

Fuel Price Increase: Unveiling the Torments and Agonies of the Transportation Sector – Basis for Policy Formation

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Abstract. This study aimed to investigate the impact of oil price hikes on the transportation sector in Padada, Davao del Sur. Utilizing a phenomenological approach and qualitative design, purposive sampling was conducted among fourteen participants from various transportation sectors. Data was analyzed through Data Reduction, Data Display, and Conclusion Verification, with assistance from a data analyst. The findings indicate that rising fuel prices significantly affect livelihoods and lifestyles, highlighting the broader impact of global issues on local communities. Additionally, increased oil prices have led to fare adjustments, impacting passengers' monthly budgets. The study suggests that government programs to support local transportation owners and drivers and initiatives for domestic oil exploration could mitigate these effects. Budget constraints and fuel price stabilization policies were also identified as relevant considerations for public administration. Consequently, it is recommended that the Local Government Unit of Padada, Davao del Sur, propose policies to address the impact of oil price increases on the transportation sector. Additionally, revising and strengthening Municipality Ordinance 003, Series of 2009, which allows for passenger fare adjustments based on daily oil prices, is advised.

Keywords: Fuel price increase; Transportation sector.

1.0 Introduction

One of the most vital raw materials the world has ever had is oil. An oil price increase could really affect the different transportation sectors. Once it happens, the effects will be too visible, the price of the goods in the market will skyrocket, the fare rate of tricycles will suddenly increase, and the services of many establishments should adjust, all of these things will happen because of the oil price hike. According to Overholt (2016), the world uses hundreds of products made of oil or gas each day and over half of the energy used worldwide is produced by oil and natural gas combined. Both oil and natural gas are essential resources, and without them, the world would come to a grinding halt.

There was an invasion of the neighbouring country of Russia, which is Ukraine, which was ordered by the Russian President, Vladimir Putin on February 24, 2022. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the United States have since given restrictions on Russia. Among the sanctions were Russia's expulsion from the global financial system and limitations on its ability to export its goods, particularly oil (Chua, 2022). Despite being far from the Philippines, the conflict between Russia and Ukraine has led to another issue: rising oil prices. This resulted in an increase in transportation costs as well as an increase in the price of necessities and commodities. It had an impact on both drivers of public transportation and those who own vehicles (Llemit, 2022).

Globally, at the gas pump, Americans were already feeling the effects of the world's record-high prices in general. Higher fuel prices are a drag on the broader economy in addition to the fact that consumers have less disposable

income. The price increase for fuel, especially diesel, affected everything that was moved by truck, train, or ship (Stevens, 2022). The Pandemic reduced the number of passengers using public transportation systems in the United States, but a recent increase in gas prices is luring some of them back (Chua, 2022).

The second-largest contributor to overall inflation in May 2022, according to the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), was transportation. The 14.6% increase in transportation costs in May outpaced the 5.4% increase in overall inflation (De Guzman, 2022). Economic jeepney drivers in the Philippines were affected by the rise in oil prices, which forced them to cease operations. Worse, it will prevent jeepney drivers from providing food for their families. Those jeepney drivers who have a large family cannot afford to meet their family's needs. And, since the pandemic began, they have barely been able to provide for their families (Ellao & Vital, 2022).

Due to the COVID-19 limits, public utility vehicle (PUV) drivers' revenue has unquestionably fallen locally in Davao City. Following these regulations, the number of passengers that can ride in cars is restricted, and fewer people commute overall. In Davao City, taxi drivers have occasionally had trouble filling up their cars, and the fares they receive at these times are insufficient to meet the escalating expenses of fuel and crude oil. Due to the continual increases in fuel prices, this circumstance has occasionally made them reluctant to operate. Before the pandemic, a taxi driver in Davao City would often work close to 24 hours a day while actively looking for customers. However, they have had to cut back on their workdays to about 12 hours due to rising fuel prices (Antoque & Eugenio, 2022).

Meanwhile, in Padada, Davao del Sur, the majority of the public transportation drivers specifically tricycle drivers were problematic in the sudden hike of the oil price which led to an increase in fares for their passengers. They could not save enough money since there were also too many tricycle drivers in the said municipality. This study understood and identified the different discernments, perceptions, torments, and agonies of public transportation drivers and vehicle owners in Padada, Davao del Sur experiencing fuel price increases and what would be the possible solutions to help and solve this kind of dilemma in Padada, Davao del Sur.

2.0 Methodology

2.1 Research Design

This study utilized qualitative design in concurrence with phenomenology methodology. Phenomenology, according to Hoffman (2014), is a philosophical method used to investigate and delve into the meanings ingrained in people's experiences as they are having them. A phenomenological investigation focuses on people's interactions with a particular phenomenon and seeks to understand what they have truly felt. Additionally, Smith (2015) asserts that phenomenology entails a first-person investigation of the architectures of consciousness. Thus, the researcher used a qualitative design in this study since the researcher explored the lived experiences and determined the perceptions, perspectives, and understandings of the transportation sectors in experiencing fuel price increase.

2.2 Research Locale

The research took place in the municipality of Padada, located in Davao del Sur province, situated between 125 degrees 20' east longitude and 6 degrees 28' 44' north latitude. To its north, it shares a border with the Hagonoy municipality, while the western boundary adjoins the Municipality of Kiblawan. To the south, it is bordered by the municipalities of Sulop and Malalag, and to the east lies the Davao Gulf. The Poblacion was around 20 kilometres from Digos, the seat of government for Davao del Sur. On the other hand, the Municipality of Padada has 29,878 residents as of the 2020 Census, and most people use public transit as their primary form of transportation.

