



# **The Effect of the Fed Interest Rate Hikes on the Financial Crisis Evidence from Emerging Market Economies**

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**Author's contribution**

*The sole author designed, analysed, interpreted and prepared the manuscript.*

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## **ABSTRACT**

The purpose of this paper is to systematically study the economic consequences of this policy adjustment by analysing in depth the five interest rate hike actions of the Federal Reserve and their chain reactions in emerging market economies, applying economic principles and methods. In particular, the central question of concern is whether the Fed's interest rate hiking policy constitutes an important trigger of the financial crisis in emerging markets. In order to shed light on this complex phenomenon in a comprehensive manner, this paper not only analyses in depth the macroeconomic logic behind the Fed's interest rate hike, but also explores its transmission mechanism in emerging market economies, as well as the economic vulnerability of these countries in the face of external shocks. The results of the study show that the collapse of emerging countries as a result of the Fed's interest rate hikes seems to be inevitable, but we can draw insights from it: actively promoting the reform of the international monetary system and supporting the inclusion of more types of currencies in the international trade and investment settlement system has become a common choice, including for some Western countries, as well as the need to continue to optimise the economic structure of the domestic economy and to strengthen the ability to manage and control the comprehensive risks.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

On 16 March 2022, the Federal Reserve decided at its policy meeting to raise its benchmark interest rate by 25 basis points to a range of 0.25-0.5 per cent. This decision has attracted widespread attention in the economics community [1], as the Fed's rate hike has traditionally been seen as an important weathervane for the global economy [2]. Historical experience has shown that Fed interest rate hikes are often accompanied by sharp fluctuations in the global economy, such as sharp stock market adjustments, significant movements in currency values, debt risk highlights, waves of corporate bankruptcies and fiscal crises in some countries. The interest rate hike marks the beginning of a tighter cycle for the global economy, posing new challenges for economic stability and growth in all countries. Emerging market economies have all been hit by financial crises in the past years. Although the specific background and manifestation of each crisis is different, but in-depth analysis is not difficult to find that these crises in the monetary level have shown similar vulnerability [3]. The purpose of this paper is to systematically sort out the history of the five interest rate hikes of the Federal Reserve and deeply analyse the root causes of the financial crises in emerging market economies in recent years, with a view to revealing the intrinsic links between the two. Through this study, we expect to be able to provide valuable reference for governments and enterprises, so as to better cope with the financial risks that may be brought about by the new round of interest rate hikes and to ensure the smooth operation of the economy.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Previous researchers and scholars on the Fed's interest rate hike have the following views. Xiao et al. (2018) obtained the following results after empirical analysis: From the perspective of historical economic cycles, a significant appreciation of the United States dollar in the short term is often accompanied by a rapid repatriation of funds from emerging markets, a phenomenon that often triggers the risk of emerging market currency crises [4]. When the appreciation of the United States dollar exceeds market expectations, the pressure of such capital repatriation will be significantly intensified, and will undoubtedly pose a great threat and

challenge to those emerging economies that are highly dependent on capital inflows from overseas. Such a situation could lead to currency depreciation, declining foreign exchange reserves and destabilising capital flows in emerging markets, which in turn would affect their economic stability and growth prospects; Ji et al. (2018) argue that The Federal Reserve's implementation of interest rate hikes and tapering policies against the backdrop of sustained inflationary pressures will undoubtedly trigger a series of market chain reactions globally, with far-reaching impacts on the stock, bond and currency markets as well as the commodities market. Such policy adjustments will likely lead to segment differentiation within the U.S. stock market, where growth-oriented segments may face greater market pressure and suffer a certain degree of impact [5]. At the same time, due to the implementation of the interest rate hike policy, the level of interest rates in the U.S. bond market will also rise significantly, which in turn will affect global capital flows and bond prices; The results of Lu's (2022) study showed that The Fed's interest rate hike cycle has always been an important driver of fluctuations in the U.S. economy and even the global economy, and the logic and laws behind its impact are quite valuable to study [6]. In the current round of steep interest rate hikes, we need to use the lens of history to deeply analyse the distinctive features of the Fed's interest rate hikes, as well as the broader impact of these initiatives on the U.S. economy and the global economy.

