WORK ETHICS OF EMPLOYEES IN THE PLATINUM MINE INDUSTRY

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OPSOMMING

TITEL: Die werketiek van werknemers in die platinum-myn-industrie.

SLEUTELWOORDE: Werketiek, godsdiens, kultuur, waardes, houding, persepsie, beginsels, motivering

Daar is verskeie faktore wat bydra tot die ontwikkeling van werketiek. Een daarvan is die individu in verhouding tot die werk, die organisasie en die omgewing. Dit wil voorkom of werketiek verband hou met prestasie, produktiwiteit en die dissiplinering van onetiese gedrag. Werketiek word ook geassosieer met ekonomiese sukses. Daar word aanbeveel dat die organisasie meer moet uitvind oor werketiek en hoe dit die organisasie tot voordeel kan strek.

Die algemene doel van hierdie navorsing was om die werketiek van werknemers in die platinum-myn industrie te bepaal. Werketiek is breedvoerig uit die literatuur gedefinieer en die belangrikste bepalende faktore is ontleed.

'n Kwalitatiewe navorsingsontwerp, gebaseer op die fenomenologiese benadering, is gebruik. Die doel hiervan was om die individu in sy of haar totaliteit te verstaan en om 'n kwalitatiewe analise van 'n persoon se bewuste wêreld te maak. Vraelyste en onderhoude is gebruik om werknemers se ervaring ten opsigte van werketiek te bepaal. Inhouds analise is gebruik om die navorsings bevindinge te definieer, bestudeer, ontleed, kwantifiseer en te interpreteer.
Die resultate van die empiriese studie is bespreek volgens temas soos godsdiens, kultuur, individualisme, groepsdinamika en organisatoriese faktore. Daar is bevind dat faktore wat werketiek beïnvloed verskillende mense op verskillende mense affekteer. Etiologie, determinante en werks- ver- bandhoudende aannames rakende werketiek in verskeie opsette moet ook in ag geneem word. Dit was duidelik dat mense wat werketiek aanhang produktiewer, suksevoller en meer tevrede is.

Aanbevelings vir toekomstige navorsingword gemaak.

SUMMARY

TITLE: The work ethics of employees in the platinum mine industry

Key words: work ethics, religion, culture, values, attitude, perception, principles, motivation.

There are different factors that contribute to the development of work ethics. One such factor is the individual in relation to the work, the organisation and the environment. Work ethics are believed to be related to performance, productivity and the disciplining of extreme misconduct. Work ethics are also associated with economic success. It is recommended that the organisation should find out more about work ethics and how work ethics could be to the advantage of the organisation.

The general aim of this research was to determine the work ethic of the employees in the Platinum mine industry. Work ethics were defined in detail from the literature and the most important factors that influence it were analysed.

A qualitative research design based on the phenomenological approach was used. The purpose of this was to understand the individual in his or her totality and to make a qualitative analysis of a person's conscious world. A questionnaire and interviews were used to determine employees' experience of work ethics. Content analysis was done to define, examine, analyse, quantify and interpret the research findings.

The results of the empirical study were discussed according to the themes of religion, culture, individualism, group dynamics and organisational factors. It was found that factors influencing work ethics have different effects on different people. Etiology, determinants and work-related beliefs in different settings must also be taken into account. It was evident that people who espouse work ethics are more productive, successful and satisfied.

Recommendations for future research were indicated.

CHAPTER 1

PROBLEM STATEMENT, OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

This dissertation investigates work ethics of employees in the platinum mine industry.

1.1INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the problem statement, objectives of the research, the research methods and the research procedure will be discussed.

1.2PROBLEM STATEMENT

The industrial world is driven by optimal performance and a high level of productivity. This is emphasised by Waltz and Ritchi (2000) when they ascribe the progress of the industrial world largely to discipline, commitment and drive. The development of work ethics and work-related concepts are believed to be related to performance and productivity. Work ethics include moral imperatives such as being non-judgemental, acceptable, confidential, individualised and having respect for colleagues and loyalty to agencies and organisations. These ethic are aimed at disciplining professionals to refrain from extreme misconduct (Waltz & Ritchi, 2000).

The current debate has centred on the crucial role of work ethics in economic achievement. The deterioration in work ethics is believed to be associated with economic decline (Ali, Azim & Falcone, 1995). According to Weber (1905) there is a genuine belief that social commitment to work and hard work are often associated with economic development and competitiveness. Furnham (1990) questioned the relationship between commitment to work ethics and economic success. It is generally acceptable that the impairment of the will to work will lead to a lower standard of living; Weber's thesis then has to be seen against the specific historical, social, and economic conditions that had prevailed and have existed in any country (Ali, Azim & Falcone, 1995). Work ethics have become increasingly important in business organisations because

researchers have concluded that the achievement of a competitive advantage depends on people's attitudes (Ali & Azim, 1994).

Bae and Chung (1997) pointed out that differences in work attitude stem from social or cultural differences. The work attitude centres around the effect of cultural values: job and organisational commitment of workers reflect widely shared and deeply rooted social and cultural values and beliefs. The high commitment of workers is due to a strong sense of job security, which originates from job arrangements. Technology is an important factor in determining worker attitude and job security and it is the key factor for high productivity (Bae and Chung 1997). They further mentioned that the management styles generate huge worker commitment to labour market conditions (Bae and Chung 1997).

Jazarek (1978) argues that writers today announce that work ethics are alive and well because people have a stronger desire for meaningful work, but that these writers seem to be missing the point. He argues that the thrust of work ethics was really that the non-creative, unpleasant, untimely work *had* to be done. Jazarek (1978) further argues that in order to properly understand work ethics, the issue has to be studied not as a matter of verbal attitude towards work but as an issue which takes in the relationship between social attitude and the socio-economic needs of the system. Only then can we begin to grasp the meaning of work ethics in modern societies and be able to make comparisons across cultural lines.

According to Watkins (1995) culture has a meaningful influence on work ethics. Furnham (1990) has found in his research that people's quality systems from different cultures are not always harmonious. In his research of the Protestant work ethic he found that different interpretations of work ethics exist. The appearance of these differences is explained on the basis of different facets in work ethics (Furnham, 1990). Niles (1999) suggested that to understand the cultural influences we really need to look at the etiology and determinants of work-related beliefs in different settings. The cross-cultural research by Furnham (1993) suggests that there seem to be a stronger commitment to a Protestant work ethic among non-Protestants.

Another important issue is related to the centrality of religious belief in the work ethic. The results indicate that there are no differences found across religious affiliations (Ali, Azim &

Falcone, 1995). Religion is a powerful spiritual motivator. However, on many occasions it is abused and this may hinder economic growth. Most world religions share some common work-related beliefs – what might differ could be the etiology of those beliefs (Furnham, 1990).

Positive work ethics refer to the belief that work is a central part of life and a desirable activity providing satisfaction (Fox and Mayor, 1995). Negative work ethics are an unacceptable work culture developed by employees in a specific working environment (Mafunisa, 1998). According to Tang & Weatherford (1998) individuals with positive work ethics spend more time on tasks, produce greater outputs, work longer hours, and spend less time on leisure activities than individuals with negative work ethics.

Cherrington (1980) emphasised the point that negative work ethics are partly responsible for the decline in productivity. According to Gildenhuys (1991) other factors responsible for the decline in productivity include poor planning, outdated work procedures, poor communication and ineffective personnel policies. Unethical behaviour can be regarded as an indicator of a negative work ethic. Unethical behaviour includes theft, misuse of resources and accepting outside employment during one's tenure in a particular organisation without approval (Gildenhuys, 1991). Some of the factors that contribute to the development of negative work ethics were discussed by Mafunisa (1998) as follows:

- *Manifestations of negative work ethics:* Superiors are inherently expected to show their subordinates the right way of behaving at work. If a negative work ethic exists at the top of the hierarchy, it is likely to permeate the entire work service. Once the head becomes rotten the body has no chance of escaping the cancer. For example, if the supervisors at the top who are well paid are engaged in the manifestation of a negative work ethic, the attitude of a subordinate to his or her job is likely to change drastically and they will see nothing wrong with taking a bribe. This indicates that the authority needs to first set an example or display their positive work ethic.

Many employees may develop the perception that it is not necessary to develop a positive work ethic when superiors and supervisors do not regard them as important. In this regard, modelling

is a powerful form of social influence. According to Hjelle and Ziegler (1987) behavioural psychologists have found that modelling can create new behaviour. One forms a cognitive image of how certain behaviours are performed through the observation of a model and the information serves as a guide for one's action. If management expects their subordinates to have respect for their work, they should respect their own work (Mafunisa, 1998).

According to Mafunisa (1998) it is clear that manifestations of a negative work ethic may not only reduce the morale of many committed employees but also negatively influence others in engaging themselves in similar practices. The values and norms which had been widely respected, disintegrate quickly. The morale fabric of the notion can easily be destroyed by such manifestations of negative work ethics.

Poorly paid or demotivated staff: South African organisations are characterised by large income differentials between the lowest and highest paid employees. Mafunisa (1998) argues that adequate remuneration of employees contributes significantly to motivation, rising of morale and improved performance. There is a correlation between adequate remuneration and retention of personnel on the one hand and reduction in the incidence of negative work ethics and seeking extra sources of complementary income on the other hand. It is no longer attractive for the organisations to appeal to acceptable ideals of commitment and loyalty of their employees without providing them with adequate remuneration. This is untenable in circumstances in which superiors appear to earn more and acquire better conditions of service for themselves (Hjelle & Ziegler, 1987).

Rasheed and Olowu (1993) postulated that the remuneration should strive to be compatible with those in other sectors to ensure that employees devote all their efforts to the services expected of them. The organisation should be responsible in ensuring that an adequate wage and equal pay for work of equal value are introduced at all levels of the organisation.

- *Lack of appropriate training and education:* Training aims to impart knowledge, skills and attributes that have immediate, narrow or specific applicability to a limited set of situations in a specific job. Inefficiency in the organisation is relatively high, particularly

when judged in terms of the ability to deliver services that are responsive to the organisation's needs. Cherrington (1980) contends that inefficiency creates a climate that has a destructive influence on a work ethic. It is inconsistent for the institution or organisation to produce inferior products and expect employees to take pride in their work. It can be argued that lack of education and training in ethics inhibits the development of a positive work ethic. Therefore, education and training in ethics should be given to employees to ensure development of a positive work ethic in the work environment (Mafunisa, 1998).

For individuals to be self-sustaining they are expected to work. Work is one of the tenets for provision and for personal satisfaction. According to Watkins (1995) work is a valuable income generator and it is of obvious importance for the improvement of quality of life. The meaning of work, however, refers to the definitions, significance, beliefs, and values which individuals and significant groups attach to the idea of working. Work is emphasised as a psychological, ongoing human activity, rather than a functional role. This is further emphasised by Maslow's hierarchy of needs: workers are not just givens in the system but instead have needs and desires to move from one level of functioning to the other. Human behaviour can be explained by the individual's tendency to seek personal goals that make life rewarding and meaningful (Tang & Weatherford, 1998). In fact working together or following positive work ethics may satisfy many of Maslow's high order needs and through this an individual's social, self-esteem and self-actualisation needs are satisfied. Self-actualisation is a desire to become everything that one is capable of becoming in a work environment. It is to explore talents and potentials. It is a desire for self-improvement, to reach the peak of one's potential. Maslow encourages a person to look up to what he or she can be and, therefore, to live with purpose (Hjelle & Ziegler, 1987).

The study of work ethics is the relationship between individuals and their work. Work ethics differ in organisations, so researchers should work with individuals from time to time with current information. Managers should use researchers information to become aware of the work ethics and the way those work ethics should be carried out.

1.3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Based on the above problem the following research questions arise:

- How are work ethics conceptualised in the literature?
- What are the factors that have an influence on work ethics?
- What are the factors that influence work ethics according to employees?
- What recommendations can be forwarded to positively influence work ethics?

1.4. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The research objectives can be divided into general and specific objectives.

1.4.1 General objectives

The general objective of the research is to determine the work ethics of employees within the platinum mine industry.

1.4.2 Specific objectives

- To determine how work ethics are conceptualised in the literature
- To identify the factors that influences work ethics.
- To determine factors that influences the work ethic within the mining industry.
- To recommend ways to promote a positive work ethic.

1.5 RESEARCH METHOD

The research method consists of two phases, namely a literature review and an empirical study.

1.5.1 Phase 1: Literature review

The literature review consists of two steps:

- Step 1: Description of a work ethic

During this stage the work ethics will be described according to the literature. The components of the work ethic (work culture, attitudes, values, norms, religion, group dynamics, organisational ethic), which will form part of the research framework, will be discussed.

- Step 2: Factors that can influence work ethics

During this stage factors that influence work ethics will be outlined as identified from the literature.

1.5.2 Phase 2: Empirical study

The following steps aim at describing the investigation framework.

- Step 1: Choice of research design

Research has to be planned or designed in a way in which the relationship appearing in the research hypothesis or research questions may be investigated (Huysamen, 1994). The research strategy has to be planned. The researcher has to decide on the type of review, its extensiveness and the type of materials to include. The key is to be careful, systematic and organised (Kerlinger & Lee, 2000).

The qualitative method will be used in the execution of this research to extract themes or generalisations from evidence and organising data to present a coherent, consistent picture. Qualitative research is a method in which direct observation and semi-structured interviewing are used. The researchers interact, they get to know personally the people being studied and may conduct informal interviews (Kerlinger & Lee 2000).

- Step 2: Study population

The sample will include 20 participants, both male and female, black and white, who are knowledgeable in the subject. All the participants will have to be conversant in English.

- Step 3: Sampling method

Stratified random sampling will be used. It divides the population into different groups known as strata, so that each element of the population belongs to one stratum.

- Step 4: Choice of data gathering methods

This study is a survey of work ethics of employees in the mining industry and interviews and questions will be utilised. The purpose of the question and interviews will be to develop a coherent and complete picture of employees' work ethics. Questions dealing with work ethics will be based on the work of other researchers who have explored the same topic. Experts in the field of Industrial and Clinical Psychology will be invited to review a draft of the question. Their comments will lead to a revised drafted question. Based on their comments particular items will be modified, deleted or added in order to improve the content and clarity of the question.

