Effect of Tertiary Students' Population on Rental Values of Residential Facilities in the Hohoe Municipality of the Volta Region of Ghana

Clement Kantam Kolamong*; Andrews Olator Jnr; Sylvia Adzoa Addai; Seth Asare

St. Francis College of Education, Hohoe

***Corresponding Author**

DOI: https://dx.doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2025.9020024

Received: 16 January 2025; Accepted: 24 January 2025; Published: 28 February 2025

ABSTRACT

The availability and quality of accommodation can influence the rental prices of residential properties, particularly in areas with a high concentration of tertiary students. Grounded in the Ricardo's Theory of Rent and the Modern Theory on Rent, this study examined the effect of tertiary student population on rental values of residential facilities in the Hohoe municipality. Specifically, the study identified the rental values of residential facilities in the Hohoe municipality, examined the effect of tertiary students' population on rental values in the Hohoe municipality, and identified factors contributing to rental values in the Hohoe municipality. The study adopted a mixed methods research approach and data was collected from residents, landlords, and officials of key tertiary institutions in the Hohoe municipality. The findings showed that the enrolment of students in various tertiary institutions has affected rental prices negatively causing rental prices to increase in the Hohoe Municipality owing to the non-availability of on-campus housing facilities in most of the institutions. Most landlords charged between 250-300 Ghana cedis per month and the least was between 150-200 Ghana cedis per month. The findings revealed that the demand for housing, location of the property, proximity, rental price, safety and security, and the amenities available were among the factors contributing to the rental values of residential facilities in the Hohoe Municipality. The study concludes that the increasing population of tertiary students in Hohoe Municipality has driven up rental prices due to limited on-campus housing.

Keywords: population, tertiary student, rental value, residential facility, Hohoe Municipality

INTRODUCTION

The expansion of higher education institutions has had noticeable effects on local housing markets. For instance, studies in the United States, such as those by Pollock (2018), highlight how university growth in urban areas leads to increased demand for rental properties, driving up rents and altering the housing landscape (Pollock, 2018). Similarly, research in the United Kingdom by Houghton and Munro (2019) has illustrated the impact of student populations on rental values in cities with large student enrollments, noting significant increases in rental prices in neighbourhoods close to universities (Houghton & Munro, 2019). In Australia, Kearns and Whitley (2015) investigated the consequences of university expansions on rental markets in cities like Melbourne and Sydney, revealing that the influx of students contributes to higher rental rates and increased competition for housing (Kearns & Whitley, 2015). These studies collectively underscore a trend where higher education institutions, by attracting large student populations, contribute to shifts in local housing markets.

In Ghana, the influence of tertiary institutions on housing markets is less documented but follows a similar pattern. As higher education institutions expand in the country, they are expected to influence local housing markets, including rental values. Research by Asiedu and Freeman (2021) indicates that the presence of tertiary

institutions in Ghanaian towns and cities increases demand for rental housing, resulting in elevated rental prices (Asiedu & Freeman, 2021). The study also emphasises that such effects are more pronounced in areas with high student populations and limited housing supply. Similarly, research in other developing countries with expanding educational sectors has highlighted the correlation between student populations and rising rental costs (Hassall, 2011). These findings suggest that the Hohoe Municipality may experience similar trends due to its growing student population.

Establishing several tertiary institutions, including three training colleges and a university, in the Hohoe Municipality has significantly increased the influx of students and workers into the area. This rapid growth has led to a surge in housing demand, creating financial pressures for both newcomers and long-standing residents. The local rental market is thus impacted by the influx of students who seek accommodation in the municipality. According to recent local reports, rental values in Hohoe have seen noticeable fluctuations, with prices increasing in areas with higher student concentrations (Ghana Statistical Service, 2023). This trend aligns with the global observations of student impact on rental markets but requires specific analysis in the context of Hohoe. Sinai (2007) notes that the introduction of new projects or developments often exerts a considerable influence on the community, which can be positive or negative and may affect various aspects such as social, cultural, or political dimensions.

Despite the global trend of increasing student enrollments (Center for Global Education, 2003), many developing countries, including Ghana, continue to struggle with providing adequate residential accommodation for students. This persistent gap between housing demand and supply (Adebowale et al., 2017) has led to increased participation by the private sector in the student accommodation market to support government efforts (Olutabo, 2017). This dynamic can lead to increased rental values, impacting students and local residents (Jones & Sutherland, 2018). Additionally, the increased demand for rental properties can influence the quality and availability of housing, potentially leading to housing shortages and affordability issues (Osei & Asiedu, 2020). The impact of tertiary students on rental values is not uniform across all regions. Factors such as population growth, income levels, traffic congestion, proximity to workplaces, access to public transportation, and closeness to educational institutions are likely to influence rental values (Oni, 2007).

In Ghana, research on this specific phenomenon is limited, especially in the context of smaller municipalities like Hohoe. Most existing studies focus on urban areas or larger cities, leaving a gap in understanding how tertiary student populations influence rental values in smaller municipal settings (Kwarteng & Amoah, 2019). This study seeks to fill this gap by investigating the impact of the tertiary student population on residential rental values in the area. Specifically, this study seeks to achieve the following objectives: 1. To identify the rental values of residential facilities in the Hohoe Municipality. 2. To examine the effect of the tertiary students' population on rental values of residential facilities in the Hohoe Municipality and 3. To investigate the factors contributing to the rental values of residential facilities in the Hohoe Municipality. Findings from this study will guide policymakers, educational institutions, and housing developers in managing rental markets amid student influx. Additionally, the research offers a deeper understanding of rental dynamics in developing countries, contributing to global knowledge and aiding in the planning of housing infrastructure and support services for both students and long-term residents.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Frameworks

The study was informed by the Ricardo's Classical Theory of Rent and the Marshall's Modern Theory of Rent.

