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The Effects of Employee Work Ethics on Customer Satisfaction: The Mediating Role of Employee Job Satisfaction in Civil Registration and Residency Services Offices in Addis Ababa

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to examine how employee work ethics (EWE) affect customer satisfaction (CS) both directly and indirectly through the mediation of employee job satisfaction (EJS) in Civil Registration and Residency Services Offices (CRRSO) in Addis Ababa. To this end, the study adopted a quantitative, cross-sectional survey design involving 385 respondents recruited from both employees and customers visiting the offices of three selected Woredas in Addis Ababa. The study employed both descriptive statistics (mean) and inferential statistics such as regression and mediation analysis using Hayes PROCESS Model. The results showed a strong, positive relationship among the three constructs. Mainly, the study confirmed a dual-pathway mechanism showing the direct effect of EWE (β=0.9521) on CS and indirect effect through EJS on CS (β=0.9029). On the contrary, the descriptive results confirmed that all the constructs are at below average levels (EWE = 3.27, EJS = 3.24, CS = 3.18) with EJS demonstrating significant variability with employees' perceptions toward their satisfaction levels (SD=0.761). The study concludes that despite the existence of the mechanisms necessary for achieving high service quality, they are underutilized in practice in the CRRSO under study settings. The results also demonstrate that when EWE and EJS increases, CS increases. To realize this, CRRSO needs to work on enhancing EWE through upholding professionalism, responsibility, punctuality, responsiveness, and standard service practices. Stabilizing job satisfaction is equally important and can be done by improving working conditions and ensuring fairness in promotion and evaluation systems. EJS, due to its strong mediating role between EWE and CS, needs to be improved so as to boost ethical behavior, which in turn enhances CS. Since the present study was limited to a few Woredas, subsequent researches could explore whether similar patterns hold across entire CRRSO in Addis Ababa.

Keywords: Employee work ethics, customer satisfaction, job satisfaction, mediation

1. Introduction

Public sectors in the Ethiopian have long been characterized by poor service delivery and weak governance systems which are manifested in a pervasive decline in customer satisfaction across government entities (Siyum, 2024). These challenges are particularly pronounced in CRRSO

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which serve as key points of public interactions. As study results of Gebeyehu (2022) and Zewoldi (2019) confirmed, service inefficiency and diminished customer satisfaction within the CRRSO are mainly attributed to two interlinked employee related factors such as poor EWE and low EJS. Mohammed (2019) found that service delivery in civil registration offices in Addis Ababa city Administration is mainly constrained by rampant incidence of forgery documents and lack of digital record keeping system that undermines service efficiency and institutional credibility. Various studies confirmed that poor EWE undermines employee morale which in turn reduces CS (Benedicto & Caelian, 2021; Fajardo, 2021; Meriac et al., 2023).

Surge of recent studies have confirmed the significance of analyzing the influence of EWE on CS in different organizations within various settings (Osibanjo et al., 2015; Panigrahi & Al-nashash, 2019; Rane et al., 2023; Remigio, 2022a; Sapada et al., 2018). Despite this consensus, scholarly debate continues regarding the mechanisms linking EWE with both employee job satisfaction (EJS) and CS. In this regard, two schools of thoughts stand out and scholars with intrinsic reward perspective argue that job satisfaction emanates from the personal fulfillment gained through ethical work (Nurudeen et al., 2021). On the other hand, scholars with organizational fit perspective suggest that satisfaction is primarily driven by external factors such as recognition and fair treatment (Manzoor et al., 2021).

Here, the main opinion difference focuses on the mechanism, through which EWE affects CS. In this regard the proponents of direct effect, Model A, argue that ethics directly affects performance (Remigio, 2022b) whereas advocates of indirect effect, Model B, assert that EJS is a critical mediating variable that determines the smooth transformation of the effects of ethical behavior into customer experiences (Javed et al., 2014). In this regard, the researcher understands that the continued debate has a paramount importance in the development of novel ideas or insights.