Unstructured interviews and questions will be used as methods of collecting data to optimise the validity of the results. Unstructured interviews, informal discussions, conversations or in-depth interviews will be held with employees of the mining industry. Questions will be used because it is a very effective method and response rates may be high for a target population.

- Step 4: Data analysis

The recorded contents of the interviews will be transcribed word by word by the researcher so that information gathered can be analysed. Content analysis will be used to qualitatively, systematically and objectively analyse and interpret the research data (Huysamen, 1994). The following concrete steps (Giorgi, 1997) of the qualitative methods were followed for the analysis of data.

- **Collecting of verbal data**: data will be collected by means of interviews and questions.
- **The reading of the data**: data will be read thoroughly before beginning any analysis.
- **The dividing of the data into parts**: since phenomenology is interested in meanings, the basis of dividing data into parts is means discrimination.
- **Organisation and expression of raw data**: data will be examined, probed and redescribed.
- **Expressing the structure of the phenomenon**: this step will determine the data essential for the phenomenon under study.

- Step 5: Research Procedure

The question and interviews will be conducted during or after working hours. Permission will be requested from the management to make use of their members during this research. Appointments for the interviews will be made for a particular member, and the day and the time will be given. The researcher will conduct the investigation by means of interviews.

1.6 CONTENT OF THE RESEARCH REPORT

The chapter outline of the research report will be as follows:

- Chapter 1: Problem statement, objectives and research method
- Chapter 2: Work ethics – a literature review
- Chapter 3: Empirical investigations
- Chapter 4: Results of empirical investigation
- Chapter 5: Conclusion and recommendations

1.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY

In this chapter the problem statement was outlined. General and specific objectives were set and the research and the methods that would be used to reach the research objectives were discussed.

Chapter 2 will deal with the conceptualisation of work ethics as well as the identification of factors that influence it, by means of a literature study.

CHAPTER 2

WORK ETHICS

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In chapter 1 it was pointed out that work ethics is aimed at disciplining professionals from extreme misconduct. The difference between positive and negative ethics was explained and it was indicated that there are factors that contribute to negative work ethics that influence South Africa's growth, development and economic prospects.

This chapter presents the literature review of work ethics. The definition of work ethics will be discussed in detail (2.2), including the historical and the contemporary perspectives on factors that influence work ethics.

2.2 DEFINITION OF WORK ETHICS

In this section work ethics will be defined and different researchers' views and definitions of work ethics will be discussed. It will also be explained by using the continuum of importance.

Work ethics have been defined in many different ways. There is no single work ethic that workers accept or reject; instead there are numerous different values of work. A worker might accept some values as important justifications for work and reject others. In this section of the report, work ethics are defined, the meaning of work is examined and the factors influencing it are discussed.

Work ethics have been defined very narrowly to refer to a positive attitude about work, a belief that work itself is important and that doing a job is essential. It has been defined by Waltz & Ritchie (2000) as the values, norms and moral judgement that guide professional behaviour as practitioners with clients. The work ethical system included such moral imperatives as non-judgemental, acceptance, confidentiality, individualisation, respect for colleagues, and loyalty of

agencies. In some respects, however, work ethics can be said to reflect minimalist qualities. As it functions chiefly to discipline professionals from engaging in extreme misconduct, it offers little towards inspiring the profession to a higher ethical level of practice. The reality revised code of ethics now includes a section on promoting issues of social justice on behalf of disadvantaged populations and on advancing global understanding of human development.

Work ethics have been referred to as the workers' efforts to identify pertinent ethical issues in their practice settings, to review and assess the adequacy of their current practices, to modify current practices as needed and to monitor the implementation of these changes Reamer, 2000). According to Watkins (1995), the meaning of work ethics, however, refers to the definitions, significance, beliefs and values which individuals and significant groups attach to the idea of working. In this approach to the study of work, it is of particular interest to pay attention to, for example, the centrality of working relative to other life roles among different groups, the extent to which individuals feel entitled to employment as opposed to feeling obliged to perform certain tasks, the outcomes people seek from working, and the extent to which groups differ with respect to their definitions of work roles. In this study, the meaning of work is used to emphasise work as a psychological, on-going human activity rather than a functional role.

According to Cherrington (1980), the broader meaning of work ethics typically refers to one or more of the following beliefs:

- People have a moral and religious obligation to fill their lives with heavy physical toil. This means that hard work and effort are to be valued for their own sake and physical pleasures and enjoyment are to be shunned.
- Men and women are expected to spend long hours at work, with little or no time for personal recreation and leisure.
- A worker should have a dependable attendance record, with low absenteeism and tardiness.
- Workers should be highly productive and produce a larger quantity of goods and services.

2.2.1 Continuum of importance

It is necessary to recognise the different values that attach to work in order to understand its meaning. The meaning of work can be placed along a continuum of importance as described by Cherrington (1980). This continuum ranges from a low end (G), where work is undesirable and has no meaning of importance, to a high end (A), where the importance of work is exaggerated (to the extent that it impairs a person's physical and emotional health). Points B and C along the continuum define the work ethic. At these points work is valued as a desirable activity.

Movements along the continuum are characterised by two factors: the rewards of work and a time perspective. The rewards can be positive, such as self-esteem, promotion, service to the community and accomplishment of a personal goal, or rewards can be negative, such as boredom, fatigue and a loss of personal freedom.

Figure 1: Continuum of importance according to Cherrington (1980)

Work is extremely desirable

Workaholic

A – displacement terminal

Work ethic

B – terminal value

C – generalised instrumental value

Worth ethics

D – self-evaluation

E – specific instrumental value

Leisure ethic

F – unfortunate obligation

G – mind numbing violence

Work is extremely undesirable

Workaholic. At point A, the meaning of work is distorted, and life is out of balance. The person works because of an uncontrollable compulsion. This is a person who works long hours, brings

Workaholic. At point A, the meaning of work is distorted, and life is out of balance. The person works because of an uncontrollable compulsion. This is a person who works long hours, brings work home in the evening, and dislikes taking a vacation. It is the compulsion to work that identifies workaholics. If they are not working, they feel nervous and guilty. The results of work are the removal of guilt, fear and personal uncertainty (Cherrington, 1980).

Work ethics. At point B, dedicated work is considered a mark of good character and has been described by such positive labels as industry, perseverance, diligence, initiative and devotion to one's calling. Point B is a religious principle: "six days you shall labour and perform all your work" (Exodus 20:9). Work in our daily occupation was a calling from God. Thus the only way to live acceptably before God was through devotion to one's calling (Weber, 1905).

Self-evaluation. Furnham (1987) emphasises point D as valuable because of its role in building a person's self-esteem. A worker develops feelings of competence and mastery by successfully accomplishing a task. Therefore, work is important to some people because it helps them feel competent and worthwhile (Cherrington, 1980).

Specific instrumental value. At point E, work is positive because it contributes to the worker's level of rewards and job satisfaction. Here work is valued because it contributes to the personal worth of the worker. For this reason, this value has been called the *worth ethic*. The job is worth doing because of its immediate rewards and satisfaction. If work does not result in some obvious signs of output or personal benefit, it loses its value (Cherrington, 1980).

Unfortunate obligation. At point F, work is undesirable and disliked. The person's interests in life are away from the workplace. But the person realises that money from work is required for other pursuits. According to Weber (1905), work represents an unfortunate obligation. Since leisure activities represent the person's primary interests, this value has been called the *leisure ethic*. A task is disliked because it prevents the worker from pursuing some other interests (Cherrington, 1980).

Mind-numbing violence. At point G, work is described as a form of mind-numbing violence to humanity. Here there are no rewards associated with work; all work is punishing and undesirable (Cherrington, 1980).

Placing the meaning of work on a continuum may convey the mistaken impression that one end is good and the other end is bad. The work ethic does not refer to a compulsion to work. The benefit of work to the individual, the company, and society are not so positive when the work ethic includes workaholics. The distinction between the *work ethic* and *worth ethic* is critical in understanding the development of work values and evaluating the usefulness of job enrichment programmes.

2.3 HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

This section explores considerations on the history of work. A discussion of these considerations is essential, because people are currently debating presuppositions about work in the past, and current concerns are interwoven with visions of work in such a way as to create mythological pasts.

Anthropology reminds us that in other cultures work is embedded in a variety of structures from which it takes its organisation and meaning. This degree of connectedness with the spheres of kinship, religion, politics and so on, is less marked in our own kind of society. The emergence of the idea of work in the West separates work from its individual forms and from the structural locations, so that it is seen as a discrete activity in an economic realm. This separation of work from its original context may be traced back to the eighteenth century; yet it is interrelated in complex ways with our current perception of work, reminding us of the cultural connectedness of work in the West too. There has been a transformation in the description of work, from a description with connotations of pain and degradation, to a description denoting dignity and the transformation of nature and man's being. These major transformations point to the need for historical anthropology or an anthropological history of work (Joyce, 1989). Accordingly, the historical development of work ethics in different contexts will be considered below.

2.3.1 The Protestant work ethic

The concept of Protestant work ethics was first proposed by Weber (1905) as a theory accounting for the origin of capitalism. Historians and theologians have been mainly concerned with whether Weber's analysis was correct or not. Sociologists and anthropologists have been concerned with the current distribution of Protestant work ethical beliefs in society and their consequences for the people who hold them (Furnham, 1987). McClelland (1961) offered a socio-psychological explanation for the link between Protestantism and capitalism. The explanation is that Protestant work ethics and values determine child-rearing practices of independence, procrastination of gratification and mastery training, which in turn leads to the children acquiring strong achievement motivation. These children are usually successful and this ensures the continuing Protestant work ethic and economic growth.

According to the results of experimental studies (Furnham, 1997) people with strong work ethics are competitive and expect a just rather than the same salary. People with a strong Protestant work ethic are usually workaholics and are capable to handle mandate work. It was found that Protestant work ethics are an accurate prediction of recreation, pensioners' activities, occupation preferences and savings ethics. Niles (1999) reminds us that strong work ethics could contribute towards economic success, but this is only a small part of the mosaic of factors which establish economic growth and advancement.

The concept of Protestant work ethics describes and accounts for aspects of capitalism, and has been studied in many contexts and ranges of social sciences, from psychology to anthropology, economics and sociology (Chell, 1997). McClelland (1961) emphasised this concept in the context of psychology in the form of his need for the achievement concept. Furnham (1987), defined Protestant work ethics from a psychologist's perspective as a dispositional variable characterised by a belief in the importance of hard work, rationality and frugality which acts as a defence against laziness, sensuality and religious doubt.

Protestant work ethics have been studied as both the causes and consequences of behaviour with particular emphasis on their influence in the workplace. On the other hand, work ethics as

described by Weber (1905) encompassed an entire philosophy of life, which Weber related to religious and economic activity. Therefore, when people talk about Protestant work ethics, they are referring to a broad philosophy that includes numerous beliefs about work and related topics (McClelland, 1961).

According to Cherrington (1980), the broader meaning of work ethics typically refers to one or more of the following beliefs:

- People have a moral and religious obligation to fill their lives with heavy physical toil. This means that hard work and effort are to be valued for their own sake and physical pleasures and enjoyment are to be shunned.
- Men and women are expected to spend long hours at work, with little or no time for personal recreation and leisure.
- A worker should have a dependable attendance record, with low absenteeism and tardiness.
- Workers should be highly productive and produce a larger quantity of goods and services.
- Employees should have feelings of commitment and loyalty to their professions, their company, and their work group.
- Workers should take pride in their work and do their jobs well.
- Workers should be achievement-oriented and constantly strive for promotions and achievement.
- People should acquire wealth through honest labour and retain it through thrift and wise investments.

When talking about work ethics people could be referring to any of these attitudes. The concept is difficult to understand because it consists of so many different ideas. Although they may be related in the value system of most people, these ideas need to be studied separately.

2.3.2 The work ethic in early America

For early Americans, work was a necessary and important part of life. It was more than accepted as a common duty of mankind. It was esteemed as a noble activity. The moral importance of work stood virtually unchallenged as an accepted social value. Dignity and honour accompanied many honest jobs, whether it entailed working with your head or your hands. Jobs that required greater skill and training were justly paid a higher wage. But regardless of the wage paid, all honest jobs were treated with dignity and value (Cherrington, 1980).

Living on public welfare was a totally foreign concept. Social welfare programmes for the poor were designed to provide only temporary help until secure employment could be obtained. People were expected to work and provide for their own support regardless of wealth or social status. Living in idleness and luxury on inherited wealth was not socially acceptable, especially in North America, although it was not an issue until the end of the nineteenth century (Cherrington, 1980).

Absenteeism in the workplace was tolerated reluctantly when there were valid reasons. But there was no good excuse for tardiness. Punctuality was a highly esteemed virtue and a mark of good character. The hours of work were from sunrise until sundown. Idleness and drunkenness were equally sinful, and people of all ages were supposed to fill their hours with worthwhile pursuits. Occupational achievements were looked upon favourably, such as acquiring greater skills, learning a new trade, obtaining an education and being promoted to a position of greater responsibility. Joyce (1989) pointed out that advancing within your occupation not only meant greater wealth and success, but that it was also a mark of good character.

The ethical standards of society were set by the middle classes, who controlled the major institutions of social influence, including the factories, schools, colleges, churches, political offices and publishing companies. This group of people felt greatly concerned about the social ethics and personal morale of Americans. According to Niles (1999) they used the institutions at their command to inculcate their ethical standards in society. Knowing what the early settlers thought about work is interesting today, not only because of what they believed but why they

believed it. They believed in hard work, diligence, thrift and industry for several reasons, but principally for one major reason. Above all, work was commanded by God: "In the sweat of thy face you shall eat bread." (Genesis 3:19). It was accepted as a divine command. Dedicated labour was believed to be the sure pathway to eternal salvation (Cherrington, 1980).

