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**FINANCIAL CHALLENGES AND COPING MECHANISM OF RICE RETAILERS,**

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**ABSTRACT**

This descriptive-correlational study aimed to determine the financial challenges and coping mechanism of rice retailers. The respondents were the 100 rice retailers in public market and Pabhay Estancia Iloilo classified according to location, source of capital, and years in business. Through the use of the researchers-modified questionnaire which was personally administered by the researchers to the respondents the data were gathered. The data were analyzed through frequency and percentage, mean, Mann-Whitney U test and Spearman's rho with the significance level set at .05 alpha level. The findings of the study revealed that the financial challenges of rice retailers in terms of inflation, and daily operation when taken as an entire group and when classified as to location, source of capital and years in business were much challenged; In terms of debt was challenged when taken as an entire group when classified as to location and above 5 years in business; much challenged with external source of capital but less challenged with internal source of capital while moderately challenged for those 5 years and below in business. The coping mechanism of rice retailers was much practiced when taken as an entire group and when classified as to location, source of capital, and years in business in terms of financial planning while moderately practiced in terms of credit facility when taken as an entire group and when classified as to location and years in business, practiced with external source of capital but less practiced with internal source of capital. There was no significant difference in the financial challenges of rice retailers in terms of inflation and debt (business) and daily operations with coping in terms of credit facility and financial planning when classified as to location and years in business, in terms of daily operation when classified as to source of capital there was significant difference in terms of inflation and debt. There was no significant difference in the coping mechanism of rice retailers in terms of credit facility and financial planning when classified as to location in terms of credit facility when classified as to years in business. but there was a significant difference when classified as to source of capital, in terms of financial planning when classified as to years in business. There was significant relationship between the financial challenges and coping mechanism of rice retailers in the municipality of Estancia.

**Keywords:** *Financial Challenges, Coping Mechanisms, Rice Retailers, Inflation, Debt, Credit Facility, Financial Planning, Daily Operation*