



CONSUMER PERCEPTIONS AND ADOPTION OF PROFESSIONAL PROPERTY MANAGEMENT SERVICES: EVIDENCE FROM APARTMENT OWNERS IN LA TRINIDAD, BENGUET, PHILIPPINES

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Abstract:

This study examined apartment owners' perceptions of service quality and adoption decisions regarding professional property management services in La Trinidad, Benguet. Using a quantitative descriptive-correlational design, data were collected from 85 apartment building owners through structured questionnaires over a 35-day period. The instrument demonstrated excellent reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.905$) and measured service quality dimensions based on the SERVQUAL framework: tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. Results revealed that apartment owners held generally positive perceptions of service quality, with reliability rated highest ($M = 4.01$), indicating strong confidence in consistent service delivery. However, empathy scored comparatively lower ($M = 3.70$), suggesting opportunities for improvement in personalized service. Pearson correlation and multiple regression analyses demonstrated significant positive relationships between service quality perceptions and adoption decisions, with the model explaining 50% of the variance. Reliability emerged as the strongest predictor ($\beta = 0.39$), followed by assurance and responsiveness, while empathy was not statistically significant. Factor analysis identified two key dimensions affecting willingness to engage services: Trust and Value, and Service Quality. Trust was the strongest predictor of willingness ($\beta = 0.43$), followed by perceived value and reliability, with the model explaining 58% of the variance. ANOVA results showed significant differences in willingness across business sizes ($p = 0.010$), indicating that organizational characteristics influence engagement decisions. The findings validate theoretical frameworks linking service quality to adoption behavior and highlight trust as a critical factor in professional service engagement, providing valuable insights for property management companies and future research in emerging markets.

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1. Introduction

The landscape of residential property management has undergone significant transformation in recent years, particularly in emerging markets where apartment living has become increasingly prevalent. In the Philippines, this shift has been especially pronounced in regions like the Cordillera Administrative Region, where urbanization pressures have created new demands for professional property management services (Mangili, 2024). La Trinidad, Benguet, as the capital of this mountainous province, exemplifies this evolution as apartment ownership has grown alongside the area's development as a key urban center in Northern Luzon. The COVID-19 pandemic fundamentally altered how property owners and residents perceive the value of professional management services, with property management enterprises experiencing unique competitive advantages despite broader economic uncertainties (Lin *et al.*, 2024). This period highlighted the critical importance of reliable service delivery, particularly as residents became more dependent on building management for essential services and community support. However, the relationship between property owners and management service providers has not been without challenges, as conflicts often arise from perceived mismatches between service quality and pricing, with costs frequently increasing over time while service standards remain questionable (Huy & Thuy, 2023).

Research has consistently demonstrated that apartment owners' willingness to engage professional management services hinges on multiple interconnected factors, with service quality perceptions playing a pivotal role in adoption decisions (Ojekalu *et al.*, 2019). The determinants of management fees and service quality expectations vary significantly across different markets, influenced by local economic conditions, regulatory frameworks, and cultural factors (Węgrzyn & Najbar, 2020). In the Philippine context, the emphasis on professionalism in real estate practice has become increasingly important, particularly in regions like the Cordillera where geographical challenges and cultural considerations create unique service delivery requirements (Mangili, 2024).

Despite the growing importance of professional property management services, there remains a significant research gap in understanding consumer perceptions and adoption patterns in specific regional contexts, particularly in emerging markets like the Philippines. The need for this study is compelling for several critical reasons. First, existing research on property management adoption has primarily focused on developed markets or major metropolitan areas, leaving smaller urban centers like La Trinidad, Benguet underexplored despite their rapid growth and unique characteristics (Garambas & Pinos-an, 2021). The post-pandemic era has fundamentally shifted consumer expectations regarding property management services, creating an urgent need to understand how these changes manifest in local contexts where traditional service delivery models may no longer suffice (Lin *et al.*, 2024).