2.3.3. The work ethic in Britain

According to Joyce (1989) the lineage of the social history of work in Britain is somewhat twisted, and this account can only be schematic. Progenitors can only be traced into the 1960s in terms of labour history. Models of economic growth and modernisation were challenged as Marxism. Thompson was a seminal figure in this movement towards culture and towards the understanding of work as a site of active cultural agency rather than passive adaptation. The continuing influence of Thompson was criticised in terms of his lack of an adequate economic account of industrialisation. The effect of Thompson's work was to leave many questions unsettled, especially those concerning class development and the role of change in the structure of work.

According to Weber (1905), there has been a much closer interest in how work labour and employment are in fact culturally defined. Again, the perception of economic recession and industrial restructuring has been important, posing new questions about class relations and alignments, and about new experiences of work and joblessness. As in other disciplines the influence of feminist approaches has been of the first importance, signalling from its own perspective the characteristic shift from work production to social production. The recruitment and reproduction of classes and workforces, becomes as important to our understanding as the internal structuring of the labour process (Joyce, 1989).

2.3.4. The character ethic

Weber (1905) credited the origin of work ethics to Martin Luther's interpretation of calling in Luther's translation of the Bible from Latin into German from 1521 to 1522. According to Luther, God summoned man to a secular calling which today we would call a job. Luther

believed that by labouring in your calling you express brotherly love through the services and products you produce for society. Later, the fulfilment of worldly duties under all circumstances was strongly emphasised as the only way to live acceptably before God. This concept provided a religious justification not only for work but also for the rigid social class system that dominated medieval history (McClelland, 1961).

The early immigrants to America were labelled the Protestant separatists and their work values were labelled the Protestant work ethic (Weber, 1905). Some writers have preferred to use the term *Puritan ethic*, because discussions about the importance of work can be traced to the philosophical writings of the early Puritan founders. More recently the term *character ethic* has been used, since these work values are not unique to either Protestantism or Puritanism. The character ethic emphasises the integration and justification of virtues of frugality, diligence, prudence and honesty acquired through working hard (Cherrington, 1980).

The character ethic was a well-established cultural tradition, especially in England, for many years before the early immigrants left Europe for religious freedom and economic opportunity. The clergy taught the work ethic in Europe and laity likes, but its strongest proponents were influential members of the clergy, and eternal salvation was a powerful incentive for believing in the doctrines they taught (Cherrington, 1980).

Popular writings also abounded with advice about the virtues of hard work. According to Weber (1905), the most influential popular proponent of the American work ethics was Benjamin Franklin. Many of Franklin's ideas were published in a publication he started in 1732 and continued until 1758. Franklin taught that wealth was the result of virtue and the proper display of character.

After Franklin, the religious justification for work ethics was gradually replaced with other practical justifications. Many eighteenth and nineteenth century moralists continued to emphasise the importance of diligent work in a religious life. But the most powerful justification for work was its role in the development of good character. The road to success was still paved with the character ethic. And though hard work was less an indication of serving God, it

remained an indication of social usefulness and the appropriate design for success (Weber, 1905).

2.3.5 Challenges to the work ethic

Until 1950, the moral pre-eminence of work stood essentially unchallenged as an acceptable social value. Between 1850 and 1920, however, the work ethic collided with the industrial revolution. Factories grew larger, became more numerous and employed large numbers of workers. Industrialisation and new working conditions created problems for the nineteenth century moralists who wanted to continue proclaiming the moral suitability of work. By 1920, work ethics stood firm in spite of its critics. During this period, work ethics were challenged by the realities of factory work (Cherrington, 1980).

If work was to be worthwhile, it required self-direction and autonomy. Work ethics are one of the factors that facilitate or inhibit the economic achievement, including managerial ability, work skills, work involvement, and beliefs about work (Ali & Azim, 1994). Another challenge to work ethics resulted from the efficiency of the factory system and the materialism it produced. Between 1860 and 1920 the population of the United States tripled, while the volume of manufactured goods increased dramatically. The economy changed from one of excess demand to one of excess supply in various major industries. The efficiency of industrialisation changed ideas about the permanence of scarcity and economic necessity. Society became more concerned with how equitable products were allocated and consumed than with the ever-pressing need to produce more.

The demand of society for better or improved services can be used as a norm to measure the extent to which services are being rendered. Limited resources are to be taken into consideration, especially the manner in which the services rendered is assessed (Rasheed & Olow, 1993).

Another challenge to the work ethic came from the growing uncertainty that hard work brings economic and social success. This has been emphasised by Ali and Azim (1994) that work ethics have become increasingly important in business organisations because the achievement of a

competitive advantage in the global market place depends to a large extent on people's attitude. This focus on competitive advantage has contributed to a shift from micro (organisation) to macro (national). Most of the people who made it to the top did not start at the bottom; instead they started much higher with the advantage of wealth, family influence and better education (Rasheed & Olowu, 1993).

The most dramatic success philosophy to challenge the work ethic was personality ethics. The principle of personality ethic was designed to improve social interaction. Cherrington (1980) states that success came not by knowing hard work but by knowing how to smile, nod approvingly and get other people to talk about themselves. Honesty, which was of central importance to the work ethic, was more than ignored in the personality ethic.

According to the work ethics of early Americans true success not only meant wealth and happiness on earth, but it meant an other worldly reward of eternal salvation. To personality ethics true success meant something very different. The literature of personality ethics emphasised accumulating wealth for its own sake, a goal that lacked the nobility of benefiting society, worshipping God, or helping others through charitable contributions or personal service. The ultimate goal of personality ethics was a self-seeking accumulation of status, wealth and power (Ali & Azim, 1994).

2.4 CONTEMPORARY PERSPECTIVES

Contemporary work ethics and individualism are significantly correlated. Successful individuals are independent and success index and independent variables such as age, sex and religion are utilised. In the study of Furnham (1997) it was discovered that these independent variables influence commitment to work ethics and individualism (Ali, Azim & Falcone, 1995). According to Ali and Falcone (1995) work enables man to be independent and it is a source of self-respect, satisfaction and fulfilment. Success and progress on the job depend on hard work and commitment. Commitment to work also involves the desire to improve the community and social welfare.

People start to demand greater responsiveness from their organisations and to seek personal growth and fulfilment beyond economic needs in the contemporary work ethic. Ali, Azim & Falcone (1995) asserted that in today's society the range of options available for employees is broad. That means there is a qualitative and quantitative shift from a simple work or starved choice to one that encompasses work and non-work choices short of starving, such as education, temporary and part-time jobs, flexible, earlier retirement and constructive leisure.

2.5. FACTORS WHICH INFLUENCE WORK ETHICS

The following were identified from the literature as factors which influence work ethics, and will be discussed in the section below, namely:

- Religious influences
- Cultural factors
- Individual factors
- Group dynamics
- Organisational factors.

Religion seems to play an important role in encouraging teamwork and appropriate attitude towards work. Culture is regarded as a main factor which influences work ethics. On individual basis facets such as work, friendship, values, behaviour, perspective and needs are experienced by individuals and organisations. Lastly, facets such as organisational rules and leadership behaviour are also studied. These facets do not represent all possible factors in the forming of work ethic, but they will be focused on in this section, as they have been shown to be of importance by the literature study and by research (Pettigrew, 1990).

2.5.1. Religious influences

According to Mafunisa (1998) religion has been defined in research as a system of beliefs and practices concerning sacred things that unite its followers into some kind of community. It provides a set of rules and a communal code of conduct for its members and it is the traditional

way of doing things. Different South African religions are referred to below to emphasise the influence of different religions on a work ethic.

2.5.1.1.Religion and work ethics

The primary purpose of work in the *Christian* society is not personal gain, but an attempt to improve the lives of all persons in the community and to mould the community into the image of the kingdom of God (Mafunisa, 1998). Niles (1999) states that people with strong religious convictions tend to have a stronger commitment to work. He further points out that there is a close connection between religious involvement and the centrality of wok.

In the *Islamic* religion, work is duty shared between the employer and the worker. Both of them should be concerned with the existence of the institution for which they work. McClelland (1961) argues that most of the oriental religions do not offer an encouraging framework for the rational pursuit of economic gain. Furnham (1990) seems to encourage the view that Asian belief systems do not promote a commitment to a work ethic that strongly supports striving for economic gain, and that their motivational patterns lack a strong need for achievement. According to Vadalankar (1979) Islam urges Muslims who are capable and healthy to work and not depend on charity organisations, individuals or state security systems.

Sen (1961) pointed out that the *Hindu* approach to the Supreme Being might be either through hard work or with the help of devotion. Those Hindus who do not find prayers necessary to reach God, approach him through hard work and diligence in serving others. Hindus believe that action is better than inaction. Their value system includes knowledge, embraces active work and emphasises sacrifice and service to others (Sen, 1961). Niles (1999) describes the view of Hinduism as that it is irrational and lacking in the essence of the Protestant work ethic. He further points out that the core Indian personality could be individualistic because the religions of India teach that ultimately salvation has to be an individual process.

According to Niles (1999) it is clear that the *Buddha* abhorred poverty and believed that it was the prime cause of the degeneration of ethical behaviour in society. He encouraged the proper

utilisation of human resources to develop the economy. He therefore presented a very effective work ethic to motivate the workforce. But this work ethic encouraged teamwork and in its widest connotation meant an appropriate attitude toward work. Religion seemed to play a major role in this and it is argued that, contrary to popular belief, Buddhism is pessimistic in outlook. There is abundant textual evidence that the Buddha formulated a work ethic that encouraged workers to put forth their best efforts.

Weber's (1905) description of the Protestant work ethic, namely asceticism, hard work, thrift, frugality, postponement of gratification etc, seems to be an important tenet of other world religions too.

To the *Jewish* people, the importance of work as a religious obligation can be traced back to the book of creation, Genesis. God instructed humans to subdue the earth (Genesis 1: 28). After Adam and Eve sinned against God, He informed them that from then onwards they would have to work hard for them to be able to provide their needs: "In the sweat of thy face shall thou eat bread" (Genesis 3: 19). Furham (1990) emphasises that most world religions are work related. The difference could be moral codes of the beliefs. Weber (1905) pointed out that hard work is God's will and that if one was God's elect then there would be an expectation of hard work and success, but that because of the belief system that decried the accumulation of wealth, this same God's elect would reinvest the fruits of their labour, giving rise to the growth of capital.

Solomon advised the Jews not to become lazy, as it is the beginning of poverty. He instructed them to learn from the ants and consider their ways so that they may be wise (Proverbs .6: 4-8). For the Jews working hard is a form of respect to God, who instructed them to do so. Buddha singled out laziness as the cause of the downfall of men and nations and argued that everyone should put forth effort. He stressed that one should be one's own master. He encouraged qualities such as initiative, striving, persistence, etc. However, he emphasised ethical means for achieving success (Niles, 1999).

According to Sen (1961) the Christian life requires that all people should be treated as equals for the promotion of efficiency and effectiveness. The employees in an organisation need to be

informed that no one is more important than others and that no work is more significant than other work. Ali, Azim and Falcone (1995) point out that on many occasions, however, religion is abused and may create an obstacle for economic growth and social welfare. Managers and powerful industrial segments of society under different circumstances have resorted to religious teachings to justify their actions (Furnham, 1990). Judaism prohibits wrongdoings in business dealings. This prohibition, according to Epstein (1959), includes all kinds of deceit, tricks of the trade, or misrepresentation in commercial transaction. A worker who does not comply with the laws and regulations of employment is violating the employers right of possession and sins against his fellow human beings and God.

According to Ali, Azim and Falcone (1995) Protestantism during the early days of industrialisation provided crucial support to the newly employed in their efforts to construct an interpretation of productive behaviour that would deliver some measure of motivational punch. The intention was to induce obedience and efficiency.

As far as the personnel functions such as recruitment, selection, appointment and promotion are concerned, the Islamic administration stresses merit. According to Vadalankar (1979) strength corresponds to the skills and qualifications the job requires and the ability to understand Islamic principles and the power to apply them. Mafunisa (1998) argued that the African religion classifies people in two categories: servants and members of the royal family. In appointing candidates into departments and promoting higher graded posts, preference is given to members of the royal family, regardless of their skills and educational background (Ali, Azim and Falcone, 1995).

The employees will have to adhere to the code of conduct to promote the image of the organisation and that of their colleagues. According to Ali, Azim and Falcone (1995) the Protestant ethic not only encouraged hard work and gave its blessing to the amassing of wealth but also gave license for excess by many who chose to ignore Christianity's greater moral and social demands. Being content with one's wages is a biblical control measure, in that the employee who is satisfied with his/her salary or wages would not steal the employer's money or equipment, would not accept bribes from corrupt members of the society and would not get

involved with fraudulent actions. According to Sen (1961) trustworthiness applies to the fear of God and the moral obligation and commitment to social and institutional goals.

Success in this life is not the end of man's action, which is performed rather with the objective of ensuring him goodness and bliss in the life after death. The moulding of life into a defined pattern which would characterise people's daily actions and duties, should be accepted as an important part of religion. Every religion has its own form of rituals and it forms and shapes the life and characters and serves as a guiding principle.

2.5.2 Cultural factors

Culture is composed of events, displays and experiences from the past. Dose (1997) defines culture as the interactive total of community characteristics, which influences human groups' responses to the environment. Culture determines the identity of a group. The word *culture* is usually used with reference to different nations or ethnic groups. It can also be used for any group or category of people, like an organisation. Gamble and Gibson (1999) identify national, organisational, professional and personal dimensions of culture, which all have an effect on behaviour. Knowledge of these cultural influences is seen by Gamble and Gibson (1999) and Furnham (1997) as a prerequisite for a successful interpersonal behaviour and for exchange of information. These prerequisites are demonstrated in the dilemma experienced by South African organisations in their effort to build a bridge between Western and African cultures.

2.5.2.1 Cultural differences

Research on the influence of cultural differences focuses mainly on the use of Protestant work ethics to determine whether there is cross-cultural agreement and differences in work ethics (Furnham, 1990; Ali, Azim & Falcone, 1995). Furnham (1991) suggests that there seems to be a stronger commitment to a protestant work ethic among non-Protestant cultures. Niles (1999) emphasised that a generalised work ethic may be found in diverse cultures and is not necessarily linked to Protestant values. Work ethics are empirically studied and theoretically analysed by using Protestant work ethic yardsticks. It is found that people's quality systems from different

relations facets are not always harmonious. In the research where Protestant work ethics yardsticks are used, it has been found that there are different interpretations of work ethics. The existence of these differences are explained on the basis of different facets of work ethics (Furnham, 1990).