Given the continued debate among scholars in the areas of organizational behavior, there is a significant gap in the current literature concerning studies that thoroughly integrate these positions into a comprehensive partial mediation model. An integrated approach is essential to fully understand the mechanism through which EWE influences EJS and CS; and comprehend the mediating roles of EJS between EWE and CS. Therefore, this study sought to quantitatively test the causal relationships among EWE, the mediating role of EJS, and CS within the specific context of the CRRSO of Addis Ababa.

2. Statement of the Problem

The core challenge for the Ethiopia Civil Registration and Residency Services Office (CRRSO) lies in the government's failure to meet the basic service delivery promise of the CRRSO, which is reflected by the ever-growing number of complaints filed by the clients and the noticeable decline in the satisfaction levels of the people (Hilina, 2023; Seyoum, 2020; Tadesse, 2019). This failure, therefore, rather than being operational, passes inside as it is maintained and reinforced by an internal vicious cycle of organizational problems. The underlying problem mechanism, therefore, lies between low employee job satisfaction (EJS) and low employee work ethics (EWE), which appears operationally as organizational bureaucratic delay, lack of service

efficacy, and, therefore, the consequent low public confidence and high grievances (Seyoum, 2020; Tadesse, 2019).

In an organizational context where the interest of having an employee base that appears committed and maintains high ethics lies at the heart of ensuring effective and high-quality public services, the threat that the employee work ethics and employee commitment pose appears as the most direct internal organizational challenge to the service delivery failure that the CRRSO experiences.

Although there appears to be an incontrovertible fact that employee ethics and employee commitment are indispensable and play significant roles in determining the delivery of services, there are no research works previously conducted in the Ethiopian, particularly in Addis Ababa context that examine the quantitative dynamics and, specifically, the mediating, internal organizational factors that influence the delivery of services.

Cognizant to this, the researcher believes that conducting empirical studies on the mediating relationship in the context of CRRSO, policy designers and practioners could get evidence based insights necessary to establish the desired employee ethics, which in turn boost their morale so as to deliver quality service. This study, therefore, aims to bridge this essential empirical gap by statistically examining the relationship between EWE and CS and figuring out the precise mediating role of EJS, thereby providing actionable, evidence-based data for targeted public service improvement interventions.

Based on the literature linking employee work ethics, job satisfaction, and customer satisfaction, this study proposes the following four hypotheses to be assessed:

H1: Employee Work Ethics (EWE) have a positive and significant effect on Employee Job Satisfaction (EJS).

H2: Employee Job Satisfaction (EJS) has a positive and significant effect on Customer Satisfaction (CS).

H3: Employee Work Ethics (EWE) have a positive and significant effect on Customer Satisfaction (CS).

H4: Employee Job Satisfaction (EJS) significantly mediates the relationship between Employee Work Ethics (EWE) and Customer Satisfaction (CS).

3. Theoretical and Empirical Background of the Study

3.1 Theoretical Framework of the Study

This study is underpinned by three grand theories that together explain how employee work ethics influences employee job satisfaction and ultimately customer satisfaction in the CRRSO context. Firstly, this study opted Social Exchange Theory (SET) as a major theory for understanding the relationship among the constructs. SET claims that reciprocity is the base for employee-work relationship. As this theory sets, when employees get fair treatment, they feel obliged to return favor. Conceptually, social exchange involves recognition, support, fairness, respect, and empowerment. SET argues that employee work ethics, job satisfaction, commitment, and citizenship behaviors emanate from such social exchanges. Employee strong

work ethics could be manifested in terms of diligence, commitment, honesty, reliability, and professionalism. When employees demonstrate such behaviors, they invest their time, energy, skills, and loyalty in the organization. In response to this investment, the organization is expected to provide fair treatment, supportive supervision, recognition, opportunities for growth, and appropriate rewards. When these positive organizational responses are present, employees perceive that the exchange relationship is balanced and mutually beneficial. According to SET, this balanced relationship fosters higher employee job satisfaction. Balu (2017) in the renowned work "Exchange and Power in social Life" confirmed that when employees get satisfied in their works, they are more likely to exert more efforts for customer care and satisfaction. This claim confirms the existing links between EJS and CS. To understand best the workplace dynamics such as EWE, EJS, and CS, this study considers SET as a major theoretical foundation.

