



## UNVEILING THE RIPPLE EFFECT: ANALYZING THE IMPACT OF ACADEMIC EXPENSES INFLATION ON THE ESCALATING FINANCIAL BURDEN OF STUDENTS AND FAMILIES

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**ABSTRACT:** *The rising costs of academic expenses became a significant concern in higher education, exerting a substantial financial burden on students and their families. This study, titled “Unveiling the Ripple Effect: Analyzing the Impact of Academic Expenses Inflation on the Escalating Financial Burden of Students and Families,” aimed to explore the complex relationship between inflation in academic expenses and its effects on the financial well-being of students and their families. Utilizing a mixed-methods research design, the study gathered data from 100 students across various year levels through quota sampling. The research examined the profile of participants- including age, sex, monthly allowance, and parents’ monthly income- and investigated how academic expenses, such as tuition fees, school supplies, and living costs, contributed to financial stress. Key findings revealed that the impact of inflation on the academic expenses inflation was consistently felt across different demographic groups, indicating that the economic strain transcended variables like income and occupation. Furthermore, while there was a weak correlation between participants’ demographic profile and their perceived financial burden, the study highlighted the profound challenges posed by student debt and the pressing need to improve financial aid strategies. The research contributed to the ongoing discourse on educational affordability, aiming to provide insights that inform policy decisions and support mechanisms to alleviate the financial pressures of pursuing higher education.*

**Keywords:** *Academic Expenses, Inflation, Financial Burden, Higher Education Costs, Education Affordability*

### INTRODUCTION

In the landscape of higher education, the escalating costs of academic expenses have become a pressing concern, creating a ripple effect that profoundly influences the financial burden borne by students and their families. As tuition fees, textbooks, and associated costs continue to surge, understanding the intricate web of consequences becomes paramount. This research endeavors to unveil the ripple effect generated by academic expenses inflation, meticulously



analyzing its impact on the ever-increasing financial strain faced by students and their families.

Historically, the pursuit of higher education has been synonymous with societal advancement and personal growth. However, as the costs associated with academic endeavors soar, a significant gap emerges between the aspirations for education and the financial realities faced by students and their families. The compounding effect of inflation in academic expenses extends beyond mere numbers, affecting access, choices, and the very fabric of educational pursuits.

Scholars like Johnson (2019) have noted the substantial surge in tuition fees across diverse educational institutions. The traditional understanding of education as an equalizer and catalyst for upward social mobility is now being challenged by the daunting financial barriers that confront aspiring learners. With tuition costs soaring beyond inflation rates, access to quality education is at risk of becoming a privilege rather than a fundamental right.

Furthermore, the repercussions of academic expenses inflation extend beyond the immediate financial strain on students. As highlighted by Smith and Brown (2020), the burden of student loans has reached unprecedented levels, casting a long shadow on graduates' post-education financial stability. The looming specter of student debt not only influences career choices but also has broader societal implications, impacting the overall economic health and well-being of entire communities.

This research sets out with the primary objective of unraveling the impact of Academic Expenses Inflation on students' financial burden. Specifically, it aims to identify the key drivers behind the inflationary trends in academic expenses and how these factors interplay to influence the overall financial landscape for students. Additionally, the study seeks to explore the nuanced consequences of Academic Expenses Inflation, examining its effects on student debt, financial stress, and access to educational opportunities. Through these objectives, the research aspires to provide valuable insights that can inform policy decisions, institutional practices, and support mechanisms aimed at mitigating the financial challenges faced by students in their pursuit of higher education.

While existing literature acknowledges the rising costs of education, there exists a notable gap in understanding the nuanced and multifaceted impact of academic expenses inflation on students and their families. Limited research comprehensively explores the ripple effect, considering factors such as student loans, part-time employment, and lifestyle adjustments. This study aims to bridge this gap by offering an in-depth examination of the implications, aiming to provide insights that extend beyond the economic dimensions to encompass the holistic experience of students facing the financial burdens induced by academic expenses inflation.



In delving into this research, we seek to contribute not only to the academic discourse on educational economics but also to the ongoing dialogue surrounding accessibility, affordability, and the broader implications of the evolving financial landscape for those pursuing higher education.