Ricardo's Theory of Rent

David Ricardo's theory of rent, formulated in the early 19th century, is based on the concept of differential rent. He posited that rent arises from differences in the fertility of land and its location, asserting that the most productive lands are cultivated first, while less fertile lands are brought into use only when demand increases

(Ricardo, 1817). Applying this to the present study, Ricardo's theory helps explain why rental prices vary across different areas within the municipality. As the student population in Hohoe increases, the demand for housing around tertiary institutions grows, raising the rental values due to locational advantage rather than improvements in housing quality (Boateng-Gyambiby, 2010). It has been posited that residential facilities closer to educational institutions commanded higher rents, reflecting Ricardo's principle that land in desirable locations earns more rent. Additionally, as the availability of housing decreases, even lower-quality accommodations see rental increases, mirroring Ricardo's assertion that land rent rises as less desirable locations are utilised. This effect is further exacerbated by the lack of sufficient student accommodation, leading landlords to exploit the inelastic nature of housing demand in proximity to schools, increasing rents beyond intrinsic property value (Kwabla et al., 2015). Hence, Ricardo's rent theory remains relevant in explaining the economic forces shaping rental values in Hohoe.

Modern Theory of Rent

The modern theory of rent expands on Ricardo's framework by incorporating demand and supply dynamics beyond agricultural land, extending rent determination to urban housing markets. This approach, influenced by the works of economists such as Alfred Marshall, considers factors like property development, demand elasticity, and external economic influences (Marshall, 1890). In Hohoe Municipality, the influx of tertiary students has created a demand-driven rental market, where the price of housing is dictated by competitive bidding among tenants rather than intrinsic land productivity. The study by Boateng-Gyambiby (2010) highlights that student demand significantly influences rent levels, particularly in areas with limited housing supply, aligning with the modern rent theory's emphasis on market forces. The research found that rental values were not merely dictated by land fertility or location but also by infrastructural developments, landlord expectations, and economic trends. Unlike Ricardo’s model, which focuses on land as a fixed resource, the modern rent theory considers improvements in property, such as better facilities or proximity to commercial areas, as key determinants of rental pricing (Kwabla et al., 2015). This is evident in Hohoe, where landlords charge premium prices for well-furnished apartments and gated residences, reflecting demand-driven price differentials. Again, the present study indicates that speculative activities by property owners, who anticipate future rent hikes due to continued student influx, further influence pricing strategies. Thus, the modern theory on rent offers a comprehensive analysis of the dynamic interactions between housing supply, infrastructural development, and market forces in determining rental values in Hohoe.

The Concept of Rent

The concept of rent has been extensively discussed in economic literature, with its foundations rooted in classical economics. According to Ricardo (1817), rent is the payment for land use, reflecting the land's productivity and relative scarcity. This traditional view was further expanded by modern economists who argue that rent is not limited to land but can apply to any factor of production that earns income due to its limited availability and unique qualities (Blaug, 2000). In urban economics, rent is often discussed in the context of housing markets, where it is influenced by factors such as location, demand, and the availability of housing units. As Tiwari and Parikh (1998) highlight, the rental value of residential properties is closely tied to the economic and social dynamics of urban centres, including the proximity to amenities and the area's overall economic health. Furthermore, rent control policies, often implemented to protect tenants, can significantly affect rental markets. Malpezzi (1998) argues that such policies, while well-intentioned, may lead to market distortions by reducing the incentive for landlords to maintain and improve properties, ultimately affecting the quality and supply of rental housing. In a broader economic context, the concept of rent also intersects with issues of inequality, as access to prime rental properties often correlates with income disparities, exacerbating social and economic divides (Harvey, 1973).

Rental Values

Rental values, often defined as the amount of rent a property commands in the market, are a crucial indicator of the real estate sector's health. These values are influenced by various factors, including location, property

size, and the overall economic environment. According to McDonald and McMillen (2010), rental values are reflective of both the demand and supply dynamics within a particular market, with higher demand in prime locations driving up rental prices. Similarly, the state of the economy plays a significant role; for instance, during economic downturns, rental values may stagnate or even decline as people's purchasing power diminishes (Smith, 2017). Additionally, changes in property laws and regulations can affect rental values, with stricter regulations often leading to increased costs for landlords, which are then passed on to tenants in the form of higher rents (Bourassa et al., 2009).

In metropolitan areas, rental values are particularly sensitive to changes in transportation infrastructure, with properties located near public transit hubs generally commanding higher rents due to their increased accessibility (Gibbons & Machin, 2005). Moreover, rental values are also affected by the condition and amenities of the property. Properties that are well-maintained and offer modern amenities are likely to have higher rental values compared to those that lack these features (Leishman, 2003).

Determinants of Rent

The determinants of rent are multifaceted and vary across different markets and property types. One of the primary determinants is location, as properties in more desirable areas, such as those with proximity to business districts or good schools, tend to attract higher rents (Alonso, 1964). The accessibility of a property, especially its proximity to public transport, shopping centres, and employment hubs, significantly influences its rental value (Gibbons & Machin, 2005). Additionally, the economic status of the region plays a crucial role; in economically vibrant areas, demand for rental properties is usually higher, leading to increased rent prices (Smith, 2017). The size and type of the property also determine rent, with larger properties or those offering more living space generally commanding higher rents (Goodman, 2003). Furthermore, the condition of the property is another important factor; properties that are well-maintained and have modern amenities can attract higher rents compared to those in poor condition (Leishman, 2003). Socioeconomic factors, such as income levels of the population and employment rates, also influence the rental market, as higher income levels enable tenants to afford higher rents (Glaeser et al., 2008). Finally, government policies, including rent controls and housing subsidies, can significantly impact rent levels by either restricting rent increases or providing financial support to tenants, thereby affecting overall market dynamics (Bourassa et al., 2009). In essence, the determinants of rent are a combination of location, property characteristics, economic conditions, and government policies, all of which interact to influence the rental prices in any given market.