Furthermore, the Cordillera region presents distinct challenges for professional service delivery, including geographical constraints, cultural considerations, and varying levels of awareness about professional standards in real estate practice (Mangili, 2024). La Trinidad's experience with rapid development and changing community dynamics, as evidenced by its tourism growth and business enterprise patterns, suggests that property owners in this area may have unique perspectives on professional service adoption that differ from national trends (Cruz & Bondoc, 2025; Garambas & Pinos-an, 2021). Understanding these localized factors is crucial for service providers seeking to effectively serve this market and for policymakers developing supportive frameworks for professional property management services.

2. Literature Review

The contemporary property management landscape has experienced a fundamental paradigm shift from traditional building-focused operations to comprehensive customer-centric service delivery models. This transformation reflects broader service industry trends where quality management has emerged as a critical determinant of organizational success, directly influencing customer satisfaction, loyalty, and financial performance (Thorat & Pagare, 2024). Understanding apartment owners' perceptions of service quality and their subsequent adoption decisions regarding professional property management services requires comprehensive examination of established service quality frameworks and their practical applications within property management contexts. Service quality, conceptualized through multidimensional frameworks, encompasses five fundamental dimensions that provide comprehensive evaluation criteria across service industries. These dimensions include tangibles (physical facilities and equipment), reliability (consistent delivery of promised services), responsiveness (willingness to provide prompt assistance), assurance (employee competence and trustworthiness), and empathy (individualized attention and care) (Saleem *et al.*, 2024). Research consistently demonstrates that these service quality dimensions significantly impact customer satisfaction and purchasing decisions, with empirical studies revealing positive correlations between service quality perceptions and customer adoption behaviors across various service contexts (Ali *et al.*, 2022).

In property management contexts specifically, customer-focused approaches have demonstrated substantial value creation potential for real estate portfolios. Property managers who deliver high-quality customer service enable real estate investors to achieve superior financial outcomes through improved tenant retention rates, premium rental pricing capabilities, and enhanced overall investment returns (Sanderson & Read, 2020). This value proposition becomes particularly significant given emerging industry trends including heightened tenant demands, increased flexibility requirements, technological disruptions, sustainability initiatives, and evolving regulatory frameworks that collectively emphasize the importance of superior customer service delivery. The adoption of professional services extends beyond simple service quality considerations to encompass multiple interconnected factors. Research identifies trust, effort

expectancy, and social influence as key determinants in service adoption decisions, with these factors proving particularly relevant in property management where apartment owners must delegate significant operational responsibilities to external service providers (Hakeem & Sulphrey, 2024). The willingness to engage professional property management services is further influenced by perceived value propositions, quality expectations, and cost-benefit analyses that apartment owners conduct when evaluating service alternatives (Ojekalu *et al.*, 2019).

Contemporary research in residential property contexts reveals that service quality perceptions, particularly regarding physical environment quality, interaction quality, and outcome quality, significantly affect purchase intentions and service adoption decisions. Studies demonstrate that client-employee interaction quality often emerges as the most influential factor affecting overall service quality perceptions, highlighting the critical importance of human resource management practices in service delivery (Cheung & Woo, 2016). This finding aligns with broader service quality literature emphasizing that human resource management practices serve as mediating factors between service quality delivery and customer satisfaction outcomes (Pascua & Japos, 2023).

The relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction has been extensively documented across service industries, with total quality management principles proving essential for service organizations seeking competitive advantage (Talib *et al.*, 2011). In property management, this relationship assumes particular significance because satisfied customers demonstrate a higher likelihood of contract renewals, positive word-of-mouth recommendations, and acceptance of premium pricing for superior service delivery (Sanderson & Read, 2020). Electronic word-of-mouth mechanisms and social influence factors further amplify the impact of service quality perceptions on adoption decisions, creating multiplier effects that extend beyond individual customer relationships (Montazemi & Qahri-Saremi, 2014). However, many property management firms continue struggling to effectively differentiate themselves through service quality, often being perceived as commodity service providers rather than value-adding strategic partners. This perception gap highlights critical opportunities for property management companies to better communicate their value propositions and demonstrate tangible benefits to apartment owners considering professional service adoption. Understanding these dynamics becomes essential for both property management firms seeking competitive advantage and apartment owners evaluating service alternatives in increasingly complex real estate markets.