### 2.1 Research Methods

This paper is a Mini-review article in which the author has used the following research methods:

### 2.2 Literature Research Method

Through reading, thinking and combing the literature related to the digital economy and the export of cultural products, reviewing the literature writings in the related fields, summarising the previous research contents, and in the process, identifying the shortcomings of the research, this paper therefore aims to make up for the shortcomings of these researches, to put forward a more comprehensive and in-depth research perspective, and to provide a new idea and methodology for the research in the related fields.

### 2.3 Comparative Analysis Method

The purpose of this paper is to analyse the differences between the five Fed interest rate hikes and their patterns, so as to provide some theoretical support for policymakers in various countries to better coordinate monetary and fiscal policies and to cope with the risky challenges of future interest rate hikes.

### 2.4 Inductive Summarisation Method

The inductive summary method is an argumentative method of deducing universal laws from individual examples, which has profound and unique application value. In this paper, the characteristics and impacts of the Fed's interest rate hikes are comprehensively analysed so that we can better understand the current economic situation and the future trend, and the response experience summarised will also help policymakers in various countries to better coordinate their monetary and fiscal policies and jointly respond to the challenges faced by the global economy.

In addition, the data in this paper are mainly from world bank , Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, United States Bureau of Economic Research and Global Financial Data (GFD).

### 3. FED RATE HIKES AND THE CAUSES OF FINANCIAL CRISES IN EMERGING COUNTRIES

Historically, the Fed's tightening cycles have often been accompanied by severe turbulence in international financial markets, especially for those emerging economies located in Asia, Africa and Latin America, where the impact has been particularly far-reaching and heavy. Since 1982 to 2021, the Federal Reserve has implemented five rounds of monetary tightening policy, this period of the global scope of the five successive financial crises or financial turmoil, fully demonstrated the international transmission effect of monetary policy.

The Latin American debt crisis of 1982 was a notable case of international financial market volatility under the Fed's austerity policies, with emerging countries falling into difficulties as a result of capital outflows and steeply rising debt-servicing pressures [7]. Subsequently, the "Black Monday" stock market crash in 1987 once again highlighted the fragility of global financial markets[8]. In the 1990s, the Asian economic crisis of 1997[9] and the Russian debt crisis of 1998[10] dealt a severe blow to emerging markets in the Fed's tightening cycle, while the bursting of the US Internet bubble in 2000[11], although it started in developed countries, had a global impact, and emerging countries were not spared.

