

# **Service Quality and Trust as Perceived by the Customers of Calamba Water District in Adherence to Ethical Norms of Conduct as Outlined in RA 6713: Basis for Monitoring and Enhancement Mechanisms**

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## **Abstract-**

This study aims to determine the level of adherence to ethical norms of conduct, as outlined in RA 6713 among employees of Calamba Water District (CWD), and to investigate its impact on the quality of service delivery and public trust. The respondents include a total of 575 individuals, consisting of two groups particularly 175 CWD employees and 400 of its customers. Random sampling is used to ensure the sample represented the population. The statistical tools employed in the study included frequency, percentage, and mean for descriptive analysis, and independent t-tests and Pearson Product Moment Correlation (r) for inferential analysis. Using a researcher-made and validated questionnaire, the findings reveal that both groups of respondents perceive that CWD employees demonstrate very high adherence to ethical norms, with some aspects receiving slightly lower ratings, though still considered high, indicating room for improvement. Additionally, the study finds that both groups perceive very high quality in service delivery and public trust, with a slight lower ratings for one indicator of tangible service dimensions. A positive and significant correlation between ethical adherence, service quality, and public trust is also identified. However, the study highlighted several challenges in the implementation of RA 6713. Based on these findings, recommendations for improvement are provided.

**Keywords:** Ethical Adherence, Service quality, Public trust

## **INTRODUCTION**

Public service organizations exist to provide essential services that directly affect the welfare and quality of life of citizens. However, the effectiveness of these services depends not only on technical competence or resources, but also on the ethical standards of the public servants who deliver them. In this regard, ethics is not just a peripheral concern but a core determinant of service quality and institutional credibility. As Josephson (1990) aptly declared, "Public office is a public trust". Hence, emphasizing that ethical behavior is fundamental to earning and maintaining citizens' confidence in government institutions.

In the Philippines, Republic Act No. 6713, or the Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees, provides the moral and legal framework for ethical public service. It defines eight norms of conduct, as follows: commitment to public interest, professionalism, justness and sincerity,

political neutrality, responsiveness to the public, nationalism and patriotism, commitment to democracy, and simple living. These norms are intended to promote integrity, accountability, and excellence in government performance. These aim to ensure that public servants uphold the highest ethical standards in the discharge of their duties.

Despite these mandates, ethical lapses and public dissatisfaction with government services persist. Dorasamy (2010) highlighted that deficiencies in ethical leadership can weaken service delivery and erode public confidence. This also supported the arguments made by Mbandlwa et al. (2020) wherein they pointed out that poor public service delivery often stems from poor leadership ethics. More so, Buye (2021) pointed out that ethical leadership is a prerequisite to good governance. This suggests that upholding strong ethical standards is crucial for improving service quality as well as in building and maintaining trust of the public. Feldheim and Wang (2004) further asserted that public trust is not merely shaped by service outcomes, but by the ethical behavior underlying government operations. This is especially relevant in service-oriented organizations such as local water districts, where accountability, fairness, and responsiveness are critical to meet the needs of the public.

The Calamba Water District (CWD) is one such organizations mandated to deliver safe and reliable water services to the residents of Calamba, Laguna. While CWD has adopted technical and operational improvements such as ISO 9001:2015 certification to enhance service delivery, little has been done to assess whether its employees uphold the ethical standards prescribed by RA 6713, and how these influence the quality of service and the level of public trust.

This study bridges that gap by examining the ethical adherence of CWD employees in relation to customer-perceived service delivery and public trust. Using the SERVQUAL model to assess service quality (Parasuraman et. al, 1988) and incorporating indicators of trust—such as confidence, transparency and accountability, and satisfaction with service (Feldheim and Wang, 2004; Beshi et. al, 2020; Zhao & Hu, 2015; Prasetya, 2023), the research aims to understand whether ethical conduct among employees translates into better service experiences and stronger trust in the organization.

Findings from this study contribute to the growing literature on ethical governance by offering insights into how ethical standards can be operationalized in local public utilities. By linking ethics with performance and public perception, this research supports the argument that ethical adherence is not merely a regulatory requirement, but rather a strategic tool for improving public service outcomes as well as restoring faith in public sectors.

## **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

This study aims to assess the ethical behavior of CWD employees and its impact on public service quality and trust. It specifically examines the extent of employees' adherence to the eight norms of conduct under RA 6713—grouped into four categories: professionalism and integrity, impartiality and objectivity, nationalism and democratic values, and ethical simplicity—and how these influence customer perceptions of service quality (reliability, responsiveness, tangibles, empathy) and trust (confidence, transparency and accountability, satisfaction). With two respondent groups (employees and customers), the study also explores whether perceptions of ethical adherence, service quality, and trust align. Ultimately, it seeks to identify challenges in implementing ethical standards and to recommend ways to strengthen ethical culture, service delivery, and public trust.

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

### **Research Design**

The study utilized the quantitative research design as it allowed for the collection of numerical data through surveys which can be statistically analyzed to identify relationships between variables. Additionally, the study adopted a descriptive-correlational design to observe a large mass of target population to assess the relationship between two and more variables, and to make required conclusion about the variables (Marshall & Rossman, 2010, as cited in Alvarado & Grace, 2022). Specifically, this approach described the level of adherence to RA 6713 and examines the correlation between employees' adherence to ethical norms, service quality and public trust.

### **Research Participants**

This study involved two groups of respondents: employees and customers of CWD. CWD had a total of 312 employees and served approximately 74,800 customers across 47 out of 54 barangays of Calamba City.

To determine the appropriate sample sizes, random sampling was applied with a 5% margin of error and a 95% confidence level. Based on this calculation, the sample size for employees was 175, and for customers, 398. The researcher slightly exceeded the required customer sample, surveying 400 customers in total to improve the reliability of the results.

Random sampling method was employed to ensure that the samples were representative of the overall employee and customer populations.

### **Research Instruments**

A researcher-made survey questionnaire was the primary instrument used for the study. The study followed ethical guidelines, and participation by respondents was voluntary. A five-point Likert scale was employed, as it allowed for a lower margin of error. Excluding a neutral option could distort results and compromise the validity of the survey. Including a neutral choice also gave respondents the option to remain neutral rather than selecting an alternative that did not accurately reflect their views.

Further, to ensure internal consistency, the researcher-made questionnaire underwent expert validation.

### **Data Gathering Procedure**

Upon approval from the faculty of Laguna State Polytechnic University – Sta. Cruz Main Campus, the next step involved formally requesting permission from the CWD management through an official letter. This communication outlined the purpose of the study and its potential benefits to the organization. Additionally, the management's endorsement aimed to enhance the study's credibility and encourage respondents to provide honest and thoughtful feedback, recognizing the research as officially supported.

After receiving management approval, an adequate number of questionnaire copies were prepared for distribution to both groups of respondents. For employees, the questionnaires were administered in person during office hours, accompanied by a briefing that explained the study's objectives and provided instructions for accurately completing the survey. As for customers, they were reached through both in-person distribution and a Google Form, ensuring broader and more convenient participation.

