

THE LIVED EXPERIENCE OF LESSORS (OWNER) IN MANAGING DIFFICULT TENANTS

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ABSTRACT

Managing difficult tenants is a common and challenging aspect of property ownership. This study delves into the lived experiences of lessors (owners) and utilized qualitative phenomenological research design to explore and understand the lived experiences of lessors in managing difficult tenants. The study describes the experiences of Filipino lessors, identifies the challenges and demands in managing difficult tenants, and finds out the coping mechanisms in relation to the challenges and demands. The participants of this study are seven (7) lessors using data collected through in-depth, semi-structured interviews. The findings revealed 28 different super ordinate themes. Difficult tenants are always present from late to non-payment of rent which resulted in having financial struggle unto the lessor. Such problems resulted in emotional and mental stress. The research revealed strategies in handling difficult tenants such as an open communication model as the research output in handling difficult tenants. Addressing problems and managing the conflicts with patience and understanding. Providing mutual respect and fair treatment by not being biased to the tenants. Understand flexibility and imposing firmness in rule enforcement to be able to foster good relationships. The significance of valuing tenants' privacy by showing minimal interaction

and setting personal boundaries is also essential to develop trust from the parties. If tenants do not show remorse, lessors may use other resources or support like seeking external help from Barangay or Community leaders. Addressing the issues directly and always implementing firm solutions may help lessors to become an effective manager. Lessors must show patience and empathy at all times by balancing and understanding issues with professionalism. And lastly, toughness and firm decision-making is needed in order to cope up with the demands and challenges of the rental business.

Keywords – *Lessor, Tenant, Lived Experience, Difficult Tenants.*

INTRODUCTION

We are only tenants, and shortly the great Landlord will give us notice that our lease has expired.

- Joseph Jefferson

Owning rental properties may be considered stable and lucrative because it promises regular income with a possibility of appreciating asset value, but it is different from any other business built. There are certain issues that are expected to arise such as late payments, property damage, and interpersonal conflicts that can disrupt this dynamic, leading to stress and financial loss for property owners. In reality, managing rental properties comes with its share of difficulties, particularly when facing challenging tenants. Tenant management is not only key to maintaining harmonious relationships but also essential for safeguarding the success of a lessor's investment.

Globally, lessees face the same issue as the dynamics of handling challenging tenants' cuts across every border. One particular example is the current housing crisis in the UK with rent so high and shortage of affordable housing, many landlords have kept pace by putting up rents for existing tenants (Geraghty, 2024). In Scotland there is a rent cap, which limits the amount a landlord can increase the rent, since the landlord sold up, landlords had to find another property in a city with high private rental costs. Landlords can hike up the rent, safe in the knowledge that if their tenant can't pay, it can serve them a no-fault eviction notice and get someone else in who can afford to pay.

The Urban Land Institute's (ULI) released recently the 2023 Asia Pacific Home Attainability Index report on which housing is attainable in cities in the Asia Pacific region. Singapore's private sector homes are the most expensive in the region with a median price of US\$1.2 million, nearly 30% increase in monthly rent. Japan, with the lowest ratio of monthly rent to income due to the relatively large pool of available housing for rent resulting from an ageing population and limited new household formation. In South Korea, with the recent home price drop that created problems for 'Jeonse', a unique form of home rental where tenants put up a lump sum deposit of 70-80% upfront instead of paying monthly rent during the lease period.

An article posted by Lamudi (2019), states that over 69% of Filipinos prefer to rent rather than buy property. According to the Richest Philippines article, Philippine rental trends in the year 2024 and beyond are expected to evolve. The experiences of Metro Manila landlords give insights into the lived realities of property owners in highly urbanized settings.

Based on the results of the 2022 Annual Poverty Indicators Survey (APIS), which was conducted by the PSA to provide information on the country's poverty situation. The highest percentage of families renting the house and lot they occupy are in the National Capital Region with 28.6 percent and Calabarzon (Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal and Quezon) with

15.7 percent. A study by Santos (2019), revealed that landlords in Metro Manila experience higher rates of tenant default and property damage compared to other regions. Filipino landlords face difficulties in collecting rent, handling tenant disputes, and maintaining property conditions due to the high volume of tenants (De Guzman, 2018). This was perhaps unsurprising considering that these regions also have the highest population figures nationwide (Balita, 2024). With the growing number of renters, the Philippine Rent Control Act of 2009 (Republic Act 9653) regulates rent increases and eviction procedures, but landlords often struggle to enforce these provisions.

While most of the time, tenants' concerns are on top of the issue regarding renting a property, the researchers decided to focus on the lessor's side and perception in managing tenants. Exploring the rental or property business, lessors' lived experiences are the primary focus of the study. This research will be limited to experiences and challenges and will not examine other family members, it focuses solely on the lessors' perspectives and highlights challenges in managing difficult tenants and includes its impact on lessors' personal lives.

This research will benefit lessor-tenants' relationships and significantly impact the financial and emotional well-being of property owners. This study is multifaceted and offers in-depth insights into the complex experiences of lessors (owners) managing difficult tenants. It goes beyond just identifying common issues; it thoroughly examines specific obstacles landlords' face, such as late rent payments and problematic behaviors that disrupt the lessor. By investigating these challenges, the study uncovers effective strategies for conflict resolution, including proactive communication techniques, mediation methods, and tenant screening processes. Ultimately, the significance of this study lies in emphasizing the necessity of addressing tenant issues both from a legal standpoint and through an empathetic understanding of the human experience and relational dynamics at play in rental agreements.

The purpose of this study is to explore the lived experiences of Filipino owners who rented out their three (3) residential or commercial units. Specifically, the objectives of this research are to describe the experiences of Filipino lessors, to identify the challenges and demands in managing difficult tenants, and to find out the coping mechanisms in relation to the challenges and demands. By elevating the discourse around managing difficult tenants, this research aspires to transform how landlords approach their roles, leading to positive outcomes for landlords, tenants, and the communities. This study will benefit all prospect lessors and business owners thinking of going into property. Furthermore, this research greatly contributes to the existing knowledge of the lessors in managing rental property and would give insights on how to successfully maintain good relationships with their tenants and with difficult tenants.

This study anchor to the Emotional Labor Theory relates to the lived experience of a lessor. Emotional Labor Theory explains how individuals manage their emotions to meet professional or social expectations. For lessors, managing difficult tenants often involves regulating their emotions to maintain professionalism, protect the investment, and sustain a stable landlord-tenant relationship. The study can explore the emotional challenges faced by lessors and how they cope with stress, frustration, or anxiety caused by tenant issues.

Furthermore, Social Exchange Theory connects to the challenges and demands in managing difficult tenants. Social Exchange Theory explains relationships as a series of reciprocal interactions where parties seek to maximize rewards and minimize costs. In the context of landlords and tenants, this theory helps understand how lessors manage difficult tenants by

evaluating the perceived costs (e.g., stress, property damage) and benefits (e.g., rental income). The study can explore how lessors navigate these interactions, balancing the costs of tenant difficulties with the benefits of maintaining rental agreements. It also sheds light on the decisions lessors make to sustain or terminate relationships with problematic tenants.

On the other hand, Conflict Management Theory relates to the coping up mechanism to handle difficult tenants. This theory focuses on how individuals handle interpersonal conflicts, highlighting strategies such as avoidance, accommodation, compromise, collaboration, and competition.

The study can examine the specific conflict management styles lessors use to deal with difficult tenants, such as whether it prioritizes preserving the relationship, protecting the property, or seeking legal recourse. The study intends to answer the following questions:

Statement of the Problem

1. What is the lived experience of lessors in managing difficult tenants?
2. What are the challenges and demands in managing difficult tenants?
3. How lessors cope with the challenges and demands in managing difficult tenants?
4. Based on the theme emerges what output can be proposed?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Lived Experience of lessors

As a lessor, managing a property means keeping in mind all the responsibilities such as maintenance, rent collection, lease agreements and compliance with various regulations. The lessor can be referred to as the owner of the leased asset either an apartment or a property. They are solely responsible to ensure that the property is in good condition complying with all the terms of lease contract. Furthermore, they grant the right to use all the assets to the lessee in exchange of payments or rents (Stohler, 2024).