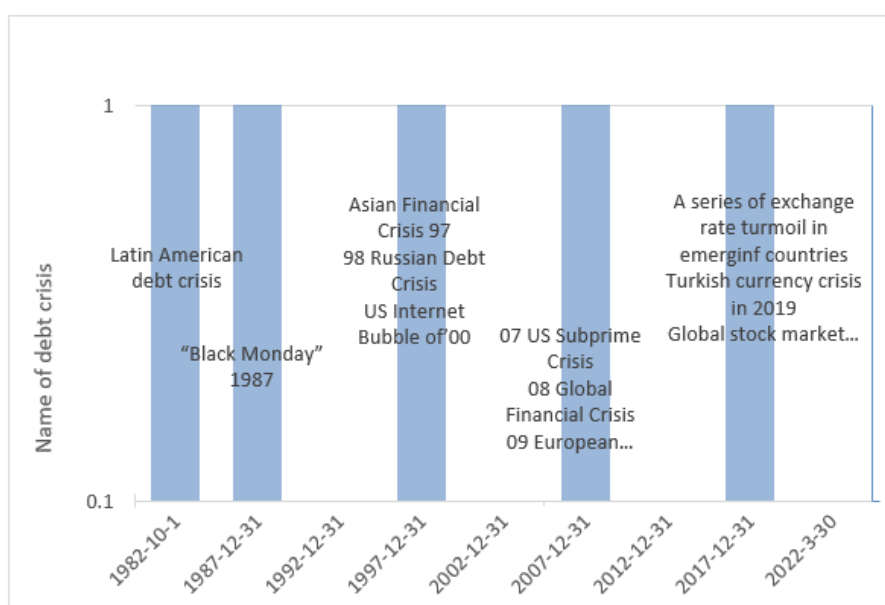


Fig. 1. The debt crisis in the fed's monetary cycle

After entering the 21st century, the US sub-prime mortgage crisis in 2007 [12,13] rapidly evolved into the global economic crisis of 2008[14], in which emerging countries suffered tremendous pressure on exchange rates and capital flows. The subsequent European debt crisis, although mainly in Europe, but its negative impact on the global financial markets can not be ignored, emerging countries are also facing capital outflows and financial market turbulence [15]. In the near future, the Turkish currency crisis in 2019 [16] and the global stock market crash in 2020 have once again reminded us that the impact of the Fed's monetary policy adjustments on emerging countries' financial markets remains significant.

This paper will focus on the first, third and fifth rounds of financial crises closely related to the financial crises in emerging countries, and analyse in depth the background of their occurrence, the transmission mechanism, and the impact on the economic and financial stability of emerging countries, with a view to providing useful references for future policy formulation and risk prevention [17].<sup>1</sup>

### **3.1 The First Round of Interest Rate Hikes and the Latin American Crisis**

Under the shadow of the stagflation crisis of the 1970s, the United States population suffered from economic hardship. At the same time, the three Latin American countries, with their rich natural resources, especially oil and commodities, were able to develop their economies rapidly, fuelled by soaring export prices. However, the good times did not last long. In 1979, Paul Volcker became chairman of the Federal Reserve, adopted an aggressive monetary policy, the Federal Funds Rate pushed up to more than 11 per cent, and then even more in 1981 to a staggering 16 per cent. This move put heavy pressure on the markets and the US economy plunged into its darkest period since the Great Depression in 1929. During this period, in addition to soaring interest rates, investment, consumption, the stock market, real estate, employment and wage levels all showed a downward trend. To add insult to injury, the rapid fall in energy prices in 1982 dealt a heavy blow to the three Latin American countries that depended on resource exports. As these countries adopted a fixed exchange rate system,

the appreciation of the US dollar was accompanied by a passive appreciation of their own currencies, leading to a massive sell-off of their currencies. The government had to use its foreign exchange reserves to stabilise its currency. However, when Mexico's foreign exchange reserves were approaching the danger line, the government was unable to repay its due US dollar foreign debt, and was eventually forced to close down the foreign exchange market and declare a default on its sovereign debt. This event triggered a chain reaction, Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Peru, Venezuela and other Latin American countries have been plunged into bankruptcy, Latin American sovereign debt crisis in full swing. This financial crisis not only put an end to the rising momentum of emerging countries, but also pushed Argentina, Brazil, Mexico and other countries into the middle-income trap, causing them to repeatedly fall into crisis in the following years. At the same time, it also became a historical precedent for emerging countries to be prone to thunder when the Fed raises interest rates [18].

### **3.2 The Third Round of Interest Rate Hikes and the Southeast Asian and Russian Financial Crises**

In 1994, the Federal Reserve initiated a new cycle of interest rate increases and the federal funds rate climbed rapidly, rising sharply from 0.5 per cent to a level of about 6 per cent. This interest rate level then remained stable for several years, reflecting the strong growth momentum of the United States economy. During this period, the U.S. economy was booming and market confidence was high, fuelling the continued appreciation of the U.S. dollar [19].

At the same time, President Clinton actively promoted the introduction of the Financial Hybridisation Act, a move that provided investment banks with broader business space and further contributed to the prosperity of the financial market. In addition, the Clinton administration also announced the opening of the Internet to civilian use, an innovative initiative that opened new doors for technological innovation and capital flows on a global scale. The implementation of these two policies attracted a large amount of international capital from emerging markets back to the United States, investing in financial securities and Silicon Valley innovation enterprises, further

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<sup>1</sup> Source: FIG 1 data from Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, United States Bureau of Economic Research.