Once the completed questionnaires were collected—either in physical form or online—the responses were systematically organized and recorded for analysis.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

### **I. Demographic Profile of Respondents**

Majority of employee-respondents who participated in the survey were male (58.86%), followed by 38.2

9% female, and 2.86% preferred not to reveal their gender.

In terms of age, 42.29% of the employee-respondents were aged 41-55 years old, followed by 31-40 years old (22.29%), 56-75 years old (18.29%), 21-30 years (14.29%), and 2.86% employee-respondents preferred not to disclose their age. The higher representation of employees aged 31 and above may be due to the job security offered in the civil service. The Philippine Constitution ensures that no civil service officer or employee can be removed or suspended except for cause provided by law, thereby safeguarding job stability. Additionally, Republic Act No. 6656 protects the security of tenure of civil service officers and employees during government reorganizations, further contributing to employment stability. This emphasis on job security may encourage longer tenures which helps explain the higher concentration of mid-career professionals in the government sector.

For educational attainment, majority of the employee-respondents were college graduates (57.71%), followed by those holding a master's degree (18.86%), with vocational education (13.71%), and high school graduates (9.71%). This was consistent with civil service qualification standards that emphasized the minimum education requirement of college degree for most positions.

In terms of position, most of the employee-respondents held rank-and-file positions (33.71%), followed by field operators (32.57%). Smaller groups included managers/supervisors (16.57%), customer service representatives (12%), and technical staff (5.14%).

In terms of years in service, most of the employee-respondents, particularly 54.29% had been employed for more than 10 years. A smaller group had been with the organization for 1-3 years with 17.14% percentage and 4-6 years with also 17.14% percentage. In support of the previously mentioned data, this indicates that many employees prefer to stay in the government due to the benefits it offers, including security of tenure.

Customer-respondents, on the other hand, in terms age, they have a nearly balanced gender distribution with 49.5% females and 48% males, while the rest (2.5%) preferred not to disclose their gender.

In terms of age, majority of the customer-respondents were aged 31-40 years old (29.5%), followed by 41-55 years old (27.75%), 21-30 years old (23.5%), and 56-75 years old (16%). This suggested that the customer base was primarily middle-aged.

In terms of education, most customers were college graduates (74%), followed by those with master's degree (6.5%). A smaller proportion had a high school diploma (9.5%), vocational education (8%), or only completed elementary school (2%). The result indicates a positive trend in terms of educational status, which aligns with the 2020 statistical report of the Philippine Statistics Authority (Mapa, 2023). According to the report, a household population aged 20 and over was surveyed regarding their highest educational attainment, and the result showed that the majority of respondents (47.3% from the 20–25 age group and 30.9% from the 25 and older age group) were college graduates. Further, the same statistical data highlighted a positive trend in educational attainment and literacy rates from 2015 to 2020.

With respect to number of years availing services from CWD, a significant number of customer-respondents had been using CWD services for over 10 years (44.25%). While smaller groups had used the services for 4-6 years with 21% percentage and 7-10 years with 17.5%. The result indicated long-term trust in the services provided by CWD.

Overall, the demographic information of the respondents showed a strong representation of the population, thus, providing the necessary data for meaningful insights in the study.

## II. Extent of Adherence to RA 6713 Professionalism and Integrity

**Table 1**  
*Extent of Adherence to RA 6713 with respect to Professionalism and Integrity as perceived by two types of respondents*

Indicator	Employee (n=175)			Customer (n=400)		
	M	SD	V.I.	M	SD	V.I.
CWD employee ....						
1. Maintains professional attitude when dealing with customers and coworkers	4.37	0.58	VH	4.48	0.69	VH
2. Performs tasks effectively without cutting corners	4.26	0.65	VH	4.30	0.71	VH
3. Prioritizes public interest over personal gain	4.22	0.73	VH	4.27	0.72	VH
4. Makes decisions fairly and sincerely, without favoritism	4.14	0.82	H	4.19	0.79	H
5. Ensures to provide fair and respectful treatment to all customers and coworkers.	4.30	0.76	VH	4.29	0.74	VH
<i>Overall for Professionalism and Integrity</i>	4.26	0.62	VH	4.30	0.62	VH

*Note. V.I.=Verbal interpretation. The mean is interpreted as follows: 4.21–5.00=Very High Level (VH), 3.41–4.20=High Level (H), 2.61–3.40=Moderate Level (M), 1.81–2.60=Low Level (L), 1.00–1.80=Very Low Level (VL).*

As can be gleaned in table 1, the overall weighted mean is 4.48, derived from a group mean of 4.26 from employee-respondents and 4.30 from customer-respondents. This implies that CWD employees have very high adherence to ethical norms of conduct in the aspect of Professionalism and Integrity.

More specifically, the provision of maintaining professional attitude when dealing with customers and coworkers (employees, M=4.37; customers, M=4.48), performing tasks effectively without cutting corners (employees, M=4.26; customers, M=4.30), prioritizing public interest over personal gain (employees, M=4.22; customers, M=4.27), and ensuring to provide fair and respectful treatment to all customers and coworkers (employees, M=4.30; customers, M=4.29), are very highly adhered to by CWD employees.

However, the indicator of making decisions fairly and sincerely, without favoritism (employees, M=4.14; customers, M=4.19) was rated slightly lower. This indicates that while the indicator is still "highly adhered" to, it is perceived less strongly than other indicators. Possible reasons for the slight decrease could be that employees may feel in some situations that decisions are influenced by personal biases or relationships even if these are subtle or unintentional. On the other hand, customers may perceive favoritism or bias in certain situations, particularly if they notice preferential treatment given to specific individuals. This could be due to personal relationships, length of service, or other factors. Therefore, these results suggest that there is a room for improvement in ensuring decisions are made without favoritism.



Overall, the findings suggest that employees of CWD almost always adhere to RA 6713 by demonstrating the highest level of service while dealing with customers or colleagues, upholding public interest over personal gain, and respecting and treating everyone equally. The results further imply that CWD employees possess a strong sense of duty as public servants. They appear to have a clear understanding of the expectations associated with their roles, as reflected in their professional conduct and service delivery. This aligns with the principles of Role Theory, as proposed by Biddle, which posits that employees' behavior is shaped by the roles they occupy and the expectations attached to these roles (LaRocco, 1978, as stated in Murphy, 2022).