2.3 Research Participants

The main participants of this thesis study were the transportation sector who resided at the Municipality of Padada, Davao del Sur. The total participants of the study were fourteen (14); two (2) motorcycle public transportation drivers, two (2) tricycle drivers, two (2) jeepney drivers, two (2) student drivers, two (2) government employee drivers, two (2) private transportation drivers, and two (2) business owners in Padada, Davao del Sur. These participants were selected based on the following reasons: first (1) if they were public transportation drivers

who rode motorcycles, tricycles, or jeepneys, or second (2) those owners who were using vehicles going school, work, or business purposes.

2.4 Research Instrument

The Purposive Sampling approach, which was used in this study, entails choosing a sample based on the goals of the investigation as well as certain features of the population. Purposive sampling is the process of choosing the subjects for the sample after consideration by the researcher. The researcher chose and identified the public transportation drivers if they were driving motorcycles, tricycles, or jeepneys, and those vehicle owners if they were using it for school, for work, for personal means of transportation, and for businesses on the inclusion and exclusion criteria.

2.5 Data Gathering Procedure

In this study, to obtain proper data, the researcher thoroughly followed steps on how to properly gather data to achieve the goal of this research. First, the researcher asked the permission of the thesis teacher and made a letter of permission. Then, the researcher immediately researched and found different sources that helped elaborate the research problem. Next, the source of information for this thesis study was an in-depth interview with the fourteen (14) participants mentioned above. The researcher found appropriate participants such as public transportation drivers and vehicle owners. The researcher asked permission from those transportation sectors that will participate in the research problem and gave them Informed Consent. Then, the researcher gave an interview guide questionnaire and immediately asked the participants with the formulated questions. The questions were answered by the participants and served as the guidelines for the researcher. Lastly, the data that the researcher gathered was categorized to know the discernments and perceptions of the public transportation sector experiencing fuel price increases and what would be the possible basis for policy formulation.

2.6 Data Analysis

The researcher analyzed the data through the following processes: **Data Reduction**. Data reduction, the initial phase of qualitative data analysis, was developed by Miles and Huberman (1994). Data reduction entails the methodical process of focusing on, simplifying, abstracting, and altering the information contained in field notes or transcriptions. With a particular focus on the participants' thoughts and insights regarding the impact of fuel price hikes in Padada, Davao del Sur, the researcher in this study employed the data reduction technique to condense the responses from the participants. **Data Display**. Findings, conclusions, and various techniques of organizing, summarizing, simplifying, or changing data were all presented using data displays, which were extremely important. The findings covered the various display styles used in these journals, their usage rates, and the goals of using visual displays opposed than just presenting data in the text (Verdinelli & Scagnoli, 2013). These visual representations were used to categorize data, evaluate findings, and give a descriptive and condensed version of the data. **Conclusion Verification**. According to Miles and Huberman (1994), conclusion verification comprises the process of formulating conclusions, which starts early in the coding phase. Coding, investigating conclusions and explanations, additional coding, retesting conclusions, and so on are steps that are routinely taken in an iterative process. According to Wilson (2015), drawing conclusions frequently entails leveraging implicit or inferred information to construct meaning from what has not been clearly expressed. Data for the study was gathered using research tools like interview guide questions. Based on the similarities of the participants' responses, the acquired qualitative data from the participants was evaluated and organized into themes. A textual presentation of the extracted and presented collective themes that connect to the study's goal.

2.7 Ethical Considerations

The researcher gave careful consideration to several vital participants. Forms requesting informed consent were distributed to the participants to obtain their approval for their voluntary participation. To ensure that the participants fully understood the study's objectives and methods, informed consent was attempted to give extensive information about it. Another ethical consideration of this study contained was the confidentiality of the subject, the researcher took precautions to limit the use of participant data, especially the most delicate information that required privacy protection. Participants have a fundamental right to regulate their personal information, thus the researcher made sure its distribution was restricted and under control. The study also considered the anonymity of the participant; therefore, the name of the participant changed. The real name of the participant was replaced with another name to suppress the primordial of the subject in this study. In this case, everyone will

never know the genuine name of the participant in this study. Likewise, in consideration for beneficence or the avoidance of harm for the participants, the researcher had admirable and fair treatments just for the participants because without the participants, the study would not be successful. Another ethical principle included was the veracity of the avoidance of deception. The researcher only spoke for the truth and was not biased for the accomplishment of this study. Any information that was given to the researcher by the participants was automatically reflected in the outcome and result of this problem. It implied that the researcher was truthful in handling facts and information by the participants that were intended for this problem. Veracity made this study more significant and authentic. The researcher used and put into practice all of the ethical principles to have complete participant engagement, have a correcting study, and observe problems.

3.0 Results and Discussion

This section contains the core concepts derived by the researcher from the responses of participants who took part in the in-depth interviews. The recurring themes that were found in the participants' responses during these interviews were used as the basis for organizing and classifying the information gathered from them. The categorized data are presented visually through figures and tables, providing a structured overview of the study's problem statement. Additionally, the researcher included detailed explanations and references to relevant literature to enhance the interpretation of the study's findings.