Secondly, Locke et al. (1976) in his renowned theory "Discrepancy Theory of Job Satisfaction" introduced the concept that employee job satisfaction arises when the difference between what employees expect and what actually they get is minimal. As confirmed by the first mentioned theory, when employees demonstrate strong ethical standards they value professionalism, integrity, accountability, and commitment and expect the organizational workplace to reflect these values. When the work environment allows them to practice these values, the discrepancy is small, and satisfaction increases. The discrepancy theory elucidates that the positive relationship that exist between EWE and EJS emanates from the alignment between personal values and organizational conditions.

Thirdly, this study is also anchored by the Service-Profit Chain (SPC) model first developed by Haskett (1990). This model clarifies that employee job satisfaction is a driving force to deliver quality service and maintain customer satisfaction. According to SPC model, EWE acts as a trigger that leads to EJS that enables employees to enhance service value and eventually CS. In this model, EWE acts as the starting point: EWE → EJS → Service Value → CS. This framework directly supports the study's mediation hypothesis by positioning EJS as the mechanism through which EWE influences CS.

The reason why these three theories were selected is that they collectively explain the full causal pathway of the study. SET clarifies the reciprocal relationship between EWE and EJS (H1) and between EJS and CS (H2). Discrepancy Theory explains how ethical values become job satisfaction. SPC shows why EJS should function as a mediator (H4). The other alternative theories such as Expectancy or Goal-Setting were not part of this study because they mainly focus on motivation and performance; and limited to explain the relationship of three constructs in one model.

Overall, integrating these theories enables the researcher to fully understand how EWE, EJS, and CS are connected and why they are linked and how they contribute to the service delivery challenges at CRRSO. This framework is also important to provide concrete and holistic practical recommendations for improving public service performance in Addis Ababa CRRSO.

Hypotheses Development and Research Model

Based on reviewed literature and the extant theory, the researcher designed conceptual framework which helps to explain the relationships among EWE, EJS, and CS. Primarily, the framework is designed to outline and describe the mechanism through which the effect of EWE channeled through EJS towards CS. It positions EWE as the independent variable, CS as the dependent variable, and EJS as the mediating variable.



Figure 3.1 Conceptual Framework
Source: Researcher's conceptualization based on literature (2024)

3.2 Empirical Studies

This section summarizes empirical evidence on EWE, EJS, and CS to justify the study's conceptual model and four hypotheses.

3.2.1 Employee Work Ethics and Employee Job Satisfaction (EWE→EJS)

A surge of recent studies have documented that there is a strong positive relationship between employee work ethics and employee job satisfaction. Mainly, robust employee ethics in the workplace is characterized by professionalism, dedication, and integrity enable the employees to demonstrate purpose, commitment, and autonomy in their roles, which in turn enhances their job satisfaction. This direct link is strongly reinforced by studies conducted by (Aflah et al., 2021; Nurudeen et al., 2021). Results from both studies confirmed the positive relationship between EWE and EJS. Further evidence that comes from public sector studies confirms that a well-designed organizational ethical standard reinforces employee job satisfaction (Kola & Molise, 2025). In consistence with this, Nurudeen et al. (2021) added evidence that substantiates the significant influence of employee work ethics on their job satisfaction in Nigerian context.

3.2.2 Employee Job Satisfaction and Customer Satisfaction (EJS→CS)

In a study that investigated the relationship between employee job satisfaction and customer satisfaction, Mohapatra et al. (2024) confirmed a positive and statistically significant relationship between the two constructs. The study demonstrated that when employees feel satisfied with their works because of fair treatment provided by organizations, they are more likely to engage, demonstrate commitment, and motivated to use the discretionary efforts to deliver quality services. Javed et al. (2014b) in their seminal works pinpointed this important relationship. To put it differently, the study results indicated that as employee engagement increases, the likelihood to deliver quality service increases, which in turn increases customer satisfaction. In the same line of inquiry, a study conducted by Susandra et al. (2021) in a Civil Registry Office of Indonesia confirmed that as employee satisfaction increases, the probability to deliver high quality output increases, positive attitude increases, and these boost organizational commitment and eventually increasing overall quality of service received by the public.