Factors Affecting Rental Values in Urban Areas in Ghana

According to Amenyah, and Fletcher, (2013) due to the high demand for residential apartments, landlords take undue advantage of tenants and increase rent without adhering to rent regulations. The rental values of residential properties in urban areas of Ghana are influenced by various socio-economic and demographic factors. One of the primary factors is the level of urbanisation and population growth. As urban areas expand and population density increases, the demand for housing also rises, leading to higher rental prices (Boamah, 2014). The influx of people into urban centres, driven by economic opportunities and better living conditions, has exacerbated the housing demand-supply gap, contributing to elevated rental values (Grant, 2009). Additionally, proximity to essential amenities such as schools, hospitals, and markets significantly influences rental prices. Properties located near these amenities typically command higher rents due to the convenience they offer (Asiama, 2008). The quality of infrastructure, including roads, electricity, and water supply, also plays a crucial role. Well-developed infrastructure enhances the attractiveness of an area, thereby increasing the rental values of properties located there (Danso-Wiredu, 2018).

Another significant factor is the economic status of the population. Higher income levels in urban areas correlate with increased rental values as people are willing and able to pay more for housing (Adjei, 2013). Moreover, the level of economic activities in an area, such as the presence of businesses and industries, influences rental prices. Areas with vibrant economic activities tend to have higher rental values due to the demand from workers seeking proximity to their workplaces (Agyemang, 2017). The regulatory environment,

including land tenure systems and property taxes, also impacts rental values. Favourable regulations can attract investment in housing, thereby influencing rental prices (Yeboah, 2008). Lastly, cultural factors, including preferences for certain types of housing, also play a role. In some urban areas, there is a preference for modern apartments, which often have higher rental values compared to traditional housing (Gough & Yankson, 2011).

Impact of Students' Population on Rental Values in Developing Cities

The impact of student population on rental values in developing cities is a critical area of research, given the increasing urbanization and expansion of tertiary education in these regions. Several studies have established a strong correlation between the presence of universities and increased rental values in nearby residential areas. This phenomenon is primarily due to the high demand for student accommodation, which often outpaces supply, leading to a significant rise in rental prices (Smith, 2008). As noted by Glaeser and Gottlieb (2009), the concentration of a young, educated population around universities often leads to increased rental prices due to the demand for proximity to educational facilities and related amenities. In developing cities, this effect is magnified by the lack of adequate infrastructure and affordable housing, which further exacerbates the situation. For instance, in cities where there is limited investment in student housing, the spillover demand from students into the general rental market tends to inflate prices, making housing less affordable for non-student residents (Hubbard, 2009).

Moreover, the seasonal nature of student demand, with peak periods at the start of academic terms, also influences rental dynamics. Landlords often capitalise on this by adjusting rental prices upward during these periods, contributing to market volatility (Chatterton, 2010). This impact is more pronounced in developing cities, where economic disparities are more evident, and housing markets are less regulated (Munro & Livingston, 2012). Additionally, the expansion of tertiary institutions in these cities often leads to gentrification, which further drives up rental values, as areas close to universities become more desirable for investment (Maclennan & More, 2014). This situation poses significant challenges for urban planners and policymakers, who must balance the needs of the growing student population with the broader community's housing affordability (Wakely & Riley, 2011). Furthermore, students' preference for off-campus housing near educational institutions drives up demand in these specific areas, leading to localized increases in rental values (Smith et al., 2018).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Design

Data collection utilised a mixed-method approach to address the limitations of individual methods while leveraging their respective advantages (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). The study applied a convergent parallel mixed-method design, which involves analyzing the similarities and differences between various data sets (Tenuche, 2018). This approach involved gathering and analysing these distinct data sets separately before merging them for comprehensive comparison and integration of the findings (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). This methodological framework was particularly suited to the study's objectives, as it allowed for a thorough mixed-methods analysis by integrating diverse data sources and perspectives to provide a richer and more nuanced understanding of the research problem. By converging these methods, the study aims to offer a holistic understanding of the rental market dynamics influenced by student populations.

Study Area

Hohoe Municipality, situated in the Volta Region of Ghana, is renowned for its hilly terrain, lush green landscapes, and the picturesque Akuapim-Togo mountain range to the east. Geographically, the Municipality is located on latitude 7.1357° N, and longitude 0.4880°E. The municipality enjoys a tropical climate with distinct wet and dry seasons. Hohoe, the capital, and a major commercial and administrative centre, is home to several schools, including four tertiary institutions. The area is rich in cultural heritage, known for its

ISSN No. 2454-6186 | DOI: 10.47772/IJRISS | Volume IX Issue II February 2025

traditional festivals and ceremonies, offering a unique blend of modern amenities and a connection to rural life. This makes Hohoe a popular destination for tourists seeking to explore the natural beauty and cultural richness of the Volta Region. According to the 2021 Population and Housing Census, the Hohoe Municipality has a population of 114,472, comprising 54,893 males (47.9%) and 59,579 females (52.1%) (Ghana Statistical Service, 2021).