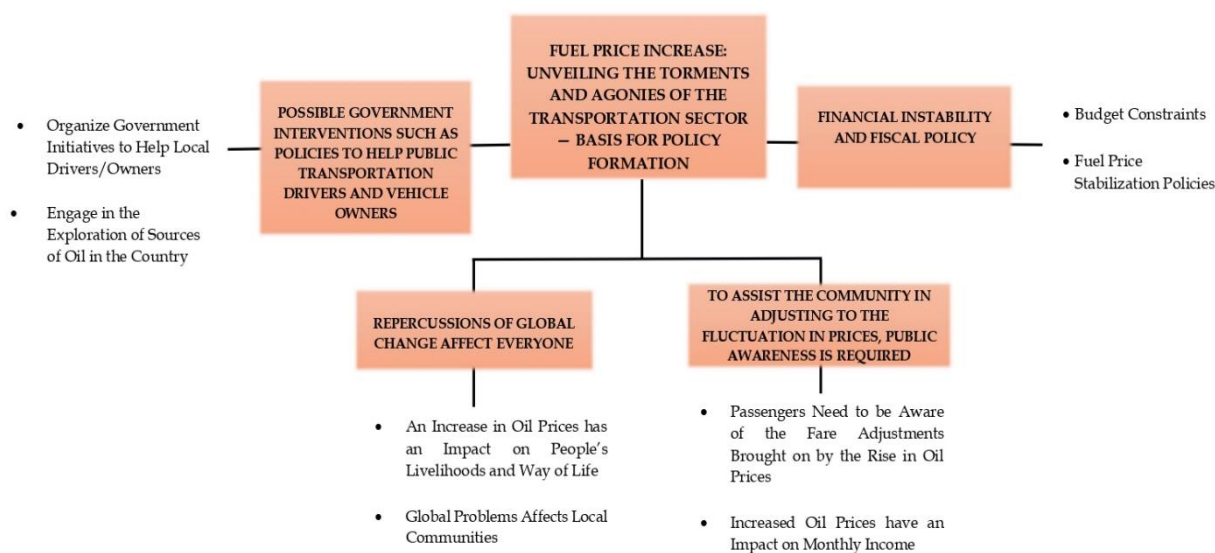


Figure 1. Thematic structure

3.1 Discernments and Perceptions on the Oil Price Hike

The responses of the participants unveiled the torments and agonies caused by the oil price hike in Padada, Davao del Sur. Figure 2 shows the figurative representation of the thematic analysis of the discernments and perceptions of the public transportation drivers and vehicle owners on the oil price hike. It presents two major themes on the discernments and perceptions of public transportation drivers and vehicle owners on the oil price hike, which includes (1) the repercussions of global change affect everyone along with its two subthemes – the increase in oil prices has an impact on people's livelihoods and way of life and global problems affect local communities; and the second (2) theme which is to assist the community in adjusting to the fluctuation in prices, public awareness is required along with its two subthemes – passengers need to be aware of the fare adjustments brought on by the rise in oil prices and increased oil prices have an impact on monthly income.

Theme 1. Repercussions of Global Change Affect Everyone

The first theme that came forth and emerged from the responses of the participants is the *repercussions of global change affect everyone*. Two subthemes emerged from the responses of the participants are (1) the increase in oil prices has an impact on people's livelihoods and way of life and (2) global problems affect local communities.

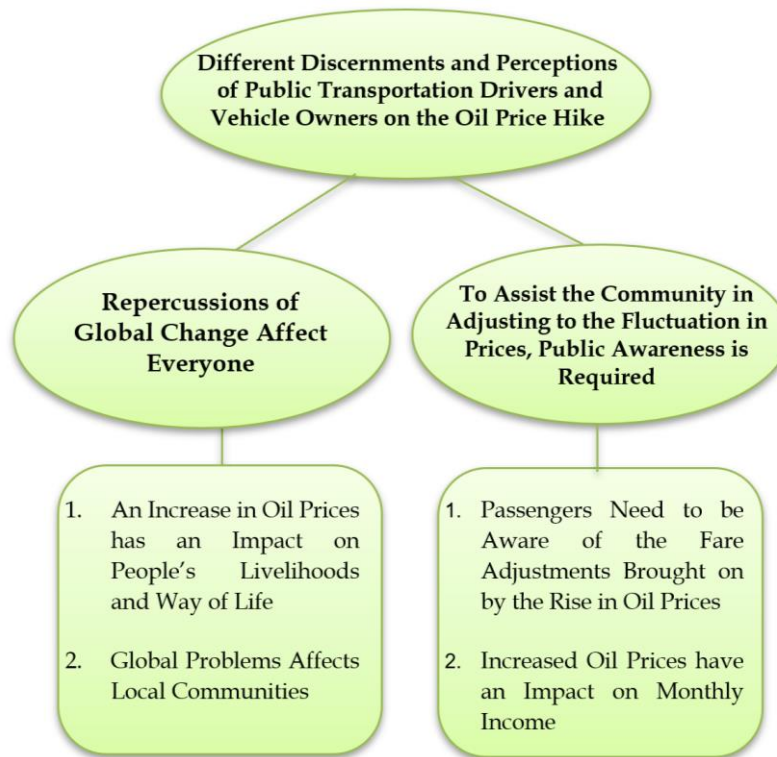


Figure 2. Themes and core ideas on the discernments and perceptions of public transportation drivers and vehicle owners on the oil price hike

Repercussions of global change affect everyone since the rise in oil prices was only the beginning; as oil prices rise, so do the prices of other products and services that rely heavily on oil, particularly in energy and transportation. Prices for basic commodities such as rice and meat have already begun to rise, since the majority of these are transported from far-flung farms to markets by gas-powered trucks, the price of necessities like rice and meat has also increased (Baluyot, 2022).