Managing rental housing business is not an easy money and business to run. Research into successful landlords (2006) pointed out reasons for starting a rental business, to earn a living, security on property, investment on property and to give accommodation to those who did not have. With all the stated reasons, it is essential to become a business minded person with empathy to their tenants in whatever issues may arise, and one effective way is to become a successful landlord. Findings from the study mentioned suggests on becoming a successful lessor in a rental business, lessors need to have a strong personal relationship with tenants and further concluded that it is an important aspect in a lessor-tenant relationship.

Challenges in Managing Difficult Tenants

Difficult tenants are another issue encountered by landlords while managing a rental business. In order to have a good relationship with the tenants, they need to interact with them and show some boundaries by becoming strict from time to time. Lessors must also keep the place clean, repair and maintain, undertake hands-on management and not be too oppressive (McGloughlin, 2006). Eviction cases may come in response to those tenants who cannot pay with what they were supposed to pay. Here comes pandemic, some lessors show kindness by letting tenants skip a monthly payment. But prior to the pandemic, an estimated 2.7 million eviction cases were filed against renters in a typical year, representing about five

(5) to six (6) percent of renter households (Gromis et al., 2022). Evictions can be traumatic and can harm the tenants' future economic prospects (Collinson et al., 2024). It can also be traumatic for tenants especially those who have nowhere else to go (Desmond, 2016). Processing an eviction process can be costly for both the tenants and landlords.

Demands in Managing Difficult Tenants

The COVID-19 pandemic affected the mental and economic wellbeing of landlords and tenants. Providing the best housing policy decisions during the pandemic is an important requirement for lessors. Data from the research on "Post pandemic landlord-renter relationships in Australia (2020)", discusses two clear groups of landlords; (1) those who are willing to consider financial assistance for their tenants, and (2) those who are against this. During the pandemic, many landlords reflected that everyone needed to be more accommodating and make little sacrifices and taking in consideration that they have a role for the wellbeing of their tenants. However, there are still strict lessors who resist reducing rental payments.

Hurley (2021), concluded the following emerging themes on "Homeowners' Lived Experience in Developing and Using Accessory Dwelling Units in Ireland" (a) pride and satisfaction, (b) need for affordable or elder housing, (c) impact on family relationships, (d) attitudes to and experiences with planning policy, (e) experiences with the construction process, and (f) role as an ADU landlord. The study may lead to positive social change by serving as a foundation for further studies and policy development in both the Irish and international contexts.

In the Philippines, there are common issues faced by the tenants. There should be clear communications with their tenants. Lessors need to have a tenant screening process which can help identify potential issues before they arise. Legal compliance with the local laws may prevent legal disputes and protect both the landlord and tenant in the future. Most importantly, regular property inspections, lessors must conduct regular inspections to identify and address maintenance issues early on.

Coping Mechanism in Managing Difficult Tenants

Handling challenging tenants is a common hurdle for landlords, but it is also an opportunity to demonstrate effective conflict resolution abilities. By addressing conflicts with empathy and professionalism, landlords can cultivate positive relationships and create harmonious rental environments. Coping mechanism is any conscious or nonconscious adjustment or adaptation that decreases tension and anxiety in a stressful experience or situation (APA Dictionary of Psychology, 2018). One common way that people cope with challenges is problem-focused coping.

One of the mechanisms of owners is to consider their past experiences with tenants who missed rent payments when evaluating prospective tenants. Research entitled "How Landlords of Small Rental Properties Decide Who Gets Housed and Who Gets Evicted (Nathaniel Decker, 2021)" suggested that there is a connection between owners' tenant selection methods and their methods for dealing with missed rent payment. A property management system must be put in place by larger-scale landlords at once to make it slightly easier for tenants prone to miss payments to find housing while also making it much more likely that tenants who miss rent payments will then be filed for eviction.

From a tenant selection perspective, the relationship between owner professionalism and the owners' approach to fair housing rules is an important concern. Fair housing rules fit more naturally into the tenant selection systems of larger-scale owners. If tenants apply to units through a standardized process that generates a matrix of information that can be evaluated by a one-size-fits-all set of criteria, the system can provide owners with a protection against accusations of discrimination. If fair housing rules change, questions can be removed or adjusted to comply with these changes. But tenant selection for smaller-scale owners often involves extensive in-person interviews, and often even includes a visit by the prospective landlord to the prospective tenant's current home.

Lessors are protected by law, to successfully cope up with difficult tenants legally, compliance with notice requirements, proper documentation, and the prompt pursuit of legal remedies are essential. By seeking competent legal counsel and meticulously observing the legal requirements, the landlord can confidently navigate this complex situation and enforce their lawful rights under Philippine law.

METHODOLOGY

This study utilized a qualitative phenomenological research design to explore and understand the lived experiences of lessors (owners) in managing difficult tenants. The phenomenological approach was chosen to capture the essence of the participants' experiences and to provide a deep understanding of the challenges and strategies they employ in tenant management.

The participants in this study will be seven (7) lessors who rented out their 3 residential or commercial units to ensure that they had relevant experiences managing difficult tenants. Data will be collected through in-depth, semi-structured interviews. An interview guide with open-ended questions will be used to facilitate the conversations while allowing flexibility for participants to share their experiences in detail. The interviews will be audio-recorded with the participants' consent and later transcribed verbatim for analysis. Researchers will take all the answers from the participants from the open-ended questions directly asked to them. After answering questions, the research questions will be considered and patterned the answers of all participants in determining themes.

Ethical protocols were strictly followed to protect the rights and well-being of the participants. The personal information of the participants will be stored and kept confidential. All potential participants will be informed about the purpose, procedure and benefits in participating in the study, including their right to withdraw from the study at any point without any consequences. Informed consent was obtained from each participant before the interview, and they were assured of the confidentiality of their responses. Upon receiving the participant's signed consent form, the researchers will proceed with the next step which is the scheduling of the interview based on the participant's availability.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study presents the results and findings of the qualitative research analysis regarding the lived experience of lessors in managing difficult tenants. The conduct of the study generated important and useful information so that the researchers could derive key themes and insights from the data. The study highlights recurring patterns, unique perspectives, and contextual

factors by examining participant narratives and providing a deeper understanding of the research problem. The findings are organized thematically, with each theme accompanied by direct quotations and detailed contextual explanations to accurately capture the participants' lived experiences.

The thematic analysis on this study has identified 28 themes, interpreted using the subordinate and super ordinate theme approach. Wherein, a "subordinate theme" refers to a smaller, more specific theme that falls under a broader, overarching "super ordinate theme". Essentially, a subordinate theme is a detailed aspect of a larger conceptual idea captured by the super ordinate theme. These themes offer a comprehensive view and interpretation of the dynamics regarding the problem of the study which is the lived experience of the lessor in managing difficult tenants.

Each theme is explored in detail to uncover the nuanced and complex realities the participants face. This approach enriches the narrative, offering a granular and holistic perspective of the research problem.

1. Lived Experience of Lessors in Managing Difficult Tenants

1.1 Can you describe your experience as a lessor?

Theme 1: Tenant Relations and Social Interactions

Lessor	Responses	Subordinate Themes
Lessor 1	<i>It's hard but fulfilling because you get to know new people aside from the income generated.</i>	Tenant Relations and Social Interactions
Lessor 6	<i>Other tenants became my friends but I realized that sometimes it may cause them to lose respect or professional approach on me as a lessor, others are even trying to borrow money from me.</i>	Tenant Relations and Social Interactions Tenant Turnover and Business Uncertainty

Among the 7 lessors interviewed and participated, lessor 1 and lessor 6 describes their experience as a lessor that in managing a rental business it formed tenant relations and social interactions.

Keyrenter Property Management Premier highlighted Conflict Resolution: Essential Landlord Traits for Harmonious Tenant Relationships and identified importance of tenant relations in property management. It is said that one of the benefits is it improves retention and conflict resolution. Tenants were more likely to adhere to the lease agreements, maintain property, and communicate effectively with property managers, when they felt valued and respected. Therefore, establishing strong tenant relations and social interaction can significantly enhance property management success.