3.3.3 Employee Work Ethics and Customer Satisfaction (EWE→CS)

To understand the direct effects of employee work ethics on customer satisfaction, Nurudeen et al. (2021) explored the effect of work ethics on job satisfaction and employee performance in Nigeria. The study found a positive and significant relationship between EWE and CS, confirming strong ethical behaviors of employees boosts employee performance, which in turn increases customer satisfaction. Accordingly, employees with better ethical behavior have tendencies to adhere to rules, maintain accuracy, avoiding mistakes, and upholding high performance standards that directly shape the quality of service delivered to customers.

3.2.4 The Mediating Role of Job Satisfaction (EWE→EJS→CS)

Lastly, this study explores the central idea of the conceptual model, which is that work ethics and customer satisfaction are mediated by job satisfaction. Employee job satisfaction is the main channel through which the positive effects of work ethics on customer satisfaction are amplified and directed. Employee satisfaction serves as a crucial mediator variable that explains the relationship between ethical behavior and favorable organizational outcomes, according to research specifically looking at this causal chain in related public service contexts (such as the impact of work ethics on employee performance) (Susandra et al., 2021). This implies a potent domino effect: work ethics increase job satisfaction (H1), which in turn increases discretionary effort and service quality leading to improved customer satisfaction (H2). Strong work ethics and high job satisfaction make an employee highly dedicated and productive, which maximizes service quality and, ultimately, customer satisfaction.

The interconnectedness of work ethics, employee satisfaction, and service outcomes is highlighted by recent empirical findings from Ethiopian scholars: Martha (2022) found that the three main components of work ethics—honesty, accountability, and respect for others—significantly and favorably predict employee job performance, which is a prerequisite for

successful service delivery. Nardos' (2025) discovery that job satisfaction mediates the relationship between employee engagement and overall organizational performance as a common proxy for high-quality service in commercial banks supports this performance link. Demis (2024) showed that characteristics of service quality, like dependability and empathy, have a major impact on customer satisfaction in the Ethiopian educational sector by directly relating the service to the recipient. When taken as a whole, these studies lend credence to the idea that moral behavior influences both performance and satisfaction.

4. Materials and Methods

4.1 Research Design

This study adopted a quantitative cross-sectional design to test how EWE affects CS directly and indirectly through EJS. For this study, the data were collected using structured questionnaires from 385 respondents. Rigorous statistical methods were employed to examine relationships among EWE, EJS, and CS. Though the method is suitable for conducting mediation and correlation analysis, yet it does not allow proving the actual cause and effect relationship.

4.2 Context, Population, and Sampling Strategy

The study was carried out in three Civil Registration and Residency Services Offices (CRRSO) in Addis Ababa (08, 09, and 11) to understand the current service delivery and customer experiences across different sub-cities. The study involved two respondent groups: employees and customers. The employee group comprises 150 respondents randomly selected from the staff lists of the three Woredas offices. This technique provides every employee within the selected offices equal chances of being selected and in a way that establishes high degree of internal representativeness for the employee data; accurately reflecting the characteristics of the entire employee population within the study area. The customer group was randomly selected from those service seekers visiting the CRRSO over a span of 15 working days. They were 235 in number, and the selection technique was opted for getting relevant insights regarding customer satisfaction (Sontakke & Zanke, 2025).

4.3 Data Collection Instruments and Procedures

For the collection of data about work ethics, this study adopted the multidimensional work ethic profile with seven dimensions of work ethic (22 items) developed by (Miller et al., 2002). Job satisfaction was measured by using the short form *adopted from* Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire with 20 items (Weiss et al., 1977); and for customer satisfaction: Batho Pele service delivery scale will be used (Africa, 1997) . Each construct was measured using a six-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (6).

4.4 Data Analysis Tools and Assumption Checking

For analytical purpose, the study used both SPSS V.23 and Jamovi 2.3. Prior to analysis the data was cleaned, classified and rigorous psychometric tests were conducted. To ensure the validity and reliability of the three measurements constructs: EWE, EJS, and CS, both Exploratory and Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) were conducted.

