

Impact of Inflation on Middle-Class Households: A Study of Walwa Taluka

Dr. Sandeep Krishnat Raval

M. A., M. Phil., Ph.D., NET JRF, PGDCG, PGDFT.

Associate Professor

H.O.D. Department of Economics

Smt. G. K. G. Kanya Mahavidyalaya, Jaysingpur

Shivaji University, Kolhapur

ravalsandeep9@gmail.com

Abstract: *The purpose of the present research is to study the impact of inflation on middle-class families in Walwataluka. This study has been conducted to understand the impact of rising inflation on the income, expenditure and savings of middle-class families. Primary and secondary data have been used for this research and primary data has been collected from 400 selected respondents in Walwataluka through questionnaire. Taro Yamane formula has been used to select the sample.*

The collected data has been categorized through tables and analyzed in percentage terms. The study found that inflation has significantly increased the expenditure related to food grains, fuel, education and health of middle-class families. It has been observed that the increasing expenditure has reduced the savings of many families and has created stress on their financial planning. Based on the Chi-Square test, it has been clear that inflation has had a statistically significant impact on the income, expenditure and savings of middle-class families.

The findings of the study show that inflation has had a negative impact on the standard of living of middle-class families in Walwa taluka. Therefore, it is necessary for families to make proper financial planning and for the government to implement effective economic policies to control inflation.

Keywords: Inflation, middle-class families, spending, savings, standard of living, Walwataluka

I. INTRODUCTION

Inflation is considered a major economic problem in the economy of any country. The process of continuous increase in the prices of goods and services is called inflation. Inflation reduces the purchasing power of currency and directly affects the standard of living of the common citizen. Middle class families in particular are the most affected by inflation, as their income is limited and their expenditure responsibilities are high. In India, the Reserve Bank of India and the Central Government are implementing various economic and monetary policies to control inflation. However, the increase in the prices of food grains, fuel, education, health and daily necessities has an impact on the lives of common citizens. Due to the increase in inflation, the monthly budget of families deteriorates, savings decrease and there is a pressure on the standard of living. Middle class families are considered an important economic segment of the society. These families generally consist of salaried employees, small traders, farmers and self-employed persons. Since the income of this class is fixed or limited, the increasing rate of inflation changes their spending patterns. Inflation directly affects education, health, household expenses and savings.

Walwataluka of Sangli district of Maharashtra is an agricultural and small-scale industry based area. There is a significant number of middle class families here. In the last few years, the increase in the prices of food grains, fuel and other essential commodities has affected the financial condition of these families to some extent. Therefore, it is necessary to study how exactly inflation affects the middle class families of this area, what changes have occurred in their spending patterns and savings. Against this background, the present research has attempted to study the economic



and social impact of inflation on the middle class families of Walwataluka. Through this study, an attempt will be made to analyze the changes in the income, expenditure, savings and standard of living of the families due to inflation. Therefore, this research will help in understanding the impact of inflation at the local level.

II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:

Inflation has become a serious economic issue in India in recent times. The prices of food grains, fuel, education, health and daily necessities are continuously increasing, affecting the lives of common citizens. Inflation reduces the purchasing power of currency and thus affects the balance of income and expenditure of citizens. In this situation, especially middle class families have to face financial difficulties. The income of middle class families is generally fixed or limited. Therefore, if the prices of goods and services increase, their daily expenses increase, savings decrease and there is a pressure on the standard of living. Due to the increase in expenditure on essential needs like education, health, household expenses and transportation, families have to change their spending patterns. WalwaTaluka in Sangli district of Maharashtra is mainly based on agriculture and service sector. A large number of middle class families live here. The increase in the prices of food grains, fuel and other essential commodities in the last few years has affected the financial condition of these families to some extent. However, there is little detailed study available on how inflation has affected the middle-class families in this area, what changes have taken place in their income-expenditure pattern and savings.

Therefore, it is necessary to study how inflation has affected the financial condition of middle-class families in Walwataluka, what changes have taken place in their daily expenses, savings and standard of living. Against this background, the present research is trying to study the impact of inflation on middle-class families in Walwataluka.

III. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objective of this research is to study the impact of inflation on middle-class families in Walwataluka. For this, the following main objectives have been set:

1. To study the impact of inflation on the income, expenditure and savings of middle-class families in Walwataluka.
2. To analyze the changes in the daily spending patterns and standard of living of middle-class families due to inflation.
3. To study the measures taken by middle-class families for financial management in the context of inflation.

IV. HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY:

H_0 : Inflation has no significant impact on the income, expenditure and savings of middle class households in Walwataluka.

H_1 : Inflation has a significant impact on the income, expenditure and savings of middle class households in Walwataluka.

V. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Ganwar S.S., Chaurasia S.A. (2025), studied 'A Study on Impact of Inflation on Monthly Budget of Individual Families With Reference To Amravati City'. In this study, he mainly studied how inflation, the continuous increase in the general price level of goods and services, has a significant impact on individual purchasing power and household financial status. This research paper mainly studied how inflation has affected the monthly budget of a middle-class family in the city of Amravati, Maharashtra. He concluded in his paper that as prices increase, the real value of money decreases, which forces consumers to adjust their spending habits, savings and overall lifestyle. In this research paper, he surveyed 100 people using a questionnaire, analyzing how their income status and spending patterns have changed due to inflation. His research is limited to Amravati and is conducted over a specific period (2024-2025), but it provides valuable insights into the socio-economic adjustments of urban middle-class families facing inflationary pressures.

Bhoskar V.P., Pilgulwar P.B. (2025) Studied 'Effect of Inflation on Household Savings and Investment Patterns in Maharashtra'. In this study, they examine the impact of inflation on household savings and investment patterns in



Maharashtra over the past decade. They conclude that inflation significantly impacts household financial behavior by affecting real savings, investment options, and purchasing power. They also conclude that rising inflation reduces the value of money, which causes households to shift from traditional savings instruments to alternative assets such as gold, real estate, and the equity market. Their study explores how inflationary pressures affect urban and rural households differently. In this research paper, using secondary data, the research analyzes trends in savings, investment, and inflation in Maharashtra, providing insights into the economic policies adopted by households. The findings highlight the importance of financial literacy, policy interventions, and inflation control measures to protect household savings and promote sustainable economic growth.

Sulekha A., Mary, Tharmalingam (2019) Studied 'Impact of Inflation of the Household Spending Power'. In this study, they have studied how inflation affects different classes of people. According to them, inflation from the point of view of a common man is the increase in the prices of goods and services on a daily basis. People with fixed incomes, whether working in public or private sector organizations or self-employed, working in the unorganized sector, are considered victims of rising inflation because inflation affects the consumption expenditure and investment pattern of the family. The objective of their study is to assess the relationship between inflation and individual household expenditure. The findings of this research study are complementary to economic theories and evidence that inflation increases the cost of living and reduces the opportunities for getting jobs. This situation directly affects the income of the family and their spending capacity, they have concluded in this research paper.

Kumarvel K., Kowsalyadevi S. (2014) Studied 'A Study on Effects of Inflation on Middle Class People with Special Reference to Tiruppur City'. The main objective of this study is to identify the impact of inflation on the purchasing power of the middle class of Tiruppur city and to identify the changes in lifestyle and living standards and to know the awareness of inflation among the middle class people of Tiruppur city. For this research, they have chosen convenience sampling technique. They have used statistical tools like Chi Square and Weighted Average method. This study has helped to find out the problems faced by the middle class people due to inflation. They have concluded that people have reduced the expenditure of the family on entertainment, they have found that although maintaining a vehicle is difficult in a middle class family, they find it necessary and they were spending valuable amount on it.

VI. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present research has adopted descriptive and analytical research methods to study the topic "Impact of Inflation on Middle Class Families in Walwa Taluka – A Study". Both primary and secondary data have been used for this study. Walwa Taluka of Sangli district has been selected as the area of study. In the year 2026, the total population of Walwa Taluka is about 4,55,000 and this taluka includes a total of 95 villages. To understand the economic impact of inflation on middle class families in this taluka, a study will be conducted on selected families.