promoting the prosperity of the U.S. economy. However, this prosperity did not last long. 2 July 1997, the Thai government announced the abandonment of the fixed exchange rate system, resulting in a sharp depreciation of 17% of the Thai baht against the U.S. dollar, which triggered a panic in the financial markets. Subsequently, international capital began to frantically short the currencies of Asian countries such as the Philippine peso and the Indonesian rupiah, resulting in the almost total loss of these countries' currencies. The Asian financial crisis broke out in full force, with far-reaching effects on the global economy. During this crisis, although the Chinese market retained the stability of the Hong Kong dollar, the stock market and property market suffered a heavy blow, with their market values shrinking drastically. In 1998, the risk of the financial crisis in Southeast Asia spread further to Russia, leading to the country's announcement of a sovereign debt default, and the rouble plummeted by 70% in a single day in September of that year. The crisis not only put an end to the Asian economic miracle, but also had a far-reaching impact on the global economic

landscape, triggering a profound rethinking of the stability of the global economic and financial system [20].

### 3.3 The Fifth Round of Interest Rate Hikes and a Series of Exchange Rate Turmoil in Emerging Countries

The 2008's year global economic crisis led to a major global central bank bailout, with the Federal Reserve continuing its seven-year-long easing policy, with the federal funds rate even dropping to near zero. It was not until 2016 that the Fed began to raise interest rates, although this time the rate hike was very slow, but the same situation happened again, in this rate hike, a series of new market economies began to have exchange rate turbulence, Argentina, Russia, Turkey's currency depreciated sharply. In the second half of 2018, the Fed raised interest rates at a faster pace, and the U.S. stock market almost collapsed, and since then, Turkey erupted into a financial crisis, and suffered a triple killing of stocks, bonds and exchange rates [21].