Subsequently, after validating the reliability and internal consistency, the inferential statistics such as correlation, regression, and mediation analysis (facilitated by Jamovi's bootstrapping method), was executed. Prior to running these tests, all necessary assumptions were checked. To establish normality, the Shapiro–Wilk test was done confirming that the data were free from problematic outliers. Regression diagnostics indicated compliance with critical assumptions: linearity was intact, homoscedasticity was confirmed, the Durbin–Watson statistic showed independence of errors, and VIF results indicated no multi-collinearity concerns. The normality of residuals was subsequently verified, supporting the validity of the confidence intervals generated in the mediation analysis.

5. Data Analysis and Discussion

This section presents the findings of the study, after conducting various analyses using three constructs in the study.

5.1 Background Characteristics of the Respondents

5.1.1 Employees' Background

The demographic breakdown of the employee sample (N=150) reveals a clear distribution skewed toward female respondents, who constitute a majority at 57.3%, compared to 42.7% male representation. About educational background, the workforce is heavily concentrated at the bachelor's degree level (BA/BSC), accounting for 70.0% of the total sample. Employees with Diploma qualifications (15.3%) and those holding MA/MSc or higher degrees (14.7%) represent significantly smaller, equal segments of the staff.

Table 4.1 Employees' Background

Category	Group	Counts (N)	% of Total
Sex	Male	64	42.7%
	Female	86	57.3%
Education Level	Diploma	23	15.3%
	BA/BSC	105	70.0%
	MA/MSC and Above	22	14.7%

Source: Survey result, 2025

5.1.2 Customers' Background

The table below details the demographic profile of 235 customers surveyed across three The table summarizes the demographic characteristics of 235 customers from three CRRSO Woredas in Addis Ababa (Yeka 9, Yeka 11, and Bole 8). The distribution is nearly equal across sites: W-8 has 79 respondents, while W-9 and W-11 each have 78. Most customers are female (144) and hold a BA/BSC degree (159). Across all Woredas, the dominant group is female respondents with BA/BSC degrees highest in W-11 (37), followed by W-9 (33) and W-8 (31).

Table 4.2 Customers' Background

Woreda	Gender	BA/BSC Degree	Master's Degree	PhD Degree	Total
W-8	Female	31	1	0	32
	Male	21	10	1	32
W-9	Female	33	11	3	47
	Male	21	8	2	31
W-11	Female	37	10	1	48
	Male	15	8	1	24
Grand	Female	101	22	4	127
Total	Male	57	26	4	87
	Overall Total	**175**	**50**	**10**	**235**

Source: Survey, 2025

5.2 Measurement Model

Evaluation of the measurement model is concerned with validating the data in terms of three standard statistical tests: the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure for sampling adequacy, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity for the presence of correlations, and Cronbach's Alpha (α) for assessing internal consistency. The KMO test results as prescribed by Kaiser and Meyer (1974) should be greater than 0.6 for acceptable analysis. As can be seen from Table 4.5, all the constructs in this study showed KMO values appropriate for analysis. Regarding Bartlett's Test of Sphericity, Bartlett (1954) recommended that the value is appropriate when the significance value is below 0.05. Accordingly, all the constructs demonstrated the p-values below the recommended threshold. These values confirm that the correlation matrices are not identity matrices and that factor analysis is appropriate {EWE (χ^2 = 6045.8), EJS (χ^2 = 5768.0), and CS (χ^2 = 11409), $p < .001$}. Cronbach's alpha indicating strong internal consistency for EWE (0.863) and acceptable reliability for EJS (0.717) and CS (0.719). The high explained variance (EWE: 73.38%, EJS: 80.1%, CS: 63.5%) reinforces the reliability and validity of the constructs (Hair et al., 2011).

Table 4.3 KMO, Sphericity, and Cronbach's Alpha

Constructs	Items	Explained variation	KMO	Sphericity Test		Cronbach's A
				X^2	P	CA
Employee Work Ethics (EWE)	22	73.383%	.836	6045.8	< .001	0.863
Employee Job Satisfaction (EJS)	20	80.1%	.624	5768.0	< .001	0.717
Customer Satisfaction (CS)	**08**	**70.5%**	**0.821**	**11409**	**< .001**	**0.719**

Source: Author's computation, 2025

5.2.1 Model Fit

The CFA results show that the measurement models for EWE, EJS, and CS demonstrate good to excellent fit. All chi-square/df ratios were below 3.0, while RMSEA (0.03–0.05) and SRMR (≤0.038) met the recommended ≤0.05 cutoff. Although EWE's CFI (0.899) was slightly below 0.90, the CFI and TLI values for EJS and CS were strong, confirming that all constructs are measured reliably and align well with the data (Hair et al., 2012).