Despite this substantial literature base, significant research gaps persist that this study addresses. First, a critical geographic gap exists as existing research predominantly focuses on developed markets like the United Kingdom, United States, and major Philippine urban centers (Sanderson & Read, 2020), with limited attention to emerging markets like La Trinidad, Benguet. Second, a stakeholder perspective gap emerges as current literature primarily examines tenant satisfaction or property manager operational viewpoints, with insufficient focus on apartment owners' perceptions as primary decision-makers for engaging professional services. Third, methodological gaps exist in

adapting established service quality frameworks specifically for property management contexts from owners' perspectives. While comprehensive frameworks exist across industries (Thorat & Pagare, 2024), their specific application to property management remains limited. Fourth, integration gaps persist between service quality perception research and adoption decision studies, preventing comprehensive understanding of how quality dimensions influence behavioral intentions among apartment owners. Finally, cultural and regional context gaps exist, as most research originates from Western contexts, providing insufficient understanding of how local business practices and regional economic conditions in Philippine settings influence perceptions and adoption decisions. This study addresses these gaps by specifically examining apartment owners' service quality perceptions and adoption decisions in La Trinidad, Benguet, providing contextually appropriate insights for this understudied population and geographic area while contributing to the broader understanding of property management service quality dynamics.

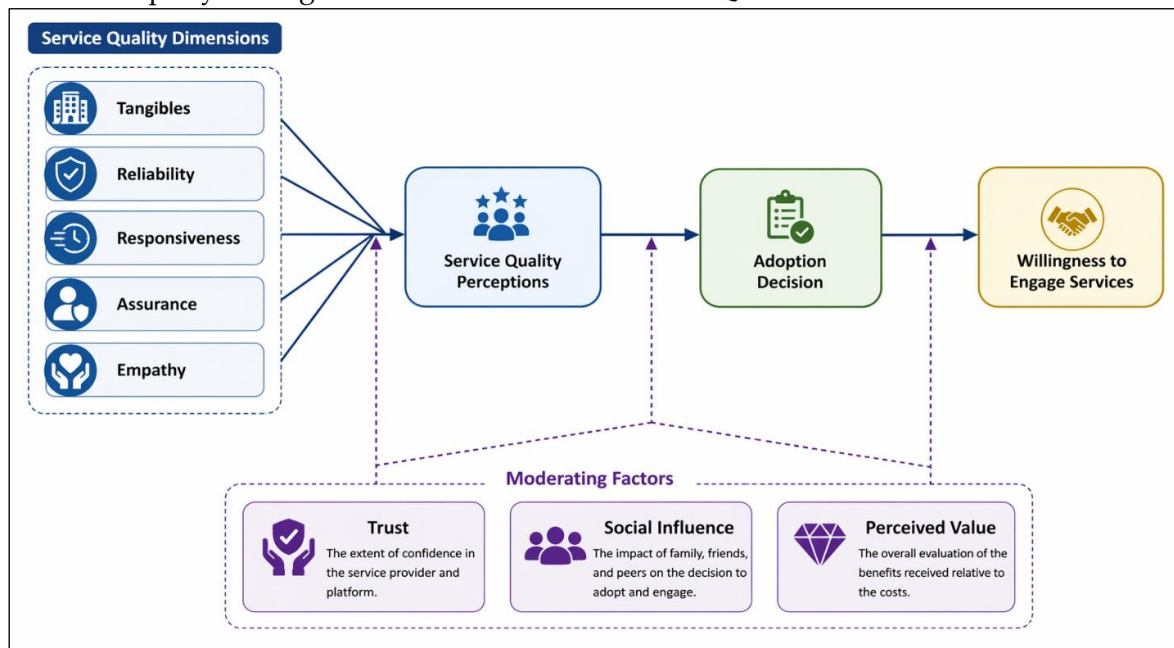
3. Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study integrates service quality theory with adoption decision models to examine apartment owners' perceptions and adoption of professional property management services. The framework is grounded in Parasuraman *et al.* (1985, 1988) SERVQUAL model, which identifies five key dimensions: tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy as fundamental determinants of service quality perceptions. These dimensions have been validated across various service industries and provide a comprehensive foundation for evaluating property management service quality (Saleem *et al.*, 2024). The framework incorporates Venkatesh *et al.*'s (2003) Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) principles, which emphasize trust, effort expectancy, and social influence as critical factors influencing adoption decisions (Hakeem & Sulphey, 2024). In property management contexts, these factors become particularly relevant as apartment owners must delegate significant operational responsibilities to external service providers. The framework also integrates Brady and Cronin's (2001) hierarchical service quality model, recognizing that service quality perceptions directly influence customer satisfaction and behavioral intentions (Sanderson & Read, 2020).