Niles (1999) focuses on a cross-cultural comparison of the main dimension of the Protestant work ethic construct, which seems to be central to work-related beliefs held by people of diverse cultures. McClelland (1961) argues that Protestant work ethics are linked to economic development through childrearing practices which promote self-reliance values in children.

It is obvious that cultural diversities manifest in individuals cognitive, emotional and social behaviour patterns of organisational display (Watkins & Mauer, 1994). Watkins and Mauer (1994) found that typical Western impression-oriented qualities are absent among black managers involved in their research. These differences in impression-oriented qualities are explained on the basis of different paradigms, which black and white managers have on impression. The same is also emphasised by Stones (1988) in his cross-national comparisons of South African youth. He pointed out the difference between black and white people's impression-orientation, although mainly on different school training and service correlated work opportunities discovered during apartheid era.

Gamble and Gibson (1999) referred to Hsu (1971) and research known as culture connection, which studied the theory on Western ethics. These researchers have identified differences and agreements on Western and Eastern work ethics. Facets of work ethics in the Eastern are mainly collective qualities, which originate from the philosophy of Confucius. This philosophy regards people mainly in their interactive social context, which explains the importance of collectivism in the Eastern work ethic. Harmony, loyalty, co-operation and support are the results of a prominent facet in the Eastern culture quality systems.

Ali, Azim and Falcone (1995) studied work ethics in America and Canada and found that the Americans reveal more dedication in their work than Canadians. The Canadians, in contrast, show more interest in relaxation activities. In this research it is incidentally found that there are

cultural differences even in the Western context. The explanation for the differences in work ethics with regard to dedication and relaxation are connected to Canada's relative proportional distribution of economical wealth.

2.5.2.2 Organisational culture

Gordon (1998) regards organisational culture as, amongst others, relative stability patterns of quality, opinions and acceptance which allow individuals to make meaningful contribution from an otherwise meaningless flow of events. The acceptance is caused by individuals who would like to belong to an organisation, to behave in a manner that will make them suitable to remain within the bounds of an organisation. The specific behaviour expected is not laid down by an organisational culture, but is communicated by the characteristics of the organisation, like structure, symbols, remuneration systems and human and sources practices (Pettigrew, 1990).

Organisational culture is seldom composed of a single culture, but mostly of a number of subcultures, which include a variety of values and opinions. In the study of work ethics the identification of subcultures is important (Chen et al, 1997). Subcultures, values and opinions may differ from organisation to organisation (Pettigrew, 1990).

2.5.3 Individual factors

Empirically it was found that high work-oriented people appear to place strong emphasis on individualism. According to Furnham (1991) research provides evidence that work norms are highly correlated with individualism. Individuals have been characterised as hard working, responsible, and having confidence in their ability to control their destiny. Individualism is fundamental to work ethics and the role of work in one's life. They further pointed out that individualism provides a better understanding of cultural variations among nations. Cultures differ in the extent to which co-operation and individualism are emphasised. Individualism in the Western world is thought to contribute to organisational performance and success (Ali, Azim and Falcone, 1995).

On the individual level factors such as perception, work values, work attitudes, expectation and motivation, demographic variables, group dynamics and organisational factors will be discussed.

2.5.3.1 Perceptions

Perceptions represent the manner in which an individual's reality experience and information are organised into a meaningful whole. The amount of information derived from the environment is large, with the result that a selective observation takes place. This selective observation of experience is determined by individual motives, personality and characteristics. After the information has been selectively observed, it is organised in a specific manner. Due to individual interpretation of situations and information, distortion can take place, which can result in an inaccurate description and diagnosis of the situation (Gordon, 1998; Sharfman et al 2000).

The process by which individual perception is developed is both learned and instinctive. Some of it comes from the senses: sight, hearing, touch, taste and smell. Some of it also plainly comes from instinct, since one's view of what is edible, for instance, is clearly coloured by how hungry one is. Perception is subjective and can influence an individual's attitude and behaviour. The individual's perception of an organisation's work ethic can influence his behaviour. For example, if an organisation supports a strong work ethic and the individual's perception is that the organisation supports a weak work ethic, the individual's behaviour can be directed by the subjective perception of the organisation's orientation and not by the reality (Finegan, 2000).

2.5.3.2 Work values

Values can be defined as the expression of ultimate ends, goals or purpose resulting from social action (Mellish, 1985). They usually express moral imperatives. They exist but are not really quantifiable, they vary from society to society, but are the motivation for social behaviour in that society. Hofstede (1987) refers to values as a broad inclination to give preference to certain manners of doing things. Bae and Chung (1997) argue that diligence and selfless devotion of Japanese employees are derived from Japanese cultural values, such as the emphasis on the collectivity and paternalistic bonds. Even within a culture there will be members with different

values regarding the same object. In simple terms a value is something highly regarded by someone (Campbel & Nash, 1992).

According to Dose (1997) individuals have a variety of values, probably as many as there are influential groups. The key reference group is the one that is more incidental in a specific situation in accordance with the urgency of power. Different co-operation interest groups can have different value systems, which can lead to ethic ambivalence or pluralism. This ambivalence or pluralism in an organisation can lead to a conflict.

George (1995) describes work values as a worker's personal convictions about what outcomes should be expected from work and how people should behave at work. Outcomes that people might expect to obtain through work include a comfortable existence with family security, a sense of accomplishment and self-respect, or social recognition and an exciting life. According to Furnham (1997) values form group convictions or systems about a specific topic or process. These systems are involved in the political, social, individual and work environment in which an individual functions.

The forces that cause some people to feel pride in their employment and internally rewarded for performing an excellent job are to be found both in the developmental experience of early childhood and in the present work environment. This part focuses on the development of work ethics during childhood and the impact it has on the values of adults. Mafunisa (1998) proposed value internalisation and value dimensions as developments of work values.

Parental child-rearing practices which emphasise firm discipline, obedience to authority, close parental supervision, involvement with the child and warm emotional support all contribute to the development of work values in children. These conclusions raise disturbing concerns, as to whether close supervision and high parental demands create resistance and antagonism in children. There is a myth that firm parental control generates passivity and dependence. Generally the most self-reliant children came from parents who were very firm in control. A similar myth, that parental restrictiveness decreases self-assertiveness and loyalty, was not supported (Cherrington, 1980).

Value internalization. Parents can tell children that work is an important value and children can learn what their parents think about work, but this knowledge does not mean that children will think work is important. There are two steps in the development of a work ethic. Firstly, work-related activities acquire the properties of a learned reinforcer and become intrinsic rewards. Secondly, the person learns to delay gratification.

The values of adults are largely shaped through childhood experiences. These include not just work value, but other values as well, such as honesty, compassion, and altruism. Children acquire a strong work ethic when their parents exert firm discipline, obedience, and expect personal responsibility for tasks assigned to them.

According to Furnham (1987) individuals have certain implicit and explicit values, with the inclusion of work ethic, which reflect the individual's education, teaching and broad culture. Values consist within a social context and develop as a part of the adulthood process by disposal to various levels of social systems like national culture, the community, family and work groups. The implication of that for the researcher is that the participant's background must be taken into consideration in the examination of work ethics experience (Furnham, 1997).

Many managers have complained that work force does not have the same values. Some insists that the deterioration of the work ethic is a serious indictment of a society that grew and flourished from the ideal of individualism and hard work. The evidence indicates that the claims of these managers are generally correct. Members of the work force do not have the same attitudes as previous generations towards the importance of work and pride. Their reasons for holding a job are different and work itself serve different purposes for many of today's employees (Cherrington, 1980).

Changes in the nature of work have seriously challenged the relevance of the traditional work ethic. The culturalist argument, which Bae and Chung (1997) proposed to explain Japanese workers, is that job and organisational commitment of workers reflect widely shared and rooted societal or cultural values. According to Mbigi and Maree (1995) the belief of Africans is that a man can only be a man through others. In its most fundamental sense it stands for personhood

and morality. The key values of personhood are conformity to organisational service values, compassion and sensitivity to the aged and respect for human beings, including colleagues at work. Some people may feel compassion for their needy friends, relatives and parents to the extent that they provide them with employment. This leads to a decline in productivity, as incompetent, inexperienced and unqualified people are appointed to positions they do not deserve.

Cherrington (1980) pointed out that managers in organisations insist that they want employees who are independent, reliable and punctual. They are looking for workers who are outstanding producers and who take pride in their work. They want employees who think work is an important part of their lives and who will go out of their way when it is necessary to make changes and meet emergencies. In short, they need employees who respect the work ethic.

George (1995) states that work values fall into two categories: intrinsic and extrinsic work values. Intrinsic work values are values that are related to the nature of the work itself. Employees who like being challenged, learning new tasks, making important contributions and reaching their full potential on their jobs, have intrinsic work values. Extrinsic values include a job's status in the organisation and the wider community, social contacts provided by the job, and the extent to which the job enables the employee to spend time with his or her family, pursue a hobby, or volunteer for a worthy cause.

Value dimensions. Gamble and Gibson (1999) have identified six value dimensions based on four prominent schemes in England. They are:

- Collectivism: attaches value to human unity and social systems. Respect all humans.
- Service provision: attaches value to integrity and relation, loyalty and obligations. According to Tang and Weatherford (1998) it embraces a positive approach to service provision and the need to deliver service to others, which can enhance self-respect.
- Innovation: attaches value to change, innovation and variation.
- Materialism: attaches value to riches and tangible possessions.
- Power: attaches value to having control over situations and people.
- Rationalisation: attaches value to emotion-free, fact-based decisions and actions.

2.5.3.3. Work attitude

Attitude is described as an evaluation of appearances, with specific references to work relations, which are stored in the memory. These evaluations of appearances are influenced by genetic factors (Baron & Byrne, 1993). According to Nelson and Quick (2000) attitude is a psychological tendency that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favour or disfavour. They are important because of their links to behaviour and they are also an integral part of the world of work.

Individuals judge cases and objects in a specific manner. This judgement arises partly from knowledge about cases and objects and to a certain extent determines an individual's behaviour against what is revealed. Attitudes, personal perception and social roles, however, have a short-lived effect on behaviour. Attitudes are internally prioritised values and reconsidered in cases of value conflict. Reconsideration of an attitude takes place if changes occur in the culture, environment and the individual (Gamble & Gibson, 1999). Reconsideration of an attitude takes place, for example, in the case of organisational restructuring.

The development of attitudes (positive or negative) in a given situation is the process by which adjustment is achieved. Attitudes tend to reinforce what is already present – for example, the perception that the future is well understood, or the perception that the availability of information is regarded as satisfactory. Problems occur when radical adjustment is either required or else to be imposed. Adjustment, therefore, works best where the prevailing attitudes are being developed rather than radically transformed (Pettinger, 2000).

Attitudes are learned - Our response to people and issues evolves over time. Nelson and Quick (2000) mentioned two major influences of attitude, experience and social learning.
Experience with an object or person is a powerful influence on attitudes. Attitudes are easily accessed and are active in our cognitive processes. When attitudes are available, we can call them quickly into consciousness.

Social learning – the family, peer groups, religious organisation and culture shape the individual's attitude in an indirect manner. Social learning occurs through modelling, in which individuals acquire attitudes by merely observing others.

Bae and Chung (1997) compared the work attitude of Japanese and Western workers. The pivotal point is whether differences in worker attitude result from societal or cultural differences or from other factors. Ali and Azim (1994) pointed out that the job and organisational commitment of workers reflect cultural values and beliefs. Furnham (1990) argued that the diligence and selfless devotion of Japanese employees are derived from Japanese cultural values such as the emphasis on the collectivity and paternalistic bonds. Technology is an important factor in determining worker attitudes (Bae & Chung, 1997).

The work ethic has become increasingly important in business organisations because researchers have concluded that the achievement of a competitive advantage in the global market place depends to a large extent on people's attitudes (Ali & Azim, 1994). Nelson and Quick (2000) emphasise that managers speak of workers who have bad attitudes and conduct attitude adjustment talks with employees. Poor performance attributed to bad attitudes really stems from lack of motivation, lack of trust or other problems.

Dose (1997) distinguished between values and attitudes. He indicated that values do not correspond to a particular object or situation, whereas attitudes are attached to a specific object. Values are standards, but attitudes are not. An individual has fewer values than attitudes. Both can be measured on a continuum from general to specific, with values being more general than attitudes and not corresponding to a particular situation. Values are more consistent than attitudes across both time and circumstances. Both can be learned either through experience or influence process. Value research focused largely on content, whereas attitude research has been based on analyses of psychological processes.

2.5.3.4. Expectations and motivation

According to Kreitner and Kinicki (1997) expectation is described as the belief that effort leads to a specific level of performance. The expectation theory of Vroom (Gordon, 1998) specifies three key concepts, which are known as expectations, instrumentality and valency. Expectation is a conviction that an effort will lead to achievement. Instrumentality represents the conviction that achievement will be rewarded. Valency is the value which the individual attaches to a reward. The expectation theory sets forth that motivation has a multiplying function of all three key concepts. It implies that high levels of motivation are the result of high valency, instrumentality and expectation. The multiplying acceptance of the theory implies thus that if any of the facets is low, the overall level of motivation will be low (Furnham, 1997).

The wide range and variety of motivational theories result from the great diversity of people and the complexity of their behaviour in organisations. Motivation theories may be classified into internal, processes and external theories of motivation. Internal theories of motivation give primary consideration to variables within the individual that give rise to motivation and behaviour. Process theory of motivation emphasises the nature of the interaction between individual and environment. External theory focuses on elements in the environment (Nelson & Quick, 2000).

According to Stones (1988) and Watkins and Mauer (1994) negative expectations or the absence of expectations can negatively affect a positive work ethic. These researchers have established that the black population of South Africa – owing to work reservation and the inferior education systems to which they were subjected during the apartheid era – had little outlook of strengthening their socio-economic position. According to Watkins and Mauer (1994) the negative outlook undermined any motivation for achievement within the work context. This resulted in the absence of achievement motivation.