Primary data for this research has been collected through questionnaire and personal interview. Information has been collected from middle class families in the selected villages about their income, expenditure, savings and changes in their standard of living due to inflation. Secondary data has also been collected from various sources. It includes research articles, books, government reports, periodicals and official websites. Information on inflation and economic conditions is mainly taken from the reports of the Reserve Bank of India and the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation. Taro Yamane Formula has been used to determine the sample size for this research. According to this formula

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

The sample size is determined in this way. Here N is the total population and e indicates the level of error. In this research, the total population of Walwataluka is 4,55,000 (N = 455000) and the level of error is 5 percent (e = 0.05). According to this formula, the sample size has been determined to be about 400. Therefore, about 400 middle-class families have been selected from various villages in Walwataluka and information has been collected from them.



Simple Random Sampling method has been used for sample selection. The collected information has been analyzed using tabulation and percentage method. Based on this analysis, an attempt has been made to explain the impact of inflation on the income, expenditure, savings and standard of living of middle class families in Walwataluka.

VII. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION:

Inflation is whereabouts general price rise and decrease in the value of money in the economy. There is an inverse relationship between price and purchasing power of households for the goods and services. This in turn increases wage rate, rent for godowns and interest for loans obtained by the producers. (Judith P.R.p-417)

1.Age-wise Classification : The respondents selected in the present research have been categorized according to age group. This information has been collected to understand the participation of respondents of different age groups. Its details are shown in the following table no. 1.

Table No.1: Age-wise Classification of Respondents

Sr.No.	Age Group	Respondents	Percentage
1	20-30	80	20%
2	31-40	120	30
3	41-50	110	27.5
4	Above 50	90	22.5
	Total	400	100 %

Source : Primary Data collected through field survey, 2026.

Table No. 1 shows the age-wise classification of respondents selected for the study. Out of the total 400 respondents, 80 respondents (20%) belong to the age group of 20–30 years. About 120 respondents (30%) fall in the age group of 31–40 years, which represents the largest proportion of the sample. Further, 110 respondents (27.5%) belong to the age group of 41–50 years, while 90 respondents (22.5%) are above 50 years of age.

The analysis indicates that the majority of respondents are in the economically active age group of 31–40 years and 41–50 years. These groups are more responsible for household income and expenditure; therefore, their responses are significant for understanding the impact of inflation on middle-class households in WalwaTaluka.

2. Occupation: The middle-class population, which forms the backbone of India’s economy, is highly sensitive to such price fluctuations. (Saini K. et al.p-1405)In the present research, the respondents have been classified according to their occupation. This information is important to understand the economic nature and sources of income of middle class families. Its details are presented in the following table number 2.

Table No.2: Classification of respondents by occupation

Sr.No.	Occupation	Respondents	Percentage
1	Government/Private Job	150	37.5
2	Small business	120	30
3	Farmer	80	20
4	Other	50	12.5
	Total	400	100

Source : Primary Data collected through field survey, 2026.

Table 2 shows the classification of respondents by occupation. Out of a total of 400 respondents, 150 respondents (37.5 percent) are employed in government or private sector. 120 respondents (30 percent) are small business owners. Also, 80 respondents (20 percent) are related to agriculture, while 50 respondents (12.5 percent) are employed in other occupations.

This analysis shows that the proportion of employed persons is highest in middle-class families in Walwataluka. Therefore, the impact of inflation is likely to be more on fixed-income families. Also, it is clear from this table that inflation is also affecting the balance of income and expenditure of small business and farming families.



3. Change in monthly expenses: Data has been collected to understand the changes in the monthly expenditure of middle-class families due to inflation. The analysis is given in Table 3 below.

Table No.3: Change in monthly expenses due to inflation

Sr.No.	Changes in expenses	Respondents	Percentage
1	Massive growth	210	52.5
2	A little growth	130	32.5
3	No change	40	10
4	Decreased	20	5
	Total	400	100

Source : Primary Data collected through field survey, 2026.

Table 3 shows the change in the monthly expenditure of middle class families due to inflation. Out of a total of 400 respondents, 210 respondents (52.5 percent) stated that their monthly expenditure has increased significantly due to inflation. According to 130 respondents (32.5 percent), there has been some increase in expenditure. While 40 respondents (10 percent) said that there has been no change in expenditure. Also, only 20 respondents (5 percent) said that there has been a decrease in expenditure.