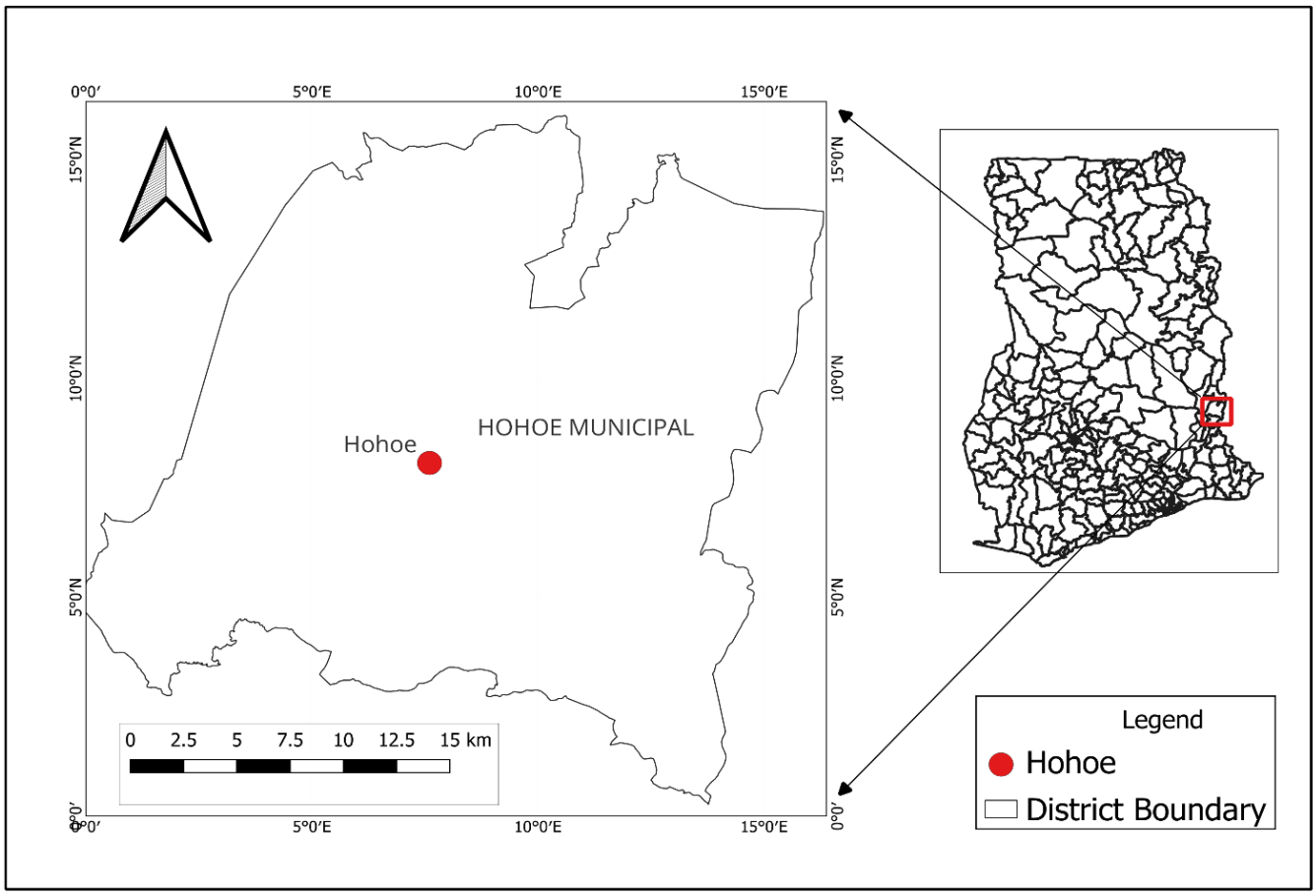

Figure 1: Study Area Map showing the Hohoe Municipality in the Volta Region of Ghana

Sampling

This study employed purposive sampling. According to Kothari (2004), the purposive sampling method involves purposely or deliberately selecting definite units of the world to obtain a sample representing the world. The primary objective of purposive sampling is to select specific characteristics or traits within a population most relevant to the research question or objectives. This method allows researchers to choose participants who possess certain attributes or experiences critical to the study (Elston & Johnson, 2008; Kazerooni, 2001). By concentrating on these specific characteristics, purposive sampling aims to provide a deeper understanding and more insightful findings related to the phenomenon under investigation. The sample size was arrived at using the Yamane's formula;

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

Where, (n) is the required sample size, (N) is the total population size, and (e) is the error margin (0.05). Out of a population of 84,000 after subtracting 30, 472 people who were under the age of 18,

$$n = \frac{84000}{(1 + 84000(0.05)^2)} = \frac{84000}{210} = 400$$

From the computation above, the sample size needed for this research was 400 respondents in the municipality. However, owing to time and logistical constraints, the researchers used a sample size comprising 100 tenants (including student and non-student residents) and 50 landlords. In addition, four officials of the tertiary institutions in the Municipality were interviewed.

Data Collection and Analysis

Quantitative data were gathered through structured questionnaires distributed to 100 tenants and 50 landlords, capturing rental values and demographic factors. The questionnaires were not piloted. However, the reliability and validity of the instruments were checked through expert advice, where the instruments were submitted to three experts. The feedback from these experts was incorporated into the final instruments. Qualitative insights were obtained through semi-structured interviews with university officials to explore the total student population and its impact on the rental values of residential facilities. Participants consented by signing informed consent forms during data collection. Additionally, we obtained their permission before recording the interviews. To maintain anonymity and confidentiality, we utilised pseudonyms to hide the identity of respondents.

Following data collection, the quantitative data from the questionnaires were serialized, coded, cleaned, and analyzed using SPSS version 25, with descriptive statistics such as frequency and percentage applied. The qualitative data were examined through thematic analysis. We transcribed the interview recordings verbatim using Microsoft Word (2010), and read the transcripts thoroughly to become familiar with the content. This process allowed us to identify patterns and recurring themes. After transcription, the data was cleaned by removing repetitions and correcting grammatical errors. We then coded the data following Saldana's (2009) coding schema, primarily employing gerunds to avoid a simple re-description of the data (Charmaz, 2004). The themes identified were organised to complement the quantitative findings, supported by direct quotations.