2.5.3.5 Needs

A need is a power in the brain which exists because of specific shortcomings. Needs influence an individual's thoughts, perception and behaviour in a manner that is striving to satisfy or fill a gap caused by the shortcomings. Needs can be activated by external stimuli (from the environment) or internal stimuli (from within the individual) (Furnham, 1997). Maslow differentiated between primary and secondary needs. De Witte (1992) mainly identified primary needs, such as a safe and healthy working place. Needs are fairly stable, but if a primary need exists, then a secondary need can temporarily lose importance until the former is satisfied. The prominent secondary need with reference to work ethics is self-substantiation (Ducker, 1999).

The need for self-substantiation is found in people with a strong work ethic (Ali & Azim, 1994; Niles, 1999). Self-substantiation seems a dynamic process, which does not attain satisfaction. People with a need for self-substantiation have a need to develop optimally and ultimately make a positive contribution towards society through the work that they do.

From the above it is clear that work relations are aimed at satisfying specific needs and consequently influence work ethics. As a result, behaviour, mutual trust, progress and compensation based on merit and effective communication, can be identified as work-related needs. The implications of needs and the role they play in the formation of work ethics suggests that the management of an organisation can seize these needs in an effective manner to stimulate desired work relations.

2.5.3.6. Demographic variables

Chell (1997) have determined whether there are differences or relations between certain biographical and academic variables with regard to work ethics of male and female students. They found out that female students have a significantly stronger work ethic than male students. The researchers ascribe this to the differences in sex role socialising which takes place in homes, schools and churches where certain values are transferred. The findings of the researchers cannot

be generalised to broad cultural groups because students are susceptible to new norms and then strive to establish a feeling of solidarity.

Furnham (1990) did research on adolescents with an average age of 16 years, representative of different religious convictions. He found that girls have a stronger work ethic than boys and that this research finding correlates positively with that of other researchers. In support of Furnham (1990) research found out that sex plays an important role in ethics orientation. Wentworth and Chell (1997) mention that in the past no remarkable sex differences were measured, but point out how recent researchers indicate that women are inclined to have stronger work ethics than men. Contrary to this, however, Watkins (1995) regards these findings regarding sex as indecisive.

From the literature it is apparent that there is a connection between critical thinking and ethical judgement. Ethical judgement is not a synonym for work ethics but is regarded as a singular dimension. According to various researchers, like Dose (1995), individuals with tertiary training generally have a stronger work ethic than individuals without tertiary training. The reason for this is largely ascribed to continuous adulthood development by means of, among others, training programmes. The success of training programmes in the development of ethics judgement is significant according to Wright (1995), though it does not show at this stage.

There are certain prerequisites or conditions under which an organisation's tutor must work. Firstly, it is necessary for management to make available leadership that will recognise people's values and reveal a broad cross-cultural understanding and sensitivity for diversity. The ultimate aim or goal of the organisation learning process is to set up a co-operative ethical code. There needs to be mechanisms to determine what the organisation tutor does and which are sensitive to diversity. Ego strength and management are added by Dose (1997) as factors that can influence learning.

2.5.4. Group dynamics

In the discussion of group dynamics, it is important to bear in mind that the content of work ethics to a large degree focuses on values, which are brought forward by evaluation standards

and criteria of ethical behaviour. Unlike ethics, *work ethics* do not mainly represent rules and regulations, but the relationship and processes which underline the behaviour by which work ethics are recognised.

An individual whose work ethic is questionable, is inclined to act ethically correct in a group with strong ethical decision making as priority sets. A group which consists of individuals with a similar work ethic, develops lower levels of ethical decision making than those of average individuals. This finding of Posner (1986) points out the danger of homogeneous groups. Groups with a diverse composition, in contrast, are inclined to raise the level of decision-making, compared to the average level of the individual (Furnham, 1997; Gordon, 1998).

Sharfman et al. (2000) found that there is a connection between what individuals regard as important and the individual's values. These values determine certain matters, with inclusion of those that are found within work context, with regard to evaluation importance. It seems more logical to assume that work values precede and influence job satisfaction than the opposite. Values are established before the evaluation phase takes place, which means that the evaluation of appearances and incidents is individualised. It is clear that individuals attach unique meanings to appearances and events, irrespective of the perspective from which it is done. These findings thus imply that the values of management determine which appearances and experiences are regarded as important and should receive priority in the work context.

2.5.5 Organisational factors

From the above discussion of the relevant literature it is clear that individuals' inclination to act correctly in terms of workplace ethics is determined by both the organisation and the individual. It is increasingly asked what is the role of leadership, good co-operation, management, core values, and organisation culture in the development of dynamic work ethics (Chen et al, 1997). The manner in which the organisation is managed has an influence on the work ethic in that organisation. Kidder (1999) argues that high ethical standards have to be developed because the organisation's and the community's success and well-being depend on a strong individual and business ethic.

Individuals are inclined to do what is highly regarded rather than to be obedient, for example to a work ethic programme. Buller and McEnvoy (1999) found that the majority determinant of unethical decisions can be ascribed to the organisation and in particular the manager, rather than to the individual. Although the organisation's features can determine the unethical decisions, researchers have found that the manager's work ethic is the deciding factor for decision making (Sharfman et al., 2000).

Finegan (1994) confirms the above finding that the organisation's business ethics for individuals are an indicative factor in the determination of its work ethics to be actualised. In an environment where the organisation's work ethic is strong and where the individual's work ethic is congruent, the work ethics with the organisation's business ethic will combine on account of cultural and social factors. The organisation's business ethics reflects the perception, values, attitudes, and needs of the work ethics, with a resulting decrease in the importance of work ethic.

2.6. CHAPTER SUMMARY

In this chapter, the following factors that influence employees in the working environment were identified from the relevant literature:

- It is God's will that people shall work and that work has psychological and economical advantages.
- The theory of Protestant work ethics has traditionally been regarded as a powerful prediction of work convictions and work relations behaviour, but has become questionable due to its cross-cultural relevance and the implied orientation of Protestants.
- It is found that a tangible change in work ethics has taken place mainly due to the nature of work and the wide variety of careers that developed after industrialisation.
- The work ethic is studied in contemporary perspectives with emphasis on the individual themes such as religion, culture, attitude, values, expectations, motivation, discipline and self-control.

- Certain factors which can influence work ethics have been identified and are discussed with respect to broad culture, individuals, groups, and at organisational level. Knowledge about individuals' differences, group dynamics and organisational culture can contribute to the understanding of behaviour within the organisation.

2.7 CONCLUSION

South African organisations need people with positive work ethics. The organisations need to create an atmosphere conducive to the development of a positive work ethic, as this will be beneficial to the organisation and the entire South African economy.

In this chapter work ethics was conceptualised from the literature, different meanings that are attached to work were highlighted and explained, and a historical as well the contemporary perspective on work ethics were provided. Lastly, attention was given to the factors that influence work ethics, as identified by the literature. The first research objective of this research was reached by discussing these issues.

The empirical study will be discussed in chapter 3.

CHAPTER 3

THE EMPIRICAL STUDY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the empirical study will be discussed. The empirical study has been divided into five steps, namely the choice of the research design (3.2), the study population (3.3), the choice of data gathering (3.5), data analysis and the research procedure (3.6).

3.2 CHOICE OF RESEARCH DESIGN

Research has to be planned or designed in a way in which the relationship appearing in the research hypothesis or research questions may be investigated (Huysamen, 1994). The research strategy has to be planned. The researcher has to decide on the type of review, its extensiveness and the type of materials to include. The key is to be careful, systematic and organised (Kerlinger & Lee, 2000).

The qualitative method will be used in the execution of this research to extract themes or generalisations from evidence and to organise data to present a coherent, consistent picture. Qualitative research is a method in which direct observation and semi-structured interviewing are used. The researchers interact, they get to know personally the people being studied and may conduct informal interviews (Kerlinger & Lee 2000).

3.3 STUDY POPULATION

The population encompasses the total collection of all members of the platinum mine industry, about which the researcher wishes to draw conclusions. According to Huysamen (1994) it has been indicated that a research problem usually has a bearing on some or other population. As a result of the size of the population, it is usually not practically and economically feasible to

involve all its members in a research project. The researcher has to rely on the data obtained for a sample from the population.

Moustakas (1994) indicates that there are no in-advance criteria for locating and selecting research participants. According to him general considerations will include age and gender. Essential criteria include that the research participant has experienced the phenomenon, is interested in understanding its nature and meanings, is willing to participate in a lengthy interview and grants the investigator the right to tape record or video tape the interview and publish the data. Putney and Green (1999) warn that if one is able to focus on only a small number of observations, then one should rarely resort to random selection of observations because random selection of observations in small research will often cause very serious biases.

According to Huysamen (1994) populations of interest are so large that from a practical point of view it is simply impossible to conduct research on all of them. Researchers have to obtain data from only a sample from such populations. Before a sample is drawn for analysis, researchers should first obtain clarity about the population units of analysis to which the research hypothesis applies.

3.4 SAMPLING

The sample includes 20 participants of the platinum mine industry who are in management positions. It is recommended in the literature that a small population has to be used (Moustakas, 1994). Thompson (1999) also argues that sampling is guided not by the need to generalise about people but rather by the need to select subjects and data likely to generate robust, rich and deep levels of understanding.

Research is not conducted on a sample of research participants only but also under a sample of conditions. The criteria of population and ecological validity will be mentioned. Population validity refers to the extent to which the results obtained for a sample of individuals may be generalised to the population to which the research hypothesis applies (Huysamen, 1994). The degree of population validity achieved depends exclusively on how representative the sample is

of the population from which it has been obtained. According to Krefting (1991) the validity of the research is the result of the credibility and transferability of the research.

The type of sample that will be used in this research is stratified random sampling based on different sections and each section will be regarded as a stratum. This is because the population to be studied is heterogeneous. Stratified random sampling divides a population into different groups known as *strata*, so that each element of the population belongs to one and only stratum (Bless & Higson-Smith, 2000).

The participant's biographical information of the sample has been provided in the following table:

Table 1: Biographical information of the participants

Biographical dimension	**Description**	**Total**	**Percentage**
Language	English	20	100%
Race / Ethnicity	African	13	65%
	White	7	35%
Sex	Male	9	45%
	Female	11	55%
	Total	20	100%

In the table, the biographical information of the sample is indicated. There are 20 participants, 13 Africans and 7 Whites, 9 males and 11 females and all the participants were English-speaking.

3.5 DATA GATHERING

Once decisions have been made as to a particular research design, the participants have to be obtained to carry out the research in terms of the chosen design. It would seem that all qualitative methods have to go through basic steps, amongst others the collection of data.

Data may be collected by straightforward description, interview, or a combination of the two methods. According to Giorgi (1997) in either case the questions are generally broad and open-

ended, so that the subject has a sufficient opportunity to express his or her viewpoint extensively. He emphasises that the use of self-report in phenomenological research is a convenience and not a theoretical necessity. When a description and an interview are used together, the description usually comes first and it is used as a basis for further elaboration during the interview. In general, descriptions are briefer but more organised. Interviews are more rambling and disorganised but more spontaneous. Each has certain advantages and disadvantages. When interviews are used they are recorded and transcribed.

3.5.1. Rationale of the interview

The interview is a qualitative research method that is based on the phenomenological paradigm. It is used for the participant's perception of work ethics (Jones et al., 1988). Omery (1983) suggests phenomenology as an alternative qualitative method. He emphasises that phenomenology is not just a research method, but also a philosophy and an approach. Leedy et al. (1997) describe the phenomenological method as inductive and as focusing on the meaning a person attributes to his or her experiences of reality, his or her world and his or her relationship. The person's cognitive experience must be understood, because it is only through this that the true essence of the person can be realised.

Rothmann (1997) argues that the purpose of the phenomenological method is to try to understand the individual person in his or her totality. The person's experience is experienced through an unbiased attitude of understanding. The observer has to project himself or herself into the person's world, stand in his or her shoes and give an unbiased description of the person's experience. The phenomenological method is therefore used in order to make a qualitative analysis of the person's conscious world.

3.5.2 Description of the interview

Participants were involved in an informal, directive interview in which questions about work ethics will be asked and they were told that there were no wrong or right answers. Meulenberg-Buskens (1989) explains an interview as a method to obtain information, and that the researcher

is led by the nature of the research or by his or her philosophy of science. The interview is a person-to-person method to obtain information concerning an opinion, and the researcher is non-directive.

In an interview context the researcher summarises, reflects, stimulates and asks for clarification. According to Neuman (1997) the interview is a joint production of a researcher and participants. Participants are active members whose insight, feelings, and co-operation are essential parts of a discussion process that reveals subjective meanings. The interviewer's presence and form of involvement – how she or he listens, attends, encourages, interrupts, initiates topics and terminates responses – is integral to the respondent's account.

The researcher carries out a series of methods and procedures that satisfy the requirements of an organised, disciplined and systematic study (Moustakas, 1994). These include:

- Discovering a topic and question rooted in meanings and values, as well as involving social meaning and significance.
- Conducting a comprehensive review of the professional and research literature
- Designing a set of criteria to locate appropriate co-researchers
- Providing co-researchers with instructions on the nature and purpose of the investigation, as well as developing an agreement with co-researchers, obtaining informed consent, ensuring confidentiality, and delineating the responsibilities of the primary research, consistent with ethical principles of research
- Developing a set of questions or topics to guide the interview process
- Conducting and recording a person to person interview that focuses on a bracketed topic and question
- Organising and analysing data to facilitate development of individual textual and structural descriptions, a composite textual description, a composite structural description, and a synthesis of textural and structural meanings and essence.

Every method in human science research is open-ended and there are no definite or exclusive requirements. According to Moustakas (1994) a human science research question has the following definite characteristics:

- It seeks to reveal more fully the essence and meanings of human experience.
- It seeks to uncover the qualitative rather than the quantitative factors in behaviour and experience.
- It engages the total self of the research participant, and sustains personal and passionate involvement.
- It does not seek to predict or determine casual relationships.
- It is illustrated through carefully, comprehensive descriptions, vivid and accurate renderings of the experience, rather than measurements ratings or scores.