## Impartiality and Objectivity

**Table 2**  
***Extent of Adherence to RA 6713 with respect to Impartiality and Objectivity***

Indicator	Employee (n=175)			Customer (n=400)		
	M	SD	V.I.	M	SD	V.I.
CWD employee ....						
1. Remains neutral in political matters during work	3.95	0.86	H	4.19	0.73	H
2. Treats everyone equally regardless of their political background	4.25	0.71	VH	4.24	0.74	VH
3. Quickly responds to customer concerns and questions	4.45	0.55	VH	4.36	0.66	VH
4. Listens carefully to customer needs and work to address them	4.43	0.58	VH	4.39	0.66	VH
5. Is doing their best to make sure customers are satisfied by providing timely service.	4.43	0.59	VH	4.37	0.67	VH
<i>Overall for Impartiality and Objectivity</i>	4.30	0.52	VH	4.31	0.56	VH

*Note. V.I.=Verbal interpretation. The mean is interpreted as follows: 4.21–5:00=Very High Level (VH), 3.41–4.20=High Level (H), 2.61–3.40=Moderate Level (M), 1.81–2.60=Low Level (L), 1.00–1.80=Very Low Level (VL).*

Table 2 presents the data on the level of employees' adherence to ethical norms of conduct in the aspect of Objectivity and Impartiality. Impartiality and Objectivity variable aims to assess the compliance with the two norms of RA 6713, namely: Political Neutrality and Responsiveness to the public.

As presented, the overall weighted mean is 4.31, derived from the employee group mean of 4.30 and from the customer group mean of 4.31. This indicates that employees have a very high adherence in this aspect. In particular, employees demonstrated a very high adherence in treating everyone equally regardless of their political background (employees, M=4.25; customers, M=4.24), responding quickly to customer concerns and questions (employees, M=4.45; customers, M=4.36), listening carefully to customer needs (employees, M=4.43; customers, M=4.39), and giving their best potential to satisfy customer by providing timely service (employees, M=4.43; customers, M=4.37).

More so, in terms of remaining neutral in political matters during work (employees, M=3.95; customers, M=4.19), the adherence is rated as slightly lower, which is interpreted as high adherence or has been

adhered to oftentimes. This suggests that while employees try to remain neutral regarding political matters, there may be instances where personal views or biases could influence their behavior. Customers perceive that employees generally maintain political neutrality, but the employees' slightly lower score may reflect occasional lapses in this ideal, perhaps due to challenges in balancing personal beliefs with their professional duties. Further training or guidance on political neutrality in the workplace could help strengthen this principle to ensure it is consistently upheld across all situations.

Overall, the results show that employees genuinely care about customer concerns and always give high importance to them, regardless of gender, educational attainment, or status. It can also be said that they are respectful not only to customers but also to their colleagues.

One statement highlighted by one of the respondents, “Calamba Water District is known for its tagline: Sipag at Malasakit para sa Calambeno.” From this statement and with the overall results for this aspect, this suggests that employees at CWD experience a sense of equity within the organization which is evident in the recognition of their effort and hard work through simple tokens and incentives. According to Equity Theory by Adams (1965), employees who feel that their efforts are valued and fairly rewarded are more likely to reflect this sense of fairness in the way they interact with and serve customers.

## Nationalism and Democratic Values

**Table 3**  
*Extent of Adherence to RA 6713 with respect to Nationalism and Democratic Values*

Indicator	Employee (n=175)			Customer (n=400)		
	M	SD	V.I.	M	SD	V.I.
CWD employee ....						
1. Attends flag raising and flag retreat ceremonies at all times	4.15	0.71	H	4.31	0.68	VH
2. Is dedicated to serve fellow Filipino	4.29	0.69	VH	4.31	0.69	VH
3. Promotes the use of locally produced goods, resources and technology	4.07	0.74	H	4.19	0.72	H
4. Respects people's right to share his views on CWD services.	4.41	0.57	VH	4.31	0.66	VH
5. Creates a work environment that values freedom and fairness.	4.22	0.65	VH	4.27	0.70	VH
<i>Overall for Nationalism and Democratic Values</i>	4.23	0.53	VH	4.27	0.56	VH

*Note. V.I.=Verbal interpretation. The mean is interpreted as follows: 4.21–5.00=Very High Level (VH), 3.41–4.20=High Level (H), 2.61–3.40=Moderate Level (M), 1.81–2.60=Low Level (L), 1.00–1.80=Very Low Level (VL).*

Table 3 presents the level of employee adherence based on Nationalism and Democratic Values, particularly to norms of Nationalism and Patriotism, and Commitment to Democracy under RA 6713. This part demonstrated CWD employees' loyalty to the country and its democratic principles in their professional conduct.

As shown in the table, the overall weighted mean is 4.25 taken from the group mean of 4.23 from employee and a group mean of 4.27 from customer suggests that CWD employee displayed a very high adherence to RA 6713 in terms of Nationalism and Democratic Values. In particular, employees demonstrated a very

high adherence in the provision of dedication to serving fellow Filipino (employees, M=4.29; customers, M=4.31), respecting people's right to share their views on CWD services (employees, M=4.41; customers, M=4.31), and creating a work environment that values freedom and fairness (employees, M=4.22; customers, M=4.27).

On the other hand, there's a slight difference in the perception of the two groups of respondents, specifically in the indicator of regularly attending flag-raising and flag-retreat ceremonies. Customer-respondents assessed this as very high adherence (M=4.31), while employee-respondents assessed it as only highly adhered (M=4.15). The main reason for this is that some employees admitted to irregular attendance at these ceremonies due to the nature of their work, which requires them to be at their posts and hinders them from attending. The differences in perception are affected by the overall impression of customers and the individual experiences of employees.

In addition, CWD management ensures the regular conduct of flag ceremonies and encourages employee attendance every first day of the week, regardless of the weather. CWD also actively promotes the celebration of "Buwan ng Wika" by holding "Balagtasan" with participation from different public schools in Calamba. These initiatives help promote love for our own, which can further be inferred as contributing to employees demonstrating very high adherence to RA 6713. This is in accordance with the social theory of Tajfel & Turner (1979) and further supported by Ashforth and Mael (1989) which indicates that organizational culture plays a significant role in employees upholding ethical norms.

## Ethical Simplicity

**Table 4**  
*Extent of Adherence to RA 6713 with respect to Ethical Simplicity*

Indicator	Employee (n=175)			Customer (n=400)		
	M	SD	V.I.	M	SD	V.I.
CWD employee ....						
1. Lives within his income	4.11	0.73	H	4.23	0.70	VH
2. Avoids display of unnecessary wealth.	4.21	0.69	VH	4.20	0.66	H
3. Avoids accepting material things in return of the job performed	4.18	0.79	H	4.20	0.71	H
4. Makes careful financial choices that reflect their role as a public servant.	4.21	0.70	VH	4.20	0.68	H
5. Uses public resources responsibly by avoiding unnecessary spending	4.19	0.75	H	4.24	0.70	VH
<i>Overall for Ethical Simplicity</i>	4.18	0.62	H	4.21	0.58	VH

*Note. V.I.=Verbal interpretation. The mean is interpreted as follows: 4.21–5.00=Very High Level (VH), 3.41–4.20=High Level (H), 2.61–3.40=Moderate Level (M), 1.81–2.60=Low Level (L), 1.00–1.80=Very Low Level (VL)*

Table 4 reveals the extent of CWD employees' adherence to RA 6713 in the aspect of Ethical Simplicity. This focuses on the employee's level of practice with the norms of Simple Living as required by RA 6713. As depicted in the table, the overall weighted mean is 4.20, resulting from the group mean of employee-respondents of 4.18 and the group mean of customer-respondents of 4.21. This indicates that employees



of CWD have exhibited high adherence to RA 6713 with respect to ethical simplicity.

