Work ethics and work values: A generational perspective

by

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Declaration

I declare that the research study titled "Work ethics and work values: A generational perspective" is my own work, and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

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Ntomzodwa Caroline Sobayeni   Date

Acknowledgements

I would like to dedicate this dissertation to my late father who was my role model and my pillar of strength, my late sister Thandeka who made me want to be a better person and to my son Sibusiso.

To my husband: your love, encouragement and absolute support gave me the strength to work harder.

To my mother: you are a wealth of inspiration to me. Thank you for your love and support and persistence to encourage me to work hard and be a better person.

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Abstract

Although generational cohorts have been studied extensively in past years, not much information is available about generational cohorts and how they differ in terms of work values and work ethics in the South African context. The aim of this research study was to confirm the findings of research conducted in other countries, and to extend the current limited body of knowledge with regard to the work values and work ethics of different generational cohorts for a South African sample.

A cross-sectional study was conducted with a sample of 301 employees from the South African labour force. Work values and work ethics of three generational cohorts were measured, namely the Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Generation Y. The data was analysed by means of a Mann-Whitney U test and Kruskal-Wallis tests, in order to determine the influence of the demographic variables on the dependent variables (i.e. workplace values and work ethics). Spearman rank-order correlations were performed to determine the relationships between the subcategories of the dependent variables. To establish the reliability of the measuring instruments, Cronbach's alpha coefficients were determined.

The main finding of this research was that statistically significant differences were found between the various generational cohorts in terms of work values and work ethics. Statistically significant differences were noted for the following work values: aesthetics, risk, social interaction, altruism, creativity, cultural identity, personal development, prestige, and variety. With regard to work ethics, statistically significant generational differences were indicated for hard work and delay of gratification. The findings of the study enable a more in-depth understanding of the work values and work ethics of different generational cohorts, which holds important implications for organisations. This research confirmed the importance of studying different generational cohorts in the context of the workplace.

Key words: generational cohorts, work values, work ethics, Generation X, Generation Y, the Baby Boomers.

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OVERVIEW OF STUDY

1.1   INTRODUCTION

Within the South African context, ethical behaviour in society as well as the workplace is deteriorating. Tooley and Mahoai (2007: 367) provide a graphic description when referring to the South African context as "when in a society the shameless triumph; when the abuser is admired; when principles end and opportunism prevails; when the insolent rule and people tolerate it; when everything becomes corrupt but the majority is quiet because their slice is waiting". According to Patel (2013), unethical behaviour, mainly in the form of corruption, through bribery, has reached "crisis proportions". Within this increasingly unethical society, employees and managers are required to make decisions on various matters on a daily basis in the workplace, with great difficulty distinguishing which decision is correct, and what the implications of a decision may be, in an environment where unethical behaviour has become the norm, rather than the exception. The recent Marikana mining massacre is a prime example of how the wrong decision led to the killing of 44 South Africans (De Waal, 2012). This is only one of many examples which are reported every day in the South African media, which underscores the importance of ethical behaviour.

Corresponding to global trends, employees in South Africa are increasingly being placed under pressure in the workplace, which often makes them cut corners, break rules, and engage in questionable practices (Robbins, Judge, Odendaal & Roodt, 2009: 16). Vyas-Doorgapersad (2007: 286) asserts that developing countries such as South Africa are more susceptible to unethical behaviour, due to widespread poverty and relatively low public-sector compensation, a lack of risk mechanisms (for example, insurance and a well-developed market), opportunities

created by complex, poorly defined, continually changing, and inadequate rules and regulations, a lack of properly established laws and principles, a lack of institutions to enforce a code of conduct, particularly public officials, and the absence of watchdog agencies.

Due to the fact that different groups have different values, a recent development in the field of organisational behaviour has been to divide work values according to different generational groups (Robbins et al., 2009: 101). Twenge (2010: 201) asserts that it is important to study and understand the workforce from a generational perspective, as the generation that is facing retirement may have different work values from the generation that is entering the labour force. As such, generational differences have implications for the management and retention of an organisation's human capital. In a study by Burke (cited by Cogin, 2012: 2268), 58% of human resource management practitioners reported conflict between younger employees and older employees, due to differences such as perceptions of work ethics, and aspects related to work-life balance (which is a work value). In light of this, the question arises as to whether generational differences also exist within the South African work environment in terms of work values and work ethics.

1.2   THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Robbins et al. (2009: 7) define organisational behaviour as "a field of study that investigates the impact individuals, groups, and structures have on behaviour within the organisation for the purpose of applying such knowledge towards improving organisational effectiveness". Organisational behaviour is therefore mainly concerned with understanding behaviour, in order to improve an organisation's effectiveness. For the purposes of this study, respondents' work ethics and work values will be investigated from a generational perspective, in

order to gain an improved understanding of the work behaviour of different generations.