To ensure that the phenomenon under study is being investigated, the phenomenological researcher has to comply with the following criteria (Omery, 1983):

- The phenomenon should be explored with no preconceived expectations or categories.
- Efforts are not made to validate any pre-selected theoretical framework.
- All data is accepted as given and the researcher has no preconceived operational definitions.
- Data in the experience under study is understood from the perspective of the participants in the experience.
- The researcher's concern is to understand both the cognitive subjective perspective of the person who has the experience and the effect that the perspective has on the lived experience.

The question must be formulated in clear and concrete terms. The key words of the question should be defined and clarified so that the intent and purpose of the investigation is evident.

3.5.3. Administration of the interview

The researchers' attitude is very important, not only because it must actually be an invitation for the participant to talk, but also because the participant will imitate the researcher's attitude (Neuman, 1997). According to Meulenberg-Buskens (1994) the researcher's attitude should be of unconditional positive regard allowing the participant to be and do as he or she feels like. He emphasises that eye contact and open, inviting body posture by the researcher is very important.

The chairs should be placed at an angle of 90 degrees so that the participant cannot avoid eye contact.

By nodding his or her head the researcher can encourage the participant. Attending is the key to the researcher's attitude and this can be done in a non-verbal way, by eye contact and nodding of the head or verbally by uttering non-significant encouraging sounds and words. Unnecessary interruption will spoil the atmosphere of trust and openness in the interview.

Ivey (1988) emphasises that attending encourages participants talk. It is used to help participant talk more freely and openly, and to reduce interviewer talk. According to him knowledge and skill in attending result in the following:

- Communicating to the participant that you are interested in what is being said.
- Increasing your awareness of the participant pattern of attending.
- Modifying your patterns of attending to establish rapport with each individual, different people and different cultural groups.
- Having some recourse when you are lost or confused in the interview. When you do not know what to do, attend.

The researcher starts the interview by brief information, giving the frame of reference of the interview. The opening question, which is the only substantive question, has to be formulated in an open and vague way. This question is the researcher's opinion formulated in an asking way and it is important that the researcher only asks one starting question in the beginning of the interview (Meulenberg-Buskens, 1994).

A reflective summary can be useful to clarify messages. A reflective summary is when the researcher gives back the participant's opinion in his or her own words, and therefore has a structuring function, as it structures the participants' information. According to Ivey (1988) summarising feedback to the participant is the essence of what has just been said. It may be used to begin and end an interview.

The participant's reaction to the researcher's reflective summary will be a good test to see if the researcher really understood what the participant said. The reflective summary has to stimulate the participant to give more information. It is self-evident that the reflection summary should be used often – more often than a clarification question. It is advisable to use the clarification question only if there is a lack of information to make good reflective feelings.

According to Omery (1988) the researcher will end the interview with a summary of all the given information in a reflective summary in which the most important points of the interview are reintegrated.

3.5.4 Reliability and validity of the interview

Reliability and validity are central issues in all scientific measurement. Both are concerned with how concrete measures or indicators are developed for constructs (Neuman, 1997). Perfect reliability and validity are impossible to achieve, but are rather ideals researchers strive for.

3.5.4.1 Reliability

The reliability of qualitative research is the result of the consistency and neutrality of the research (Krefting, 1991). The research is consistent if it provides the same results with the same responses at a second time or in a similar context. In qualitative research consistency refers to dependability that is variability that can be ascribed to identify sources. Neuman (1997) explains that reliability tells us about an indicator's dependability and consistency. Dependability can be obtained in the following ways (Krefting, 1991):

- A precise description of the method of data collection, analysis and interpretation. This provides information about the reproducibility of the research and the uniqueness of the situation.
- The use of the coding-recoding process when the data is analysed. Data is coded and recoded after a period of two weeks, and the results of the two codings are compared.
- The use of colleagues and methodology experts to examine the research plan and its application.

How to improve reliability

It is rare to have perfect reliability. Neuman (1997) identifies four principles which must follow to increase the reliability of measures: conceptualise constructs, level of measurement and multiple indicators.

- Clearly conceptualise constructs – this means developing ambiguous, clear theoretical definitions.
- Use precise level of measurement – indicators at higher or more precise levels of measurement are more likely to be reliable than less precise measures because the latter pick up less detailed information.
- Use multiple indicators of a variable – because two or more indicators of the same construct are better than one.

Woods and Catanzaro (1988) list the factors that may influence the reliability of qualitative studies:

- The researcher's role in the research setting should be clearly identified.
- Describe characteristics of participants and the decision process involved in their choice to participate.
- Delineate the social and physical context in which data is generated.
- Report precisely and thoroughly the strategies used to collect, analyse and report data.

3.5.4.2. Validity

The validity of qualitative research is the result of the credibility and transferability of the research (Krefting, 1991). According to Neuman (1997) validity tells us whether an indicator for actuality captures the meaning of the construct in which we are interested.

The credibility of qualitative research is influenced by the extent to which recurring patterns and themes are obtained. Credibility can be measured in the following ways (Krefting, 1991):

- The researcher should spend sufficient time with the participants to establish rapport, facilitate comfort and to increase the willingness to make sensitive information known.

- Social desirability is reduced by the use of interpersonal skills. Rephrasing and repeating questions may promote the gathering of credible information.
- Through reflexive analysis the researcher determines the impact of his background, perception and interests on the research. The researcher should note the ideas and feelings he experiences towards participants.
- The researcher should ensure that there are no inconsistencies between the data and its interpretation.

According to Woods and Catanzaro (1988) the factors that influence the validity of the qualitative research according to Woods and Catanzaro (1988) are as follows:

- Distinguish maturation from effects of intervening phenomena by use of constant comparative analysis and discrepant-case analysis.
- There has to be comparison of data to theories and analytical models derived from literature and presentation of data in relation to the researcher's position and relationship.
- Recruit participants who meet purposive sampling criteria.
- Remind participants often that they are experts in the topic of study.
- Provide consistent follow-up to participants in the form of information about the ongoing study.

3.6. DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis is a method of studying and analysing communications in a systematic, objective and quantitative manner to measure variables (Kerlinger, 1986). According to Huysamen (1994) data is examined systematically to record the relative incidence of themes and of the ways in which these themes are portrayed. In essence it implies that the research interrogates the communications that people have produced.

In so doing one only retains a global sense of the data. Huysamen (1994) states that before data can be analysed it should be defined clearly.

- **Step 1**: the universe of the content that has to be analysed is defined and categorised. Categorisation is perhaps the most important part of the analysis because it is a reflection of the theory, hypothesis or feelings being tested.
- **Step 2**: units of analysis are determined. Five major units of analysis are used, namely words, themes, characters, space and time measures, and items, with the word being the smallest unit. A theme is often a sentence, or a proposition about something. Themes are combined into sets of themes.
- **Step 3**: quantification of the units through assigning numbers to the objects of the analysis. The reason for this was if the material was not representative, or if the category items were relatively infrequent, generalisation from statistics calculated would be invalid.

This study will investigate the values of working people and it will ask questions to probe fundamental issues, for instance

In your view, elaborate to what extent you think the following aspects influence work ethic:

- *Religious factors*
- *Cultural factors*
- *Individual factors (work values, discipline and self-control, work attitude, expectations and motivation, and demographic variables)*
- *Organisational factors*
- *Group dynamics*
- *Other factors.*

3.7. CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter described the method of the research and how it will be carried out. An explanation was also given of the choice of the research design, study population, data gathering methods and how data is going to be analysed.

The results of this study will be discussed and explained in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 4

THE RESULTS OF THE EMPIRICAL STUDY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the results of the empirical study and report will be discussed. The results of the qualitative study will be discussed by themes.

4.2 THE RESPONSE REGARDING THE WORK ETHIC OF EMPLOYEES IN PLATINUM MINE INDUSTRY

Table 2 contains the dimensions which were identified by the researcher from the responses of the participants. The table also includes the total responses mentioned by participants. The result of the empirical study will be discussed and explained using specific words and phrases which participants used.

Table 2: Themes and dimensions identified from responses of participants

THEME 1: Religious influences	**No. of responses**
1.1 Influence of religion from childhood	12
1.2. Religion shares common work-related beliefs	6
1.3. Influence of religion on daily activities	13
1.4. Centrality of religious beliefs in work ethics	9
1.5. Relationship between wealth and religious affiliations	6
THEME 2: Cultural factors	
2.1. Cultural factors play a significant role in the work environment	12
2.3. The influence of cultural background in the work environment	7
2.3. The influence of cultural orientation in the work environment	10

2.4. Sensitivity of cultural issues in the workplace	8
THEME 3: Individual factors	
3.1. Work principles	9
3.2. Work values	16
3.3. Factors influencing work attitude	12
3.4. Factors influencing discipline and self-control	10
3.5. Expectation	14
3.6. Motivation	16
3.7.Demographic variables	13
THEME 4: Organisational factors	
4.1. Job insecurity	10
4.2. Corruption in the workplace	11
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4.2.1. Theme 1: Religious influences

Religion is the strongest element in traditional background and probably exerts the greatest influence upon the thinking and way of life of the people concerned. Participants in this study gave their views as far as the influence of religion on ethics is concerned:

4.2.1.1 Influence of religion from childhood

Religion has been defined as a moral guideline which guides human behaviour towards a common ethos. They contend that individuals should start living by religion from childhood and that families, schools and social organisations should assist in instilling it amongst all people

(Weber, 1905). According to Furnham (1990) hard work is important for a person with a strong work ethic. Examples of comments made in this regard are the following:

- One's religious background will always influence the way the job is performed, whether or not the code of conduct will be upheld.
- Religion is a moral stance that becomes indoctrinated in an individual from a young age. Once this level of right or wrong has been established and a basis of faith is adopted, an individual is capable of choice.
- For one to have a moral guideline, one starts living by religion from childhood and school and social organisations should instil religion in people.
- Religion promotes the development of a positive work ethic in people by instructing them to abide by ethical commands and principles from a very young age.

According to McClelland (1961) self-reliance values and economic and technical development was achieved through childrearing practices which developed the strong need for achievement among children. He emphasised that parental stress on self-reliance and independence led to high achievement among children.

4.2.1.2 Religion shares some common work-related beliefs

Religion was described as asceticism, hard work, thrift, frugality, postponement of gratification, and these seem to be important tenets of world religions (Weber, 1905). It provides a set of rules and a communal code of conduct for its members and it is the traditional way of doing things (Mafunisa, 1998). Examples of comments made in this regard are as follows:

- Religions share common related beliefs, what could differ could be the etiology of these beliefs.
- Hard work is something given by God and there is subsequently an expectation of hard work and success.
- Religion is a way of life and a search for well-being within the community in the here and now of everyday existence.
- Religion embraces active work and it emphasises sacrifice and service to others.

- Work is duty shared between the employer and employees: both should be concerned with the existence and the running of the organisation.

4.2.1.3 Influence of religion on daily activities in the workplace

Extensive social interactions and mobility may reduce the differences in work-related beliefs attributed to a particular religious teaching (Ali, Azim & Falcone, 1995). Niles (1999) describes laziness as the downfall of men and nations, and urges that everyone should put forth effort in their daily activities. The above is supported by the following example:

- Religion influences the daily work in that it supports a good relationship with colleagues, teaches us to always listen to other people without being judgemental and influences good communication among employees.
- Religion influences every sphere of our lives and improves relationships within the organisation.
- The moulding of life into a definite pattern which would characterise people's daily actions and duties should be accepted as an important part of religion.
- It contributes to work ethics by encouraging employees to embrace diligence at work and approach or serve God through hard work.

Everyone should be one's own master. Qualities such as initiative, striving and persistence are encouraged in the everyday functioning of individuals (Niles, 1999).

4.2.1.4 Centrality of religious beliefs in work ethic

The results of the research of Ali and Azim (1994) indicate that in terms of classical work ethic measures, no significant differences were found across religious affiliations. Non-denominational and others scored higher than the rest on contemporary work ethic. Religion has always provided people with a powerful spiritual motivator to achieve particular objectives (Ali, Azim & Falcone, 1995). Examples of comments made in this regard are as follows:

- Religion forms the foundation of work ethic.

- Due to different religious affiliations in the workplace, things are approached from a humanistic approach.
- Religion does not play an important role in the work ethic; what matters is that one must behave according to the constitution.
- The importance of work as a religious obligation affects us all, irrespective of different religions. This can be traced back to the book of Genesis, where God instructed humans to work hard so that they provide their needs.

According to Niles (1999) there is a close connection between religious involvement and the centrality of work. It seems that people with strong religious convictions tend to have a stronger commitment to work.

4.2.1.5 Relationship between wealth and religion

Dose (1997) proposed that the Protestant work ethic provides the moral justification for the accumulation of wealth. According to Weber's (1905) view on Protestant theology, work is a divine calling and must therefore be done to the glory of God and worldly success is the sign of grace. Characteristics of individuals subscribing to the Protestant work ethic include industriousness, self-discipline, asceticism and individualism. The research results have shown scores on various measures of the Protestant work ethic to be related to job satisfaction, job involvement, organisational commitment, career salience and leader-member exchange (Furnham, 1990). The above statements are supported by the following examples:

- Commitment to work and hard work are often associated with economic development and competitiveness.
- All religious affiliations are committed to achieving organisational goals and improving productivity.
- Management should encourage employees' desire to work harder and to be aware of their organisational obligations, paying employees very well.
- It is believed that deterioration in work ethic would probably lead to economic decline.

Weber (1905) pointed out that the economic success of Protestant countries was due to motivation and respect for daily work, including the discipline and pursuit of gain and the attitude appropriate to the growth of capitalism. Ali, Azim & Falcone (1995) questioned the relationship between commitment to work and economic success. They argued that, while it is generally acceptable that impairment of the will to work would lead to a lower standard of living, the Weberian thesis has to be seen against the specific historical, social and economic conditions that had prevailed and have existed in any country.