In particular, CWD employees demonstrated a very high adherence in the provision of avoiding the display of unnecessary wealth (employees,  $M = 4.21$ ; customers,  $M = 4.20$ ), making careful financial choices that reflect their role as a public servant (employees,  $M = 4.21$ ; customers,  $M = 4.20$ ), using public resources responsibly by avoiding unnecessary spending (employees,  $M = 4.19$ ; customers,  $M = 4.24$ ). And a high adherence in terms of living within their income (employees,  $M = 4.11$ ; customers,  $M = 4.23$ ), and avoiding the acceptance of material things in return for the job performed (employees,  $M = 4.18$ ; customers,  $M = 4.20$ )

In general, this suggests that employees adhere to RA 6713 oftentimes, meaning they live within their means and base their lifestyle on the needs of their families.

However, while the adherence rate for this aspect is high, it is slightly lower compared to others that have a "very high" adherence rate. This could suggest that although employees are generally committed to live simply and within their means, there may be some challenges or pressures that affect their ability to consistently live by these values. Nonetheless, the fact that the adherence rate is still high shows a strong commitment to ethical behavior, and through continued support and awareness, these principles can be further reinforced.

Based on the results, most of the respondents believe that employees are following the ethical norms of RA 6713 which suggests that these values are truly being practiced within the organization. This aligns with the Theory of Planned Behavior of Ajzen (1991), which suggests that when employees believe these norms are realistic and in line with their values, it creates a positive mindset. Living a simple life within one's means becomes not just possible, but part of the organization's culture, thus helps to reinforce the commitment to these ethical standards.

### III. Perceived Service Quality

#### Reliability

**Table 5**  
*Quality of CWD's Service in Terms of Reliability*

Indicator	Employee ( $n=175$ )			Customer ( $n=400$ )		
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>V.I.</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>V.I.</i>
1. CWD provides water services consistently without interruptions	4.18	0.62	H	4.19	0.76	H
2. CWD services are reliable and meet customer needs.	4.34	0.52	VH	4.26	0.67	VH
3. CWD is dependable in addressing issues with service reliability quickly	4.26	0.56	VH	4.21	0.70	VH
4. CWD meets its commitments in providing scheduled water supply	4.25	0.61	VH	4.25	0.69	VH
5. The overall experience with CWD has been reliable and trustworthy	4.30	0.60	VH	4.30	0.68	VH
<i>Overall for Reliability</i>	4.27	0.51	VH	4.24	0.61	VH

*Note. V.I.=Verbal interpretation. The mean is interpreted as follows: 4.21–5.00=Very High Level (VH), 3.41–4.20=High Level (H), 2.61–3.40=Moderate Level (M), 1.81–2.60=Low Level (L), 1.00–1.80=Very Low Level (VL).*

Table 5 presents the respondents' perceived level of CWD service quality in terms of reliability.

As shown in the table, the overall weighted mean of 4.26, derived from a group mean of 4.27 from employee respondents and a group mean of 4.24 from customer respondents, suggests that both groups perceive a very high level of reliability in the services provided by CWD.

Specifically, CWD demonstrated very high reliability in the following areas: Meeting customer needs (employee,  $M=4.34$ ; customer,  $M=4.26$ ), addressing different issues quickly (employee,  $M=4.26$ ; customer,  $M=4.21$ ), meeting commitments for providing scheduled water supply (employee,  $M=4.25$ ; customer,  $M=4.25$ ), and overall experience with its services (employee,  $M=4.30$ ; customer,  $M=4.30$ ). Moreover, the table also reveals a high level of reliability in CWD services in terms of providing consistent water services without interruptions.

In general, this is an indication that the service quality provided by CWD in terms of reliability is perceived positively by both groups of respondents. This supports the view of Mamilla et al. (2013) and Omar et al. (2015) as cited in Karagianni & Theriou (2018) who stated that reliability is a key determinant of satisfaction. Ensuring customer satisfaction is vital in retaining customers, and achieving service quality also means the ability of service provider in maintaining a loyal customer.

## Responsiveness

**Table 6**  
*Quality of CWD's Service in Terms of Responsiveness*

Indicator	Employee ( $n=175$ )			Customer ( $n=400$ )		
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>V.I.</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>V.I.</i>
1. CWD employees respond quickly to customer's requests or concerns	4.35	0.62	VH	4.31	0.69	VH
2. CWD handled all complaints and concerns efficiently	4.27	0.61	VH	4.27	0.69	VH
3. CWD provides clear timelines for resolving any service issues.	4.29	0.58	VH	4.28	0.69	VH
4. CWD employees are approachable and listen to customer concerns.	4.31	0.61	VH	4.33	0.68	VH
5. CWD values and considers feedback on services	4.26	0.62	VH	4.29	0.70	VH
<i>Overall for Responsiveness</i>	4.29	0.53	VH	4.30	0.59	VH

*Note. V.I.=Verbal interpretation. The mean is interpreted as follows: 4.21–5.00=Very High Level (VH), 3.41–4.20=High Level (H), 2.61–3.40=Moderate Level (M), 1.81–2.60=Low Level (L), 1.00–1.80=Very Low Level (VL).*

Table 6 shows the respondents perceived level of service quality in terms of responsiveness.

As presented, the overall weighted mean of 4.30 taken from a group mean of 4.29 from employee-respondents and a group mean of 4.30 from customer-respondents suggest that CWD services demonstrates very high responsiveness.

In particular, CWD services are rated with very high responsiveness in the aspect of responding quickly to customer's requests or concerns (employee,  $M=4.35$ ; customer,  $M=4.31$ ), handling all complaints and concerns efficiently (employee,  $M=4.27$ ; customer,  $M=4.27$ ), providing clear timelines for resolving any service issues employee,  $M=4.29$ ; customer,  $M=4.28$ ), being approachable and able to listen to customer

concerns (employee,  $M=4.31$ ; customer,  $M=4.33$ ), valuing and considering customer's feedback on services (employee,  $M=4.26$ ; customer,  $M=4.29$ ).

These high ratings reflect the CWD commitment to responsiveness and this aligns with the provisions of the Anti-Red Tape Act (ARTA). ARTA mandates all government agencies to provide services in a timely, transparent and efficient manner, and it aims to reduce bureaucratic inefficiencies and enhance public satisfaction. The emphasis on quick responses, handling concerns efficiently, clear timelines for issue resolution, and being approachable directly supports the goals of ARTA by ensuring compliance with the standards of service delivery set by the law (Mendoza, 2024).

The practice of valuing and considering customer feedback is in line with ARTA's call for continuous improvement in public service. These findings suggest that CWD services meet the expectations set by ARTA in terms of responsiveness, which is also a key determinant for customer satisfaction (Isaac et al., 2024; Setiono & Hidayat, 2022; Karagianni & Theriou, 2018).