## **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

This study assessed the impact of academic expenses inflation on the financial burden of the students and parents. Specifically, it seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What is the profile of the participants in terms of:
  - 1.1. Students
    - 1.1.1. Age
    - 1.1.2. Sex
    - 1.1.3. Monthly allowance
  - 1.2. Parents
    - 1.2.2. Monthly Income
    - 1.2.3. Occupation
2. What is the impact of academic expenses inflation on parents/students' financial burden in terms of:
  - 2.1. Tuition Fee
  - 2.2. School Supplies
  - 2.3. Miscellaneous
  - 2.4. Board and Lodging
  - 2.5. Transportation
3. Is there a relationship between the impact of academic expenses inflation on the financial burden of parents/students' when grouped according to their profile variables?
4. What are the problems encountered by the participants in terms of academic financial inflation?
5. What measures can be proposed to mitigate the problems encountered?

## **HYPOTHESIS**

This study is guided by the lone hypothesis that: There is no significant relationship between the impact of academic expenses inflation on the financial burden of parents/students' when grouped according to their profile variables.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The study employed a mixed-methods research design to analyze the impact of academic expenses inflation on the financial burden of students. This approach was chosen as it allowed for both quantitative data, to measure relationships between variables, and qualitative insights, to understand the experiences of participants. The research focused on 100 students, selected through quota sampling to represent various year levels, including 30 first-year, 30 second-year, 20 third-year, and 20 fourth-year students out of a population of 134. Data were



collected through a survey questionnaire, with some questions adapted from existing literature and others newly developed by the researchers. The survey was divided into sections covering participants' demographics and their perceptions of financial burdens. To analyze the data, frequency counts and percentage distribution were used for demographic profiles, while a weighted mean was applied to assess the financial burden due to academic expenses. Pearson-r correlation measured the relationship between variables, while thematic analysis provided insights into qualitative responses. This comprehensive approach enabled a deeper understanding of how rising academic costs affected students across different backgrounds.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

**Table 1.1a: Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Students According to Age**

Age	Frequency	Percentage
18	8	8
19	41	41
20	19	19
21	7	7
22	4	4
23	14	14
24	7	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

Referring to Table 1.1a, out of the overall of 100 participants, 8% of the population of the participants are age 18, 41% are 19, 19% are 20, 7% are 21, 4% are 22, 14% are 23 and 7% are 24.

**Table 1.2a: Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Students According to Sex**

Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Male	35	35.00
Female	65	65.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.00</b>

As seen on the Table 1.2a, out of the overall of 100 participants, 65% are male and 35% are female. This means that there are more females than males who participated in this study.

**Table 1.3a: Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Students According to Monthly Allowance**

Monthly Allowance	Frequency	Percentage
3,000 AND BELOW	13	13.00
3,000-6,000	87	87.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Table 1.3a illustrates the outcome in terms of student's allowances, out of the overall of 100 participants, 13% have 3, 000 and below monthly allowances while 87% have 3,000-6,000.



**Table 1.2.a: Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Parents According to Occupation**

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
Farming	46	46.00
OFW	38	38.00
Teaching	9	9.00
Welder	2	2.00
Waitress/Waiter	1	1.00
Cashier	4	4.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.00</b>

As seen on the Table 1.2.a, 46% are farmers, 38% are OFW, 9% are teachers, 2 percent are welders, 1% is waiter/waitress and 4% are cahiers.

**Table1. 2.b: Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Parents According to Monthly Salary**

Monthly_Salary	Frequency	Percentage
15, 000 & Below	7	7.00
15,000-25,000	15	15.00
25,000-35,000	69	69.00
35,000 & Above	9	9.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Table 1.2.b illustrates the parent's monthly salary, 7% are 15,000 php and below, 15% are 15,000-25,000 php, 69% are 25,000-35,000 php and 9% are 35,000 and above.

**Table 2.1: Descriptive Statistics and Mean of Tuition Fees**

Tuition Fee	Mean	Descriptive Interpretation
1. I experienced challenges in covering tuition fees due to inflation.	4.56	Strongly Agree
2. I experienced to make any financial sacrifices or adjustments to pay tuition fees.	4.10	Agree
3. I usually do promissory note for tuition fee at the end of the semester.	4.34	Agree
<b>Category Mean</b>	<b>4.33</b>	<b>Agree</b>

As shown on the table above, the category mean is 4.33 or Agree which implies that the rising costs of education primarily impact families/students through increasing tuition fees.