Building on Kotler and Armstrong's (2012) consumer behavior theory demonstrating positive relationships between service quality and purchasing decisions (Ali *et al.*, 2022), the framework positions service quality perceptions as antecedents to adoption decisions. The model incorporates Ajzen's (1991) Theory of Planned Behavior, acknowledging that willingness to engage professional services extends beyond quality perceptions to include factors such as perceived value, cost considerations, and risk assessments (Ojekalu *et al.*, 2019). Research in residential property contexts further supports this approach, showing that Rust and Oliver's (1994) three-component model of physical environment quality, interaction quality, and outcome quality significantly affect purchase intentions and service adoption decisions (Cheung & Woo, 2016). The

framework recognizes Schuler and Jackson's (1987) strategic human resource management theory regarding the mediating role of HRM practices in service delivery, as research indicates that HRM practices significantly influence service quality perceptions and customer satisfaction in real estate contexts (Pascua & Japos, 2023). Additionally, the model incorporates Hennig-Thurau *et al.*'s (2004) electronic word-of-mouth theory and social influence mechanisms that amplify service quality perceptions' impact on adoption decisions (Montazemi & Qahri-Saremi, 2014).

Figure 1: Integrated Service Quality-Adoption Model for Professional Property Management Services Based on SERVQUAL and UTAUT Theories



4. Research Objectives

The following objectives were addressed in this study:

- 1) To examine apartment owners' perceptions of the service quality of professional property management companies in La Trinidad, Benguet.
- 2) To analyze how these perceptions influence the adoption decision of professional property management services among apartment owners.
- 3) To identify key factors that affect apartment owners' willingness to engage property management services.

5. Methodology

5.1 Research Design

This study employed a quantitative research design utilizing a descriptive-correlational approach to examine apartment owners' perceptions of service quality and their adoption decisions regarding professional property management services in La Trinidad, Benguet. The descriptive component aimed to characterize apartment owners'

perceptions of service quality dimensions, while the correlational aspect investigated relationships between service quality perceptions, adoption factors, and willingness to engage professional property management services. This design was appropriate for addressing the research objectives as it enabled systematic measurement of variables and statistical analysis of relationships between constructs, consistent with service quality research methodologies employed in similar studies (Cheung & Woo, 2016; Hakeem & Sulphey, 2024).

5.2 Population and Locale

The study population comprised apartment building owners in La Trinidad, Benguet, representing a specific geographic and demographic segment within the property management services market. La Trinidad, as the capital municipality of Benguet province, provided an appropriate research locale due to its growing residential development and emerging property management service sector. The sample size consisted of 85 apartment building owners, determined through power analysis calculations to ensure adequate statistical power for detecting meaningful relationships between variables. Purposive sampling methodology was employed to select participants who met specific criteria relevant to the research objectives. The inclusion criteria encompassed: (1) legal ownership of apartment buildings with multiple rental units, (2) a minimum of two years of property ownership experience, (3) current involvement in property management decisions, and (4) willingness to participate in the study. Exclusion criteria included: (1) owners of single-family residential properties, (2) property owners with less than two years of ownership experience, (3) individuals not directly involved in property management decisions, and (4) those unwilling to provide informed consent for participation.