## Tangible

**Table 7**  
***Quality of CWD's Service in Terms of Tangibles***

Indicator	Employee ( $n=175$ )			Customer ( $n=400$ )		
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>V.I.</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>V.I.</i>
1. CWD facilities, such as payment or, waiting area, are clean and well-maintained	4.38	0.58	VH	4.40	0.63	VH
2. CWD employees are neatly dressed and present themselves professionally	4.31	0.61	VH	4.36	0.65	VH
3. The physical facilities of CWD give people confidence in their services.	4.35	0.59	VH	4.38	0.62	VH
4. CWD's customer materials, such as bills and notifications, are clear and easy to understand	4.30	0.64	VH	4.31	0.66	VH
5. The equipment used by CWD is modern and reliable	4.14	0.73	H	4.25	0.72	VH
<i>Overall for Tangibles</i>	4.29	0.55	VH	4.34	0.54	VH

*Note. V.I.=Verbal interpretation. The mean is interpreted as follows: 4.21–5.00=Very High Level (VH), 3.41–4.20=High Level (H), 2.61–3.40=Moderate Level (M), 1.81–2.60=Low Level (L), 1.00–1.80=Very Low Level (VL).*

Table 7 presents the respondents' perceived level of service quality in terms of tangibles.

As shown in the table, this got an overall weighted mean of 4.32 from a group mean of 4.29 from employee-respondents and a group mean of 4.34 from customer-respondents.

To be specific, CWD services in terms of tangible is rated as very high in the following aspects: CWD facilities, such as payment or waiting area are clean and well maintained (employee,  $M=4.38$ ; customer,  $M=4.40$ ), CWD employees are neatly dressed and present themselves professionally (employee,  $M=4.31$ ; customer,  $M=4.36$ ), CWD physical facilities give people confidence in their services (employee,  $M=4.35$ ;

customer,  $M=4.38$ ), and CWD's customer materials such as bills and notifications are clear and easy to understand (employee,  $M=4.30$ ; customer,  $M=4.31$ ).

Conversely, in the aspect of modernity and reliability of equipment used by CWD, the rating is high. A slight difference is found in how it is viewed by the two groups of respondents, with employee-respondents rating it as high ( $M=4.14$ ) and customer-respondents rating it as very high ( $M=4.25$ ). As commented by one employee-respondent, some of the equipment particularly the computers, have been in use for several years and there have been reported issues with slow responses and system failures, which could negatively impact waiting times.

Overall, this suggests that CWD is attentive not only to intangible aspects but also to the physical aspects of its office such as to its facilities and equipment. By maintaining cleanliness, CWD creates a positive overall impression for everyone entering or leaving the office. As further noted in the study by Isaac et al. (2024) tangibility is interconnected with other dimensions of SERVQUAL, particularly reliability and responsiveness in the sense of an outdated equipment, for example, can significantly impact a service provider's ability to deliver efficient service.

## Empathy

**Table 8**  
***Quality of CWD's Service in Terms of Empathy***

Indicator	Employee ( $n=175$ )			Customer ( $n=400$ )		
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>V.I.</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>V.I.</i>
1. CWD employees show genuine concern for customer needs	4.33	0.57	VH	4.33	0.66	VH
2. CWD makes an effort to resolve customer concerns and complaints thoughtfully.	4.37	0.55	VH	4.35	0.64	VH
3. CWD respects its customer	4.46	0.54	VH	4.39	0.64	VH
4. CWD uses customer feedback seriously to improve its services.	4.29	0.60	VH	4.30	0.68	VH
5. CWD is attentive to the specific needs of each customer.	4.34	0.57	VH	4.32	0.66	VH
<i>Overall for Empathy</i>	4.36	0.51	VH	4.34	0.57	VH

*Note. V.I.=Verbal interpretation. The mean is interpreted as follows: 4.21–5.00=Very High Level (VH), 3.41–4.20=High Level (H), 2.61–3.40=Moderate Level (M), 1.81–2.60=Low Level (L), 1.00–1.80=Very Low Level (VL).*

Table 8 shows the respondents' perceived level of service quality in CWD in terms of empathy.

As presented in the table, the overall weighted mean is 4.35, derived from a group mean of 4.36 from employee-respondents and a group mean of 4.34 from customer-respondents suggests that CWD's service quality in the dimension of empathy as viewed by both groups of respondents is very high.

CWD services exhibited a very high empathy particularly in these aspects: Showing genuine concern for customer needs (employee,  $M=4.33$ ; customer,  $M=4.33$ ), making effort to resolve customer concerns and complaints thoughtfully (employee,  $M=4.37$ ; customer,  $M=4.35$ ), respecting its customer (employee,  $M=4.46$ ; customer,  $M=4.39$ ), using customer feedback seriously to improve its services (employee,  $M=4.29$ ; customer,  $M=4.30$ ), and being attentive to the specific needs of each customer (employee,  $M=4$

.34; customer, M=4.32).

With these, it can be inferred that CWD is focused on offering personalized and thoughtful service by making sure they recognize and address each customer's individual needs. Whether it is understanding preferences or just providing a feeling of care, they are making a genuine effort to connect with customers. As suggested by Isaac et. al (2024), showing this kind of empathy really helps shape customers' views of service quality and often leads to better evaluations and outcomes. When businesses show they care, it strengthens customer relationships and boosts satisfaction.

## IV. Perceived Public Trust Confidence

**Table 9**  
*Level of Trust in Terms of Confidence*

Indicator	Employee (n=175)			Customer (n=400)		
	M	SD	V.I.	M	SD	V.I.
1. I have confidence in CWD's ability to deliver quality water services.	4.42	0.56	VH	4.37	0.66	VH
2. I trust CWD to use public resources responsibly for the benefit of customers	4.41	0.55	VH	4.35	0.66	VH
3. CWD demonstrates a commitment to ethical standards in its operations	4.33	0.60	VH	4.31	0.69	VH
4. I feel secure knowing that CWD is transparent in sharing important information that affects customers	4.27	0.65	VH	4.29	0.70	VH
5. CWD provides updates on issues that affect service in a timely manner	4.25	0.62	VH	4.28	0.70	VH
<i>Overall for Confidence</i>	4.33	0.54	VH	4.32	0.59	VH

*Note. V.I.=Verbal interpretation. The mean is interpreted as follows: 4.21–5.00=Very High Level (VH), 3.41–4.20=High Level (H), 2.61–3.40=Moderate Level (M), 1.81–2.60=Low Level (L), 1.00–1.80=Very Low Level (VL).*

Table 9 presents the respondents' perceived level of trust in CWD in the aspect of confidence.

As reflected in the table, the overall weighted mean of 4.33 taken from a group mean of 4.36 from employee-respondents and a group mean of 4.34 from customer-respondents implies that respondents have a very high level of confidence in CWD.

