

Grocery basket prices surge: How single women are adapting

By [Rudo Manjoro](#), issued by [KLA](#)

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Amidst the ongoing economic shifts and changes in consumer behaviour, the rising prices of essential goods continue to impact households worldwide. In South Africa, the February 2023 Household Affordability Index revealed a significant increase in the cost of the typical household food basket. Over the course of a year, the price surged by R572.64, marking a shift from R4,355.70 in February of the previous year to R4,928.34 in the same month this year.¹



Rudo Manjoro

This article delves into the particular experiences of households headed by single women with dependents, a group significantly affected by the changing economic landscape. Not only does it shed light on the challenges these households face, but it also explores the strategies they employ to navigate these difficult times.

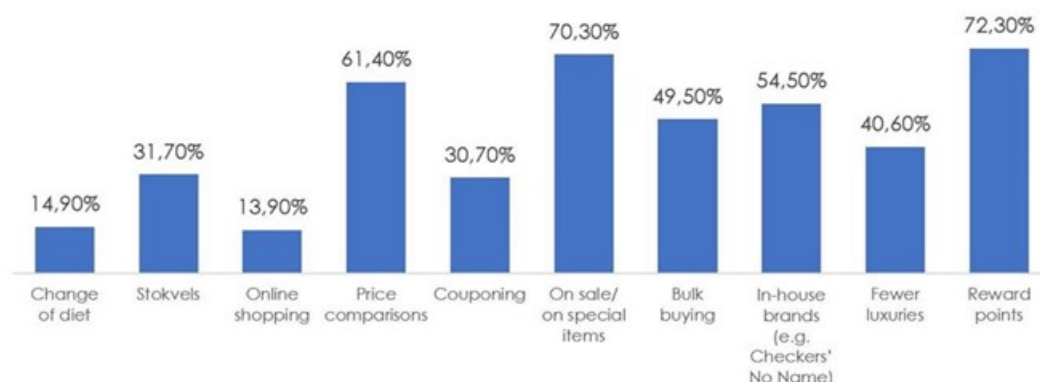
The study, conducted using the YourView platform, focused on single women households living with dependents. With 100 respondents, the study aimed to understand the impact of rising food prices on their daily lives.

According to the research, an overwhelming 94% of respondents revealed that the escalating costs of groceries have strained their overall household budgets. These households have had to reassess their purchasing patterns, leading to adjustments in their consumption habits. Among these households, 42.4% reported facing budget constraints, while 34.3% have had to cut down on expenses and 20.2% experienced a shift in their overall affordability.

The survey also highlighted the staples that hold the greatest importance for these households. Cooking oil (61.4%), maize meal (52.5%), toilet paper (37.6%), rice (25.7%), and soap (23.8%) were identified as essential items. However, due to financial constraints, some items have had to be reduced. Respondents indicated cutting back on junk food (90.1%), alcohol (59.4%), name-brand products (48.5%), processed foods (42.6%), and frozen meals (38.6%).

In the face of these challenges, single women-led households have implemented various strategies to manage the situation. Bulk purchasing (62.4%), utilising reward points (72.3%), taking advantage of sales (70.3%), and comparing prices (61.4%) were some of the techniques adopted.

Strategies employed to cope with the rising grocery prices



Interestingly, a significant 90% of respondents relied on reward programmes and coupons to alleviate the strain of grocery costs. In-house brands have also emerged as a reliable alternative, providing a balance between quality and affordability. Brands like Checkers' no-name brand gained popularity among 54.5% of respondents.

With retailers becoming more appealing to this consumer segment, brands like Shoprite, PicknPay, and Checkers have taken the lead in offering affordability and value. This shift in shopping preferences reflects the adaptability of these households to changing circumstances.



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In light of Women's Month, this study underscores the resilience and adaptability of single women-led households in the face of economic challenges. Despite the financial strains, these households continue to prioritise their families' well-being, demonstrating unwavering commitment in uncertain times.

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Methodology:

YourView platform: a market research community that gives respondents the opportunity to have their views, ideas and attitudes heard! Respondents of the community receive invitations to participate in surveys for some of South Africa's biggest brands. YourView is supported by KLA, a leading market consumer insights company with more than 20 years of experience.

Target: Single (unmarried/divorced/ widowed) women (aged 25+ years) households who live with dependents. Number of

people surveyed = 100

¹[https://www.iol.co.za/business-report/economy/average-household-food-basket-increased-by-r57264-in-february-year-on-year-9f4718c6-fe0d-41c8-b92c-a158daab6e4d#:~:text=These%20products%20include%20onions%20\(51.9,beans%20\(15.8%25\)%2C%20tinned%20fish](https://www.iol.co.za/business-report/economy/average-household-food-basket-increased-by-r57264-in-february-year-on-year-9f4718c6-fe0d-41c8-b92c-a158daab6e4d#:~:text=These%20products%20include%20onions%20(51.9,beans%20(15.8%25)%2C%20tinned%20fish)

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