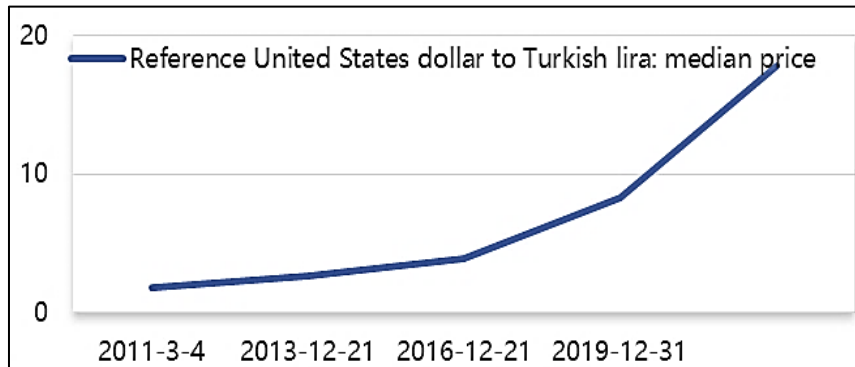


Fig. 2. Exchange rate fluctuations in Turkish

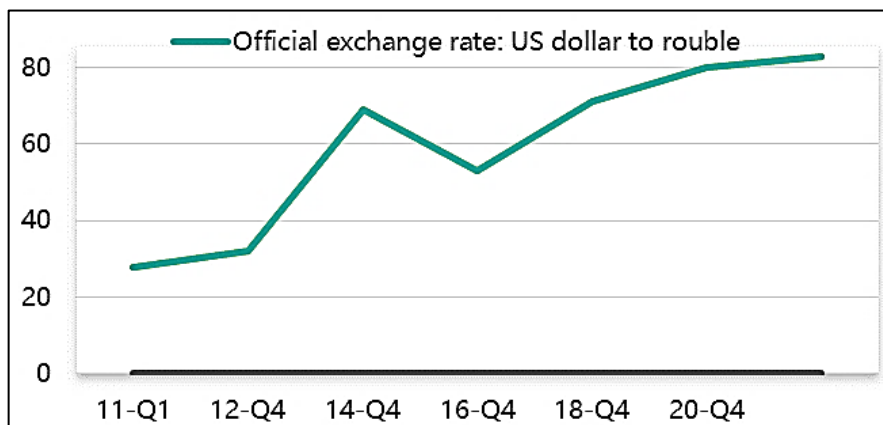


Fig. 3. Exchange rate fluctuations in Russian

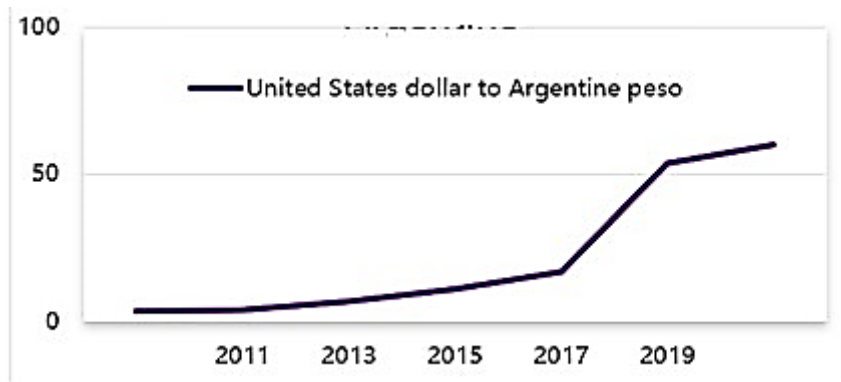


Fig. 4. Exchange rate fluctuations in Argentina

#### 4. ANALYSIS OF THE RELATIONSHIP

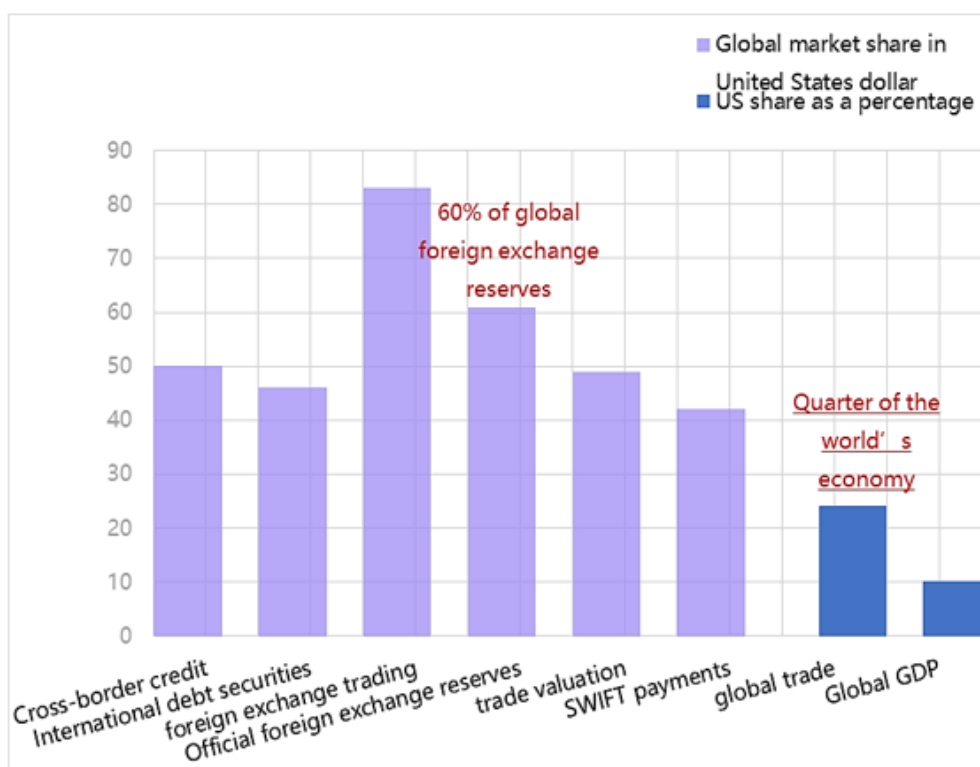
##### 4.1 Influence of the Dollar on the Economy