More specifically, CWD is rated very high in the following areas: Confidence in CWD's ability to deliver quality water services (employee, M=4.42; customer, M=4.37), trusting CWD to use public resources responsibly for the benefit of customers (employee, M=4.41; customer, M=4.35), demonstrating a commitment to ethical standards in its operations (employee, M=4.33; customer, M=4.31), feeling secure knowing CWD is transparent in sharing important information that affects customers (employee, M=4.27; customer, M=4.29), and in providing updates on issues that affect service in a timely manner (employee, M=4.25; customer, M=4.28).

Over the years, CWD has clearly demonstrated a commitment to continuous improvement and technological advancement. This is a testament to CWD's responsible use of public funds to enhance its



services to benefit many customers. For example, the adoption of a state-of-the-art UV- HOD with filtration system is a significant contribution to improving water quality (Acierto, 2022; Masa, 2023). Additionally, CWD's ongoing compliance with the ISO 9001:2015 standard helps to ensure that its services meet or exceed the requirements set by regulatory bodies, such as the Philippine National Standards for Drinking Water (PNSWD) (Masa, 2023). These innovations play a key role in building customer confidence, which can in turn, translate into public trust. This is likely the main reason why CWD is rated very high in terms of confidence by both group of respondents.

As highlighted in the work of Feldheim and Wang (2004), an organization's ability to sustain service levels and quality, adhere to ethical principles, create a transparent atmosphere, and communicate openly with stakeholders can increase confidence and therefore trust in the organization.

## Transparency and Accountability

**Table 10**  
*Level of Trust in Terms of Perceived Transparency and Accountability*

Indicator	Employee (n=175)			Customer (n=400)		
	M	SD	V.I.	M	SD	V.I.
1. CWD communicates openly about service changes or disruptions.	4.27	0.58	VH	4.33	0.71	VH
2. CWD keeps customers informed of any actions it takes to address service complaints.	4.25	0.60	VH	4.30	0.72	VH
3. CWD is accountable for any delays or issues that occur with service delivery.	4.33	0.56	VH	4.34	0.68	VH
4. I observe that CWD management takes responsibility for ensuring service quality.	4.35	0.56	VH	4.37	0.66	VH
5. CWD gives its customer an access to information regarding the steps it takes to improve its services.	4.17	0.62	H	4.25	0.70	VH
<i>Overall for Transparency and Accountability</i>	4.27	0.51	VH	4.32	0.61	VH

*Note. V.I.=Verbal interpretation. The mean is interpreted as follows: 4.21–5.00=Very High Level (VH), 3.41–4.20=High Level (H), 2.61–3.40=Moderate Level (M), 1.81–2.60=Low Level (L), 1.00–1.80=Very Low Level (VL).*

Table 10 shows the respondents' perceived level of trust in terms of Transparency and Accountability. The overall weighted mean, as presented in the table, is 4.30. This is derived from the group mean of 4.27 for employee-respondents and the group mean of 4.32 from customer-respondents. This suggest that respondents perceive CWD's level of transparency and accountability as very high.

In particular CWD received very high rating in these areas: Communicating openly about changes or disruptions on its service (employee, M=4.27; customer, M=4.33), keeping customers informed of any actions it takes to address service complaints (employee, M=4.25; customer, M=4.30), being accountable for any delays or issues that occur with service delivery (employee, M=4.33; customer, M=4.34), CWD management taking responsibility for ensuring service quality (employee, M=4.35; customer, M=4.37).

The very high ratings for “CWD management taking responsibility for ensuring service quality” show that CWD's leadership is actively involved in maintaining high service standards. When management takes responsibility for service quality, it helps prevent problems and ensures that all customers receive the best possible service. This also builds trust with both employees and customers, as it shows that everyone from top to bottom is committed to maintaining a high level of service.

Regarding the statement “giving customers access to information pertaining with the steps it takes to improve its services”, a slight difference is observed. Employee-respondents rated CWD as high, while customer-respondents rated it as very high. The difference may reflect the fact that CWD employees are more closely involved with the organization, therefore, might be more aware of what information has been publicly disclosed regarding CWD's operations.

Overall, the findings indicate that CWD is committed to providing transparent and accountable service delivery to the public. As mentioned earlier in this paper, CWD is compliant with ARTA (Mendoza, 2024), and also ensures transparency by posting public announcements on service interruptions and other relevant information. Furthermore, CWD has established a Public Information Committee (PIC) to guarantee the timely release of important updates to the public. As noted by Beshi et al. (2020), making actions that are necessary for measuring an organization's transparency and accountability are vital to effective public administration. Hence, are considered as the main influential factors in building and maintaining citizens' trust in government institutions.

## Satisfaction with services

**Table 11**  
*Level of Trust in Terms of Satisfaction with Services*

Indicator	Employee (n=175)			Customer (n=400)		
	M	SD	V.I.	M	SD	V.I.
1. Overall, I am satisfied with the water services provided by CWD.	4.40	0.57	VH	4.40	0.64	VH
2. CWD employees uphold high ethical standards in service delivery	4.26	0.61	VH	4.29	0.66	VH
3. CWD services provide good value for the fees that customers pay	4.41	0.59	VH	4.41	0.65	VH
4. Water service needs are met effectively by CWD	4.30	0.57	VH	4.35	0.68	VH
5. I would recommend CWD's services to others in my community	4.49	0.58	VH	4.39	0.64	VH
<i>Overall for Satisfaction with Services</i>	4.37	0.51	VH	4.37	0.56	VH

*Note. V.I.=Verbal interpretation. The mean is interpreted as follows: 4.21–5:00=Very High Level (VH), 3.41–4.20=High Level (H), 2.61–3.40=Moderate Level (M), 1.81–2.60=Low Level (L), 1.00–1.80=Very Low Level (VL).*

Table 11 presents the respondents' perceived level of trust in terms of Satisfaction with Services. As revealed in the table, the overall weighted mean of 4.37 is obtained from a group mean of 4.37 of both respondents. CWD received a very high agreement rating for all aspects. This only indicates that respondents have a very high level of satisfaction with CWD services.

From those results, it just clearly shows the dedication of CWD in providing quality service. The very high ratings in areas like ethical conduct, service quality, and public trust such as confidence, transparency and accountability, all reflect the district's commitment to its customers. These findings are in line with the work of Feldheim and Wang (2004), who emphasize that satisfaction often stems from the ethical behavior of public institutions. When fairness, responsiveness, and reliability are prioritized, it enhances citizens' experiences. And when people are satisfied with the services they receive, it naturally boosts their trust in the organizations providing those services.

## V. Test of Difference in CWD Employees' Adherence to RA 6713, Quality of Service Delivery, and Public Trust as perceived by both types of Respondents

### Test of Difference in the assessment of two groups of respondents in terms of Adherence to Ethical Norms of Conduct (RA 6713)

**Table 12**  
**Test of Difference in the Adherence to RA 6713**

Independent Variable	Group				<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
	Employee		Customer			
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>		
Professionalism and Integrity	4.26	0.62	4.30	0.62	−0.80	.422
Impartiality and Objectivity	4.30	0.52	4.31	0.56	−0.06	.952
Nationalism and Democratic Values	4.23	0.53	4.27	0.56	−0.90	.370
Ethical Simplicity	4.18	0.62	4.21	0.58	−0.64	.525

*Note.* Independent *t* test was used. No violations to normality assumptions were detected.