The first subtheme under this theme pertains to *the increase in oil prices has an impact on people's livelihoods and way of life* with its four codes – (1) fares rise in line with the rise in the price of oil, (2) PUV drivers would prefer to save oil by waiting for their turn rather than driving around, (3) owners of vehicles cut back and adjusted their spending on other things like food to save money for oil, and (4) to save money for oil, social activities like vacations were planned. The specific responses provided by the participants under the generated subtheme are listed below. The participant two, four, and ten said that,

“... Since the price of gasoline is expensive, our income will also decrease. In our household, I am the only one who has work, my wife is just a housewife, life is really difficult that's why we really need to save.”

(Q 01 ; KII 02)

“... Gasoline is expensive, then there we're only few passengers, many people will not ride a tricycle anymore because they can't afford it brought by the oil price hike”.

(Q 01 ; KII 04)

“... I only just stay here and wait for my turn to have passenger so I won't have to keep driving and look for passengers because I will waste too much gasoline if I will go around and still, cannot find passenger”.

(Q 01 ; KII 04)

“... When the oil price increased, it only means that you need to control yourself in going out, you need to limit yourself in using your car because it would be expensive if you will spend too much especially on gas”.

(Q 01 ; KII 10)

According to Ang (2022), the rise in inflation is primarily due to the market's skyrocketing prices for global oil, which also affects the prices of other goods. Other goods and necessities are affected by global oil prices. Some people can cope and ride out the price hike wave, but ordinary and working Filipinos bear the brunt of inflation and price increases for necessities and food staples (Rubio, 2022).

On the other hand, the sudden increase in oil prices led to the increase in fares, it gave a major impact not just on commuters of public transportation but also on the public transportation drivers. This gave rise to the statement of Calleja (2022), fear and panic have gripped public transportation drivers and operators, who said they were still reeling from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. The sudden change in prices, as well as the high prices, worried public transportation drivers. This will kill their livelihood because oil prices are going up, but they are not increasing the passengers' fares.

Moreover, PUV drivers would prefer to save oil by waiting for their turn rather than driving around. According to Cabuenas (2022), due to the increase in oil prices, several jeepney drivers stopped plying their routes with their families and are now struggling to make ends meet due to the increase in petroleum product pump prices.

In addition, owners of vehicles adjusted their spending on other things such as food to save money for oil. Thus, social activities like vacations must be planned. The second subtheme under this theme is the *global problems affect local communities* with its three codes — (1) there is nothing we can do because it is not just you who is affected, it is everyone, (2) when there is a large demand for oil, the price likewise rises, and (3) when a crisis affects the entire country or world, no one can do anything but adjust. The specific responses provided by the participants under the generated subtheme are listed below. The participant six said that,

“... It could really make us feel bad but we cannot do anything about it because somehow, we do not have the power to change the price.

(Q 01 ; KII 06)

According to Rubio (2022), after surviving the pandemic and the government's severe lockdowns, Filipinos are now facing a new hurdle as the costs of practically all necessities have surged due to soaring fuel prices. Other items and necessities are influenced by global oil prices. Some people can cope and ride off the price hike wave, while regular and working Filipinos endure the burden of inflation and price hikes for basic needs and dietary staples.

Brought by the war between Russia and Ukraine, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the United States have imposed sanctions on Russia. Among the sanctions are Russia's expulsion from the global financial system and limitations on its ability to export its goods, particularly oil (Chua, 2022). Despite being far from the Philippines, the conflict between Russia and Ukraine has led to another issue: rising oil prices. This resulted in an increase in transportation costs as well as an increase in the price of necessities and commodities. It has an impact on both drivers of public transportation and those who own vehicles (Llemit, 2022).

Though this situation only happened between the two countries, still, the effects were large that it also affected different countries, especially the Philippines. Moreover, when a crisis affects the entire country or world, no one can do anything but adjust. Thus, economic jeepney drivers in the Philippines were affected by the rise in oil prices, which forced them to cease operations. Worse, it will prevent the jeepney drivers from providing food for their families. Those jeepney drivers who have a large family cannot afford to meet their family's needs. And since the pandemic began, they have barely been able to provide for their families (Ellao & Vital, 2022).

The different pleas and concerns of drivers and vehicle owners brought by the increased oil price must be taken action, may it be an ordinance to help these drivers lessen and eradicate these kinds of problems. Moreover, finding concrete solutions to this problem would be beneficial for all of the people, especially Filipinos since the

price of the goods in the market was also affected by this hike. In conclusion, the rise of the oil prices affected different people's way of life, from the rise of the price of the fare, to adjusting just to save up, or to the drivers who gave their best for their families. These were manifestations that one global problem could cause something big that may affect local communities.

Theme 2. To Assist the Community in Adjusting to the Fluctuation in Prices, Public Awareness is Required

The second theme that emerged from the responses of the participants is *to assist the community in adjusting to the fluctuation in prices, public awareness is required*. Two subthemes emerged from the responses of the participants are (1) passengers need to be aware of the fare adjustments brought on by the rise in oil prices and (2) increased oil prices have an impact on monthly income.