Theme 2: Financial Stability and Income Generation

Lessor	Responses	Subordinate Themes
Lessor 2	<i>I am happy being a landlord since I don't have a full time job as of the moment, this business serves as a passive income for me)</i>	Financial Stability and Income Generation
Lessor 6	<i>This business is good because you will have a monthly income.</i>	Financial Stability and Income Generation

Lessor 7	<i>This business is my late husband's legacy, we owned the rental units for years now.</i>	Financial Stability and Income Generation
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Lessors see rental business as a passive income and a source of financial stability. Lessor 2, lessor 6 and lessor 7 responded that as a lessor it can create additional monthly income which contributed to their individual financial stability.

As presented by Green Ocean Property Management, passive income strategies for millennials: Why rental properties are a smart investment (Lau, 2024). Millennials often see rental businesses offering pathways for long-term wealth and income stability. Over the years, rental businesses are still becoming popular like short-term rentals. Rental business won't require much of the lessors' time by creating money from existing assets. It then offers promising opportunities to enjoy business while making profit over the coming year (Peddlr Philippines, 2023).

Theme 3: Late Payments and Financial Struggles

Lessor	Responses	Subordinate Themes
Lessor 2	<i>It really causes me financial constraints. Even one of my tenants is behind on their rent payments because my personal expenses or budgeting are affected.</i>	Late Payments and Financial Struggles
Lessor 3	<i>I have many experiences in this business, the most common is when the tenants don't pay on their due date and they will ask for payment extension but I am just being understanding regarding that matter.</i>	Late Payments and Financial Struggles

Similar to other businesses, being a rental owner comes with difficult challenges such as late rental payments which create a financial strain in their personal finances.

It can be a headache for any lessor which causes financial struggles. However, in some cases lessors need to acknowledge the right approach and it should not be a disaster. Lessors need to understand the tenant's situation. Leniency is one way to foster positive relations. Even a one-time delay does not mean a tenant is unreliable, there are still circumstances that being flexible is the right move (Robertson, 2024).

Theme 4: Property Maintenance and Tenant Behavior Issues

Lessor	Responses	Subordinate Themes
Lessor 4	<i>I had many experiences. It's hard, for example, when someone applies to rent. That's the main thing: choosing whom I will trust to rent, because you don't know them. Right? That's the hardest part, having someone who lives in your rental house. That's what I've experienced in renting out my property. I've had bad experiences with tenants, like damaging the house, being noisy, those kinds of things. It's important because sometimes there are rules when renting out. There's no contract; I just tell them,</i>	Challenges in Tenant Selection and Trust Issues Property Maintenance and Tenant Behavior Issues

“This is not allowed,” things like that. Because in our rental properties, we don't have contracts, just a matter of trust. That's the hardest part for me, choosing the right tenants.

Lessor 7	<i>The challenging part of this business are the tenants who do not follow simple rules, which are noisy and already causing trouble and disturbances to their neighbors.</i>	Property Maintenance and Tenant Behavior Issues
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In addition to that, property maintenance and tenant behavior issues are also one of the challenges of being a lessor. Sometimes tenants would cause property damage, noise pollution, or disturbances leading to complaints and difficulties in property management.

Entering in this type of business is a bit risky especially if the lessor does not have enough effective property management. Addresses the importance of effective property management in running a rental business by implementing efficient practices to ensure smooth operations and maximize returns. Lessors need to make sure that property is in good condition, always respond to the tenant inquiry and concerns. Another important aspect to consider is having a thorough tenant screening by conducting background checks which minimizes the risk of late payment and of course property damage (Lau, 2024).

1.2 What are the most common issues you face with difficult tenants?

Theme 5: Difficult Tenant Attitudes and Conflicts

Lessor	Responses	Subordinate Themes
Lessor 1	<i>Those who have psychological problems. There are tenants who think of themselves as superior to us lessors. It is very difficult to handle.</i>	Difficult Tenant Attitudes and Conflicts
Lessor 2	<i>Tenants with attitude problems and those have issues with the design and layouts of the house so they will change it and deduct on the rent fee without even consulting me as the owner is really challenging. There are also some tenants who always have conflicts with neighbors and end up dragging me with their issues because they can no longer deal with my tenant.</i>	Difficult Tenant Attitudes and Conflicts
Lessor 4	<i>There are always visitors, who are noisy.</i>	Tenant Lifestyle and Noise Issues
Lessor 7	<i>I had a tenant who always fought and hurt each other, which the neighbors could hear. When they left, I barely recognized the unit because of the damages, and they had forced clothes into the pipes, flushed clothes, and left a lot of trash.</i>	Difficult Tenant Attitudes and Conflicts Property Damage and Negligence Tenant Lifestyle and

Common issue arises in this study is the difficult tenants' attitudes and conflicts. Some tenants display entitlement, excessive complaints, or cause disturbances, making them difficult to handle. Tenants also cause property damage and negligence which lead to major problems in the property.

Shaw (2024) further identifies the red flags in renter behavior and attitude: inconsistent communication, reluctant to provide information, negative attitude towards previous landlords, often shows signs of disrespect or aggressiveness, overly eager to move in quickly, frequent moves without clear justification, unreasonable or excessive demands and vague employment details. Lessors dealing with difficult tenants is an inevitable challenge, but it can be an opportunity for the lessors to become an effective manager that resolves conflict among the tenants.

Theme 6: Late and Non-Payment of Rent

Lessor	Responses	Subordinate Themes
Lessor 2	<i>Those with continuous late payments on their rents, if it is a once or twice scenario as a lessor I always try to understand.</i>	Late and Non-Payment of Rent
Lessor 3	<i>Sometimes tenants lose their jobs, especially during the COVID 19 pandemic they will really have a rent payments backlog.</i>	Late and Non-Payment of Rent
Lessor 4	<i>Number one is those who don't know how to pay, making it difficult to collect payment.</i>	Late and Non-Payment of Rent
Lessor 6	<i>Those who pay late or don't pay at all, then suddenly leave the house and their unpaid bills like electricity and water, those are my headaches.</i>	Late and Non-Payment of Rent

Another common issue of the lessors is the late and non-payment of rent. This is a major issue for lessors that tenants failing to pay rent on time or leaving behind unpaid bills.

In support of the statement, Richest Philippines revealed that handling late rent payments is a challenging aspect of property management in the Philippines. With problems encountered by lessors, it is then suggested to a proactive approach that can help in many issues.

1.3 How do you balance enforcing rules with maintaining a positive landlord-tenant relationship?

Theme 7: Mutual Respect and Fair Treatment

Lessor	Responses	Subordinate Themes
Lessor 1	<i>It's very simple, of course respect, you need to understand them at the same time you need to enforce the rules and regulations in the compound that must be followed. Therefore, do not show favor among others. No seniority, no brotherhood. Not biased and showing</i>	Mutual Respect and Fair Treatment

fair treatment with all your tenants.

Lessor 2	<i>Camaraderie and respect because I believe that it should be a two-way street. So, sometimes, even if they make mistakes or have problems they want to share, I don't get angry right away. Instead, I try to understand them first.</i>	Mutual Respect and Fair Treatment
Lessor 6	<i>It is important to have respect for one another.</i>	Mutual Respect and Fair Treatment

The lessors emphasize treating all tenants fairly and with respect. They ensure no favoritism or biases are involved while still upholding rules and professional relationships with the tenants.

To balance lessor-tenant relationship, Jaxon Texas Property Management posted a golden rule of property management and that is by establishing respect for both owners and tenants. Treating others in the best possible way. The core of property management is respect. Lessors should treat tenants with equal considerations, empathy, fairness and dignity. Most importantly, responding to such problems professionally and with kindness (Texas, 2024).

Theme 8: Firmness in Rule Enforcement

Lessor	Responses	Subordinate Themes
Lessor 2	<i>At the same time, I am always firm with the rules, and they know there are things I can and cannot let pass.</i>	Firmness in Rule Enforcement
Lessor 4	<i>But if, for example, there are one or two issues, I can still handle those. But if it's too much, I talk to them nicely. I say, "Oh, that's not allowed", "Oh, don't do that again", things like that. That's why they stay longer in my rental property.</i>	Firmness in Rule Enforcement
Lessor 7	<i>This is really simple, but not everyone does it, the camaraderie and understanding each other. Understanding them and they understand you also. Following the rules and not insisting on what's prohibited.</i>	Firmness in Rule Enforcement

Lessors maintain authority by ensuring that rules are followed and addressing violations when necessary. By showing firmness in rule enforcement, lessors can balance enforcing rules while maintaining a positive landlord-tenant relationship.