As can be gleaned in table 12, in the aspect of Professionalism and Integrity, the independent t-test shows that the difference in means between employees and customers is not statistically significant. This is supported with the p-value that is greater than the 5% level of significance,  $p=.422$ .

For the aspect of Impartiality and Objectivity, the t-test result shows no significant difference between employee and customer responses,  $t = -0.06$ ,  $p = .952$ .

Similarly, for Nationalism and Democratic Values, the p-value is greater than the level of significance, thus it would mean no significant difference between the assessment of the employee ( $M = 4.23$ ) and customer ( $M = 4.27$ ) groups. The t-value of -0.9 shows a very small difference between the groups which is not statistically meaningful.

The difference in responses between employees ( $M = 4.18$ ) and customers ( $M = 4.21$ ) in the aspect of Ethical Simplicity is also not statistically significant,  $t = -0.64$ ,  $p = .525$ .

Based on the results from the independent t-tests, it is clear that there is no statistically significant difference in the responses of employees and customers across all four aspects (Professionalism and Integrity, Impartiality and Objectivity, Nationalism and Democratic Values, and Ethical Simplicity). The

p-values for all aspects are greater than the 0.05 significance level, suggesting that both groups perceive the ethical adherence of employees to RA 6713 similarly.

### Test of Significant Difference in the assessment of two groups of respondents in terms of Service Quality

**Table 13**  
*Test of Difference in the Perception of Service Quality*

Independent Variable	Group				<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
	Employee		Customer			
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>		
Reliability	4.27	0.51	4.24	0.61	0.53	.596
Responsiveness	4.29	0.53	4.30	0.59	−0.03	.975
Tangible	4.29	0.55	4.34	0.54	−0.88	.381
Empathy	4.36	0.51	4.34	0.57	0.37	.714

*Note.* Independent *t* test was used. No violations to normality assumptions were detected.

Table 13 presents the assessments made by the two groups of respondents regarding their perceptions of quality of service delivered by CWD across four dimensions.

Specifically, the t-test result for Reliability shows that there is no significant difference between the employee and customer,  $t = .53$ ,  $p = .596$ . The slight difference of 0.03, with a group mean of 4.27 for employees and 4.24 for customers is not enough to conclude a meaningful distinction.

The t-test for Responsiveness also indicates no significant difference between the responses of employees ( $M = 4.29$ ) and customers ( $M = 4.30$ ),  $t = -0.03$ ,  $p = .975$ .

For Tangible, the difference between employee ( $M = 4.29$ ) and customer ( $M = 4.34$ ) ratings is not statistically significant, with a computed p-value of 0.381. Although there is a 0.05 difference in the means, this is not large enough to be statistically significant.

Likewise, t-test for Empathy reveals no significant difference in the assessment between employees and customers,  $t = .37$ ,  $p = .714$ .

For all four aspects of service quality, the results show no statistically significant differences between the responses of employees and customers. In each case, the computed p-values are greater than the significance level of 0.05, meaning any observed differences in means are likely due to random chance. Therefore, it can be concluded that both employees and customers perceive the service quality in these dimensions quite similarly.

### Test of Significant Difference in the assessment of two groups of respondents in terms of Public Trust

**Table 14**  
*Test of Difference in the Perception of Public Trust*

Independent Variable	Group				<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
	Employee		Customer			
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>		
Confidence	4.33	0.54	4.32	0.59	0.31	.755

Transparency and Accountability	4.27	0.51	4.32	0.61	-0.86	.389
Satisfaction with Services	4.37	0.51	4.37	0.56	0.05	.957

*Note.* Independent *t* test was used. No violations to normality assumptions were detected.

As can be gleaned in table 14, particularly for the dimension of confidence, t-test reveals that ratings between employee and customer have no significant difference since the computed p-value is 0.755 which is greater than the 0.05 significance level.

For Transparency and Accountability, there is also no statistically significant difference between the employee ( $M = 4.27$ ) and customer ( $M = 4.32$ ) ratings, with a p-value of 0.389.

The Satisfaction with Services results also show no significant difference,  $t = 0.05$ ,  $p = .957$ . Both employees and customers rate their satisfaction with the services provided by CWD equally with same means of 4.37.

Therefore, for all three aspects, the results indicate that there are no significant differences between the responses of employees and customers. The p-values are all much higher than the 0.05 threshold, meaning that any differences in means are likely due to random chance. and customers perceive CWD's performance similarly across these dimensions.

## VI. Test of Correlation between Adherence to RA 6713 and Service Quality and Public Trust

### Test of Correlation between Adherence to RA 6713 and Service Quality

**Table 15**

*Test of Correlation Between Adherence to RA 6713 (Ethical Norms) and Service Quality*

Ethical Norms Variable	Service Quality Variable			
	Reliability	Responsiveness	Tangible	Empathy
Professionalism and Integrity	.62		.61	.68
	Moderate	.68	Moderate	Moderate
	corr.	Moderate corr.	corr.	corr.
Impartiality and Objectivity	.67		.65	.69
	Moderate	.69	Moderate	Moderate
	corr.	Moderate corr.	corr.	corr.
Nationalism and Democratic Values	.69		.72	.70
	Moderate	.69	High corr.	High corr.
	corr.	Moderate corr.	High corr.	High corr.
Ethical Simplicity	.66		.65	.65
	Moderate	.65	Moderate	Moderate
	corr.	Moderate corr.	corr.	corr.

*Note.* Cell contains correlation statistic, interpretation of its strength, and its corresponding *p* value. Degree of freedom is 573.

\* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$ . \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

As shown in table 15, all the ethical norms (Professionalism and Integrity, Impartiality and Objectivity, Nationalism and Democratic Values, and Ethical Simplicity) show a moderate positive correlation with all aspects of service quality (Reliability, Responsiveness, Tangibles, and Empathy). The probability for



all the correlations is below .001, thus the null hypothesis is rejected, which indicates that the relationships are statistically significant.

This suggests that higher adherence to ethical standards is positively related to better perceptions of service quality across different dimensions. Therefore, it can be inferred that ethical behavior is a key driver of positive customer experiences in various service aspects particularly reliability, responsiveness, tangibles, and empathy. The findings corroborate the study of Onyilofor et al. (2024) which emphasized the link between work ethics and service delivery. They also argued that proper implementation of standard work ethics can lead to increased efficiency in the public sector. Additionally, in the study of Gaitho et al. (2019) they found out that ethical practices and strategic leadership were significant in influencing service delivery.

Moreover, the results also indirectly support the work of several proponents who indicate a significant positive association between ethical compliance and job performance (Alvarado & Grace, 2022; Benedicto & Caelian, 2021). However, this contrasts with the study by Callao (2022), which suggests that job performance was not significantly correlated with either ethical behaviors or organizational commitment.