Table 4.4 CFA model fit results

Statistics	Recommended value	EWE	EJS	CS
CMIN/DIF	≤3.00	230/80=2.87	219/76=2.7	224/80=2.8
P-value	>0.05	< .001	< .001	< .001
CFI	≥0.90	0.899	0.948	0.958
TLI	≥0.95	0.937	0.946	0.948
RMSEA	≤0.08	0.04	0.03	0. 05
SRMR	≤0.05	0.037	0.038	0.022

Source Author's computation, 2025

5.3 Descriptive Statistics

Table 4.5 presents the descriptive statistics for Employee Work Ethics (EWE), Employee Job Satisfaction (EJS), and Customer Satisfaction (CS), based on a sample of 385 respondents.

Table 4.5 Mean and proportion of respondents (N=385)

Constructs	Mean	SD	Range Classification	Distribution Symmetry
Employee Work Ethics (EWE)	3.27	0.647	Below Average	50.5% Below, 49.5% Above
Employee Job Satisfaction(EJS)	3.24	0.761	Below Average	50.0% Below, 50.0 Above
Customer Satisfaction (Cs)	**3.18**	**0.640**	**Below Average**	**50.5% Below, 49.5% Above**

Source: Author's Analysis (2025)

The interpretation of the mean was based on calculated mean values, SD, range, and distribution symmetry as indicated in Table 4.8. To determine the score ranges of a six-point Likert scale (range 1 to 6) dividing the total range of 5 points into four equal categories (range width

W=1.25) was done. The established four distinct assessment levels are: low (1.00 to 2.25), indicating strong disagreement; below average (2.26 to 3.50), representing slight disagreement or a neutral-negative stance; above average (3.51to 4.75), signaling slight agreement or a neutral-positive stance; and high (4.76 to 6.00), signifying strong agreement.

The analysis confirms that all three measured constructs are below the average score (EWE at 3.27, EJS at 3.24, and CS at 3.18). These results below 3.51 cut off point demonstrate there is lack of positive consensus with regard to performance dimensions in the organizations under study settings. The results further show that the organizations are not in position to discharge their duties and responsibilities in an efficient and effective ways.

The findings reveal a cycle of internal weakness leading to poor external outcomes. EJS, with the lowest stability (SD = 0.761), stands out as the most inconsistent construct, indicating notable dissatisfaction among employees. Combined with low EWE, these issues contribute to the weakest overall score: CS at 3.18. With all indicators below average, the organization needs more than minor adjustments it requires an immediate strategic overhaul. Improving EWE and EJS should be the first priority, as strengthening internal conditions is essential to elevating customer satisfaction.

5.4 Hypothesis Testing

5.4.1 Hypothesis One

The regression analysis reveals a strong and significant positive relationship between Employee Work Ethics (EWE) and Employee Job Satisfaction (EJS). With an R-value of 0.768 and an R^2 of 0.5898, EWE explains nearly 59% of the variance in EJS. The model is highly significant ($F = 550.64$, $p < 0.0001$). The coefficient ($\beta = 0.9029$) indicates that a one-unit increase in EWE leads to an approximate 0.90-unit increase in EJS, a result strongly supported by the t-value (23.47, $p < 0.0001$) and a narrow confidence interval (0.8272–0.9785). Overall, EWE is a powerful predictor of EJS.