The study will specifically investigate work ethics and work values, as it has been found that different generations differ in terms of work values and work ethics (Twenge, 2010: 201). Phale (2003: 1) asserts that an improved understanding of work ethics will be to the advantage of the organisation, since work ethics is related to organisational outcomes such as performance, productivity, and discipline. Work values are equally important to study, as they influence employees' attitudes, behaviour (Robbins et al., 2009: 100), and well-being (Lu, Kao, Siu & Lu, 2011: 769), which, in turn, may have an impact on organisational performance.

1.2.1 GENERATIONAL COHORT THEORY

Kupperschmidt (2000: 66) defines a generation as an "identifiable group that shares [the same] birth year, age, and significant life events at critical developmental stages". Generational cohort theory, also known as subculture theory, posits that life events, such as significant macro-level societal, political and economic events during pre-adolescence, result in a generational identity. This generational identity seems to remain relatively stable throughout the lifespan of the generation (Fisher & Crabtree, 2009: 656).

The life events as experienced by various generations have a definite impact on the formation of attitudes and beliefs (Meriac, Woehr & Banister, 2010: 316). Therefore, one may postulate that the attitudes and beliefs of different generations may result in perceptual differences, not only in terms of how each generation perceives attitudinal objects, but also in terms of what it regards as important (or what it values), as well as the ethical manner in which it behaves.

Due to ideological and perceptual differences which exist between generational cohorts, conflict and misunderstandings are inevitable (Meriac et al., 2010: 315). Consequently, organisational leaders need to be aware of these differences that exist between different generations, in order to prevent or manage conflict appropriately, and to reduce misunderstandings, as dysfunctional conflict and misunderstandings may potentially have a negative impact on organisational effectiveness (Van der Walt & Du Plessis, 2010: 3).

Table 1.1 below provides a summary of the characteristics of the different generations (Gursoy, Maier & Chi, 2008: 451; Robbins et al., 2009: 102; Roux, 2008: 20) that are investigated in this study.

Table 1.1:   Characteristics of the different generations investigated

Generation	Years of birth	Characteristics
The Traditionalists	1930-1949	Disciplined, hard-working, dedicated, respect authority and rules, loyal, stable, conservative lifestyle, directive, respect positional power, and self-sacrificing.
The Baby Boomers	1950-1969	Open-minded, workaholics, ambitious, optimists, success-driven and crave for job status, service-orientated, self-driven, build good relations, have team loyalty, live to work, respect authority, and live large.
Generation X	1970-1989	Individualistic, self-reliant, pragmatic, hard-working and enthusiastic, and focus on relationships. Not interested in long-term careers, and have limited corporate loyalty or status. Have an open-to-change attitude, adaptable, technologically literate, independent, creative, and not intimidated by authority. They respond to instant gratification, and they work to live.

Generation	Years of birth	Characteristics
Generation Y/ The Millennial Generation/ Millennials	1990-2000	Optimists, confident, strong morals and ethics. Expect greater workplace flexibility, enjoy brainstorming and challenges, and want everything to be mobile, fast, accurate, and at their fingertips. Mobile-orientated, technologically informed, and able to multitask. "The more the merrier", "rules are made to be broken", "here today and gone tomorrow".

Based on the exposition in Table 1.1, one may conclude that different generations have different work values, work ethics, and personality characteristics. However, not all studies investigating generational differences have supported generational cohort theory. In this regard, Real, Mitnick and Maloney (2010: 303) state that there is a need for more studies to be conducted that investigate generational differences in the workplace, in order to substantiate whether the generational differences claimed above do, in fact, exist.

Investigating the South African workforce from a generational cohort perspective will provide organisational leaders with new insights and perspectives on how to manage employees. The proposed study will determine generational differences in terms of work ethics and work values in the South African context. The findings of the research project will be used to formulate managerial recommendations on how to appropriately manage different generations, in order to ensure organisational effectiveness.

1.3   DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS

1.3.1 Work ethics

The definition of work ethics which will be applicable for the purposes of this study is that work ethics is a multidimensional construct consisting of "a constellation of attitudes and beliefs pertaining to work behaviour" (Miller, Woehr & Hudspeth, 2002: 5). Beliefs and attitudes which are often included in the study of work ethics include work centrality, self-reliance, hard work, attitudes towards leisure, wasted time, morality, and the delay of gratification (Miller et al., 2002: 14; Real et al., 2010: 204).