RESULTS

Socio-demographic characteristics of respondents

In Table 1, the background characteristics of tenants are presented. Out of one hundred tenants, 42% (42) were aged 18-24 years, followed by those aged 25-34 years representing 39%. Regarding gender, more than half (56%) were women while the rest were men (44%). Concerning the occupation, the results found more than half (58%) of the tenants to be students (Figure 2). A majority (85%) resided in residential properties within the Hohoe municipality. Out of those in residential properties, more than half (58.8%) lived in compound houses, 27.1% lived in apartments, 8.2% lived in detached houses and 5.9% lived in semidetached houses (Figure 3).

Table 1: Background characteristics

Variable	Groups	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Age	18-24	42	42
	25-34	39	39
	35-44	15	15
	45-54	1	1
	55+	3	3
	Total	100	100
Gender	Male	44	44
	Female	56	56
	Total	100	100

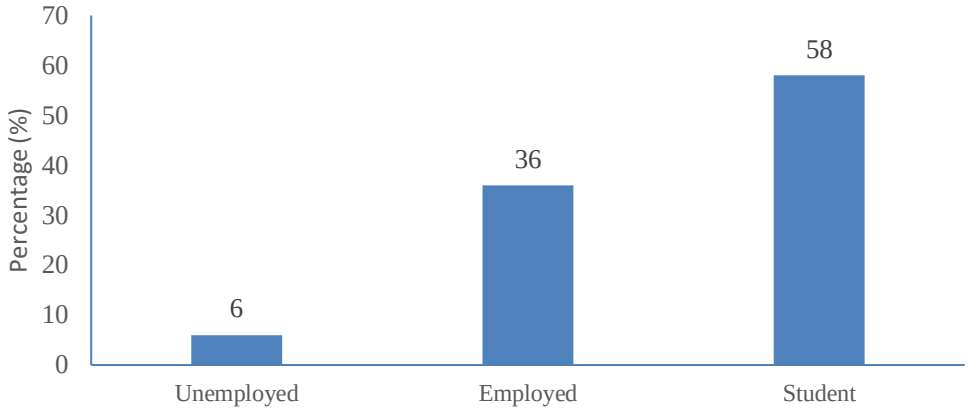

Figure 2: Occupation

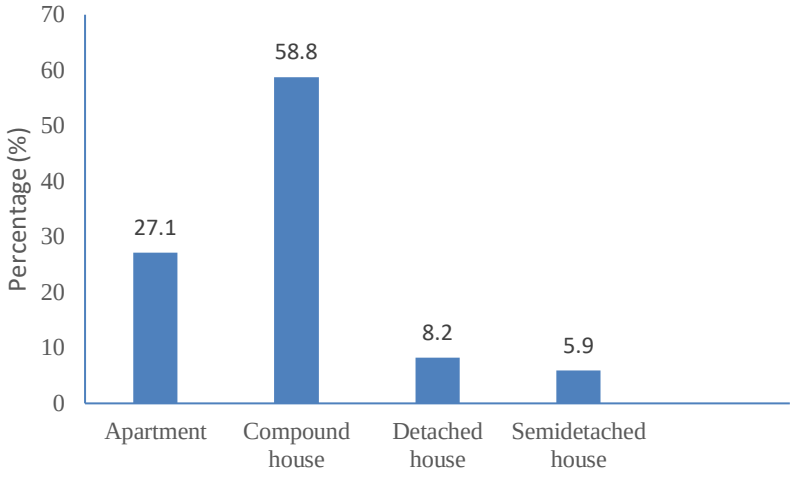

Figure 3: Type of House

Rental values of residential facilities in the Hohoe Municipality.

This objective sought to examine the rental values of residential housing in the municipality. The results revealed that 38% of the landlords charged between 250-300 Ghana cedis per month, followed by 34% who charged 350-500 Ghana cedis per month, and 20% charged 550 Ghana cedis and above. Only 8% of them charged between 150-200 Ghana cedis per month. This is shown in Figure 4.

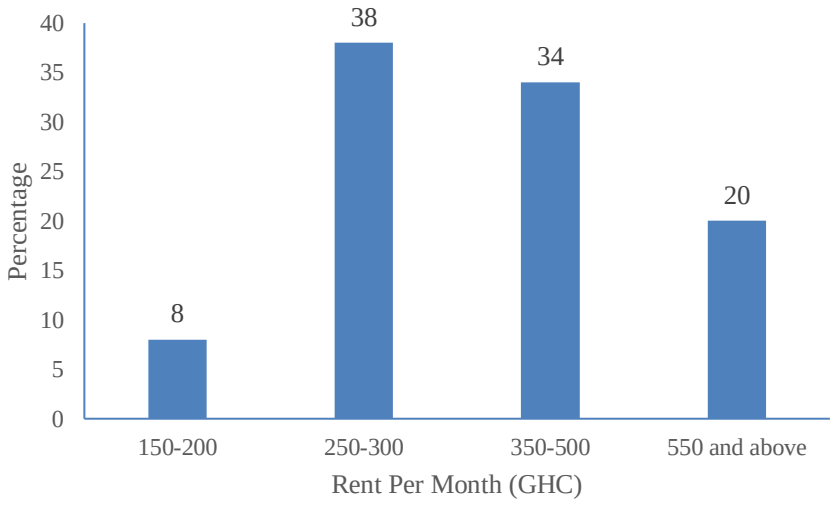

Figure 4: Rental values per month

Effect of tertiary students' population on rental values on residential facilities in the Hohoe Municipality

According to tenants (TN), 87% of them observed changes in the rental costs due to the presence of tertiary students in their area. Of those who observed changes, 93.1% of them mentioned an increase in rental prices and 2.3% mentioned that there were more housing options. Only 3.5% indicated stability in the rental prices. Also, 96% of the TN noticed an increase in the number of tertiary students living in their areas and 92.7% of those who noticed this increase said it is affecting rental prices negatively.