Table 4.6 Model summaries and coefficient of EWE

Model summary	**R**	**R-sq**	**MAP**	**F**	**df1**	**df2**	**p**
	0.7680	.5898	0.2383	550.6373	1.0000	383.0000	.0000
Coefficients	**Effects**	**Coef.**	**SE**	**t**	**p**	**LLCI**	**LI**
	constant	0.3431	0.1737	1.9751	0.0490	0.0016	.6847
	EWE-> EJS	0.9029	0.0385	23.4657	0.0000	0.8272	.9785

Source: Author's Analysis (2025)

5.4.2 Hypothesis Two

The regression analysis shown in Table 4.7 reveals a strong and meaningful connection between Employee Job Satisfaction (EJS) and Customer Satisfaction (CS). The model fits remarkably well, with an R-squared value of 0.9828, which indicates that the factors we're looking at explain a staggering 98.28% of the variance in customer satisfaction. With an exceptionally high F-

statistic (p <0.0001) of 10887.4443, this model confirms that our results are unlikely due to chance. Employee Job Satisfaction is directly related to Customer Satisfaction which indicates that for every increase of one unit of Employee Job Satisfaction there will be an increase of an approximately equal amount in Customer Satisfaction (path coefficient of 0.0304). The association is statistically significant (t-statistic=3.4510; p-value=0.0006). In addition, the 95% Confidence Interval for the coefficient (from 0.0131 to 0.0478) does not encompass 0 which further supports the notion that employee with greater levels of satisfaction will ultimately create happier customers.

Table 4.8 Model summaries and coefficient of EJS

Model	**R**	**R-SQ**	**MAP**	**F**	**DF1**	**DF2**	**P**
Summary	0.9913	0.9828	0.0071	10887.4443	2.0000	382.0000	.0000
	Effect	**Coef**	**SE**	**t**	**p**	**LLCI**	**LI**
Coefficients	constant	0.0535	0.0301	1.7758	0.0766	-0.0057	.1128
	EJS -> CS	**0.0304**	**0.0088**	**3.4510**	**0.0006**	**0.0131**	**.0478**

Source Author's computation, 2025

5.4.3 Hypothesis Three

Results of the direct effect analysis between EWE and CS are shown in Table 4.9. The statistical evidence for a significant positive relationship between the two variables is exceedingly strong. The magnitude of the direct effect of EWE on CS is 0.9521, which is a large positive coefficient suggesting that as employee work ethics increase, customer satisfaction increases correspondingly. The effect is highly significant with a t-statistic of 91.8362 and p-value of 0.0000 less than the generally accepted level of .001, so the null hypothesis can be rejected overwhelmingly.

The 95% confidence interval of the effect was between 0.9317 and 0.9725. Because this interval is not centered on zero and is rather narrow, it confirms the statistical significance and precision of the finding. Moreover, a path coefficient, c'_cs of 0.9633 further strengthens the level of this direct relationship. In essence, data strongly supports that a strong employee work ethic is an essential and direct determinant of customer satisfaction.

Table 4.9 Direct effect of EWE on CS

Effect	SE	t	p	LLCI	ULI	c'_cs
0.9521	**0.0104**	**91.8362**	**0.0000**	**0.9317**	**0.9725**	**0.9633**

Source: Author's Analysis (2025)

5.4.4 Hypothesis Four: Mediation Analysis

Table 4.10 shows the result of a mediation analysis, in which the indirect effect of Employee Work Ethics (EWE) on Customer Satisfaction (CS) is analyzed, with Employee Job Satisfaction (EJS) as a mediator. A bootstrapping method was implemented to assess the indirect path: EWE

→ EJS → CS. The point estimate of this indirect effect was 0.0275, with a positive relation. The bootstrap 95% confidence interval estimates for this effect were between 0.0095 and 0.0501. This does not include zero; thus, the indirect effect is statistically significant. That indicates EJS significantly mediates the relation between EWE and CS. Thus, increased employee work ethics may lead to a rise in job satisfaction, which, in turn, influences customer satisfaction positively. It follows from these results that a policy aimed at increasing employee work ethics will have a spillover effect that can positively influence customer satisfaction.

Table 4.10 Indirect effect(s) of EWE on CS

Indirect Effect	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
EWE-> EJS-> CS	**0.0275**	**0.0104**	**0.0095**	**0.0501**

Source: Author's Analysis (2025)

6. Conclusion

The results of this study comes up with very interesting issues significant in contributing to the literature, policy makers, and program designers on the casual relationship among EWE, EJS, and CS in CRRSO under study settings. The study discovered a strong positive correlation between EWE and EJS (β=0.9029), implying strong work ethics is a significant predictor of EJS. Moreover, the study found that both EWE (β=0.9521) and EJS (β=0.0304) have crucial roles in determining CS. The very interesting result this study proved is the mediating roles of EJS, ensuring the EWE can have positive influence of on CS both directly and indirectly through EJS. This implies that when employees feel god about their works, the benefits go beyond the workforce and improve the CS.