Property Management Law Solutions, PLLC (2024), posted a question as to Why landlords need strong lease provisions or showing firmness in rule enforcement. Premises condition is an important aspect that helps to ensure tenants carefully understand the property's condition before moving in and limit the potential misunderstanding among the parties.

Theme 9: Understanding and Flexibility

Lessor	Responses	Subordinate Themes
Lessor 3	<i>Understand the conditions they requested and listen to them, because they are your livelihood too. It's difficult to keep changing tenants in your unit. That's why camaraderie and understanding are really important.</i>	Understanding and Flexibility
Lessor 4	<i>For me, as long as they haven't violated any of the issues we discussed, I let it go as long as I can manage it.</i>	Understanding and Flexibility
Lessor 6	<i>As much as I can, I give them some leeway as long as they do not overstep or take advantage. It is important to have mutual respect.</i>	Understanding and Flexibility

Lessors acknowledge tenants' concerns and show flexibility, as long as rules are not excessively violated. By being flexible and understanding, it can build rapport and loyalty with the tenants thereby encouraging them to be honest and responsible.

Showing some empathy and compassion can also be an additional step to become flexible and understandable. It is then advised that lessors must not be rigid or inflexible with the rules, open for negotiation and accommodate reasonable requests or exceptions from the tenants (How do you balance being firm and flexible with tenant rules? LinkedIn).

1.4 How do difficult tenant situations affect you personally?**Theme 10: Emotional and Mental Stress**

Lessor	Responses	Subordinate Themes
Lessor 1	<i>It sometimes becomes toxic, there are times you tend to become short tempered. But you need to have patience and always follow your rules.</i>	Emotional and Mental Stress
Lessor 3	<i>Of course, it's unavoidable to be affected mentally and emotionally.</i>	Emotional and Mental Stress
Lessor 6	<i>It affects me because there are times when you get annoyed with them for not following your simple rules or not paying on time, especially when they seem to be the ones angry at you.</i>	Emotional and Mental Stress

This reveals that difficult tenants can cause emotional and mental stress on the lessors. By navigating the right approach, lessors need not to be stressed in the rental business they are in.

However, with the difficult tenants encountered by the lessors, it is not an exception to feel emotionally and mentally stressed at times of conflict. Azibo posted a blog on late rent notice: a landlord's recurring nightmare discussed that tenants not paying rent on time as it is one of the most issues a landlord may have with a tenant (Smith, 2024).

Theme 11: Financial Struggles Due to Late or Unpaid Rent

Lessor	Responses	Subordinate Themes
Lessor 3	<i>Especially during the time when my children were in college, because tuition fees are expensive, we really relied on that income. In budgeting, you expect that on a certain day you will have money because you are supposed to collect rent, but then some tenants are unable to pay.</i>	Financial Struggles Due to Late or Unpaid Rent

Financial struggles are another reason due to late or unpaid rent of the tenants. Unpaid rent and financial delays disrupt budgeting and affect the lessors' personal and family expenses.

Sometimes landlords are not being paid on time or not at all. These affect really the lessor to lose out on their income. When the tenant's fail to pay, the landlord may face such a difficult situation and can cause frustration. It can then ripple the entire operation of the business. If there are delays on the side of the tenants, it would result in it becoming harder on the side of the landlords to cover their own obligations such as mortgage payment, property taxes or even insurance. There are times that property repairs or upgrades may have to be postponed which affect the value and appeal of the property (Smith, 2024).

Theme 12: Managing Tenant Conflicts with Patience and Understanding

Lessor	Responses	Subordinate Themes
Lessor 4	<i>As for me, I haven't experienced that because I talk to them. The main issue I faced was collecting payment. But if, for example, they have difficulty in paying, they usually negotiate. When someone asks for a favor, I talk to them nicely, saying, "It's okay, no problem", regarding those who have difficulty in paying. If they really can't pay, they themselves talk to me about moving out and finding a cheaper place because my rent is quite high. They prefer a lower rent, so when they say, "We can't afford your rent anymore, we'll move to a smaller place," I understand and allow them to move. That resolves the issue.</i>	Managing Tenant Conflicts with Patience and Understanding
Lessor 7	<i>I can't really say that I've been personally affected by my tenants because we can usually resolve misunderstandings through conversation, and when they decide not to continue renting, they let me know that they are leaving.</i>	Managing Tenant Conflicts with Patience and Understanding

Lessors highlight the value of patience and understanding, especially during financial hardships faced by tenants. Patience and understanding enables the lessors to listen to the tenants without reacting impulsively.

It is a very invaluable quality in terms of managing tenant's conflicts. Lessors therefore need to understand all underlying issues by showing patience to the tenants to maintain positive relationships and navigate conflicts effectively (Keyrenter Property Management Chattanooga).

2. What are the challenges and demands in managing difficult tenants?

2.1 What specific behaviors or actions made the tenant challenging to manage?

Theme 13: Emotional and Mental Strain on Lessors

Lessor	Responses	Subordinate Themes
Lessor 1	<i>I think the attitude of the tenant is very difficult to manage, there are tenants who are ill-tempered or grumpy. And they think of themselves as superior to other people. Aside from that, when in times of due date, because most of them always have white lies or excuses and are always in denial.</i>	Emotional and Mental Strain on Lessors Difficulty in Enforcing Rules and Tenant Cooperation
Lessor 2	<i>I think it's the attitude, those with rough behavior who even have conflicts with neighbors to the point of involving the barangay. Late payments can still be understood, but when you're dragged into it because neighbors complain to you about the behavior of your tenants, that's difficult.</i>	Financial Difficulties Due to Late or Unpaid Rent
Lessor 3	<i>Sometimes there are tenants who are stubborn, even when you politely tell them something, they don't follow. Then, there are those whose behavior you can never understand, like always breaking something in the house or clogging the sink in the bathroom, for example. When that happens, it's a headache because it's expensive. But I've started talking to them, saying that they should cover the costs if it happens again.</i>	Emotional and Mental Strain on Lessors Financial Difficulties Due to Late or Unpaid Rent
Lessor 4	<i>Drinking. Drinking and then being noisy and letting people who are not family stay over. Letting friends sleep over. I've experienced that too. It's okay if they say, "Oh, I have a friend coming over to sleep", that's fine, no problem, and if it's just for a few days, that's also okay, but if it's for a month, that's not allowed anymore.</i>	Conflict Avoidance and Communication as a Solution
Lessor 6	<i>In these situations, it's often those who drink and invite too many friends over to the house, causing noise, and leaving their bottles or any trash in the hallway or balcony.</i>	Emotional and Mental Strain on Lessors Difficulty in Enforcing Rules and Tenant Cooperation

Challenging tenants can greatly affect the lessor's experience in handling the rental business. It is being proved that challenging tenants resulted in having emotional and mental strain on lessors. Lessors experience frustration, stress, and emotional exhaustion when dealing with uncooperative tenants.

The NRLA (National Residential Landlords Association) revealed that with the outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic, it is being said that 40% of landlords' mental health had a negative or very negative impact. Prior to the pandemic, statistics showed that one in four landlords set to experience a mental health problem at any given year.

Theme 14: Financial Difficulties Due to Late or Unpaid Rent

Lessor	Responses	Subordinate Themes
Lessor 3	<i>Sometimes you just can't understand why there's always something broken in the house or a clog in the bathroom sink. For example, when that happens, it's a headache because it's expensive. But sometimes I just talk to them and say they should cover it if it happens again.</i>	Financial Difficulties Due to Late or Unpaid Rent

Another subordinate theme arises is having financial difficulties due to late or unpaid rent. Unpaid rent disrupts the lessors' financial planning, especially when they rely on rental income for major expenses.

Among the seven (7) lessors, lessor three (3) experienced the two subordinate themes which resulted in having emotional and mental strain together with financial difficulties due to late or unpaid rent in dealing with challenging tenants. Financial worries that exacerbated which add another worry over lost income and vulnerable tenants (Walmsley, 2021). If these two (2) superordinates themes were combined, this is becoming a very serious concern on the personal well-being of the lessors and shows a deeply worrying picture.

