (H. Holle & Manilet, 2023).

Effective financial planning also includes the determination of specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound goals (SMART goals). These findings support the literature that states that clear and structured goals help individuals to focus and be motivated in the pursuit of economic independence.

b. Debt Management and Risk Management

One of the important aspects of the personal finance strategy found in this study is wise debt management. Individuals who succeed in achieving economic independence generally have strong strategies in managing debt, including avoiding consumptive debt and focusing on paying off high-interest debt first. This study shows that poor debt management can be a major obstacle to achieving long-term financial goals (Ramin et al., 2023).

In addition, risk management through insurance and emergency funds also plays an important role. The study found that individuals who have health, life, and asset protection insurance are better protected from unforeseen events that could interfere with the achievement of their financial goals. An adequate emergency fund has also been found to be important to address emergency situations without having to sacrifice investment or long-term goals.

c. Investment as an Instrument to Achieve Financial Goals

Investment is a key component in a personal finance strategy that aims to achieve economic independence. The study found that individuals who invest regularly, whether through the stock market, mutual funds, or other assets, tend to reach their long-term financial goals faster. Investment diversification has also been found to be an effective strategy for minimizing risk and maximizing potential returns (A. T. Anas & Ashari, n.d.).

Investments not only help in wealth growth, but they also provide protection against inflation and allow for significant accumulation of assets over time. This research supports the view that proper investments, with a good understanding of risks and opportunities, are essential on the road to economic independence.

d. The Role of Financial Education

Financial education is found to be a determining factor for success in implementing personal financial strategies. Individuals with better financial knowledge tend to be more successful in managing their finances, making wise investment decisions, and avoiding debt traps. This study emphasizes the importance of continuous financial education, both through formal learning and personal experience, to improve people's financial literacy (Wahyudin, 2024).

Financial education also allows individuals to understand complex financial products and make better decisions regarding personal financial management. This shows that financial education programs, both organized by financial institutions, governments, and educational institutions, are very important to support the achievement of people's financial goals.

e. Expense Management Strategy

Controlling expenses is an important element of a successful personal finance strategy. This study shows that individuals who are disciplined in managing expenses and prioritizing needs over desires tend to be more successful in achieving long-term financial goals. Expenditure management techniques such as budgeting, expense tracking, and the use of financial technology to monitor daily finances have been found to be very effective (A. Anas, 2024).

In addition, prudent consumption patterns, including avoiding a consumptive lifestyle and understanding the importance of saving, are very helpful in achieving economic independence. The study shows that strict

spending controls, especially when it comes to purchasing non-essential items, are key to ensuring greater allocation of funds for investments and savings.

4. Conclusion

Effective financial management includes three important aspects. First, identify and record all sources of income, as well as categorize and analyze spending patterns to optimize efficiency. Discipline in controlling expenditure according to priorities and financial goals is also crucial. Second, set short, medium, and long-term financial goals, then allocate revenue to various budget posts according to priorities. Review and update your budget regularly to adjust for changes. Third, create realistic and consistent savings targets, and diversify savings instruments to optimize returns. Form an emergency fund of 3-6 months of spending to deal with unexpected situations, and place the funds in safe and easily accessible instruments. By applying these three aspects comprehensively and disciplinedly, a person can achieve long-term financial stability and maximize opportunities to achieve their financial goals.

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