Crude oil price fluctuations have a global impact, affecting every nation on the planet. Emerging economies, which lacked financial stability and were vulnerable to foreign shocks, were among the hardest hit. These changes in oil prices had a significant impact on inflation rates and price swings, potentially causing economic upheavals that impacted overall economic performance. Numerous studies have consistently demonstrated that oil prices have a significant impact on consumer price inflation. This is primarily due to the fact that oil is a critical input in the production of many consumer goods and is used directly in the production of practically all consumer goods (Sek et al., 2015).

The first subtheme states that the *passengers need to be aware of the fare adjustments brought on by the rise in oil prices* with its five codes – (1) commuters feel unhappy with the changes of the fare but helpless because they recognize the drivers' or owners' side, (2) asked why drivers ask for a very high price though it runs the same. But then realize that they too are living their lives and their capital also is too big, (3) passengers must know and understand the changes of the fare due to oil price increases, (4) owners of vehicles have to adjust the fare because if not, they won't be able to get passengers, and (5) some passengers are complaining about the fare. The specific responses provided by the participants under the generated subtheme are listed below. The participant one and two said that,

"... Actually, there may be five passengers out of one hundred who have knowledge and care about the price of the crude oil, they thought that the cheap fare before will be permanent and we can't really blame them because of course, life right now is really difficult".

(Q 01 ; KII 01)

"... There were passengers who kept on complaining about the fare, sometimes it seems like they are yelling at you because they were used to the cheap price. But we can't do anything about it either because if they have hard time paying too much, we as drivers also have a hard time because gasoline now is too expensive".

(Q 01 KII 02)

According to Calleja (2022), drivers of the Philippine iconic jeepney buses have petitioned the government to reduce taxes or allow them to raise fares to offset rising oil prices. According to Piston, an organization of jeepney drivers and operators, drivers must raise fares by one peso to compensate for fuel price increases since January. Diesel prices have risen by 17.50 pesos per litre since the beginning of 2022, while gasoline prices have risen by 13.25 pesos. Many of the passengers and commuters feel unhappy with the changes in the fares but still, the majority of them recognize the hurdles on the drivers and owners. According to Refraccion, Mugas, and Orejas (2022), due to increased gasoline prices, jeepney drivers in the provinces of Luzon struggle to bring home enough money for their families after a day on the road, prompting them to take odd jobs and find other ways to get by.

Passengers must know and understand the changes in the fares due to oil price increases. According to Luna (2022), transport organizations pleaded for patience from commuters and the government, saying some operators have been forced to resort to alternative means to support their families in the face of soaring petrol prices. Nonetheless, owners of vehicles have to adjust the fare for them to have passengers.

The second subtheme is *increased oil prices have an impact on monthly income* along with its three codes – (1) given that only one person is the worker in the household and that gasoline has become so costly, it affects all of the drivers, (2) the allowance became not enough so there is a need to request additional amount to survive and

comply the requirements, and (3) need to adjust the expenses to survive. The specific responses provided by the participants under the generated subtheme are listed below. The participant one and five said that,

"... I don't have enough of income; I only make 3,000 or 4,000 a month".

(Q 01 ; KII 05)

"... It really affects my income because we only have about 7000 a month so it can really affect negatively, it's really hard".

(Q 01 ; KII 1)

Oil price fluctuations have a significant impact on the inflation rate and overall price adjustments. These changes in inflation rates and price levels, in turn, could lead to changes in the economy and affect how well the economy is performing overall (Siok, Teo, & Wong, 2015). Even tricycle drivers, who ordinarily can only carry a small number of people in their pedicabs, are suddenly struggling to make about a hundred pesos less per day than they usually do (Ellao & Vital, 2022).

As the nation's economy begins to recover from the pandemic, the unavoidable effects of higher transportation costs and food prices are making things more difficult for consumers. The issue is getting worse as a result of the rise in the price of imported oil and the continued supply shortages around the world. The Philippines is extremely vulnerable to fluctuations petroleum prices on the international market because of its dependence on imported oil. As a result, the government must launch focused humanitarian assistance initiatives and public awareness campaigns, paying special attention to public utility drivers and the most economically disadvantaged people (Daroy, 2022).

In conclusion, the perceptions of drivers on the oil price hikes, perceptions of their passengers, and perceptions towards their status and monthly income or allowance affected them truly. It caused a huge impact on the drivers' monthly income, may it be for private owners of vehicles, government employees, or public transportation drivers. It could affect the lifestyle of a family since their income would vary on the price of the oil. Whereas, the salary of an employee would be lessened due to the increased price of oil, the allowance of the students was also affected, and much more, drivers' income was affected since oil is the main reason why their vehicles would be functional.

3.2 Government Interventions

The verbal responses from the participants in the guide interview questions were employed to discover what are the possible government interventions such as policies to help public transportation drivers and vehicle owners. Figure 3 displays the figurative representation of the thematic analysis of the possible government interventions such as policies to help public transportation drivers and vehicle owners. It presents one major theme which is government plays a vital role in protecting the welfare of the people along with its two subthemes namely; organising government initiatives to help local drivers or owners and engage in the exploration of sources of oil in the country.

Theme 1. Government Plays a Vital Role in Protecting the Welfare of the People

The only theme in the drivers' responses on what are the possible government interventions such as policies to help public transportation drivers and vehicle owners is *Government Plays a Vital Role in Protecting the Welfare of the People*. Two subthemes emerged from the responses of the participants are (1) the increase in oil prices has an impact on peoples' livelihoods and way of life and (2) global problems affect local communities.