1.3.2 Work values

The concept of values seems to be well researched, and different definitions have been offered over time to describe this concept. One of the earlier definitions of values stated that a value is "an enduring belief that a specific mode of conduct or end-state of existence is personally or socially preferable to an opposite or converse mode of conduct or end-state of existence" (Rokeach, 1973: 5). Subsequently, Schwartz (1992: 2) proposed a more detailed definition of values, namely that values refer to "desirable states, objects, goals, or behaviours, transcending specific situations and applied as normative standards to judge and to choose among alternative modes of behaviour". This definition suggests that values are relevant to the workplace, as the workplace may be regarded as a situation in which an individual operates, and where values are applied in order to guide adequate behaviour.

Against the above background, work values are defined as "expressions of general values in the work setting" (Ros, Schwartz & Surkiss, 1999: 54). Thus, one may conclude that values and work values are similar concepts, although work values are specifically applicable to the work environment. Therefore, if an individual has positive life values, such as honesty and integrity, which are expressed in the work environment, such an individual will add more value to an organisation than someone with negative values.

1.4 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Figure 1.1 represents the conceptual framework for the study, which corresponds to the theoretical background that was presented in the previous section.

Figure 1.1:   Conceptual framework of the study
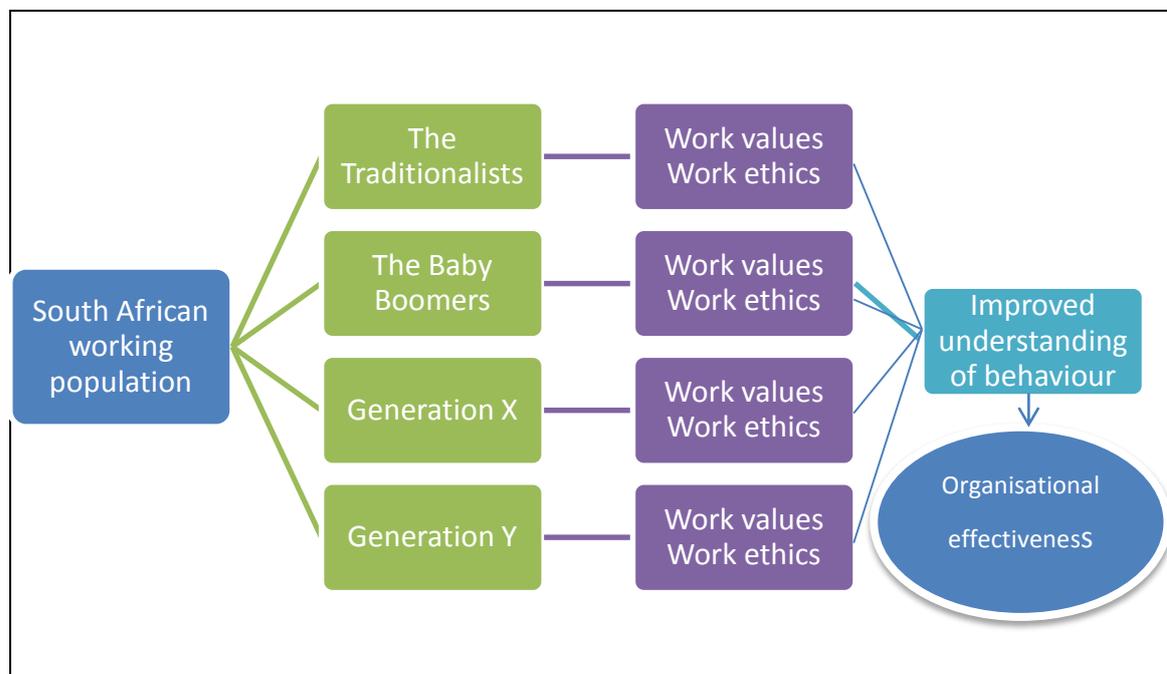
The South African workforce, as depicted in Figure 1.1, can be divided into different generational cohorts, namely the Traditionalists, the Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Generation Y. However, the sample in the current study will not include the Traditionalists, due to the fact that the majority of this cohort has reached retirement age. The work values and work ethics of each generational cohort will be measured and compared. Understanding the work values and work ethics of different generational cohorts will advance the understanding of human behaviour in the organisational context. It is hypothesised that this, in turn, may have a positive impact on organisational effectiveness.