4.2.2 Theme 2: Cultural factors

It is evident at times that rigidity in cultural beliefs breeds individuals who are stereotyped and difficult to work with and hence make it difficult for work ethics to be adhered to. To understand cultural influences we really need to look at the etiology and the determinants of work-related beliefs in different settings (Niles, 1999). There are different views of culture which participants responded to:

4.2.2.1. The influence of cultural background on the work environment

Niles (1999) states that the Protestant work ethic seems to be central to work-related beliefs held by people of diverse cultures. Mc Clelland (1961) argues that the Protestant work ethic is linked to economic development through appropriate childrearing practices, which promote self-reliance values in children. These have been supported by the following responses:

- Charity begins at home, which means that we inherited cultural factors from our parents. If this hypothesis is to be supported, then people who did not inherit cultures are believed to lack this kind of training, and they also should lack self-reliance and need for independence.
- Culture is the building block of every person's upbringing and rearing.
- The significance of our cultural background informs our various levels of what we stand for and what we do not stand for.
- When coming to the work environment with our different cultures there should be a compromise, for the organisation's culture is the one to be upheld.

The Protestant work ethic has been linked to many different constructs, such as achievement motivation, authoritarianism, conservatism, perceived control, entrepreneurship. It has also been linked to several attitudinal correlates, such as attitude to leisure, money, time, success and so on, unlike the work ethic of members of other cultures who stick to their cultural background (Weber, 1905).

4.2.2.2. The influence of cultural orientation in the work environment

Culture is the collective mental programming and that part of our conditioning that we share with the members of our nation, religion or group, but not with members of other nations, religions or groups (Hofstede, 1987). The following are examples of responses:

- To understand cultural influences we really need to look at the etiology and determinants of work-related beliefs in different settings.
- Collectivism increases work ethics because it encourages teamwork and working together to achieve a common goal. Individualism decreases work ethics because there is no generation of ideas and the culture of learning is not encouraged. Individuals want to be recognised for their own efforts and not for team performance.
- Culture influences one in that one belongs to a certain group and in that one does things in relation to one's culture.
- Culture can be easily outgrown in as much as it is a learned component of human behaviour.
- Every organisation has its own culture, which necessitates that the individuals relinquish their own cultural practices and follow those of the organisation.

According to Furnham (1990) the Protestant work ethic seems to have been translated into personality dimension removed from its original anchoring in socio-political and religious history. The Protestant work ethic, defined and measured by the Protestant Work Ethic Scale , appears to be concerned with work values, beliefs and needs.

4.2.2.3. Sensitivity of cultural issues in the work place

According to Watkins & Mauer (1994) the creation of cultural diversity within people results in a system of diverse individual beliefs, attitudes and values which hold a great deal of potential for the organisation. Ideas do not become actualised and embodied in cultural developments unless they are bound up in some fashion with interests, impulses, emotions or collective tendencies and their incorporation with institutional structures. Examples of comments made in this regard are the following:

- Culture is a sensitive issue and can cause a rift between people.
- Cultural issues can lead to exploitation, discrimination, and racial injustice.
- People do not respect other people's culture and that can create diversity in the workplace. Each individual should be respected for who he or she is.
- Culture can prevent people from understanding each other and may cause intentions or messages to be misinterpreted.
- Conflict can result regarding cultural communication and this can result in the formation of cliques.

Watkins (1995) pointed out that in view of South Africa's history of discrimination, organisations are required to employ, develop, remunerate and retain members of designated groups.

4.2.3 Theme 3: Individual factors

Individuals associate hard work with a work ethic but emphasises that hard work must have intellectual demands, be productive and have time constraints. Participants gave different views as far as the following are concerned:

4.2.3.1. Work principles

According to Chell (1987) there is a difference but also a close relationship amongst ethics, principles and code of conduct. Ethics deal with what is wrong or right as defined by various

social institutions for various purposes. To be ethical is to carry out socio- professional conduct in a manner that is defined as acceptable. Principles are specifically designed to suit the basic needs of a particular institution. They are more focused than ethics. A code of conduct is a set of principles that are adopted by associations or institutions to define specific principles for which the institution stands (Mafunisa, 1998). Examples of comments made in this regard are the following:

- Individuals must function in accordance with the organisation's principles.
- The development and the growth of the organisation will be due to individuals practicing the organisation's code of conduct and principles which will enhance their work ethic.
- Our individualism gives us an indication of how well we can carry out a particular principle.
- Work ethics harmonise with principles that one holds individually.

4.2.3.2. Work values

According to Dose (1997) values are standards and criteria for choosing goals or actions and are relatively enduring and stable over time. They develop through the influence of culture, society and personality. He further pointed out that values occupy a more central position in the cognitive system and personality make-up of individuals, determine attitudes and are more closely linked to motivation. Our individualism gives us an indication of how well or badly we can carry out a particular principle. The following are comments made in this regard:

- Values have a fundamental and pivotal role in the development of a work ethic.
- People bring themselves to workplaces with their personality problems, perception of self, dreams, aspirations and those play a role in terms of how they go about their jobs.
- Individuals who see the organisation's policy as consistent with their own value system will most probably develop a work ethic in line with the organisation.
- Performance against standards must be regularly measured and the results published. To attain the set standards, all companies should accept two of the central values: objective competence and loyalty.

Objective competence, according to Mafunisa (1998), relates to the ability to do the work of the organisation expertly and to do it according to explicit, objective standards rather than personal or party obligations. For the organisation to be impartial they need to be objective in providing services, irrespective of their cultural background. Ali and Azim (1994) indicate that objectives are to determine whether employees exhibit different levels of commitment to work ethic, to investigate the relationship between measures of classical and contemporary work ethic, to explore the relationship between measures of work ethic and work loyalty.

According to Mafunisa (1998) management is in a very special situation, since they serve the organisation to which they owe obedience and duty, but they also serve the nation. Diligence of workers reflects their loyalty and commitment (Bae & Chung, 1997). The above is supported by the following examples:

- Loyalty of the organisation will contribute to the high performance of employees and will enhance positive work ethic.
- Loyalty not only refers to identification with goals and interests but also a willingness to co-operate with other members and place the interest of the employees above their own.

Furnham's (1987) research on personality and individual differences showed that work ethic and organisational beliefs were linked to both terminal and instrumental values. A world at peace, equality and pleasure were the terminal values closely related to the various work beliefs, while clean, imaginative, obedient and polite were the instrumental values closely related to the work. The following are examples of responses:

- In an organisation there might be individual differences, which may result in value preferences and value conflict. This constitutes different but equally worthwhile outcomes.
- Value conflict implies that all work values do not possess the same degree of social consensus.

4.2.3.3. Factors influencing work attitude

Diligence and selfless devotion of employees derive from work attitude (Bae & Chung, 1997). Ali and Azim (1994) emphasise that achievement of a competitive advantage in the global market depends to a large extent on people's attitude. Dose (1997) argues that attitude can be learned either through direct experience or influence process. Examples of comments made in this regard are as follows:

- The organisation should involve employees in what is happening in the everyday running of the organisation. It should publish standards for the quality of service.
- Good service should be provided to them all, irrespective of culture, race or religious background.
- Employees expect feedback on the changes and the running of the organisation.
- Incentives, bonuses and promotion should be given to those who deserve them.

Attitudes predict behaviour effectively only when there is high correspondence between attitudes, object and the behavioural option. The mining companies are expected to publish standards for the level and quality of services it will provide, so that all potential users will know what level of service they are entitled to expect and employees can complain if they do not receive it.

4.2.3.4. Factors influencing discipline and self-control

According to Tang and Weatherford (1997) individuals with high levels of self-esteem have more favourable efficacy beliefs. They enjoy performing more difficult tasks, set high goals for themselves, have high levels of certainty, and have better performance skills in comparison to individuals with lower levels of self-esteem. Examples of comments made in this regard are listed below:

- The feeling that comes from being of service to others or the organisation differs from person to person.
- Some felt that discipline and self-control is an inborn quality, while others disagreed.

- Lack of job knowledge, low self-esteem and lack of reinforcing properties like promotions and bonuses can lead to lack of discipline and self-control.
- Lack of self-esteem seemed to be an issue in performing tasks.

4.2.3.5. Expectations

Tang and Weatherford (1997) emphasise that service to others not only provides a sense of fulfilment but also changes those who choose to do such work. Examples of comments in this regard are the following:

- We join an organisation by virtue of our potential and high expectations.
- We expect the organisation to fulfil our needs as we do our best towards accomplishing the goal of the organisation.
- We want to be part of the system which encourages growth and development. The system encourages learning and knows that motivation plays an important role in the development of a work ethic.
- If the organisational functioning is not in line with what employees aspire or how they see themselves, the work ethic is negatively affected.

4.2.3.6. Motivation

According to Chell (1987) one of the major problems facing management today is that of understanding what motivates people. In order to be able to control people it is necessary to understand what makes them move. For some it will be the offer of more pay and for others higher status, but there is no one single thing which will satisfy all people for most of the time. He further emphasises that all people are different and have different wants and desires and that motives are complex and dynamic. Furnham (1987) argues that the Protestant work ethic promotes hard work, asceticism and industriousness, regardless of what motivates workers. Tang and Weatherford (1997) postulate that workers are not just givens in the system but instead have needs and desires. Below are examples of comments made in this regard:

- Motivation to work consists of all drives, forces and influence – conscious and unconscious – that cause employees to want to achieve certain aims.
- The authority needs to know about the factors that create motivation in order to be able to inspire employees to work harder, faster, more efficiently and with greater enthusiasm.
- Motivation is a positive function and money, for example, can satisfy many needs. It could be used to purchase expensive goods that meet esteem needs, or to finance a personal hobby, thereby helping to satisfy a need for self-actualisation.
- Even though not all people value monetary rewards, they still want the things that can be purchased with money.
- Whether it is a primary motivator or not, money is a convenient way of measuring the worth of a job and of indicating the standard expected of the worker.
- Money is perhaps a better motivator in the short term than in the long term.

4.2.3.7. Demographic variables

The variables of sex and age are discussed below.

Sex: Previous research results indicated that girls have stronger work ethics than boys (Furnham, 1990). Furnham (1994) indicates that women scored higher than men on Protestant work ethic beliefs. The above was supported by the following examples:

- Females have stronger work ethics than males. Females are responsible wives and mothers who always think of the future of their children, thus they do everything in their power to keep the jobs they have.
- Mothers look at opportunities, are career oriented, focused and full of determination.
- Men have always been responsible breadwinners and traditionally a man has to look after his family.

Ali, Azim and Falcone (1995) argue that both men and women display a high commitment to work ethic. Watkins (1995) regard these findings about gender as indecisive.

Age: Younger people are more optimistic, motivated and industrious than older people (Wentworth & Chell 1997). Cherrington (1980) has found that as people mature they realise more clearly that they cannot shift the responsibility of providing for themselves onto society and that a society cannot survive when it is forced to support the increasing population. Because their range of experience is narrower, younger employees are more self-centred and they focus on what is fun and interesting for them. The consequences of bad decisions, wasted time and other errors of judgement are meaningful learning experiences. The above argument was supported by the following responds:

- The generation gap has an impact on the work ethic. Their opinions indicate that younger employees are less work oriented than older employees.
- Many younger employees do not accept the traditional work ethic as enthusiastically as older workers.
- Younger employees differ from older people in many of their attitudes and values.
- Differences between work values of older and younger employees arise from the training and learning experiences of each group. These values are influenced by the historical events each group experienced.
- Even though younger employees have less favourable attitudes towards the importance of work, they can be expected to acquire more work-oriented values as they mature.

This hypothesis suggests that the difference in work values result from the process of growing older. As people pass through different stages in life, their frame of reference changes. Perhaps the importance of work increases as age forces a person to re-examine the meaning of life.

4.2.4. Theme 4: Organisational factors

Organisational structure is important in maintaining and supporting employees to maintain work ethics. Ali, Azim & Falcone (1995) indicated that the organisation should encourage employees through various programmes to emulate their desire to work harder and to be aware of their organisational obligations. These programmes should be designed to reduce alienation and strengthen employees' involvement in the decision making process. Different factors were under consideration: job insecurity, corruption in the workplace and technological changes.

4.2.4.1. Cultural factors

Cultures are formed by processes such as management values and cognitive, emotional, behavioural and social foundations which are manifested in thinking, behaviour, feelings and interactions (Watkins & Mauer, 1994). According to Furnham (1993) there seems to be commitment to work ethics among people who respect their cultures. There is evidence that a generalised work ethic can be found in diverse cultures. Examples of comments made in this regard are as follows:

- Culture involves general assumptions about the manner in which work should be done, appropriate goals for the organisation as a whole, for the departments within the organisation and personal goal for employees.
- Organisational culture should respond to the changes in the corporate world.
- Organisational culture is the one to be upheld and if the culture of an individual is in conflict with that of the organisation, then there will be low work ethics in an individual.

4.2.4.2. Job insecurity

Tang and Weatherford's (1998) research about organisational citizenship behaviour represents individual behaviour that is discretionary, not directly or explicitly recognised by the formal rewards system, and promotes the efficient and effective functioning of the organisation. According to Cherrington (1980) job safety and security have been strengthened through legislation. The Occupational Safety and Health Act makes unsafe working conditions unlawful, while unemployment compensation is provided for workers who lose their jobs, and social benefits cover accidents and long-term disability. Work has been influenced by a shift in power position of the employer and the employee. If workers feel that the organisation is unresponsive to their interests, they can petition the labour relations board for a representation election. Below are examples of comments made in this regard:

- Employees work from day to day with little job security.
- Employees' financial welfare is continually threatened by death, disability or termination.
- Hazardous working conditions were often considered a normal part of the job.

- Employees do not get enough time to rest between activities. This is not healthy.
- No safety measures are taken, there is a shortage of staff and the work is strenuous. Conditions are uncomfortable and the environment is not conducive to job performance.

4.2.4.3. Corruption in the workplace

Corruption is the immoral, depraved or dishonest practice of persons. Functions performed by individuals who fail to promote the general interests within the organisation's jurisdiction can be construed as corrupt practices. These practices can have a great impact on employees' relation with the organisation and affect their performance. Within the framework of this general definition the analogy may be drawn that corruption means the betrayal of trust for individual gain (Mafunisa, 1998). The above argument was supported by the following statements:

- There is a lot of corruption in the workplace; it cannot be avoided.
- There are appointments of relatives and friends who do not meet the requirements.
- There is favouritism due to the allocation of bursaries or study loans.
- Promotion of employees for private gains or selfish interests at the expense of the organisation by whoever is in charge and responsible within the area of work.
- Corruption resulting from appalling conditions made them incapable of committing themselves.