According to Ochave's findings in 2022, the government should implement policies to lessen the effects of rising oil prices on critical commodities. Laban Konsyumer, Inc. President Victorio Mario A. Dimagiba underlined that rising fuel prices cause inflation, which harms customers, particularly those who are part of vulnerable groups like daily wage workers. Despite the reduced rate of inflation seen in January, Mr. Dimagiba advised the government to maintain its vigilance and pursue measures like temporary fuel tax reductions and contract approval. These steps are meant to lessen the effect that growing fuel and power costs will have on consumer pricing in the upcoming months.

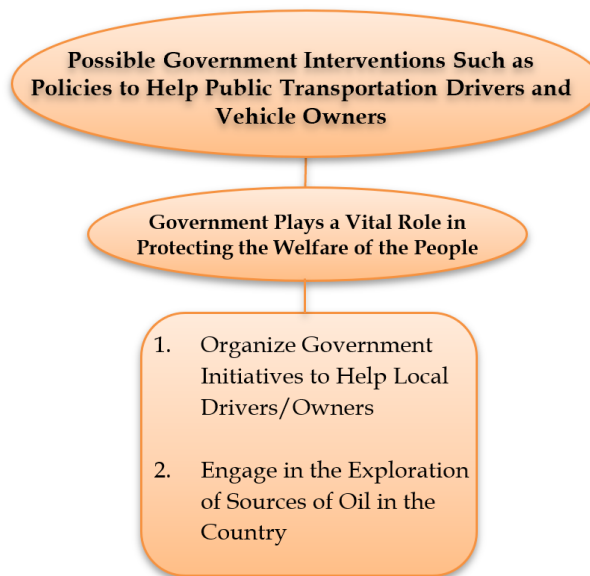


Figure 3. Themes and core ideas on the possible government interventions such as policies to help public transportation drivers and vehicle owners

The first subtheme is to *organize government initiatives to help local drivers or owners* with its five codes – (1) the government needs to take into consideration programs such as subsidies for PUV owners and drivers, (2) last year, in 2022, there was a fuel subsidy, but as of right now, the drivers have not received any, (3) still believe that the government can help the country with this problem, (4) the government must create an ordinance regarding the changes of the fare prices, and (5) the government can assist by increasing workers’ wages so they can pay for their own needs, including gasoline. The specific responses provided by the participants under the generated subtheme are listed below. The participant one and four said that,

“... The government should have initiatives intended for us drivers similar on what had happened during Rodrigo Duterte's time that the drivers had subsidies”.

(Q 02 ; KII 01)

“... It was just in year 2022, then now, it's already 2023 but still, we did not receive any, we will not expect it anymore since we already sent information to DILG”.

(Q 02 ; KII 04 ; Line 85-88)

Contributing to the creation of a policy that can benefit both users of public transportation and owners of private vehicles is one of the goals of this study. A crucial element in the process of creating public policies is policy formulation, during which governments and other important stakeholders participate in a discussion to address various problems and circumstances affecting individuals and organizations as they work to accomplish their objectives. The answers developed throughout this formulation process form the basis of what, after being adopted, becomes a formal public policy (Howlett & Mukherjee, 2014).

One thing that the government can provide to the drivers and owners is to have initiatives to help these affected people. There were so many solutions that could help these drivers specifically for those public transportation drivers. The Pantawid Pasada Program (PPP), which offers a one-time subsidy to provide financial help to Public Utility Jeepney (PUJ) franchisees and operators, was established by the government in 2022, according to Llemit's report. With the recent rise in gasoline prices and the ongoing epidemic, the public transportation industry is currently experiencing financial difficulties that are being addressed by this program. The program covers a variety of vehicles, including PUJs, and fuel-dependent modern jeepneys. Each unit is eligible for a P7,200 subsidy. Through a federally financed national program, 136,000 participants would get P1 billion in subsidies nationally.

These initiatives comply with Republic Act No. 10963 (TRAIN Law), also known as the Tax Reform for Acceleration and Inclusion (TRAIN) Law, which specifies the prerequisites for having an operational and legitimate PUJ franchise.

On the other hand, some drivers continue to believe that the government can help resolve this issue, and thankfully, as stated by the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) Secretary Amenah F. Pangandaman in 2023, the government is acting. She continued, "As directed by President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., this administration will continue providing fuel subsidies to our fellow citizens, especially in the most vulnerable sectors, including public transport and agriculture." A total of P3 billion has been set aside in the national budget for 2023 for fuel vouchers, which will help qualified drivers of Public Utility Vehicles (PUV), taxis, and tricycles, as well as full-time drivers for ride-hailing and delivery services, across the entire nation. Comparing this allocation to the P2.5 billion budget for the fuel subsidy program in 2022, there has been a rise of P500 million. It is hoped that with this additional support, the current high oil costs won't have such a negative impact on thousands of PUV drivers. The DOTr, DOE, and DBM have all established guidelines that must be followed for implementing the program. It will be the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board's (LTFRB) responsibility to confirm and specify the recipients.

The second subtheme is to *engage in the exploration of sources of oil in the country* with its three codes — (1) the government needs a factory of its own. The country has sources in the Western Philippine Sea, but there are still problems, (2) the country is just buying and importing from other countries, and (3) making the power plants government-owned which is still a long way off. But in any case, just look for a source of oil. The specific responses provided by the participants under the generated subtheme are listed below. The participant ten said that,

"... If the source of our oil is different, or if it's the same that it is from a different country, it will still be high".