With five interest rate hikes by the Federal Reserve, five financial crises have erupted globally, and the Fed is able to make waves in the global market because the US dollar is the world's currency. In the past four decades, the international status of the US House of Representatives has been very solid. Today, the U.S. economy accounts for 1/4 of the world's total economic volume, the dollar in the global foreign exchange reserves accounted for 60 per cent, in international settlements accounted for 80 per cent, that is to say, in today's international currency market, the U.S. dollar is almost the only currency supplier, the Federal Reserve firmly in control of the pricing power of global currencies. Every time the dollar easing period, the dollar index will fall some, but in the tightening cycle and rebound back, the dollar excessive easing, the global diffusion; the dollar excessive tightening, the global shortage of water, can be seen in the dominance of the dollar. The belief by some that the Fed is reaping the rewards by operating in an easing-tightening cycle has not yet been confirmed. While the Fed assesses global financial stability, the Fed's monetary policy serves itself to the national market rather than the international market, with the goal of achieving full employment and controlling inflation in the country. Secondly, the dominance of the US dollar in the international currency market is actually the result of rational

choices made by governments, investors, businesses, and individuals, such as the Turks who prefer to give up their local currency to hold US dollars, and the central banks of Japan, China, and Saudi Arabia who stockpile large amounts of US dollars to issue their own currencies. And we can also see that four of the five financial crises that erupted after the Fed raised interest rates occurred in the United States. Two stock market crashes, a bubble crisis, a debt crisis, does this mean that the Fed rate hikes to the global punishment or reward is indiscriminate? But excluding the United States, the financial crises during the Fed's tightening period hit emerging countries much harder than developed countries; for example, the Latin American sovereign debt crisis of 1982 pushed Latin American countries into the middle-income trap; and the Asian financial crisis of 1997 put an end to the Asian growth miracle.

##### 4.2 The Path of the Dollar's Impact on the Economy of Emerging Countries

First, interest rate hikes by the Federal Reserve tend to lead to changes in global capital flows. As United States Treasury yields rise, capital may be more inclined to flow to the United States, leading to capital outflows from emerging markets. This is a huge challenge for countries that have gaps in their fiscal and monetary policies. It reveals that emerging countries need to strengthen their own macroeconomic management and the maturity of their financial markets to cope with the uncertainty caused by external capital flows.



**Fig. 5. Influence of the dollar on the economy**

Second, capital outflows may lead to currency depreciation in emerging countries, which in turn puts pressure on economic growth. In order to stabilise their exchange rates, these countries may need to adopt tighter monetary policies or capital control measures, but this often comes at the expense of economic growth. This reveals that emerging countries need to find a balance between maintaining exchange rate stability and promoting economic growth, which may need to be achieved by deepening structural reforms and enhancing industrial competitiveness.

In addition, the Fed's interest rate hike may also increase the debt burden of emerging countries. Debt-servicing pressure on these countries may further increase due to rising borrowing costs. This reveals that emerging countries need to prudently manage their external debt, and reduce debt-servicing pressure by optimising debt structure and reducing debt costs.

At the same time, the Fed's interest rate hike may also trigger volatility in global financial markets, especially for those emerging market countries with close ties to the U.S. stock market and economy. This requires emerging countries to strengthen financial regulation and improve

the robustness of their financial systems to cope with external shocks.

Dollar interest rate hikes affect the economy of emerging countries generally have four paths: 1. external debt path: when the dollar interest rate hikes, hold a large number of U.S. dollar debt of the government, corporate debt servicing costs directly increased resulting in external debt mine, Mexico in 1982, Argentina belongs to this situation, and now China Evergrande and other large-scale real estate is also faced with U.S. dollar debt defaults; 2. exchange rate path: the U.S. dollar interest rate hikes, the depreciation of the national currency, resulting in a large amount of capital outflow domestic real estate bubble collapse, the risk passed to commercial banks triggering systemic financial risks. A large amount of capital outflow domestic real estate bubble collapse, the cost of foreign debt service to further increase and mine, the risk of transmission to commercial banks triggered systemic financial risk, emerging countries are very dependent on foreign capital, capital flight is disastrous, the 1997 Asian financial crisis belongs to this situation; 3. Inflation path: the dollar hikes in interest rates, the local currency depreciated sharply, suffered a credit crisis, the people sell their currency to avoid risk, triggering