2.2 How would you describe your typical relationship with tenants?**Theme 15: Long-Term Tenants and Family-Like Bonds**

Lessor	Responses	Subordinate Themes
Lessor 1	<i>Here, we treat each other like family, because most of my tenants here, at least 60-70%, are living here for many years now. I think my longest tenant stays here for 12 to 15 years already.</i>	Long-Term Tenants and Family-Like Bonds
Lessor 6	<i>We get along well because some tenants become my friends.</i>	Long-Term Tenants and Family-Like Bonds

Being a landlord is said to be a rewarding experience. By providing a place for people to call a home then in return they pay money for the rent.

However, a typical landlord-tenant relationship would always require more than just collecting rent. It is also important to establish good relationships with the tenants (Lau, 2024). On the lessor's side presented below, it revealed that lessor 1 and lessor 6 have long term tenants and family-like bonds. These lessors form strong, long-term bonds with tenants, making the rental space feel like a community. Maintaining a good landlord and tenant relationship is an integral way of having a quality experience as a tenant. It requires constant effort to balance the flexibility of each party (Rabatan, 2020). Lessors tend to form strong family-like bond relationships with tenants especially when tenants are more cooperative in every lessor's demand. An article from Hindustan Times (2017) supported the idea that landlord and tenant can form a family-like bond relationship. In a Partition-era mansion, the bond between the Zoroastrian landlord and his Sindhi tenants. In a sharp contrast it is a rarest-of-rare account of bonding and love between the two parties who came from different backgrounds. As the years passed by, a deep bond of affection and love was developed between the landlord and tenants (Vaidya & Barau, 2017).

Theme 16: Professional Yet Friendly Approach

Lessor	Responses	Subordinate Themes
Lessor 2	<i>I'm doing okay because I tend to take a more professional approach. I don't like getting into arguments, but I'm not purely all about business. I do get along with them, but not in a way that's too close, because that's when people start asking for too many favors.</i>	Professional Yet Friendly Approach
Lessor 7	<i>Some tenants get along well, and I do the same with them; as much as possible, we respect each other.</i>	Professional Yet Friendly Approach

Aside from the mentioned superordinate themes, it is then revealed that lessor 2 and lessor 7 had a professional yet friendly approach to their tenants. Landlords maintain professionalism while still fostering mutual respect and good relations.

Keeping the landlord-tenant relationship on a professional level is a wise way by becoming not too personally close in order to set boundaries. It could then protect against uncomfortable situations in fostering fair business decisions and straightforwardness (Jugo, 2024).

Theme 17: Minimal Interaction Due to Work or Personal Boundaries

Lessor	Responses	Subordinate Themes
Lessor 4	<i>Because I don't really interact much with my tenants. All of my tenants have jobs, so we rarely see each other, rarely meet. I also have a job. That's why we don't have anything. We don't even talk.</i>	Minimal Interaction Due to Work or Personal Boundaries
Lessor 6	<i>I don't often see some of them because they have work.</i>	Minimal Interaction Due to Work or Personal Boundaries

Lessor 4 and lessor 6 said that their typical relationship with tenants have minimal interaction due to work or personal boundaries. These lessors and tenants have limited interaction due to work schedules or personal boundaries. This also establishes trust from the tenants and lessors then value privacy and personal boundaries.

Upholding minimal interactions is a way of respecting tenant privacy which results in mutual trust and consideration. Respecting boundaries creates good faith on the tenants and that they can rely on their landlord's integrity which further strengthens the landlord-tenant relationship (Jugo, 2024).

2.3 What resources or support do you use when dealing with tenant-related challenges?**Theme 18: Open Communication as the First Approach**

Lessor	Responses	Subordinate Themes
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Lessor 1	<i>If my tenants have problems I need to show empathy to them, they just need to tell the truth. The need for open communication. I did not try to ask for help from the authorities if there were problems, I just evicted them immediately instead of going to baranggay.</i>	Open Communication as the First Approach
Lessor 2	<i>We first have a conversation about what the problem is and why it keeps happening. If it can be resolved through talking, that's better. But if not, I set terms like 'I need the house because this is our business, you've been three months behind on rent, so I'll give you one more month to either pay or find another place.'</i>	Open Communication as the First Approach Setting Limits and Enforcing Consequences
Lessor 6	<i>First, we try to resolve it through conversation.</i>	Open Communication as the First Approach

To be able to address tenant-related challenges, lessors responded to such issues in a more efficient and professional landlord manner. Open communication as the first approach.

Many lessors prioritize talking with tenants first to understand issues and resolve conflicts amicably. Regardless of the issues that arise, open communication and honest communication is very essential. Real property management Central Valley takes a similar approach used by landlords to dealing with tenant problems (Raglin, 2023). Following tenant communication strategies is an effective way to address tenant issues.

Theme 19: Seeking External Help (Barangay or Community Leaders)

Lessor	Responses	Subordinate Themes
Lessor 2	<i>It's a different story if they don't want to leave because I've experienced that before. They claim they've done a lot of repairs that they didn't ask to be deducted from the rent. When that happens and it's out of my control, I've had to seek help from the barangay.</i>	Seeking External Help (Barangay or Community Leaders)
Lessor 4	<i>Barangay. Oh! First, the Homeowner, the Homeowners Association Leader. Then, if the Homeowners Association Leader can't handle it, it goes straight to the barangay.</i>	Seeking External Help (Barangay or Community Leaders)
Lessor 6	<i>If it was no longer manageable, it was brought to the barangay to resolve things immediately.</i>	Open Communication as the First Approach

Another resource or support revealed in the study is by seeking external help either from Barangay or Community Leaders. This is usually the approach used for unresolved disputes. Some lessors escalate issues to barangay officials or community leaders for mediation.

Resolving Landlord-Tenant Disputes in the Philippines provided by Respicio & Co. highlights amicable settlement which is the best step to resolve such disputes without resorting to litigation. Local barangays in the Philippines under the Katarungang Pambansa Law (Barangay Justice System) are mandated to facilitate settlements of landlord and tenant conflict. As every tenant is different, it is important that landlords are flexible, creative, remain level-headed and remain professional throughout the process.

3. How lessors cope with the challenges and demands in managing difficult tenants?

3.1 How do you typically address conflicts or issues with tenants?

Theme 20. Communication as the Primary Conflict Resolution Tool		
Lessor	Responses	Subordinate Themes
Lessor 1	<i>Always communicate when the tenants, if for example tenants have problems, you need to be fair and not biased with them. Just be at the center and not in favor of.</i>	Communication as the Primary Conflict Resolution Tool Fair and Unbiased Mediation
Lessor 2	<i>I'm just really talking about communication. As I mentioned, my approach is always professional. From the beginning, before they move into my unit, I thoroughly explain the do's and don'ts. I believe that way, they will immediately understand if there are any conflicts or issues.</i>	Communication as the Primary Conflict Resolution Tool Setting Expectations Early (Preventive Measures)
Lessor 4	<i>I'm talking to them. It gets resolved when you talk.</i>	Communication as the Primary Conflict Resolution Tool
Lessor 6	<i>We just really talk about everything.</i>	Communication as the Primary Conflict Resolution Tool

The table shows that communication is the primary tool of lessors in resolving conflict. Most lessors emphasize that communication is the key to understanding the issue and coming up with a resolution.

Addressing maintenance requests promptly and conveying lease terms and policies transparently can significantly enhance the overall management experience (Freedom House Property Management, 2024). Also, this can prevent potential disputes from escalating into more significant problems. Through conversation, it does not only help the lessors to quickly identify and understand the issues of any tenant, but it also helps avoid similar problems from arising in the future (North Central College, 2022).

3.2 What are the coping strategies of lessors in facing challenges and demands in managing difficult tenants?

Theme 21. Addressing Issues Directly and Implementing Solutions		
Lessor	Responses	Subordinate Themes
Lessor 1	<i>First, always address the mistakes and shortcomings of your tenants. Second, after you address their mistakes there is a need for implementation in order to solve the problem.</i>	Addressing Issues Directly and Implementing Solutions

The table above indicates that lessors navigate the challenges and demands in managing difficult tenants. The subordinate theme revealed addressing issues directly and implementing solutions in order to manage challenges and demands from difficult tenants. The first subordinate theme indicates that lessors ensure that tenant concerns are acknowledged and resolved through direct action and clear communication.