From this analysis, it is clear that inflation has had a significant impact on the monthly expenditure of middle class families in Walwataluka. The daily expenditure of families has increased due to the rising prices of goods and services, which has put a strain on their financial planning.

4. Impact of inflation on food expenditure: In emerging economies, inflation poses significant challenges to household consumption—an essential driver of aggregate demand and overall economic stability.(Tremblay N.p-21) To understand the impact of inflation on food expenditure, information has been collected from respondents. The details are given in Table 4 below.

Table No.4: Impact of inflation on food expenditure

Sr.No.	Impact of inflation on food expenditure	Respondents	Percentage
1	Big growth	240	60
2	Medium growth	110	27.5
3	No change	50	12.5
	Total	400	100

Source : Primary Data collected through field survey, 2026.

Table 4 shows the impact of inflation on the food expenditure of middle class families. Out of a total of 400 respondents, 240 respondents (60 percent) stated that inflation has increased the expenditure on food grains to a large extent. According to 110 respondents (27.5 percent), there has been some increase in the expenditure on food grains. While 50 respondents (12.5 percent) have said that there has been no change in the expenditure on food grains.

From this analysis, it is clear that inflation has had a significant impact on the expenditure on food grains. The increase in the prices of essential commodities of daily life has increased the household expenditure of middle class families, which has put a strain on their monthly budget.

5. Impact of inflation on fuel and transportation costs :Data has been collected to understand the impact of inflation on fuel and transport costs. Details in this regard are given in the following Table No. 5.

Table No.5: Impact of inflation on fuel and transportation costs

Sr.No.	Impact	Respondents	Percentage
1	High Increase	220	55
2	Moderate Increase	130	32.5
3	No change	50	12.5
	Total	400	100

Source : Primary Data collected through field survey, 2026.



Table 5 shows the impact of inflation on fuel and transport costs of middle-class households. Out of a total of 400 respondents, 220 respondents (55 percent) stated that fuel and transport costs have increased significantly due to inflation. According to 130 respondents (32.5 percent), these costs have increased to some extent. While 50 respondents (12.5 percent) have said that there has been no change in fuel and transport costs.

From this analysis, it is clear that the transport costs of middle-class households have increased due to the increase in the prices of petrol, diesel and other fuels. Due to this, there is an additional financial burden on the monthly expenses of the households and inflation has a significant impact on their overall household budget.

6. Impact of inflation on education costs: Data has been collected from respondents to study the changes in education-related expenditure due to inflation. The details are shown in Table 6 below.

Table No.6: Impact of inflation on education costs

Sr.No.	Impact	Respondents	Percentage
1	High Increase	180	45
2	Slightly Increase	150	37.5
3	No change	70	17.5
	Total	400	100

Source : Primary Data collected through field survey, 2026.

Table 6 shows the impact of inflation on the education expenditure of middle-class families. Out of a total of 400 respondents, 180 respondents (45 percent) stated that there has been a significant increase in education expenditure. According to 150 respondents (37.5 percent), there has been some increase in education expenditure. While 70 respondents (17.5 percent) stated that there has been no change in education expenditure.

This analysis shows that due to inflation, education-related expenses such as school and college fees, books, notebooks and other educational materials have increased, which has led to an increase in the education expenditure of middle-class families. This has created additional financial strain on the monthly budget of the families.

7.Impact of inflation on health spending:Data has been collected to understand the impact of inflation on health-related expenditure. Its analysis is given in the following Table No. 7.

Table No.7: Impact of inflation on health spending

Sr.No.	Impact	Respondents	Percentage
1	High Increase	170	42.5
2	Slightly Increase	160	40
3	No change	70	17.5
	Total	400	100

Source : Primary Data collected through field survey, 2026.

Table 7 shows the impact of inflation on the health expenditure of middle-class families. Out of a total of 400 respondents, 170 respondents (42.5 percent) stated that there has been a significant increase in health expenditure. According to 160 respondents (40 percent), there has been some increase in health expenditure. While 70 respondents (17.5 percent) said that there has been no change in health expenditure.

From this analysis, it is clear that the health expenditure of middle-class families has increased due to the increasing cost of medicines, tests and hospital services. Due to this, there is an additional financial burden on the total monthly expenditure of families and inflation has also had a significant impact on the health sector.