5.3 Data Gathering Instruments and Procedures

A structured questionnaire was developed based on established service quality frameworks, particularly the SERVQUAL model dimensions (tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy) and adoption decision factors identified in relevant literature. The instrument comprised sections measuring service quality perceptions, adoption intentions, and demographic characteristics. Prior to data collection, the questionnaire underwent rigorous reliability testing using Cronbach's alpha coefficient, yielding a value of 0.905, which exceeded the generally accepted threshold of 0.70, indicating excellent internal consistency and reliability of the measurement instrument (Thorat & Pagare, 2024). Data collection utilized self-administered questionnaires distributed through a systematic sampling approach over 35 days. Questionnaires were delivered to apartment building owners with clear instructions and collected after completion, ensuring standardized data gathering procedures consistent with quantitative research methodologies.

5.4 Statistical Treatment of Data

The collected data from the apartment building owners underwent comprehensive statistical analysis using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) software. Descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations, were employed to characterize participant demographics and describe the distribution of variables related to service quality perceptions and adoption decisions. Data normality was assessed using Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests to determine appropriate analytical procedures. Inferential statistical analyses were conducted to address the research objectives. Pearson correlation analysis examined the strength and direction of relationships between service quality perception dimensions (tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy) and adoption decisions. Multiple regression analysis was utilized to identify significant predictors of willingness to engage professional property management services and to determine the relative contribution of each service quality dimension to adoption decisions. Statistical significance was established at the $p < 0.05$ level, with Cohen's conventions used to interpret effect sizes (small = 0.10, medium = 0.30, large = 0.50) to determine the practical significance of findings beyond statistical significance.

5.5 Ethical Considerations

Rigorous ethical protocols were implemented throughout the research process in accordance with established research ethics standards. Prior to data collection, participants received comprehensive information sheets detailing the study's purpose, procedures, potential risks and benefits, and their rights as research participants. Written informed consent was obtained from all 85 participants, with explicit emphasis on voluntary participation and the unconditional right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty or negative consequences. Data confidentiality and participant anonymity were strictly maintained through multiple protective measures. All questionnaires were assigned numerical codes instead of participant names, with the master list of identifiers stored separately from completed questionnaires in a locked filing cabinet accessible only to the researcher. Electronic data files were password-protected and stored on encrypted devices. Upon completion of data analysis, all identifying information was permanently destroyed. The study protocol adhered to institutional research ethics guidelines and relevant data protection regulations, ensuring participant welfare, privacy protection, and research integrity throughout the entire investigation process.

6. Results

6.1 Service Quality Perceptions

Table 1 presents the results of the respondents' perceptions of the quality of service. Apartment owners generally have positive perceptions of service quality, with reliability ($M = 4.01$) rated highest, indicating strong confidence in consistent service delivery.

However, empathy ($M = 3.70$) is comparatively lower, suggesting room for improvement in personalized service.

Table 1: Service Quality Perceptions Dimensions (SERVQUAL)

Dimension	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
Tangibles	3.82	0.64	Positive
Reliability	4.01	0.58	Positive
Responsiveness	3.76	0.67	Positive
Assurance	3.95	0.61	Positive
Empathy	3.70	0.69	Positive
Overall Mean	3.85	0.64	Positive

Scale: 1–1.80 = Very Negative, 1.81–2.60 = Negative, 2.61–3.40 = Neutral, 3.41–4.20 = Positive, 4.21–5.00 = Very Positive.