"... That's always the plan, they want the government to control the gas stations because in other countries, it looks like their gas station is government owned because if it's privately owned, it's different, they can't manipulate, whereas if it's government-owned, they can manipulate".

(Q 02 ; KII 10)

If the country discovers sources of oil in the country itself, this problem would be solved right away. The significance of comprehending the causes or sources of oil shock was thoroughly discussed by Kilian (2014). There are numerous avenues via which the effects of the oil price can be distributed. One of the channels is the supply or inflationary channels. Higher final goods prices are the outcome of inflationary pressures brought on by higher oil prices. Higher oil prices can also be passed along through cost channels, where they raise production costs and cause markups, capital utilization, and reallocation effects to fluctuate over time. When examining how oil shocks affect the macroeconomy, it is also important to take into account the pattern of energy flows, which varies through time and between different nations. In conclusion, government can create or formulate solutions to eradicate this kind of problem. Little by little, the country will be free of oil price hike experiences and will later on be satisfied with the solutions brought to them by the government. Subsidies can be a great help for the drivers and vehicle owners and the exploration of sources of oil inside the country would be a great help, especially in these times.

3.3 Insights and Personal Takes

The verbal responses of the researcher in the guide interview questions were employed to discover what are the insights and personal takes on the results of the researcher's study that could be applicable in the field of Public Administration. Figure 4 displays the figurative representation of the thematic analysis of the insights and personal takes in the results of the researcher's study that could be applicable in the field of Public Administration. It presents one major theme which is financial instability and fiscal policy along with its two subthemes namely; budget constraints and fuel price stabilization policies.

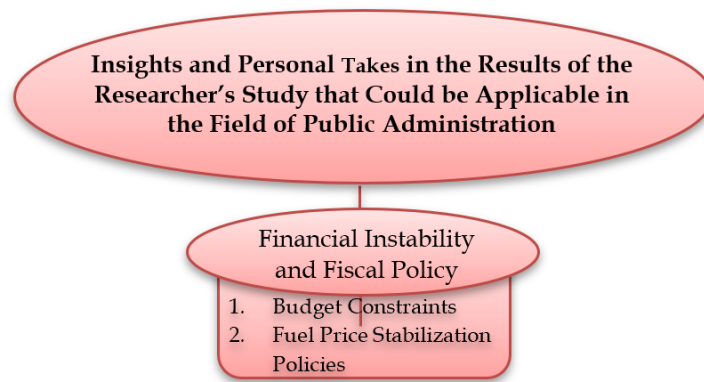


Figure 4. Themes and core ideas on the insights and personal takes in the results of the researcher's study that could be applicable in the field of public administration.

Theme 1. Financial Instability and Fiscal Policy

The only theme in the insights and personal takes in the results of the researcher's study that could be applicable in the field of Public Administration is *Financial Instability and Fiscal Policy*. Two subthemes emerged from the responses of the participants (1) budget constraints and (2) fuel price stabilization policies.

Oil prices had a significant impact on emerging economies, mainly because these economies lacked financial stability and were vulnerable to outside shocks. The impact of changes in oil prices on the inflation rate and price adjustments is significant. A shift in inflation or pricing levels can lead to changes in the economy that have an impact on how well the economy is performing as a whole. Since oil is a direct input for a wide range of consumer goods and is used as a direct input in almost every consumer product, numerous studies have shown that oil prices have a significant impact on determining consumer price inflation (Sek et al., 2015).

The first subtheme is *budget constraints* with its four codes – (1) rising oil prices can strain a driver's budget, as fuel expenses often represent a substantial portion of their monthly spending, (2) drivers often have limited income and rely heavily on their tricycles for transportation, so increased fuel costs can eat into their already tight budgets, (3) a reduced allowance can put students and their families under financial strain. Students often rely on their allowances to cover various expenses, including transportation, school supplies, and personal needs, and (4) the instability of oil prices can lead to unpredictable changes in a private transportation driver's monthly expense.

The relevance of community interaction and feedback in policymaking may be recognized by public administrators. The outcomes of the study stress the importance of listening to and cooperating with affected individuals and groups to build effective solutions. Oil prices, real exchange rates, and exporter production costs have a significant impact on domestic inflation, and because they can disturb both price stability and the stability of financial markets, policymakers should be concerned about their effects. Numerous experts contend that monetary policy can be used as a powerful instrument to reduce the disproportionate effects of these shocks on domestic inflation (Sek, Teo, & Wong, 2015).

Personal thoughts of the researcher, formed by the experiences of the participants, may also generate empathy and advocacy in the field of Public Administration. Understanding the human cost of rising fuel prices can motivate efforts to develop more compassionate and responsive policies. Many individuals and households spend a significant amount of their monthly income on fuel. This is particularly true for those who rely largely on personal vehicles for daily transit. As a result, any increases in fuel prices have a correspondingly greater impact on their overall budget. Rising gasoline expenses can put a strain on a driver's budget, causing financial stress and anxiety. They may be struggling to make ends meet or forced to make difficult decisions about which expenses to prioritize.

The second subtheme is the *fuel price stabilization policies* with its three codes – (1) implement targeted fuel subsidies or price controls to alleviate the financial burden on drivers, (2) governments may develop strategies to

stabilize the economy during oil price fluctuations. This includes managing fiscal policies, tax adjustments, and subsidies to help drivers manage their budgets effectively, and (3) governments can explore policies aimed at stabilizing oil prices to prevent excessive fluctuations.

