

Incomes by age and sex of family head. Table 7.33 shows that the average income of families headed by males (\$20,947) was much greater than that of families headed by females (\$12,089) in 1977. For the younger groups, in fact, the male-headed average was more than twice the female-headed one. However, the average income of female-headed families 65-69 years of age (\$15,172) and 70 years and over (\$13,534) in 1977 exceeded the male-headed averages for those age groups (\$13,836 and \$10,870 respectively). While the average income for male-headed families increased with age to peak at 45-54, the average for female-headed families continued to increase into the 55-64 age group (largely because of the more frequent presence of adult children or other working family members in female-headed families).

Incomes by education of family head. Education of the family head is another factor greatly affecting family income. As Table 7.34 shows, the average income of families whose head had a university degree was much higher than that of families whose head had only primary school education.

Incomes by combination of income recipients. The number and combination of family members receiving income obviously affects the family income. In Table 7.35 families are first divided into two groups: husband-wife families and all other families. This latter group includes single parent families as well as groups of other relatives living together, for example brothers and sisters. As expected, the average income of husband-wife families was greater than for other families and the average for both groups increased with the number of income recipients.

7.8 Family spending

Household surveys of family spending provide information on consumer spending that can be related to family characteristics such as geographic location, family size and income level. In general, the survey program has consisted of two phases: the collection, by means of monthly record-keeping surveys throughout the reference year, of detailed information on family food expenditures; and the collection of information by annual recall of all family expenditure, income and changes in assets and liabilities. The record-keeping phase was not featured in all the survey programs.

A primary use of such surveys is to provide information for constructing, reviewing and revising the weights of the consumer price index. Initially these small-scale sample expenditure surveys carried out in selected Canadian urban centres since 1953 were designed to follow changes in the patterns of a well-defined group of middle-income urban families known as the "target group" of the consumer price index. In recent years, demand for expenditure statistics to serve other needs of government, business, welfare organizations and academic research has resulted in a widening in the scope and size of the surveys.

The most recent survey was carried out in February and March 1977 and published as *Urban family expenditure, 1976* (Statistics Canada Catalogue 62-547). In order to produce data for individual cities, the main sample was concentrated in eight major urban centres, with no restrictions imposed on family composition or income. For the 1976 survey the usable sample of 3,681 spending units was distributed in the cities of St. John's, Halifax, Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto, Winnipeg, Edmonton and Vancouver.

7.8.1 Family (spending unit) concept

The definition of a family or spending unit used in the family expenditure surveys is not the same as that of the census, or the economic family concept used in the surveys of consumer finances (see Section 7.7.1). The family or spending unit is defined as a group of persons dependent on a common or pooled income for the major items of expense and living in the same dwelling, or one financially independent individual living alone. Never-married sons or daughters living with their parents are considered as part of their parents' spending unit. In the great majority of cases the members of spending units of two or more are related by blood, marriage or adoption, and are thus consistent with the economic family definition employed in surveys of family income, that is "a group of