6.2 Influence of Perceptions on Adoption Decision

Table 2: Influence of Perceptions on Adoption Decision

Variables	Adoption Decision
Tangibles	0.42**
Reliability	0.61**
Responsiveness	0.48**
Assurance	0.55**
Empathy	0.39**

$P < 0.01$

Table 2 shows that all five consumer perception dimensions had a positive and significant relationship with the adoption of professional property management services among apartment owners in La Trinidad, Benguet ($p < 0.01$). Reliability had the strongest relationship with adoption decision ($r = 0.61$), followed by assurance ($r = 0.55$), responsiveness ($r = 0.48$), tangibles ($r = 0.42$), and empathy ($r = 0.39$). This suggests that apartment owners who have more favorable perceptions of service quality are more likely to adopt professional property management services.

Table 3: Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

Predictor	B	Beta	t	Sig.
Tangibles	0.18	0.21	2.34	0.022
Reliability	0.35	0.39	4.76	0.000
Responsiveness	0.22	0.25	2.89	0.005
Assurance	0.29	0.31	3.68	0.001
Empathy	0.11	0.14	1.92	0.058
Model Summary				
R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	F	Sig.
0.71	0.50	0.47	15.62	0.000

Table 3 shows that the regression model significantly predicts the adoption of professional property management services among apartment owners in La Trinidad,

Benguet, with $R = 0.71$, $R^2 = 0.50$, adjusted $R^2 = 0.47$, $F = 15.62$, and $p < 0.001$. This means that the five perception dimensions collectively explain about 50% of the variation in adoption decisions. Among the predictors, reliability had the strongest significant effect ($\beta = 0.39$, $p < 0.001$), followed by assurance ($\beta = 0.31$, $p = 0.001$), responsiveness ($\beta = 0.25$, $p = 0.005$), and tangibles ($\beta = 0.21$, $p = 0.022$). Empathy was not a significant predictor ($\beta = 0.14$, $p = 0.058$). Thus, when the five dimensions are considered simultaneously, reliability is the most important predictor of apartment owners' adoption decisions, while empathy does not make a statistically significant unique contribution.

6.3 Factors Affecting Willingness to Engage Services

Table 4: Factor Analysis (Rotated Component Matrix)

Variables	Factor 1 (Trust & Value)	Factor 2 (Service Quality)
Trust	0.82	0.31
Perceived Value	0.79	0.28
Social Influence	0.74	0.22
Reliability	0.30	0.81
Assurance	0.27	0.78
Responsiveness	0.25	0.75

Table 4 shows that the variables were grouped into two main factors. Factor 1, Trust and Value, had strong loadings for trust (0.82), perceived value (0.79), and social influence (0.74), indicating that these variables represent a common dimension related to owners' confidence and perceived benefits of professional property management services. Factor 2, Service Quality, had strong loadings for reliability (0.81), assurance (0.78), and responsiveness (0.75), indicating that these variables represent a common service-quality dimension.

Table 5: Dependent Variable: Willingness to Engage Services

Predictor	B	Beta	t	Sig.
Trust	0.41	0.43	5.12	0.000
Perceived Value	0.33	0.35	4.26	0.000
Reliability	0.21	0.24	2.98	0.004
Model Summary				
R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	F	Sig.
0.76	0.58	0.56	22.47	0.000

Table 5 shows that trust, perceived value, and reliability significantly predicted willingness to engage professional property management services. Trust was the strongest predictor ($\beta = 0.43$, $p < 0.001$), followed by perceived value ($\beta = 0.35$, $p < 0.001$) and reliability ($\beta = 0.24$, $p = 0.004$). The overall regression model was significant ($F = 22.47$, $p < 0.001$) and explained 58% of the variation in willingness to engage services ($R^2 = 0.58$).

Table 6: ANOVA (Willingness by Business Size)

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	8.72	2	4.36	4.85	0.010
Within Groups	73.65	82	0.90		
Total	82.37	84			

Table 6 shows that willingness to engage professional property management services differed significantly according to business size ($F = 4.85$, $p = 0.010$). Since the significance value is below 0.05, the results indicate that the three business-size groups had significantly different levels of willingness to engage professional property management services.