8. Impact of inflation on saving: Inflation sweeps away savings and investments that are not pegged on the actual price of money. More traditional saving vehicles such as the bank deposits and fixed-income instruments typically fail to keep abreast of the inflation, which does create negative real returns.(SuryakantG.R.,KumarKamleshp-6) Information has been collected from respondents to understand the impact of inflation on the savings of middle-class families. The details are presented in the following Table No. 8.



Table No.8: Impact of inflation on saving

Sr.No.	Status of Saving	Respondents	Percentage
1	Saving Decreased	230	57.5
2	No Change in Saving	110	27.5
3	Saving Increased	60	15
	Total	400	100

Source : Primary Data collected through field survey, 2026.

Table 8 shows the impact of inflation on the savings of middle-class families. Out of a total of 400 respondents, 230 respondents (57.5 percent) stated that their savings have decreased due to inflation. According to 110 respondents (27.5 percent), there has been no change in their savings. While 60 respondents (15 percent) have stated that their savings have increased.

From this analysis, it is clear that due to inflation, the daily expenses of middle-class families have increased. Due to this, their savings have decreased and the financial stability of the families has been affected to some extent.

9. Measures taken by families to deal with inflation: For big and important expenses like home, car, and education, middle-class families often depend upon borrowing money. During inflation times, to regulate price level, central banks generally increase interest rates. (Tajpuri H.S.p-1972) Information has been collected to know what measures middle class families have taken to deal with inflation. The details are given in the following table number 9.

Table No. 9: Measures taken by families to deal with inflation

Sr.No.	Measures	Respondents	Percentage
1	Reduced unnecessary expenditure	160	40
2	Reduced savings	140	35
3	Searching for additional sources of income	70	17.5
4	Borrowing / Taking loans	30	7.5
	Total	400	100

Source : Primary Data collected through field survey, 2026.

Table 9 shows the details of various measures taken by middle class families to cope with inflation. Out of a total of 400 respondents, 160 respondents (40 percent) stated that they have reduced unnecessary expenses to cope with inflation. 140 respondents (35 percent) stated that they have reduced savings. 70 respondents (17.5 percent) stated that they have tried to find additional sources of income. While 30 respondents (7.5 percent) stated that they have taken the option of taking loans.

From this analysis, it is clear that middle class families mainly take measures like reducing unnecessary expenses and reducing savings to cope with the increased expenses due to inflation. Also, some families try to find additional sources of income or take the option of taking loans. This shows that inflation has had a significant impact on the financial management of families.

10. Impact of inflation on standard of living: Food prices, particularly basics like rice, wheat, and vegetables, are very sensitive to inflation. To combat food inflation, many households turn to local markets or low-cost brands. (Dwivedi A.p-4424) To understand the impact of inflation on the living standards of middle-class families, information has been collected from the respondents. Its analysis is shown in the following Table No. 10.

Table No. 10: Impact of inflation on standard of living

Sr.No.	Impact of standard of living	Respondents	Percentage
1	Standard of living Decreased	200	50
2	Partially affected	140	35
3	No effect	60	15
	Total	400	100

Source: Primary Data collected through field survey, 2026.



Table 10 shows the impact of inflation on the standard of living of middle class families. Out of a total of 400 respondents, 200 respondents (50 percent) stated that their standard of living has decreased due to inflation. According to 140 respondents (35 percent), inflation has affected their standard of living to some extent. While 60 respondents (15 percent) have said that there has been no impact on the standard of living.

From this analysis, it is clear that inflation has negatively affected the daily lives of middle class families due to the rising prices of goods and services. The rising costs are creating financial difficulties for families to meet their needs and inflation has significantly affected their standard of living.