Inflation, although the depreciation of the local currency will be conducive to exports, but like today's emerging countries in Turkey, Russia, a large number of commodities, technology dependent on imports, the depreciation of the local currency led to a large increase in the cost of imports, which further pushed up the price of commodities.<sup>4</sup> Path of interest rate hikes: the dollar hiked interest rates, followed by the hike in interest rates of the emerging countries does not necessarily defuse the risk, depending on the specific country's economic strength, if the country's economic strength is strong, Government and corporate liabilities are low, cash flow is sufficient, financial assets and real estate bubble is small, that follow the dollar together with the interest rate hike is effective, for example, robust Germany's ability to resist risk is very strong, the financial crisis in 2008, cash flow is sufficient for the German Volkswagen reverse takeover is collecting their own Porsche company; but if the country's economic strength is weak, the government, business, household liabilities are high, asset bubbles, follow the The consequence of the US dollar interest rate hike is that the debt burden of the country also increases, enterprise and household consumption shrinks, and a debt crisis and asset bubble crisis may break out, and the financial system and the real economy suffer a full impact. Usually, Japan, the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia and the euro area have strong economic strength, it is easier to keep up with the Fed's pace, in contrast, emerging countries such as Brazil, Mexico, Argentina, Thailand, Turkey and other emerging countries are not strong enough, it will be difficult to withstand the financial risks caused by the Fed's interest rate hikes, for example, the economic growth of Latin American countries in the 1970s, the Russian economy in the first decade of the 21st century have benefited from the rise in energy prices and energy exports. Rising energy prices and energy exports of foreign exchange dividends, rather than technological progress, when energy prices fall back, economic growth came to an abrupt end, coupled with the Federal Reserve interest rate hikes, the immediate outbreak of the debt crisis, the same situation there are relying on the accumulation of foreign capital rather than the accumulation of technology in the 90's Asian economic growth, when the Federal Reserve interest rate hikes, the withdrawal of foreign capital from Asia, Asia on the outbreak of the financial crisis. To sum up, the Fed raised interest rates, the global tightening cycle, whether the outbreak of financial crises,

depending on the Fed's tightening efforts and their own economic strength.

### **4.3 The Strength of the Impact of the Federal Reserve's Interest Rate Hike**

Although analysing the real economic strength of a country is a complex project, it is relatively easy to judge the level of a country's economic bubble, which can be observed from the country's currency issuance. From current experience, we can tell: the more water is released, the weaker the economy is and the more likely it is to explode. As the U.S. interest rate market is a free market, the free price will have been commercial banks excessive risk-taking, then the U.S. dollar interest rate hike, the U.S. commercial banks will not be a large-scale expansion of credit, the Federal Reserve will be purchasing treasury bonds to inject water into the financial market, to inhibit the over-inflation of the U.S. monetary aggregates. But for emerging countries, many emerging countries, the exchange rate market and commercial banks are not fully liberalised, credit can easily get out of control, the 1997 Southeast Asian financial crisis, Thailand's commercial banks are the royal family's ATM, South Korea's commercial banks serve the plutocrats, the Asian financial crisis directly penetrated the fragile risk control system of such commercial banks, South Korea's foreign exchange reserves are in an emergency, the country's credit is at stake! The South Korean government urgently asked the IMF for help, but one of the conditions of the IMF's rescue was to cut the chain of interests between commercial banks and plutocrats, which directly harmed the interests of South Korean plutocrats, and South Korea's request for help failed. Currency out of control countries are the most dangerous countries, like Turkey's central bank to take a suicidal operation, in the Fed tightened the purchase of debt, Turkey successive crazy interest rate cuts, 2021 Turkish economy has been this reverse operation crushed, suffered two consecutive stock bond exchange three kill, now Turkey replaced the year Argentina became the emergency vanguard of the economic collapse of emerging countries.