Despite these positive relational dynamics, descriptive results uncover critical challenges related to organizational system. Clearly, all constructs demonstrate mean scores below the expected average {EWE (3.27), EJS (3.24), and CS (3.18)}. These low values along with considerable variability in job satisfaction (SD = 0.761) and diminishing customer engagement, prove organizational failure and an inability to maintain expected service standards.

To conclude, though the organizations have favorable structural capacity for discharging effective performance, yet there exist gaps in their practical implementation. Therefore, it is necessary to take immediate corrective measures to address these shortcomings, to capitalize on the positive linkages identified, and to raise all performance indicators to above-average levels.

7. Implications and Recommendations

The study attempted to address research gap and answer research questions set at the outset of the design. In doing so, it makes important contributions to the current literature. First, the study confirmed the validity of the mediation model framed as EWE → EJS → CS in this study. This confirmation of the mediating role of job satisfaction extends the soundness of the existing organizational behavior theory and supports Social Exchange Theory.

Second, prior studies have overlooked in exploring the existing relationships among three constructs such as EWE, EJS, and CS in public sector, particularly in Ethiopian CRRSO context. This study is among the first to consider the mediating role of EJS in the context of Addis Ababa CRRSO. Therefore, it is possible to say that the study provides valuable insights into the direct and indirect effects of EWE on CS in a government service delivery setting and by extension it contributes to the public sector literature by generating evidences from empirical data in the context of CRRSO.

Drawing upon the findings and the extant theories, this study provides recommendations important for practice and policy designers. The results suggest that employee work ethics and behavior determines service delivery and customer satisfaction. These situations necessitate CRRSO under study settings to establish integrated system that considers employee morale and work ethics as strategic issues demanding organizations to invest on revitalizing the internal conditions.

The study results reveal that the three constructs (EWE, EJS, and CS) received low average scores with a high-level of variability related to job satisfaction. These findings indicate that the CRRSO identified in this study does have challenges regarding developing functional systems, organizational culture, policies/procedures, and work conditions. Therefore, the CRRSO must find ways to revitalize all of these systems and provide simplified leadership practices, enhanced work conditions, ethical working practices, and perfect customer experiences in order to bring all systemic weaknesses back to normal operational levels. To support this effort, initiate organization-wide reform to eliminate the existing bureaucratic inefficiencies; create long-term improvements through digitizing services and creating and implementing an open performance evaluation system immediately.

The research has shown a direct link between employee work ethic (EWE), employee job satisfaction (EJS), and customer satisfaction. Therefore, the research indicates that both customer and employee experiences are affected significantly by the work ethic of employees, which means that if we want to improve employee work ethic, we must implement organizational interventions through policy rather than individual behaviors. Consequently, it is critical for policymakers to prioritize the establishment of workplace wellness programs, equitable distribution of workload, incentive-based structures, and mechanisms for employee voice. Additionally, policymakers should institutionalize the establishment of ethical hiring, promotion, and performance appraisal systems. By incorporating ethics into human resource (HR) frameworks, policies promote professionalism, accountability, and fairness and help support desired behaviors across an entire organization.

This study offers new knowledge regarding the impact of EWE on EJS and CS; however, there are still issues that haven't been addressed and warrant further investigation. This investigation utilized a quantitative cross-sectional survey research design utilizing a structured questionnaire to obtain data from participants recruited solely from three Woredas located within Addis Ababa, which restricts generalization of the results to all Woredas comprising CRRSO in Addis Ababa. Therefore, it is recommended that longitudinal and qualitative research

methodologies be employed to identify any mediating influences that may exist as well as to conduct further analysis and comparisons across all Woredas housing CRRSON in Addis Ababa.

Disclosure Statement

I, the author, declared that there is no known financial conflict of interest or personal relationships that could have influenced the work reported in this paper.

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