VIII. FINDINGS

1. Out of the total 400 respondents in the study, 30 percent of the respondents are in the age group of 31 to 40 and 27.5 percent of the respondents are in the age group of 41 to 50. This shows that the majority of the respondents are in the economically active age group.
2. When classified according to the occupation of the respondents, 37.5 percent of the respondents are government or private sector employees and 30 percent of the respondents are associated with small businesses.
3. Due to inflation, the monthly expenses of 52.5 percent of the middle class families have increased significantly, while the expenses of 32.5 percent of the families have increased to some extent.
4. Due to the increase in food prices, 60 percent of the respondents have seen a significant increase in food grain expenses.
5. In terms of fuel and transport expenses, 55 percent of the respondents have stated that there has been a significant increase due to inflation.
6. In terms of education expenses, 45 percent of the respondents have stated a significant increase and according to 37.5 percent of the respondents, there has been a slight increase in education expenses.
7. In terms of health expenditure, 42.5 percent of respondents said that inflation has increased health expenditure to a large extent.
8. In terms of savings, 57.5 percent of respondents said that inflation has reduced their savings.
9. To deal with inflation, 40 percent of households have opted to cut unnecessary expenses, while 35 percent of households have stated that they have reduced their savings.
10. In terms of standard of living, 50 percent of respondents said that inflation has reduced their standard of living, while 35 percent of respondents have stated that it has affected their standard of living to some extent.

IX. SUGGESTIONS

1. Most of the respondents in the study are in the age group of 31 to 40 and belong to the economically active group. Therefore, it is seen that inflation is having a direct impact on their income and expenditure.
2. The proportion of government and private sector employees is the highest among the respondents. It is seen that inflation is having a greater impact on these families with a fixed income.
3. Inflation has significantly increased the monthly expenditure of most middle-class families due to inflation.
4. Due to the increase in the prices of food grains, the food grain expenditure of families has increased significantly.
5. Due to the increase in the prices of petrol, diesel and other fuels, inflation has also had a major impact on fuel and transport costs.
6. Due to the increase in the prices of education-related expenses such as fees, books and other educational materials, the education expenditure of middle-class families has increased.
7. Due to the increasing cost of medicines, tests and hospital services, there has also been an increase in health expenditure.
8. Due to the increase in daily expenses due to inflation, the savings of most families have decreased.
9. It is seen that many families have taken measures to deal with inflation, such as reducing unnecessary expenses, reducing savings, and finding additional sources of income.



10. Overall, inflation has had a negative impact on the standard of living of middle-class families in Walwataluka and has had a significant impact on their financial planning.

X. HYPOTHESIS TESTING

H_0 : Inflation has no significant impact on the income, expenditure and savings of middle class households in Walwataluka.

H_1 : Inflation has a significant impact on the income, expenditure and savings of middle class households in Walwataluka.

Chi-Square Test for Impact of Inflation

Impact	Observed Frequency(O)	Expected Frequency (E)	O-E	(O-E) ²	(O-E) ² / E
Impact	280	200	80	6400	32
No Impact	120	200	-80	6400	32
Total	400	400			64

$$\chi^2 = \sum (O-E)^2 / E = 64$$

Degree of Freedom $df = (r-1)(c-1) = (2-1)(2-1) = 1$ Table Value at 5% significance level χ^2 table value = 3.84

Decision Rule Calculate χ value = 64 Table χ value = 3.84 That is, $64 > 3.84$

Therefore, the Null Hypothesis (H_0) is rejected and the Alternative Hypothesis (H_1) is accepted.

The Chi-Square test shows that inflation has had a statistically significant impact on the income, expenditure, and savings of middle-class households in Walwataluka.

XI. CONCLUSION

The purpose of the present research was to study the impact of inflation on middle-class families in Walwataluka. For this research, information was collected from 400 respondents using primary and secondary data. The collected data was statistically analyzed through tables and its findings were presented.

The study shows that inflation has significantly affected the daily lives of middle-class families. There has been a significant increase in expenditure in essential sectors such as food grains, fuel, education and health. This has led to an increase in the monthly expenditure of families and a decrease in the amount of savings. Also, the increasing expenditure has put a strain on the financial planning of many families.

This study also shows that in the context of inflation, families have taken measures such as reducing unnecessary expenditure, reducing savings and finding supplementary sources of income. Overall, inflation has had a negative impact on the standard of living of middle-class families in Walwataluka and has affected their financial stability.

Therefore, it is essential for middle-class families to do proper financial planning and for the government to implement effective policies to control the prices of essential commodities. Such measures will help to reduce the impact of inflation on middle-class families to some extent.

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