From the landlord's (LL) perspective, 82% of them said the presence of tertiary students has affected the rental prices. Of those that mentioned the presence of tertiary students affects rental prices, 95.1% said it has resulted in the high demand from the students and 4.9% said it has resulted in limited students staying in campus residential facilities. Furthermore, 72% of the LL have experienced demand from the students and 52.8% of them said it makes them regularly maintain the apartment whilst 47.2% said it makes them always reserve the place for the students. About the proportion of tertiary students in the apartments of landlords, 24% of them said about 50-60% of their tenants were tertiary students, followed by 14% having between 90-100% of them being tertiary students.

Insights from the interviews indicated that there has been a significant increase in students' enrolment in the institutions in the Municipality over the past half-decade with the offering of degree programmes and the addition of new courses. This was how one principal reported:

"*Yes, student enrolment has increased over the past five years and this is due to the introduction of a four-year degree program which replaced the three-year diploma programme*" **(P3: Principal)**.

A similar opinion was shared by another that,

"Yes, there has been a significant increase in student enrolment over the past 5 years and this is mainly because there has been the introduction of new courses." **(P4: Administrator).**

The increase in enrolment has resulted in (1) an increase in rental prices of residential facilities and (2) impact on residential property type.

Rental Price Increase

The study discovered that rental prices of residential facilities were affected by the demand for housing owing to student enrolment increases in the institutions. One Estate Officer said that

"Yes, because rental prices are demand driven and since over 400 students are in final year students who go to look for accommodation within the municipality, rental values will definitely go up." **(P1: Estate Officer).**

The participants mentioned that rental prices were demand-driven and high demand for housing can lead to an increase in rental prices. An administrator had this to report:

"Yes, because the institution is only able to accommodate just few of its enrolled student population, most of the students have to get themselves accommodation outside and this may have contributed to the rising rental values lately within the municipality." **(P2: Administrator)**

Impact on Residential Property

Specific types of residential properties such as apartments, shared housing, and single-family homes seemed to be more affected by student enrolment concerning rental values. Most participants said that apartments were mostly affected and few said compound houses. For example, an Estate Officer said,

"*Compound houses are mostly affected, except a few students who come from good financial backgrounds who can afford detached and semidetached accommodation."* **(P1: Estate Officer)**

Factors contributing to rental values of residential facilities in the Hohoe Municipality.

This part of the study sought to unravel the factors determining the rental values of residential facilities in the Hohoe Municipality. Figure 5 presents the factors influencing the rental values from the perspectives of the landlords. According to the results, 38% of the LL associated the changes in rental values with the high demand for housing. Other factors mentioned were the location of the facility (24%), condition of the property (10%), proximity (10%) and amenities (8%).

Similarly, Figure 6 depicts the factors tenants consider before choosing an apartment. The results showed that 50% of them considered the rental price, 30% considered the proximity to their school or place of work, 12% considered how safe and secure the apartment is, 7% considered the amenities available and only 1% considered the size and layout of the property as determinants of rental values.

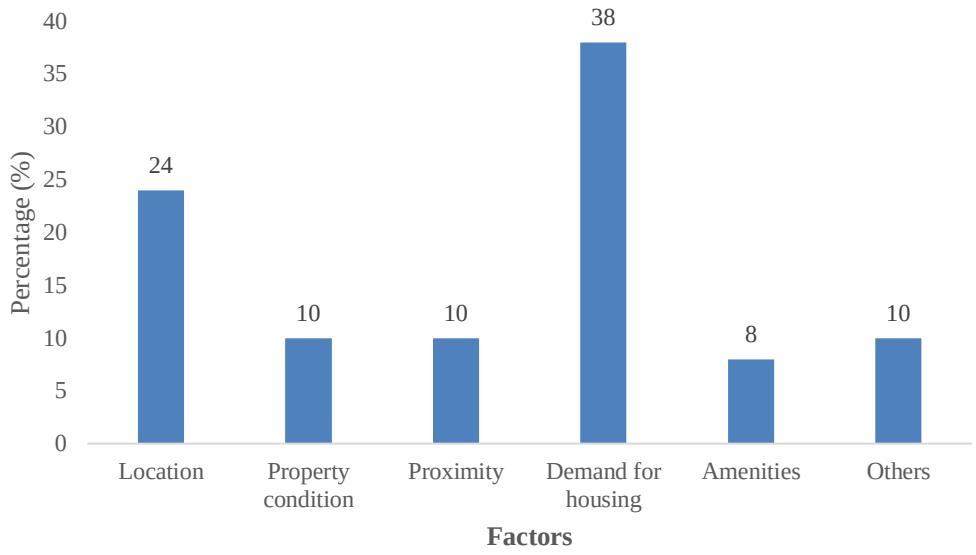

Figure 5: Factors influencing the rental values in the municipality (LL)