4.2.4.4. Technological changes

Technological change is necessary for progress. Mining is still a hazardous occupation but mechanical equipment has taken the picks, shovels and buckets out of the miner's hands (Cherrington, 1980). Many of the most difficult jobs have been eliminated through automation. Mechanisation has gone about as far as it can to eliminate manual jobs (Cherrington, 1980). Tang and Weatherford (1998) emphasise the use of machinery in the organisation, which provide flexibility needed to work through many unforeseen contingencies and help employees in an organisation to cope with the otherwise awesome condition of interdependence on each other. Examples of comments made in this regard are:

- The beauty of technology has dramatically changed the nature of work.
- Technological changes have occurred in the mining industry. The number of workers employed in mining has not changed much, but the methods have changed considerably because of technological innovations.
- A century ago, coal miners often worked in groups, picking at a vein of coal, shovelling it into buckets, and carrying them to the top of the mine. The work was strenuous, the conditions were uncomfortable, and the environment was dangerous.

4.2.5. Theme 5: Group dynamics

Every context has a group that is either for or against a particular work ethic. Groups are either constructive or destructive. People join groups for various reasons and the reasoning will determine how work ethics are upheld. Through the social categorisation process we place ourselves as a member of some group, while excluding ourselves from other groups. Group membership becomes internalised as part of the self-concept. The individual becomes part of the group and the group becomes part of the individual's self-concept. Different views were given as far as groups are concerned in the workplace.

4.2.5.1. Group pressure

Groups can be quite disruptive towards others' development processes. People in a group can provide useless material to work with, material that is highly irrelevant to the very things that brought them to the group in the first place, that will make them more frustrated and impatient (Chell, 1987). This is supported by the following examples:

- The influence of a group on individual members is huge and potentially hidden, as it is so embedded in the way we think, feel and act, often with an assumption that others think, feel and act in the same way.
- A group may create a negative ethic, it might not be useful to its members, and it may be a group which does not motivate but rather demoralises its members and which inhibits growth.

- One needs to know what a group does and how it does it in order to capitalise on those effects.
- In a group, the number and the talkativeness of the other members limit the amount of time available for each person.
- A group will collectively decide to make one member the target for its anger, frustration, or disappointment.
- Other members of the group will occasionally want and need to assume a more passive role and benefit from others without giving.

4.2.5.2. The group as a vehicle for ethical behaviour

Groups are oriented to work hard and to be independent and responsible at the workplace. They are sensitive to their work status, and working hard may provide them with a security or a means to make it in a highly competitive business environment (Ali, Azim & Falcone, 1995). Below are examples of comments made in this regard:

- Groups are more effective in achieving goals. Things go on in groups that cannot happen in individual work.
- For a group to work there must be different personalities that complement each other.
- Members of a group must be motivated and inspire each other.
- They must use each other in the process of growth and change.
- For as long as there have been people, there have been groups. People are social creatures; they form groups naturally, inevitably and spontaneously.
- The giving and the receiving that occurs in a group are really beneficial.

There may be a feeling that the group stands to lose the most during economic hardship and recession. Organisations should capitalise on channelling the commitment of these groups towards achieving organisational goals and improving productivity (Ali, Azim & Falcone, 1995).

4.3. CHAPTER SUMMARY

The research evidence indicates that people who espouse the work ethic are more satisfied and more productive and report a higher quality of life. During the data collection process described in chapter 3, the question responses were not only obtained but participants were interviewed. The interview information was useful in identifying the character of outstanding workers. Their comments illustrated how high performers were very work oriented and derived enormous satisfaction from their work, whereas the poor performers were dissatisfied with the running of the organisation.

This research was done to explore the experience of ethics in a mining environment, the work ethics of the employees and the major factors that contribute to the work ethics in the platinum mine industry. Information was obtained from workers who responded to questions.

This chapter is the result of the empirical study. The information in this chapter provides an answer to the second research question and through this the third specific research objective is achieved, namely to determine factors that influence work ethics within the platinum mine industry.

Chapter 5 will entail the conclusion and the recommendations of the research.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The conclusions reached after the literature and empirical study and recommendations for further research will be presented in this chapter.

5.2. CONCLUSIONS

Conclusions with regard to the literature study as well as the results of the empirical study will be discussed below.

The first specific objective of the literature study was to conceptualise work ethics from a literature study. Work ethics are explained within the frame of the individual's thoughts, perceptions and behaviour. Work itself is not considered a personal virtue, or a form of worship. Some of the positive values furthered by dedicated work indulge greater national productivity, organisational effectiveness, personal happiness, self-discipline and the development of character and service to society as a result of one's accomplishments. Success has been characterised in the literature as the result of hard work, responsibility and having confidence in one's ability to control one's destiny.

Work requires self-direction and autonomy to be worthwhile. Work is one of the factors that facilitate or inhibit economic achievement, including beliefs about work. Individuals who experience economic prosperity have a tendency to create various work engagements and it is in these individuals that productivity and creative efforts have flourished at the same time.

Specific conclusions with regard to the literature study (5.2.1) and the empirical study (5.2.2) are presented in the sections below.

5.2.1 Conclusions with regard to the literature study

- Historically work was embedded in a variety of structures from which it took its organisation and meaning. The importance of work in the past was not the same as it is today. People would shift the responsibility of providing for themselves onto society, society cannot survive if it is forced to support the growing population. The Great Depression had a serious effect on the attitude and values of workers. When jobs were extremely scarce, almost any job was better than no job at all. There was also no reason for the employer to tolerate incompetence when there was an abundant supply of job applications.

- For many years Protestant work ethics, proposed by Weber, were cited as the chief explanation for the economic success of the Protestant countries. Calvinism, which encouraged the valuing of mastery of one's social economic environment, seemed to offer an explanation for the rise of capitalism and economic prosperity among Protestant nations. McClelland offered an explanation for the link between Protestantism and Capitalism. The explanation is that the Protestant work ethic and values determine practices of independence, procrastination of gratification and mastery training, which leads to strong achievement motivation. Protestant ethical beliefs and behaviour, as defined and measured by the Protestant Work Ethic Scale, appear to be concerned with work values, beliefs and needs, and more particularly to a continued commitment to paid employment.

- To early Americans work was a necessary and important part of life. Most people had to work hard because the alternative to not working was starving. Advancement in psychological techniques and studies and the ascent of affluent society gave rise to a contemporary type of work ethics. People demanded greater responsiveness from their organisation and to seek personal growth and fulfilment beyond economic needs. The moral importance of work remains unchallenged as an accepted value.
- Work ethics in Britain have become increasingly important in business organisations because researchers have concluded that the achievement of a competitive advantage in

the global market depends on people's attitude. Marxism as a site of active cultural agency rather than positive adaptation challenged models of economic growth. The influence of Marxism was criticised in term of the lack of an adequate economic account of industrialisation. The focus on competitive advantage has contributed to a shift in the focus of research, from organisational to national level. The researchers have examined environmental variables and attributes that facilitate or inhibit economic achievement. Findings in this regard are that commitment to hard work is associated with economic development and competitiveness.

The second specific objective of the literature study was to determine the factors that influence the work ethic within the mining industry. It was concluded that religious influences, cultural factors, individual factors, group dynamics and organisational factors influence work ethic. Religion promotes the development of a positive work ethic. Cultural factors pertain to the cultural differences and organisational culture within organisational values and ethic codes included. Individual factors such as work relations, perception, values, attitude, expectations and motivation, needs, demographic variables, discipline and self-control also influence work ethic. Group dynamics is yet another factor, as it is manifested in group thinking, socialising and group values. Organisational factors pointed to the organisation's values and work ethic.

The following conclusions were reached:

- It was found that different religions seem to have a common concept of a work ethic when it is defined as a commitment to hard work and excellence. Hard work is seen as an end in itself and even as morally right. However, what does not appear to be universal seems to be a belief that there is a direct relationship between hard work, religion and success. Weber suggested that hard work is God's will and that if one was God's elect then there would be an expectation to hard work and success, but because of the belief system of the accumulation of wealth, these same God's elect would reinvest the fruits of their labour, giving rise to the growth of capital.

- Cultural studies suggest that work ethics are the respect for, admiration of and willingness to take part in hard work. The idea that one must do one's best as well as be the best seems to come through. It was found that culture determines the identity of a group in a similar manner as an individual's identity determines it (culture). It therefore seems appropriate to continue to refer to a work ethic as the Protestant work ethic.

- High-performance-oriented people appear to place strong emphasis on self-reliance and individualism. Individualism places emphasis on self-reliance and success, individual rather than group rewards, pride in one's activities and the fact that that loyalty revolves around self. This research provided evidence that work norms are highly correlated with individualism and that work ethics and individualism are significantly correlated. It was also indicated that individual perception of work ethics could influence this behaviour and attitude. It represents the manner in which an individual experiences and organises information into a meaningful whole.

- It was indicated that not all individuals possess the same degree of work value. What individuals perceive to be important about their work environment and work outcome constitutes different but equally worthwhile outcomes. Outcomes that people might expect to obtain through work include a sense of accomplishment, self-respect, social recognition and exciting life. Hard work does not necessarily lead to a good life or to a positive outcome but also to high achievement motivation. People seem to value self-reliance and independence, which could be the influence of religious beliefs, which emphasise individual responsibility. It was said that motivation, discipline and self-control are the right ingredients for economic success. The findings are that motivation and the right attitude are a major part of the complex leading to economic development.

- In the organisational studies it was found that there have been various approaches or criteria used to measure success. A subjective judgement was used to measure success. This is because the perception of success is influenced by one's overall satisfaction in life despite salary achievement. Other aspects that impact on industrial success and growth but that get less attention include increasing family disputes, drug problems at the

workplace and a lack of confidence in business organisation. These factors often distract managers' attention from focusing on major strategic business issues. This can contribute to employee alienation. Alienation often leads to confusion, and confusion may result in disarray, unclear priorities and lack of global vision.

- The findings concerning organisational groups are that groups are oriented to work hard to be independent and responsible. It was found to be advantageous to have groups in the work place. Groups are sensitive to their work status and working together may provide them with security or the means to succeed in a competitive environment and this results in a successful organisation.

5.2.2 Conclusions with regard to the empirical study

- It was found out that religion has a major influence on work ethics as religion has an influence on daily activities from childhood, it is central work ethics and there is a clear relationship between religion and wealth.

- Other factors include the significant role of cultural factors in the work environment, the influence of cultural background and cultural orientation in the work environment, and the sensitivity of cultural issues in the workplace.

- Individual factors such as work values, principles, attitude, discipline and self-control, motivation and expectations, and demographic variables also play a major role in influencing work ethic.

- Organisational factors such as job insecurity, corruption in the workplace and technological changes and group dynamics were also pointed out as factors influencing work ethic.

5.3. RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations of this research focus on two things. Firstly, alternative solutions to the problem are explored and, secondly, recommendations regarding future research are made.

5.3.1 Alternative solutions to the problem

The following recommendations are made to solve the problem:

- Self-development programmes could be provided to employees on aspects such as interpersonal relations, problem solving and positive thinking, which would make them sensitive to cultural and individual differences. The aim of the development programmes should be to promote positive work ethics in the workplace.
- The implementation of mentorship programmes should be promoted. These programmes should facilitate career and psychosocial functions of mentoring to increase acceptance of organisational core values.
- The implementation of leadership development programmes should be promoted to foster the development of positive work ethics. Attention should be paid to the development of transformational and charismatic leadership skills because the leadership behaviour of both styles is related to moral grounds that are an integral part of individual ethical behaviour.

5.3.2 Recommendations for future research

The following recommendations focus on future research:

- Future research should concentrate on the development of an instrument to measure the need for self-development of staff on issues relating to interpersonal relations and problem solving.

- This research focused on the employees' experience of work ethics in a mining environment. A quantitative design in this regard could provide meaningful information to management for the development of positive work ethics.
- Qualitative research could be carried out with the use of questionnaires that are based on the themes that are identified in this study, so that a better picture could be formed regarding work ethics in organisations.
- Research regarding the topic could be expanded to other industries to facilitate comparisons regarding the experience of work ethics.
- Research could be carried out with regards to the development of a validated instrument that investigate cultural differences regarding work ethics.

5.4 CONTRIBUTIONS OF THIS RESEARCH

The following contributions have been made to the field of industrial psychology by this research:

- An intensive literature study has been conducted to generate a better understanding of work ethics and the factors that influence it.
- In this research the results seem to confirm those of previous studies. In particular, the results affirm the relationship between work-related individualism and work ethic measures.

5.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

The following limitations of the research have been identified:

- It is difficult to generalise the results of this study because the samples are not broad enough.
- Interviews should have focused on the here and now for the effectiveness of results.
- The research was focused on a qualitative study, which means the results cannot be generalised.

With the above, the third specific objective of the research has been achieved. The study is thus concluded with the above recommendation of ways to promote work ethic in the platinum mine industry.

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APPENDIX 1

Places where the research was conducted:

- **Anglo Platinum** (Rustenburg - May, 2003)
- **Impala Platinum** (Rustenburg - June, 2003)
- **Brandrill Torrex** (Rustenburg - July, 2003)

APPENDIX 2

THE RESEARCH QUESTION

In your view, elaborate to what extent you think the following aspects influence work ethic:

- Religious influences
- Cultural factors
- Individual factors
- Group dynamics
- Organisational factors

APPENDIX 3

THE PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH

The purpose of the study is to determine individual work ethic by looking at factors which influence work ethic.

APPENDIX 4

DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS

Work ethic: norms, values and moral judgement that discipline people from engaging in misconduct.

Work-related believes: system of beliefs and practices that provide a set of rules and a communal code of conduct.

Culture: the identity of a group and their collective conduct in certain aspects as determined by the identity of individuals in that group.

Attitude: psychological tendency that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favour or disfavour.

Value: a broad inclination to give preference to certain manners of doing things.

Perception: the organising into a meaningful whole of the manner in which an individual experiences reality.

Principle: specifically designed to suit the basic needs of a particular institution.