## Test of Correlation between Adherence to RA 6713 and Public Trust

**Table 16**  
*Test of Correlation Between Adherence to RA 6713 (Ethical Norms) and Public Trust*

Ethical Norms Variable	Public Trust Variable		
	Confidence	Transparency & Accountability	Satisfaction
Professionalism and Integrity	.68 Moderate corr.	.66 Moderate corr.	.68 Moderate corr.
Impartiality and Objectivity	.71 High corr.	.69 Moderate corr.	.73 High corr.
Nationalism and Democratic Values	.71 High corr.	.70 High corr.	.70 High corr.
Ethical Simplicity	.66 Moderate corr.	.63 Moderate corr.	.68 Moderate corr.

*Note. Cell contains correlation statistic, interpretation of its strength, and its corresponding p value. Degree of freedom is 573.*

*\*p<.05. \*\*p<.01. \*\*\*p<.001.*

As can be seen in Table 16, all ethical norms all the ethical norms (Professionalism and Integrity, Impartiality and Objectivity, Nationalism and Democratic Values, and Ethical Simplicity) show a moderate positive correlation with all indicators of public trust (Confidence, Transparency & Accountability, Satisfaction with services.)

The findings suggest that the CWD's ability to build public trust is closely linked to its commitment to high ethical standards. With p-values all below .001 which is well below the 5% significance level, the null hypothesis is rejected. The results show that when the CWD demonstrates professionalism and integrity, impartiality and objectivity, nationalism and democratic values, and ethical simplicity, both employees and customers are more likely to trust the organization and feel satisfied with its services.

Ethical adherence really does play a key role in shaping public trust in government institutions. These findings back up the argument made by Mbandlwa et al. (2020) who pointed out that poor public service delivery often stems from poor leadership ethics. This suggests that upholding strong ethical standards is

crucial for building and maintaining public trust.

In the outset, the research outcomes prove the significant correlation between Ethical Adherence and Service Delivery and Public Trust. This aligns with the several studies which strongly project a positive association between ethical adherence, and service quality, and public trust (Onyilofo et. al, 2024; Gaitho et al, 2019; Mbandlwa et al., 2020; Beshi et al, 2020; Feldheim & Wang, 2004)

## VII. Problems Encountered by Respondents in the Implementation of RA 6713

In the survey, employee-respondents were asked to select all the problems they perceived as hindrance to the implementation or adherence to RA 6713.

**Table 17**  
*Problems Encountered in the Implementation of RA 6713*

Problem	<i>f</i>	%
Lack of Awareness and Understanding among Employees	81	46.3
Weak Role Models and Leadership	53	30.3
Weak Monitoring and Enforcement Mechanisms	60	34.3
Unethical Behavior within the Organization	56	32
Weak Rewards System	51	29.1

*Frequency refers to the number of respondents who selected the specified problem where multiple se*

As shown in table 17, the most significant problem identified by employee-respondents was the “Lack of Awareness and Understanding among Employees”. This finding aligns with the research of Benedicto & Caelian (2021) that emphasize the importance of awareness when it comes to ethical adherence. While it is part of the organization’s responsibility to ensure all new employees undergo orientation that covers key points like the code of ethics and expectations as public servants, CWD has yet to conduct comprehensive training that thoroughly covers the RA 6713. With more training and clear communication, employees will be better equipped to follow ethical guidelines, thus improving compliance (Tahanlangit, 2021).

Another issue frequently raised by employees is the “Insufficient Monitoring and Enforcement Mechanisms,” followed by “Failure to Report Unethical Behavior”. The challenge here is that when systems for monitoring and enforcing ethical guidelines are weak, it becomes easier for violations to go unnoticed or unaddressed. Effective monitoring systems are essential in ensuring that employees are held accountable for their actions. When these systems are not functioning well, unethical behavior can slip through the cracks and it can result to frustration and a lack of trust in the system. This is especially true when employees are unsure of how to report unethical behavior or are reluctant to do so out of fear of retaliation. In such an environment, employees may feel that ethical behavior is optional or that there are no consequences for violations. To address this, CWD needs to strengthen its monitoring and reporting systems, offering clear guidelines for reporting unethical behavior and ensuring that those who do come forward are supported, not penalized.

The fourth issue raised by respondents was “Inadequate Role Models and Leadership”. Ethical leadership is critical in shaping the culture of any organization. As Brown and Treviño (2006) pointed out, leaders are responsible for setting the tone for ethical behavior within an organization. Ethical leadership not only

promotes trust and accountability but also encourages employees to act with integrity (Hassan et al., 2014; Buye, 2021). However, a lack of ethical leadership can demoralize employees, and this can make it more difficult for the organization to meet the standards set by RA 6713. To improve adherence, CWD should prioritize ethical leadership at all levels, ensuring that leaders exemplify the behaviors they expect from employees.

Lastly, “Weak Awards and Rewards Systems”. The absence of recognition and reward system makes it harder to promote ethical behavior. According to Adams’ equity theory, employees are motivated when they feel their contributions are fairly recognized. In the same approach, without acknowledgment or rewards for ethical behavior, employees may feel undervalued and it can lead to disengagement or even a decrease in their commitment to ethical principles. Benedicto & Caelian (2021) and Tetti et al. (2023) stressed that a transparent and fair rewards system is crucial for motivating employees to uphold ethical standards. Therefore, CWD would benefit from implementing a clear and fair rewards system that acknowledges employees who consistently follow ethical guidelines.

Furthermore, employee-respondents were given the opportunity to provide additional problems, not listed in the given choices, that they perceive as obstacles to ethical compliance. Some of the additional concerns mentioned by the respondents are as follows:

- “Management is perceived to be so kind which may lead to pampering erring employees.”
- “Some respondents expressed concerns about a perceived lack of accountability among employees with certain instances of favoritism in management decisions.”
- “There were mentions of loyalty becoming a factor influencing accountability which raise concerns about its impact on ethical behavior.”
- “Some employees are still patronizing foreign products.”
- “There are challenges in observing and maintaining role clarification and transparent data monitoring.”

These comments are inferred to be contributing factors to the slightly lower ratings on employees' ethical adherence. They also point out key areas where ethical compliance can be improved. In short, greater attention and action are required to address these concerns within the workplace.

## **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

The findings of this research emphasized the critical role of ethical conduct in public service. As demonstrated in CWD, adherence to ethics contributed to improved service delivery and greater public trust. Efforts by institutions to address gaps and strengthen ethical practices could significantly enhance the quality and integrity of public service in the Philippines. Therefore, the following recommendations were made:

1. Comprehensive training and capacity building on RA 6713
  2. Stronger monitoring and enforcement mechanisms
  3. Employee feedback platforms for reporting ethical concerns
  4. Enhanced rewards and recognition systems
  5. Creation of an Ethics Committee in collaboration with HR, to promote long-term ethical governance
- Additionally, it is recommended that this research be reconducted using the same variables but in a different organizational setting. The use of other indicators to measure service quality and public trust is also suggested as the results could further support the correlations between ethics, service quality, and public trust.

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