7. Discussion

7.1 Service Quality Perceptions

The findings reveal that apartment owners in La Trinidad, Benguet hold generally positive perceptions of professional property management service quality, with reliability emerging as the most valued dimension. This aligns with established service quality literature emphasizing reliability as a fundamental determinant of customer satisfaction (Thorat & Pagare, 2024; Saleem *et al.*, 2024). The prominence of reliability reflects apartment owners' prioritization of consistent, dependable service delivery, which is particularly crucial in property management where operational continuity directly impacts rental income and property value. This finding corroborates research by Sanderson and Read (2020), who identified reliability as a key factor in customer-focused property management that contributes to superior financial outcomes for real estate investors, and supports Ali *et al.* (2022), who demonstrated that service quality significantly impacts customer satisfaction and purchasing decisions. However, the relatively lower empathy scores indicate a significant gap in personalized service delivery, suggesting that property management companies in the region may be focusing more on operational efficiency than individualized customer relationships. This contrasts with findings from residential facility studies where empathy and personalized attention significantly influence overall service quality perceptions (Cheung & Woo, 2016). The empathy gap represents a critical opportunity for property management firms to differentiate themselves through enhanced customer relationship management, as research demonstrates that empathy positively correlates with customer satisfaction and loyalty (Pascua & Japos, 2023).

These findings indicate that reliability remains the cornerstone of service quality perceptions in property management contexts, consistent with total quality management principles that emphasize consistency and dependability as fundamental service attributes (Talib *et al.*, 2011). The positive overall perceptions suggest market readiness for professional services, while the empathy gap reveals potential areas where service differentiation may occur. The multidimensional nature of service quality perceptions demonstrates that apartment owners evaluate services holistically, considering both

functional and emotional aspects of service delivery, which aligns with comprehensive service quality frameworks that emphasize the importance of addressing all service dimensions to achieve customer satisfaction.

7.2 Influence of Perceptions on Adoption Decision

The significant positive relationship between service quality perceptions and adoption decisions validates theoretical frameworks linking service quality to customer behavior and purchasing intentions. The dominance of reliability as the strongest predictor of adoption decisions reinforces its critical role in service evaluation, consistent with research demonstrating that reliability significantly impacts customer satisfaction and behavioral intentions (Ali *et al.*, 2022; Thorat & Pagare, 2024). This finding aligns with property management literature emphasizing that consistent service delivery enables real estate investors to achieve superior returns through improved tenant retention and premium pricing capabilities (Sanderson & Read, 2020), and supports broader service quality research showing positive correlations between quality perceptions and adoption behaviors (Saleem *et al.*, 2024). The substantial explanatory power of the model, accounting for 50% of the variance in adoption decisions, demonstrates the practical significance of service quality perceptions in professional service adoption contexts. This level of explained variance exceeds many service quality studies and suggests that apartment owners' adoption decisions are strongly influenced by their quality perceptions, supporting the theoretical foundation of service quality-adoption relationships (Hakeem & Sulphey, 2024). Interestingly, the non-significance of empathy in predicting adoption decisions, despite its inclusion in service quality frameworks, suggests that apartment owners may prioritize functional service attributes over emotional connections when making initial adoption decisions.

These findings demonstrate that service quality perceptions serve as critical antecedents to adoption decisions, supporting established consumer behavior theories that link quality perceptions to purchasing intentions. The strong predictive power of reliability, assurance, and responsiveness indicates that functional service attributes dominate adoption decision-making processes in property management contexts. The non-significance of empathy in adoption decisions suggests that while emotional service dimensions may influence long-term satisfaction, they may not be primary drivers of initial service adoption, indicating that different factors may influence acquisition versus retention phases of the customer relationship lifecycle.