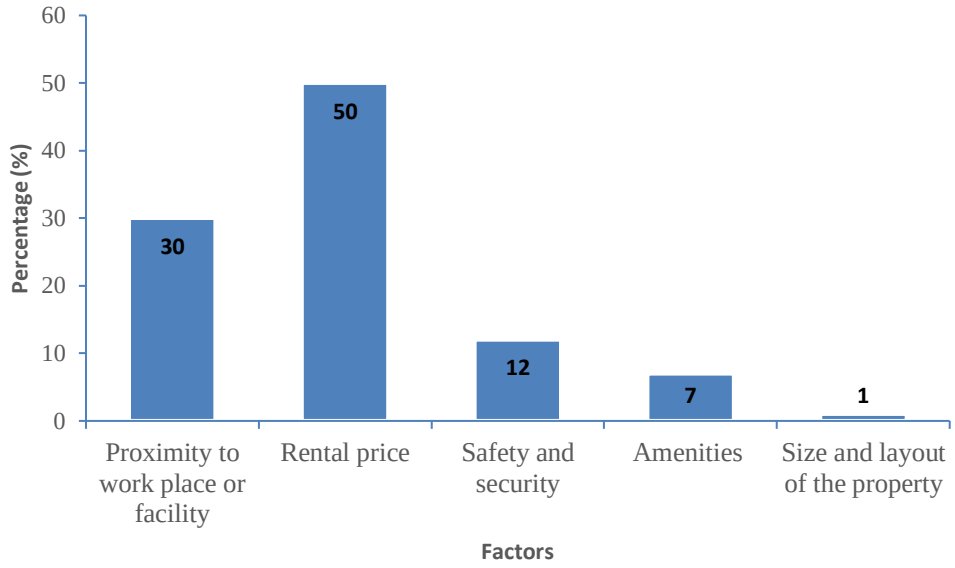

Figure 6: Factors considered by tenants before renting a house

DISCUSSION

The findings of the study on the effect of tertiary students' population on rental values in the Hohoe Municipality reveal several key insights that align with and expand upon existing literature on factors affecting rental values in urban areas of Ghana and developing cities more broadly. The study highlights that the enrollment of students in tertiary institutions in Hohoe has led to an increase in rental prices, primarily due to the insufficient availability of on-campus housing. This aligns with Amenyah and Fletcher (2013), who noted that high demand for residential apartments often leads landlords to exploit tenants by increasing rents beyond regulatory limits. The increase in rental values in Hohoe can be understood within the broader context of urbanisation and population growth, which are significant drivers of rental prices. The rising demand for housing in areas with expanding educational institutions exacerbates the housing demand-supply gap, leading to higher rental prices. From the perspective of Ricardo's Theory of Rent, this phenomenon can be explained by the principle that rent is determined by the differential advantage of land in terms of its fertility or location (Ricardo, 1817). In the case of Hohoe, proximity to tertiary institutions is the key locational advantage that makes certain rental properties more desirable, thus commanding higher prices. Ricardo's theory suggests that as demand for land (or rental properties) increases, rents will rise, particularly for properties in prime locations near institutions, aligning with the study's findings that the limited supply of housing near tertiary institutions forces students to compete for available spaces, driving up rental values.

The study's findings of landlords charging amount between 250-300 Ghana cedis per month for rental properties, with some as low as 150-200 Ghana cedis, underscores the price range influenced by various factors, including location, demand, and amenities. This aligns with Asiama (2008), who found that properties near essential amenities like schools and markets command higher rents due to the convenience they offer. This is supported by the modern theory of rent, which extends Ricardo's classical view, by arguing that rent is not only determined by land scarcity but also by the productivity or utility of the property (Marshall, 1890; Alonso, 1964). In this context, rental properties in Hohoe gain value due to their utility—providing housing to students who require proximity to their institutions. In Hohoe, the high demand for housing near tertiary institutions drives rental prices up, as landlords capitalise on the proximity to educational facilities and related amenities. This situation is further compounded by the lack of sufficient infrastructure and on-campus housing, which makes off-campus housing the only viable option for many students.

In Hohoe, the absence of adequate on-campus housing means that students and other residents must rely on external housing options, driving up demand and, consequently, rental prices. This is consistent with findings from Smith (2008) and Glaeser and Gottlieb (2009), who observed that the presence of universities tends to increase rental values due to heightened demand for nearby accommodation. The study highlights that, factors such as demand for housing, location, proximity, safety, and available amenities significantly contribute to rental values in the Hohoe Municipality. Moreover, the influx of students can be seen as a driver of local economic activities, creating a demand for various services and amenities that can, in turn, influence rental values. This finding supports the studies by Adjei, (2013) and Agyemang, (2017), who opine that the economic status of the population and the level of economic activities in the area also influence rental prices. The modern theory of rent further explains this by considering how economic development, increased infrastructure, and localized demand can elevate rental values over time (Harvey, 1987).

However, the study also suggests that the seasonal nature of student demand, with peak periods at the start of academic terms, affects rental dynamics. This seasonal fluctuation, where landlords adjust rental prices upward during peak periods, reflects the market volatility discussed by Chatterton (2010) and is exacerbated in developing cities with less regulated housing markets (Munro & Livingston, 2012). The phenomenon of gentrification, as discussed by Maclennan and More (2014), also plays a role in the rental market dynamics observed in Hohoe. The expansion of tertiary institutions and the increased desirability of areas near universities often lead to higher rental values and potentially displace non-student residents. This aligns with the study's findings that increased rental prices are a result of high demand from students and the lack of adequate on-campus housing. The impact of students' preferences for off-campus housing near educational institutions drives localized increases in rental values, a pattern consistent with Smith et al. (2018).

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The study underscores that the influx of tertiary students in the Hohoe Municipality significantly impacts rental values, driven by the insufficient availability of on-campus housing and the resultant high demand for off-campus accommodations. This shortage has led to a heightened demand for off-campus accommodations, consequently driving up rental prices. These findings align with broader trends observed in urban areas of Ghana and developing cities, where increased demand for housing due to factors like urbanisation and educational institutions leads to higher rental prices. In Hohoe Municipality, the increased student population has put considerable pressure on the local housing market. As demand outpaces supply, landlords often take advantage of the situation by raising rents, making it difficult for both students and non-student residents to find affordable housing. This trend exacerbates socioeconomic disparities, as those with limited financial means struggle to secure adequate living arrangements.

The findings highlight the need for improved housing strategies to mitigate the negative effects on rental prices and ensure affordability for both students and non-student residents. Policymakers and educational institutions should consider expanding on-campus housing and enhancing infrastructure to better accommodate the growing student population. This approach can help alleviate pressure on the local rental market and contribute to more stable rental prices. Additionally, implementing rent regulations and supporting affordable housing initiatives could help stabilize rental markets and reduce exploitation by landlords. Addressing these issues will not only benefit students but also contribute to a more balanced and equitable housing environment in developing urban areas.