In property management, an essential strategy of a lessor for effective communication is to establish open lines of dialogue with the lessor. This involves creating a welcoming and approachable atmosphere where tenants and lessors feel at ease discussing their concerns and issues (Henson, T., 2023). This enables the lessors to take appropriate action and helps not only in diffusing tensions but also in finding amicable solutions. Furthermore, taking direct action demonstrates the lessor's commitment to tenant satisfaction.

Theme 22. Developing Mental Toughness and Firm Decision-Making

Lessor	Responses	Subordinate Themes
Lessor 2	<i>In the business of renting out properties, one must be brave because it's mostly a long-term venture with inherent risks. Having a mindset of firmness and courage in decision-making is essential. This way, when problems arise, they can be overcome because you know the kind of business you are in.</i>	Developing Mental Toughness and Firm Decision-Making
Lessor 7	<i>In this kind of business, you need a lot of patience because it will really test you. I've gotten used to the fact that not everything will go my way, and it's the same for others.</i>	Developing Mental Toughness and Firm Decision-Making

As shown by the table, lessors 2 and 7 demonstrate being mentally strong, assertive, and patient help lessors navigate the demands of property management. Mental toughness encompasses the ability to manage emotions, thoughts, and actions to achieve positive outcomes despite external challenges.

In real estate, building mental toughness equips leaders to lead through uncertainty and strengthen relationships with clients, fostering trust and loyalty (Ahumada, T. 2025). On the other hand, assertiveness pushes people to address their feelings and voice their expectations of the other party, rather than avoiding conflict altogether (North Central College, 2022). Practicing patience involves managing one's emotions and assessing the situation at hand. An individual does not only focus on immediate actions, but also contemplate their long-term implications (Wooll, M., 2022). Lessors must weigh the pros and cons of various actions and choose the best course of action, whether it's deciding on lease terms or handling tenant disputes.

Theme 23. Learning from Experience and Adjusting Strategies

Lessor	Responses	Subordinate Themes
Lessor 3	<i>Because I've been in this business for a long time, I've come to accept that there will always be some troublesome tenants. I don't return their deposit to cover the bills they leave behind or for house repairs, because there will always be something to fix after a tenant leaves, to ensure the place is presentable for potential renters during viewings. For me, I just</i>	Learning from Experience and Adjusting Strategies

overcome these problems by thinking of them as a learning experience. So next time, I'll know what to do in similar situations.

Lessor 4	<i>I just talk to them. That's it, I just talk to them. Then we came to an agreement. Whatever they request, I also provide. If they have any problems, we discuss them properly. For example, if they have problems related to the house, like 'this thing is broken, this thing doesn't work,' I address it immediately to avoid any issues. I will fix it right away. So, we communicate properly. They come to me or I go to them. Also, my siblings and caretaker, would say "Someone has a problem," and I would talk to them.</i>	Addressing Directly and Implementing Solutions	Issues and
Lessor 6	<i>If there are any unexpected events, they don't happen again because I have learned from them.</i>	Learning from Experience and Adjusting Strategies	

The third subordinate theme was learning from experience and adjusting strategies. Lessors 3, 4 and 6 used their past challenges as learning experiences to refine their management strategies over time.

These showed that encountering challenges is inevitable in life and can serve as valuable learning opportunities. By understanding what went wrong, a lessor can prevent similar issues in the future through applying the lessons learned to improve the processes or strategies (Calibre Real Estate, n.d.).

Theme 24. Maintaining Open Communication and Cooperation

Lessor	Responses	Subordinate Themes	
Lessor 4	<i>I fix it right away. So, we communicate properly. They come to me or I go to them. Also, my siblings and caretaker, would say "Someone has a problem," and I would talk to them.</i>	Maintaining Communication and Cooperation	Open and
Lessor 6	<i>I've been doing this for quite some time, but I can say that you really need to talk when you have problems.</i>	Maintaining Communication and Cooperation	Open and

Lessors 4 and 6 also demonstrate that frequent communication with tenants fosters better relationships and prevents misunderstandings from escalating. Consistent and timely communication is the key to a healthy working relationship.

Reaching tenants to gather their feedback on any issues or suggestions they may have could show how proactively a lessor caters to tenant needs. (NOVA Bay Property Management Group, 2024). Moreover, effective communication is one of the essential components of conflict resolution which can help not only in strengthening the bonds of lessor and tenants but also in preventing similar issues from arising in the future (North Central College, 2022).

3.3 Can you share any lessons or insights you've gained from managing difficult tenants?

Theme 25. The Importance of Patience and Empathy

Lessor	Responses	Subordinate Themes
Lessor 1	<i>Of course, on top of that if you understand them, show empathy and compassion with your tenants because it is not good if you always approach them with anger. If tenants don't have money yet to pay the rent, just let us know especially at this time of crisis. I just understand my tenants.</i>	The Importance of Patience and Empathy
Lessor 4	<i>For me, I have become more patient. I learned to be patient and to communicate properly. In my first experience renting out, it was my first time, and I ended up getting into a fight. They had demands because they were supposed to move out by a certain time but were asking for an extension, and I didn't agree. So, I remembered that experience and decided that I wouldn't repeat it. Now, if tenants have demands, I am understanding them. That's what I do to avoid conflicts with tenants. I don't want to fight with them. So, if they have requests, I grant them to avoid trouble. That's what I learned from my experiences with them.</i>	The Importance of Patience and Empathy
Lessor 6	<i>I think at this point; I learn to develop more patience and care/empathy towards others.</i>	The Importance of Patience and Empathy

Managing properties, whether residential or commercial, that are leased to tenants inevitably involves challenges. However, these challenges can provide valuable lessons that can be applied in the future. As shown by the table, lessors 1, 4 and 6 highlight the value of soft skills—patience and understanding, especially during financial hardships faced by tenants.

Empathy involves not only recognizing and understanding another person's emotions and experiences but also sharing and connecting with those feelings on a deeper level. In other words, it is the ability to step into someone else's shoes. The research of Schumann, K., Zaki, J., and Dweck, C.S. (2014) demonstrates that one way to respond to empathic challenges is through exerting additional effort to feel empathy, promoting positive outcomes for both the empathy target and empathizer. Additionally, tenants more likely trust the lessors' judgment and solutions if they feel they are heard and understood (Miami Breeze Property Management, 2024). On the other hand, patience is about nurturing and improving relationships. It allows someone to make more thoughtful and realistic decisions, fosters kindness, and helps a person embrace a peaceful and stress-free life (Wooll, M. 2022).

Theme 26. Balancing Understanding with Professionalism

Lessor	Responses	Subordinate Themes
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Lessor 2	<i>In terms of lessons, I think it's important to be understanding and have a broad perspective because it's hard if you always get annoyed when there are problems with your rental property. Secondly, being firm with your rules regarding the rental property ensures that when a tenant leaves, you won't have major repairs to deal with, and there won't be accumulated unpaid bills. It's like you need to be understanding but, at the same time, professional, so they know that their place of residence is also your livelihood—business is business, in a way.</i>	Balancing Understanding Professionalism with
Lessor 3	<i>I don't have a specific strategy for why we've been in the rental business for so long other than showing goodwill and understanding. Sometimes, you have to put yourself in their shoes, like when they suddenly lose their job and payments are delayed. I just understand the situation, especially those who have been renting from me for over 10 years. I am more understanding towards them because they rarely delay payments unless there's a real problem.</i>	Balancing Understanding Professionalism with

Lessors 2 and 3 recognize the need to set firm boundaries and maintain business principles while still being considerate. Having clear boundaries benefits the lessor through gaining peace of mind from knowing that the policies are clearly communicated.

The tenants, on the other hand, may feel secure in having open communication with the lessors especially in case of unforeseeable circumstances. Understanding and professionalism are essential in maintaining positive relationships while upholding standards. Even in challenging situations, when professionalism is maintained, it reflects well on the lessor and it helps in maintaining long-term relationships with tenants (Miami Breeze Property Management, 2024). Likewise, if compassion is being shown, it cultivates empathy and understanding in the lessor-tenant relationship (NOVA Bay Property Management Group, 2024).