7.3 Factors Affecting Willingness to Engage Services

The emergence of trust as the strongest predictor of willingness to engage property management services validates adoption theory emphasizing trust as a fundamental determinant of service adoption decisions. This finding strongly aligns with research on service adoption, which identifies trust as a critical factor influencing customers' willingness to engage professional services, particularly when delegation of control is involved (Hakeem & Sulphey, 2024; Montazemi & Qahri-Saremi, 2014). The prominence of trust in property management contexts is particularly logical given that apartment

owners must entrust significant assets and operational responsibilities to external service providers, making confidence in provider competence and integrity paramount (Sanderson & Read, 2020). This finding also supports broader service quality literature emphasizing trust as a mediating factor between service perceptions and behavioral intentions (Ali *et al.*, 2022). The identification of two key dimensions; Trust and Value, and Service Quality, through factor analysis provides a parsimonious framework for understanding willingness to engage services. The strong explanatory power of 58% variance explained demonstrates that these factors comprehensively capture the primary drivers of engagement willingness, exceeding the explanatory power found in many adoption studies. The significant role of perceived value reflects the cost-benefit analysis that apartment owners conduct when evaluating professional services, consistent with research on willingness to pay for apartment management services (Ojekalu *et al.*, 2019). The significant differences in willingness across business sizes suggest that organizational characteristics influence service adoption decisions, potentially reflecting varying resource availability, management complexity, or risk tolerance among different types of apartment owners.

These findings highlight the multifaceted nature of service engagement decisions, where trust emerges as the primary driver, consistent with service adoption literature that emphasizes confidence and reliability as fundamental prerequisites for professional service engagement. The dimensional structure reveals that willingness to engage services encompasses both rational evaluation (value and service quality) and emotional confidence (trust), supporting theoretical models that recognize both cognitive and affective components in service adoption decisions. The significant variance across business sizes indicates that organizational characteristics moderate engagement willingness, suggesting that service adoption patterns may vary systematically across different types of apartment owners based on their operational scale and resource capabilities.

7.4 Conclusions and Implications for Future Research

This study provides significant insights into apartment owners' perceptions and adoption of professional property management services in La Trinidad, Benguet, revealing that service quality perceptions play a crucial role in shaping adoption decisions and willingness to engage professional services. The findings demonstrate that apartment owners hold generally positive perceptions of service quality, with reliability emerging as the most critical dimension, while empathy represents an area requiring improvement. The strong positive relationship between service quality perceptions and adoption decisions, with the model explaining 50% of variance, validates theoretical frameworks linking service quality to customer behavior. Furthermore, trust emerges as the strongest predictor of willingness to engage services, followed by perceived value and reliability, with the comprehensive model explaining 58% of variance. The significant differences in willingness across business sizes indicate that organizational characteristics moderate engagement decisions, suggesting that service adoption

patterns vary systematically among different types of apartment owners based on their operational scale and resource capabilities.

The implications for future research are substantial and multifaceted. Longitudinal quantitative studies examining how service quality perceptions and adoption decisions evolve over time would provide valuable insights into the dynamic nature of the property management service relationship and the factors that influence long-term customer retention versus acquisition. Cross-cultural and geographic comparative studies using similar quantitative descriptive-correlational designs could explore how regional differences, cultural factors, and economic conditions influence service quality perceptions and adoption patterns across different markets, extending beyond the La Trinidad context to other emerging property management markets. Future quantitative research may investigate the mediating and moderating effects of demographic variables, property characteristics, and market conditions on the relationships identified in this study through advanced statistical modeling techniques such as structural equation modeling or hierarchical regression analysis. Additionally, experimental or quasi-experimental quantitative designs could examine causal relationships between specific service quality interventions and adoption outcomes, while larger-scale survey studies could test the generalizability of these findings across broader populations and geographic regions, ultimately contributing to more comprehensive theoretical frameworks for understanding professional service adoption in property management contexts.

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Conflict of Interest Declaration

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest.

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Jane Macasling Mencio is a results-driven Property Accountant and Financial Controller with strong expertise in financial reporting, budgeting, and process improvement. With a solid accounting background and customer service experience, she demonstrates adaptability, leadership, and commitment to delivering efficient financial management and client-focused solutions across property management operations.

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