The agonies and torments of drivers were summed up into a problem that the government ought to look into. According to the researcher's observations and personal viewpoints, the researcher concluded that the government is the only entity that might significantly assist these drivers. To avoid extreme volatility, governments might look into initiatives targeted at stabilizing oil prices. This can offer certainty and lessen the effects of unexpected price increases.

Governments may come up with strategies to maintain economic stability while oil prices fluctuate. To assist drivers in properly managing their budgets, this management includes managing fiscal policies, tax modifications, and subsidies.

In the Municipality of Padada, Province of Davao del Sur, an ordinance made for the passengers, Ordinance 003, Series of 2009 which is "An ordinance imposing regulations for fare rates of tricycles for hire in the municipality of Padada, province of Davao del Sur and penalties for violations thereof". According to Section Three (3) of the Ordinance 003 of Padada, Davao del Sur, it is proper that the rate of fares of tricycles-for-hire shall be based on the price rates of gasoline per litre in the Municipality of Padada. Moreover, Section Three (3) of the said ordinance said that, students, senior citizens and persons with disabilities shall be given an automatic 20% fare discount based on the fare rate stipulated in Section 2 of the Ordinance. Since the municipality of Padada formulated an ordinance for the passengers, the drivers also need to have it for themselves.

To help the PUV sector cope with the ongoing rise in oil prices, the government established the Pantawid Pasada Program (PPP) by providing a one-time subsidy to provide financial support to PUJ franchisees and operators in the wake of the recent spike in oil costs amid the pandemic (Llemit, 2022). Since this program came to light, it would be much better that this program must ensure that all drivers receive this one-time subsidy since many of the drivers in the municipality did not receive any.

The results of this study only pointed out one thing and that only means that the participants experienced difficulty in this fuel price increase. The torments and agonies they have experienced cultivated the researcher's insights and personal takes that could be applicable in the field of Public Administration.

The study shed light on the real-life experiences and obstacles experienced by those affected by this economic phenomenon by studying the impact of fuel price rises on participants. It emphasized the real-world issues that drivers and other stakeholders face when fuel costs rise. The study's conclusions contain important insights that can help the field of public administration. The agonies and torments expressed by participants can serve as compelling motivation for public officials to explore and prioritize actions targeted at minimizing the impact of fuel price increases. These policies may include steps to improve economic stability, public transportation, and social support programs.

In conclusion, the researcher's insights and personal takes proved that the experiences of the transportation industry were accurate. The researcher understood and realized how tough it was to realize that if solutions were not found, the drivers would endure and feel these pains, sufferings, agonies, and torments forever. To lessen the financial strain on drivers, not only those who were driving public transportation but also those who were government employees, business owners, vehicle owners, and student drivers, it is time to enact targeted fuel subsidies or price regulations. These incentives may lower fuel prices and lower the cost of commuting.

4.0 Conclusion

The study's findings led to the following conclusions, and based on the findings, these conclusions were drawn: First, the results of the data in the Repercussions of Global Change Affect Everyone show that (1) An Increase in Oil Prices has an Impact on Peoples' Livelihoods and Way of Life and (2) Global Problems Affects Local Communities. In addition, the study implies that to Assist the Community in Adjusting to the Fluctuation in Prices, Public Awareness is Required, and it shows that (1) Passengers Need to be Aware of the Fare Adjustments Brought on by the Rise in Oil Prices and (2) Increased Oil Prices have an Impact on Monthly Income. Second, the

results of the study show that the Government Plays a Vital Role in Protecting the Welfare of the People and this can only be done if the government (1) Organize Government Initiatives to Help Local Drivers/Owners and (2) Engage in the Exploration of Sources of Oil in the Country. Third, the study results show that from the insights and personal takes of the researcher's study, the Financial Instability and Fiscal Policy shows that the main concerns of these drivers are all about (1) Budget Constraints and (2) Fuel Price Stabilization Policies.

To the Local Government Unit of Padada, Davao del Sur, the researcher highly recommends to identify and propose policies that should be made to help mitigate and lessen the problem brought by the results of the oil price hikes in transportation sectors. It would be better to amend and strengthen the ordinance made for the passengers, Ordinance 003, Series of 2009. This merely indicates that, depending on the cost of oil at that particular moment in time, the price of the passenger fare may fluctuate from time to time. Moreover, the government needs to take into consideration and follow up the programs such as the promised subsidies for PUV owners and drivers. In addition, if there would be no possible policies that shall be made ahead of time, government interventions and solutions shall be made in order for the municipality not to be affected drastically. Improving the tourism industry in the locality would be one of the interventions that could be both beneficial to the transportation sector especially to the public transportation drivers and would also give positive impact in the municipality itself. The researcher strongly advises public transportation drivers to strictly adhere to the suggested pricing and the fare matrix provided by the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB). In addition, it is good that public transportation drivers understood the current situation and have budget income allocated for the food and other needs of the family, since it is better to adjust the expenses in order to survive. To the future researchers, this study will be a great help for their future investigation related to the discernments of the people about the oil price hike. Moreover, this can be a guide in conducting another study that will relate to this.

5.0 Contributions of Authors

Cydeah Aldic J. Conchas – editing, writing, encoding, transcribing, revision, conception, design, typists
Roel Jr. D. Apas, MPA – supervising, data analysis, checking, themes and codes

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7.0 Conflict of Interests

The authors declare no conflicts of interest about the publication of this paper.

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