Theme 27. The Role of Communication and Rule Reinforcement

Lessor	Responses	Subordinate Themes
Lessor 5	<i>It often involves repeatedly reminding tenants of the rules of the rental property.</i>	The Role of Communication and Rule Reinforcement
Lessor 6	<i>I also learned to have a broad understanding, that you should also understand others and not just yourself all the time.</i>	The Role of Communication and Rule Reinforcement

As mentioned, lessors may gain peace of mind, knowing that policies are clearly communicated. This shows how crucial having effective communication in property management is. Lessors 5 and 6 emphasized that effective communication and clear expectations help prevent recurring tenant issues.

The article of Henson, T. (2023) explored the importance of communication in property management and discussed the strategies for successful communication. It was further

mentioned that establishing a communication plan and setting expectations are essential components of effective communication, ensuring that both lessors and tenants are aware of the communication process and know what to expect in terms of response times, which helps in maintaining transparency and building trust.

Theme 28. Financial and Practical Adjustments for Long-Term Stability

Lessor	Responses	Subordinate Themes
Lessor 3	<i>In terms of insights or lessons I've learned, it's better to rely on referrals. This way, you know the tenant through someone you trust, giving you a bit of background on them. Also, having deposits is essential for unforeseen circumstances.</i>	Financial and Practical Adjustments for Long-Term Stability
Lessor 4	<i>If they say, "Can we extend because we haven't found a new place yet?" I say yes. Unlike other rental places, they charge the tenants for the extended stay. For me, as long as you haven't moved out yet, you can stay, but you have to pay for the electricity and water, but the rent is free. That's what I do. But in other rental properties, you need to pay for that time too. That's what I do to avoid conflicts with tenants. I don't want to fight with them. So, if they have requests, I grant them to avoid trouble. That's what I learned from my experiences with them.</i>	Financial and Practical Adjustments for Long-Term Stability

The fourth theme was the lessors' insights in adapting financial and leasing policies based on long-term tenant relationships and business sustainability.

It may not be the most favorable option if a lessor gives the tenants additional time to pay rent or collaborates with them to find an alternative solution, but it is likely less time-consuming and expensive than pursuing the legal eviction process (NOVA Bay Property Management Group, 2024). By prioritizing retention of current tenants through fostering a community atmosphere, this encourages longer tenancies (PMI Northbay, 2025). Moreover, properties known for maintaining strong lessor-tenant relationships and high retention rates are more appealing to prospective or future occupants, especially with the help of positive referrals and testimonials from satisfied tenants. This can attract new businesses and sustain high demand for the property (Holloway, n.d.).

4. Output proposed based on the theme emerges

Textural and Structural Analysis

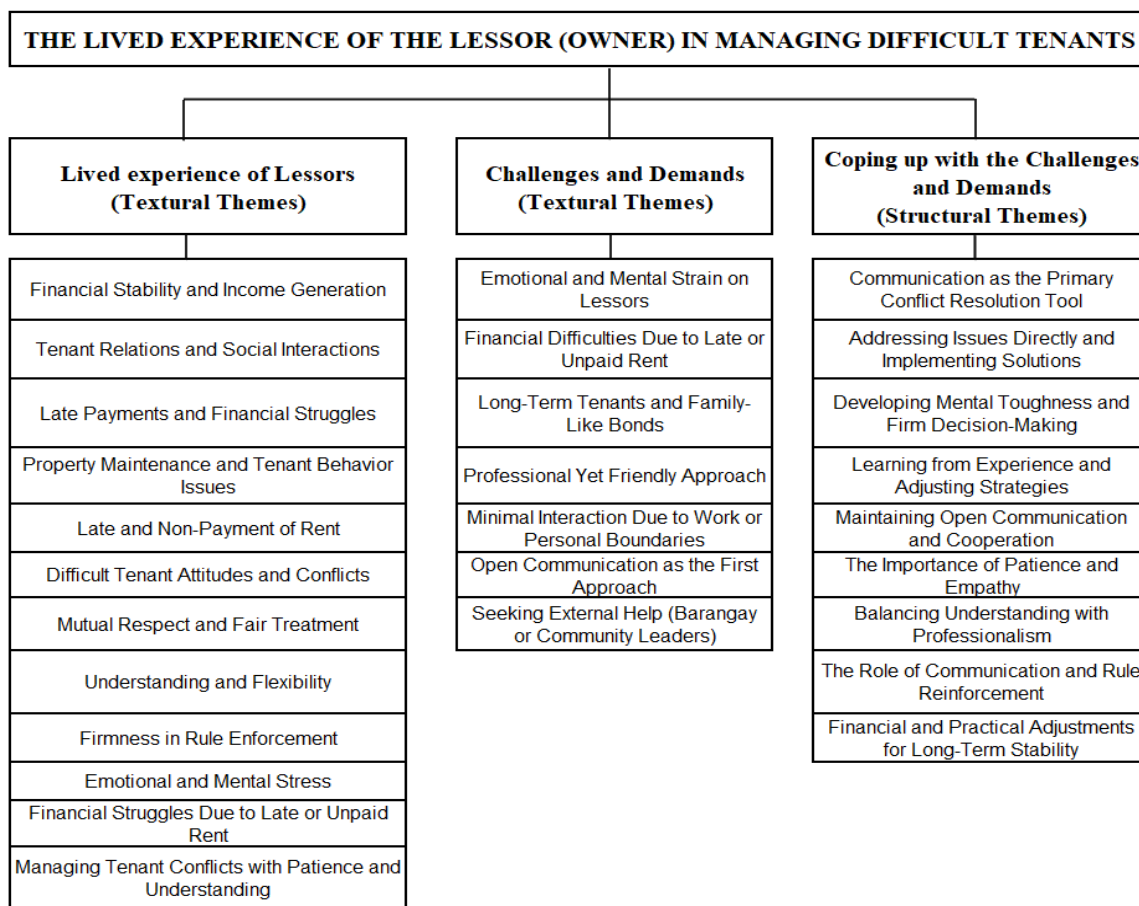


Figure 1. Thematic Variable (Textural and Structural Themes)

Textural Descriptions

The first core question on “What is the lived experience of lessors in managing difficult tenants?” answers the 12 themes cluster presented on Figure 1 first column. Managing rental business comes with great responsibility. Emerging themes showed that on the lived experience of lessors, revealed that lessors tend to have financial stability and income generation in entering into rental business. Lessors see rental business as a source of financial stability though it comes with its own challenges. Being a lessor allows for new social connections, but close relationships with tenants can lead to complications. Late payment and financial struggles create financial strain and forces lessors to adjust budgeting. Property Maintenance and Tenant Behavior Issues leads to complaints and difficulties in property management. Lessors often encounter late and even non-payment of rent which is one of the major issues in managing a rental business. Some tenants also display entitlement and cause disturbances making them difficult to handle. Mutual Respect and fair treatment is an important aspect that needs to be considered, lessors also must understand being flexible enough by showing firmness in rule enforcement and managing conflicts with patience and understanding. With all the lived experiences of lessors in managing difficult tenants, it is then concluded that difficult tenants tend to affect the lessors emotion and cause mental

stress. The second column shows seven (7) themes that answer the question: “What are the challenges and demands in managing difficult tenants?” Managing rental business can result in developing long-term tenant and family-like bonds which is a nice experience for any rental owner. But, despite all the good terms, there are challenges that arise on this part. Financial difficulties due to the late or unpaid rents can result in mental strain on the lessors as they need money to finance the business. There are solutions emerging in the themes revealed, solutions as to the challenges and demands in managing difficult tenants. There should always be open communication with minimal interaction due to work or personal boundaries. If problems cannot be solved with just a mere communication, then seeking external help may be necessary.

Structural Descriptions

The last nine (9) themes on the third column answers the question “How lessors cope with the challenges and demands in managing difficult tenants?” To be able to be successful in a rental business, lessors need to learn different strategies in handling difficult tenants. Lessors mostly used financial and practical adjustments for long-term stability of the rental business. As a mediator of conflicting issues between tenants and other tenants, lessors must always be fair enough in addressing issues directly and proactively to implement immediate solutions. Developed mental toughness and firm-decision making is an essential aspect to be able to become an effective lessor. Reflecting and learning previous experience must take into consideration and thereby adjusting such strategies to resolve issues. Of course, the importance of showing patience and empathy to the tenants is what the tenants would always want. A Lesser tenant relationship must always maintain open communication and cooperation to be able to have a harmonious well-being. Communication must be the primary conflict resolution on dealing with difficult tenants. Lastly, lessors must always keep in mind that business is business, showing professionalism with the tenants would always be appropriate to foster respect on the lessor and tenant side.