## **5. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS**

The Federal Reserve raises interest rates, as a key means of monetary policy adjustment, behind its decision-making is the weighing and consideration of multiple factors such as economic growth, inflation, employment



conditions and international financial markets. The decision to raise interest rates not only reflects the Fed's judgement of the current economic situation, but also foretells the possible direction of economic trends in the coming period. Reviewing the history of the Fed's interest rate hikes, we can see the diversity and complexity of the interest rate hike cycle. In different economic contexts, the magnitude, frequency and duration of interest rate hikes show significant differences. These differences not only stem from the volatility of the economic cycle itself, but also reflect the Fed's policy choices in response to different economic challenges. Therefore, this paper helps us better understand the current economic situation and future trends by analysing the characteristics of previous Fed interest rate hikes and their impacts, and it also helps policymakers in various countries better coordinate monetary and fiscal policies to jointly address the challenges facing the global economy.

In the current cycle of interest rate hikes, the Fed's decision-making has been affected by the overlapping effects of multiple factors, such as weak global economic recovery, rising geopolitical risks, and high domestic inflationary pressures in the United States. As a result, the current round of rate hikes is characterised by its steepness and uncertainty. A steeper path of rate hikes may have a more immediate impact on economic growth and financial markets, while uncertainty increases the difficulty of anticipation and risk management costs for market participants. From the impact level, the Fed's interest rate hike will not only have a direct impact on the US economy, but will also have spillover effects on the global economy through channels such as exchange rates and capital flows. For the U.S. domestic economy, interest rate hikes may dampen consumer demand and investment activity, which in turn affects economic growth and the job market. For the global economy, an interest rate hike by the Federal Reserve could lead to increased international capital flows, greater exchange rate volatility and greater external financing pressures on emerging market countries.

A new round of Fed rate hikes in 2022 seems inevitable for the collapse of emerging countries, but in reality, every round of Fed monetary policy since 1982 has operated asymmetrically: each round of rate hikes has been smaller than rate cuts. This also shows that in the past forty, the world has actually been in a big dollar easing

cycle, and historically the Fed has been very cautious in raising interest rates, and although the Fed is not necessarily concerned about the collapse of the bubble in emerging countries, it must highly value the collapse of the bubble in U.S. stocks, and in the last round of the interest rate hiking cycle, the Fed only raised to 2.5%, and the Nasdaq retreated by 8% in May 2019, and the Fed started in August to cutting rates, so it is not yet known how much it will be able to raise rates this time. In fact, the Fed is also caught in a dilemma: on the one hand, inflation is high, on the other hand, the asset bubble is very serious, the U.S. stock market is faltering, the U.S. bond short-term and long-term spreads are narrowing, and there is limited room for interest rate hikes and drawdowns. At the same time, emerging countries are also betting on the U.S. stock market first crash, thus forcing the Fed to surrender to lower interest rates.

Based on the above conclusions, this paper puts forward the following suggestions:

From the outside: actively promoting reform of the international monetary system is crucial to maintaining the health and stability of the global economy. Currently, the international monetary system is overly dependent on the US dollar, and this imbalance makes US economic fluctuations have significant spillover effects on the global economy. Therefore, promoting the formation of a diversified and stable international monetary system has become a common choice for many countries, including some Western countries. By supporting the inclusion of more types of currencies in the international trade and investment settlement system, risks can be effectively dispersed and the resilience of the global economic system can be strengthened. For China, accelerating the internationalisation of the RMB is not only in line with the objective law of the country's economic development, but also in line with the international community's expectation for a diversified currency system. The internationalisation of the RMB will enhance China's influence in the global economy, and at the same time help reduce the sensitivity to external currency fluctuations and enhance the autonomy of the national economy.

At the domestic level: continued optimisation of the domestic economic structure in order to enhance the economy's resilience and resistance to risks. In this process, attention should be paid not only to improving the rationality, efficiency and innovativeness of the industrial structure, but

also to improving the market mechanism and optimising the allocation of resources. At the same time, in order to more effectively prevent and resolve economic and financial risks, a comprehensive and detailed national economic and financial operation monitoring system should be constructed. Such a system should have long-term, continuous and real-time monitoring capabilities to accurately capture dynamic changes in economic and financial operations and effectively identify and assess potential risk points. Through the regular release of monitoring reports and risk assessment results, it can enhance society's awareness of economic and financial risks, thereby strengthening comprehensive risk management and control and ensuring the sound operation of the economic and financial system.

### COMPETING INTERESTS

Author has declared that no competing interests exist.

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