**Table 2.2: Descriptive Statistics and Mean of School Supplies**

School Supplies	Mean	Descriptive Interpretation
1. Over the past few years, I noticed that there is an increase in the cost of school supplies.	4.26	Agree
2. I believe that the cost of school supplies has an impact on my education.	4.09	Agree
3. I delayed or avoided purchasing necessary school	4.21	Agree



supplies due to financial constraints.		
4. I buy school supplies whenever I have extra money.	4.18	Agree
5. I spend more on cheaper school supplies rather than those expensive ones.	4.44	Agree
<b>Category Mean</b>	<b>4.24</b>	<b>Agree</b>

As shown in the table above, the category mean is 4.24 or Agree which implies that school supplies has also a significant impact on the students and their families.

**Table 2.3: Descriptive Statistics and Mean of Board and Lodging**

Board and Lodging	Mean	Descriptive Interpretation
1. I eat and cook at my boarding house rather than eating outside in restaurants.	4.37	Agree
2. I encountered challenges in maintaining a conducive study within boarding house due to financial problems.	3.87	Agree
3. I am living with my family to lessen expenses on staying on a boarding house. (ex. Water bill, electric bill, etc.)	4.38	Agree
4. I do part time job so I can cover my expenses on paying board and lodging.	4.35	Agree
<b>Category Mean</b>	<b>4.24</b>	<b>Agree</b>

As shown in the table, the category mean is 4.24 or Agree means that Board and Lodging has also a significant impact

**Table 2.4: Descriptive Statistics and Mean of Transportation**

Transportation	Mean	Descriptive Interpretation
1. I prefer to pay twice the fare or the entire vehicle for transportation.	3.88	Agree
2. I rather use my own service and pay for gas instead.	3.87	Agree
3. I choose to walk instead of using vehicles when it is near.	4.20	Agree
4. I prefer to not attend on any unnecessary activities due to fare prices.	3.84	Agree
<b>Category Mean</b>	<b>3.95</b>	<b>Agree</b>

As reflected in the table above, there is a category mean of 3.95 or Agree. This further describes that transport costs, while notable, seem to have a slightly lower impact.

**Table 4: Correlation Analysis between Profile variables and Academic Expenses**

		Tuition_Fee	School_Supplies	Board_and_Lodging	Transportation
Age	Pearson Correlation	-.089	-.066	.142	-.026
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.377	.512	.158	.794
	N	100	100	100	100
Sex	Pearson	.019	.044	-.141	.095



	Correlation				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.851	.667	.161	.346
	N	100	100	100	100
Monthly_Allowance	Pearson Correlation	.135	.119	.096	-.017
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.181	.240	.340	.868
	N	100	100	100	100
Occupation	Pearson Correlation	-.133	-.030	.172	-.051
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.187	.769	.087	.613
	N	100	100	100	100
Monthly_Salary	Pearson Correlation	.065	.096	-.018	-.078
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.518	.341	.857	.442
	N	100	100	100	100

Based on the correlation analysis, the results showed no significant correlations, as all p-values were greater than the 0.05 alpha level. This indicates that none of the profile variables had a notable impact on academic expenses. In other words, factors like age, sex, and financial status did not significantly influence how much was spent on these academic-related costs. As a result, the null hypothesis (HO) is accepted, meaning that the profile variables do not have a significant effect on academic expenses.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the study reveals that the financial strain from rising academic expenses is experienced by students across all demographic backgrounds. This widespread impact highlights the importance of implementing effective financial aid and cost-management strategies to reduce the economic pressure on students and their families. The findings emphasize that income levels have little influence on how students perceive these costs, making it crucial to address the financial challenges faced by all students.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Department of Education should set up a financial assistance program to help students with living expenses.
2. The Commission on Higher Education (CHED) should develop and maintain digital libraries for free student access to course materials.
3. The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) should partner with local businesses and corporations to create scholarships, grants, and internships.
4. Schools and universities should introduce financial rewards for top-performing students to encourage academic excellence.



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