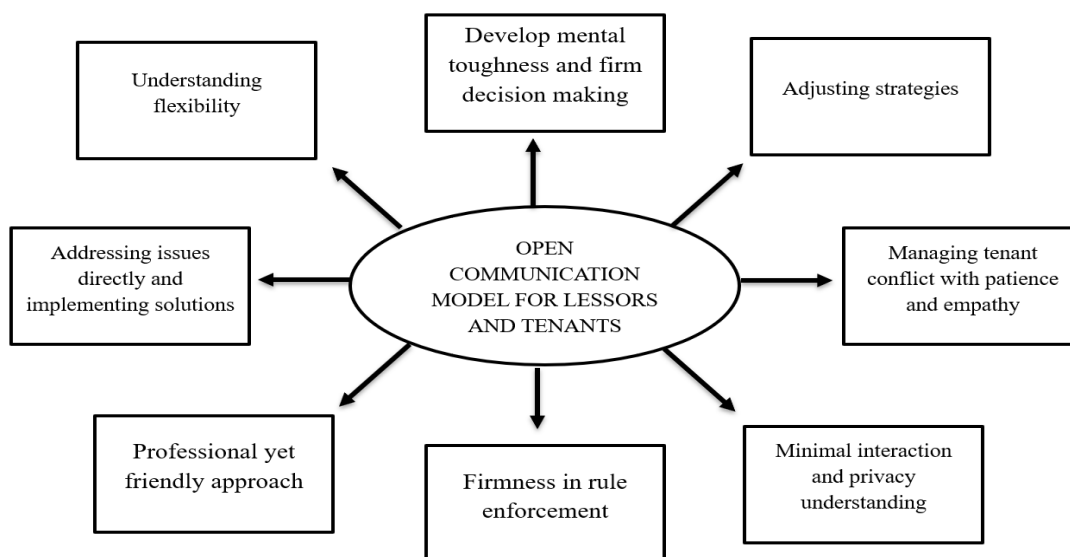


Figure 2. Open Communication Model

The study created an idea that open communication is an essential factor that lessors need to consider in running the rental business well, which also indicates that this model can have a positive impact on the success of the rental business. This open communication model

involves the different themes concluded from the answers to the interview of lessors. Most lessors emphasize that talking to tenants directly helps in resolving disputes before they escalate. Frequent communication with tenants fosters better relationships and prevents misunderstanding from escalating. Effective communication and clear expectations help prevent recurring tenant issues. In fostering an open communication strategy, it can result in solving such problems with the tenants. Lessors must understand flexibility in dealing with difficult tenants. Developing a mental toughness and firm decision making as being the owner of the rental business. Adjusting strategies to cope up with the demands of the tenants as tenants have different personalities. Managing tenant conflict with patience and empathy, by being fair treatment with all of the tenants. Another aspect in an open communication is having respect for the privacy of the tenants by showing minimal interaction but always present in the concerns of the tenants in regards to the property being rented. A good lessor-tenant relationship must also be consistent in the firmness of rule enforcement. Showing professionalism at all times with a friendly approach can positively affect good relationships with the tenants. Finally, addressing issues directly and implementing solutions helps understand the open communication model as an indicator in developing a successful rental business.

CONCLUSIONS

The study explored the lived experiences of lessors (owners) in managing difficult tenants, highlighting the challenges, demands and coping strategies enabled to foster good lessor-tenant relationships.

1. On the lived experience of lessors

Lessors enter into a rental business to mainly sustain their own financial stability and continued income generation. This type of business is not always a win-win situation, there are certain issues that are always present in managing a rental business. Common issues revealed in this study are late and non-payment of rent from the tenants which often resulted in having financial struggle on the lessors. That is why it is very important to address the problem and manage the conflicts with patience and understanding. Maintenance and tenant behavior issues then arise, as every tenant is not the same, the different attitudes of the tenants made them difficult to handle. The said issues affect the tenant personally which resulted in them developing emotional and mental stress from financial struggles due to late or unpaid rent. The study revealed that continued tenant relations and social interactions must be present by providing mutual respect and fair treatment. Lastly, lessors need to understand flexibility and imposing firmness in rule enforcement.

2. Challenges and demands

The good thing about a rental business is having a long-term tenant that formed into a family-like bond relationship. However, understanding each individuality is also another factor. Lessors need to value privacy with the lessors by showing minimal interaction and setting personal boundaries. As always pointed out, one of the main challenges in running a rental business is that financial difficulties always present due to late or unpaid rent which impacts the lessor's emotional and mental strain. In addressing such issues, it is then concluded that open communication must be the first approach used by the lessors. If tenants do not show remorse, then lessors may use other resources or support just like seeking external help from Barangay or Community leaders to maintain peace.

3. Coping strategies

Managing tenants in a rental business should not be a burden in developing good financial stability. Difficult tenants are not avoidable, if problems may occur always remember that proper communication is one of the primary conflict resolution tools to be used. Address the issues directly and always implement firm solutions. Maintain an open communication and cooperation. It is also important to show patience and empathy at all times. Balance and understand issues with professionalism. After everything else, learn from previous tenants, learn from previous experiences and adjusting strategies. Lessors being the manager must always develop toughness and firm decision-making. Always remember that a rental business must serve its purpose and that is to provide personal financial stability. Maintaining financial practical adjustment for long-term stability in order to be successful in this very complicated business, a rental business.

4. Open Communication Model

Researchers discover the Open Communication Model that resolves any underlying issues with difficult tenants. This can be used by lessors in running a rental business aligned with the goal of becoming successful. As difficult tenants are inescapable, lessors must understand that the tenants have different unique personalities. In whatever circumstances, communication can solve lots of disputes, from concerns of the tenants regarding the property problems, to actively solving even small problems. While maintaining the rental business, the need to understand how to deal properly with difficult tenants made it easier for lessors to handle the business as smoothly as possible. Always build an open communication environment, if tenants have concerns try to make an effort to hear the sentiments. Those sentiments may help the lessor to discover different techniques on dealing with other tenants. Accepting honest criticisms and suggestions can encourage tenants to take part in maintaining a good relationship with the lessor. Finally, communication is a very important factor that enables the tenants to be confident that if problems may arise, lessors are always present to act as mediator.

The study further highlights the resilience and adaptability of property owners, as well as the need for enhanced support systems and resources to aid them in effectively managing difficult tenant situations. This research contributes to the broader understanding of the complexities faced by lessors and provides insights for policy makers, real estate professionals, and property owners in improving tenant-owner relations and fostering more positive rental experiences.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Rental business is not always a steady income generation. Before entering into this business, remember that there are issues to consider and important points to remember. Succeeding recommendations would benefit lessors in maintaining good relationships with their tenants as the primary customer in a rental business.

Maintaining a good relationship between lessors and tenants is crucial in a rental business. Open communication is key to developing a harmonious relationship, serving as the primary tool for conflict resolution. Learning from previous experiences is also essential, as tenants have varying attitudes and challenges. Flexibility and adjusting strategies based on individual

tenant needs are important aspects to develop. Respecting tenants' individuality and privacy through minimal interaction and setting boundaries is equally important. When problems arise, addressing issues directly and implementing solutions while maintaining professionalism, patience, and empathy is crucial. Lessors must possess mental toughness and firm decision-making skills to handle tenant issues effectively. Additionally, before entering the rental business, it is recommended that the government evaluate lessors' capacity to manage difficult tenants, considering the emotional and stress factors involved. Updating the rights and privileges of lessors and highlighting coping strategies is necessary for maintaining good relationships. Establishing groups or organizations for lessors to provide support during disputes and problems is also beneficial.

Future research should also explore the same lived experiences of lessors managing difficult tenants in different parts of the country, including provinces with diverse cultures and financial capabilities and shown very limited studies conducted on the experiences of lessors especially in terms of handling difficult tenants which is inevitable in a rental business.

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