Disclosure Statement

There is no potential conflict to be declared by the authors

REFERENCES

1. Adjei, M. (2013). The impact of income levels on rental prices in Ghana. *Journal of African Real Estate Studies*, 2(1), 45-61.
2. Agyemang, F. (2017). Economic activities and rental values in Urban Ghana. *African Economic Review*, 5(3), 87-99.
3. Alonso, W. (1964). *Location and land use: Toward a general theory of land rent*. Harvard University Press.
4. Asiama, S. O. (2008). Housing market dynamics in Urban Ghana. *Journal of Housing and the Built Environment*, 23(4), 399-420.
5. Asiedu, A. B., & Freeman, A. (2021). Impact of higher education institutions on residential rental markets in Ghana. *Journal of Housing and the Built Environment*, 36(3), 435-450.
6. Blaug, M. (2000). *Ricardian Economics: A historical perspective*. Edward Elgar Publishing.
7. Boamah, N. A. (2014). The determinants of housing prices in Ghana. *African Review of Economics and Finance*, 6(2), 92-113
8. Bourassa, S. C., Hoesli, M., & Sun, J. (2009). The price elasticity of demand for residential land: Empirical evidence and policy implications. *Land Economics*, 85(1), 59-73.
9. Chatterton, P. (2010). The student city: An ongoing story of neoliberalism, gentrification, and spatial concentration. *Environment and Planning A*, 42(3), 509-514.
10. Creswell, J. W., & Plano Clark, V. L. (2018). *Designing and conducting mixed methods research* (3rd ed.). SAGE Publications.
11. Danso-Wiredu, E. (2018). Infrastructure development and housing prices in Ghana. *Urban Studies Journal*, 55(2), 321-339.
12. Ghana Statistical Service. (2023). *Annual report on housing and rental prices in Hohoe Municipality*. Accra: Ghana Statistical Service.
13. Gibbons, S., & Machin, S. (2005). Valuing rail access using transport innovations. *Journal of Urban Economics*, 57(1), 148-169.

14. Glaeser, E. L., Gyourko, J., & Saks, R. E. (2008). Why have housing prices gone up? *American Economic Review*, 95(2), 329-333.
15. Goodman, A. C. (2003). Hedonic prices, price indices, and housing markets. *Journal of Urban Economics*, 14(3), 394-411.
16. Gough, K. V., & Yankson, P. W. K. (2011). The role of culture in housing preferences in Urban Ghana. *Habitat International*, 35(1), 118-125.
17. Grant, R. (2009). Urbanization and the challenges of housing in Ghana. *Journal of Urban Affairs*, 31(1), 55-77.
18. Harvey, D. (1973). *Social Justice and the city*. Edward Arnold.
19. Harvey, D. (1987). The urban process under capitalism: A framework for analysis. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 11(3), 233-255.
20. Hassall, G. (2011). Student housing and the local property market: A review. *Journal of Property Research*, 28(2), 165-180.
21. Houghton, J., & Munro, M. (2019). Studentification and rental values: An analysis of University Towns in the UK. *Urban Studies Journal*, 56(7), 1345-1362.
22. Hubbard, P. (2009). Geographies of studentification and purpose-built student accommodation: Leading separate lives? *Environment and Planning A*, 41(8), 1903-1923.
23. Kearns, A., & Whitley, T. (2015). University expansion and housing markets in Australian cities. *Australian Geographer*, 46(4), 391-408.
24. Kwarteng, A., & Amoah, S. (2019). Student enrollment and housing market dynamics in Ghana: A review. *Journal of Housing and Built Environment*, 34(1), 45-61.
25. Leishman, C. (2003). *Real Estate market research and analysis*. Macmillan Education.
26. Maclennan, D., & More, A. (2014). *Housing and economic development: The role of housing in regional and urban economic development*. Centre for Cities.
27. Malpezzi, S. (1998). Rent control and housing market performance: A review of the evidence. World Bank.
28. Marshall, A. (1890). *Principles of Economics*. Macmillan.
29. McDonald, J. F., & McMillen, D. P. (2010). *Urban Economics and Real Estate: Theory and policy*. Wiley.
30. Munro, M., & Livingston, M. (2012). Student impacts on urban housing markets: A review. *Housing Studies*, 27(2), 238-258.
31. Osei, M., & Asiedu, A. (2020). The effects of higher education on urban housing markets: A case study of Ghanaian cities. *International Journal of Housing Markets and Analysis*, 13(4), 521-536.
32. Pollock, L. (2018). The effect of university growth on urban rental markets. *Housing Policy Debate*, 28(2), 250-275.
33. Ricardo, D. (1817). *On the principles of political economy and taxation*. John Murray.
34. Smith, D. P. (2008). The politics of studentification and "(un)balanced" urban populations: Lessons for gentrification and sustainable communities? *Urban Studies*, 45(12), 2541-2564.
35. Smith, L. B. (2017). The effects of economic conditions on housing prices and rents. *Journal of Housing Economics*, 4(2), 104-127.
36. Teddlie, C., & Tashakkori, A. (2009). *Foundations of mixed methods research: Integrating quantitative and qualitative approaches in the Social and Behavioral Sciences*. SAGE Publications.
37. Tiwari, P., & Parikh, J. (1998). Affordability, housing demand and housing policy in Urban India. *Urban Studies*, 35(11), 2111-2129.
38. Wakely, P., & Riley, E. (2011). *The case for incremental housing*. Cities Alliance Policy Research and Working Papers Series.
39. Yeboah, E. (2008). Land tenure systems and property taxes in Ghana. *Property Management Journal*, 26(4), 292-307.