1.5   PROBLEM STATEMENT

The composition of the South African workforce is changing, and is becoming increasingly diverse (Robbins et al., 2009: 12; Van der Walt & Du Plessis, 2010: 1). Hence, organisations need to comprehend that a different approach may be required to successfully attract new employees and to effectively manage and retain current human capital. Although considerable research is available on diversity management, there is a paucity of studies that focus on generational or age diversity (Van der Walt & Du Plessis, 2010: 1). A possible alternative available to organisations is to determine differences between different generational cohorts. Establishing whether different generations have different work values and work ethics would assist organisations when formulating strategic human resource interventions, such as retention and procurement strategies.

Furthermore, although generational cohort theory has been researched in other countries, sufficient empirical studies have not yet been conducted to test this theory in the South African work environment. Therefore, it will be valuable to determine whether work values and work ethics differ for generational cohorts in

the South African context, since unethical conduct has become the norm, rather than the exception, in South Africa.

1.6   RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The primary and secondary research objectives of the study are stated below.

1.6.1   Primary research objective

The primary research objective of the study is to investigate whether generational differences exist in terms of work ethics and work values in the South African organisational context.

1.6.2   Secondary research objectives

In order to achieve the primary research objective, as stated above, the following secondary objectives have been formulated for the study:

1. To conduct an extensive literature review of the work values and work ethics of different generational cohorts;
2. To determine the work ethics of different generational cohorts in the South African work environment;
3. To determine the work values of different generational cohorts working within the South African organisational context;
4. To profile the work ethics and work values of different generations, according to generational cohort theory;

5. To determine whether sociodemographic variables, such as gender, race, years of service, and highest academic qualification, statistically significantly influence the dependent variables, namely work values and work ethics;

6. To formulate recommendations on how to appropriately manage different generations in the South African workplace.

1.7 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1.7.1 Primary research question

The primary research question is "How do generational cohorts differ in terms of work values and work ethics in the South African work environment?"

The primary research question will be investigated using the following hypothesis:

H_0: *There is no statistically significant difference between various generational cohorts in terms of work values and work ethics in the South African work environment.*

H_1: *There is a statistically significant difference between various generational cohorts in terms of work values and work ethics in the South African work environment.*

1.7.2 Secondary research questions

The secondary research questions of the study are:

1. Do sociodemographic variables, such as age, gender, race, years of service, and highest educational qualification, have a statistically significant influence on work values and work ethics?
2. Is there a statistically significant relationship between the different components of work ethics and work values?

1.8 LAYOUT OF CHAPTERS

The focus areas of the research study under discussion include work values and work ethics from a generational perspective. In Chapter 2, a literature review of generational cohort theory, work ethics, and work values is presented. Chapter 3 consists of a description and justification of the research methodology which was employed in the research project. Various topics are discussed, including sample selection, collection of data, and statistical methods used. In Chapter 4, the results are presented, analysed, and interpreted. In the final chapter, conclusions are drawn, and possible recommendations are made based on the research findings.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1   INTRODUCTION

Globally, organisations are becoming more diverse (Roper, Prouska & Ayundhya, 2010: 132). As such, the contemporary workforce consists of employees with different ages, cultural backgrounds, and ethnicities, to mention a few of the sociodemographic variables. Apart from these differences, individuals have also been exposed to different historical events as members of a particular society (Fisher & Crabtree, 2009: 657). For example, individuals who were raised in South Africa who are currently 40 years of age entered the workforce when society moved from an era of apartheid to one of democratisation. Historical events that the population has been exposed to, as well as factors such as cultural and age differences, may potentially influence individual values, as well as ethical behaviour which is manifested in the work environment (Davis, 2009: 161).

This chapter begins with a description of generational cohort theory, and each of the generational cohorts investigated in the study is discussed in depth. Thereafter, a literature review of ethics, with specific reference to work ethics, is presented. The various ethical theories which have evolved over time will be discussed, after which ethics in the context of the workplace will be elaborated on. This will be followed by a discussion of values, with specific reference to work values.

2.2 GENERATIONAL COHORTS

In this section, generational cohort theory is discussed, after which four generations of employees are described, namely the Traditionalists, the Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Generation Y. This is followed by a presentation of previous research findings regarding the similarities and differences between the various generations.

2.2.1 Generational cohort theory

Generational cohort theory is widely regarded as a theory of social history which describes and elaborates on differences and changes in generational and public attitudes over time (Wolf, Carpenter & Qenani-Petrela, 2005: 186). Karl Mannheim (1970) was one of the first scholars to write extensively about generational differences. Mannheim (cited in King, 2005: 2), defined a generation as a group of people who share the same birth cohorts and historical events, and who react in similar ways to the experiences brought before them. In his seminal work on generations, Mannheim (cited in Parry & Urwin, 2011: 81), elaborated that the study of the construct of generations is made possible by five characteristics of society, namely the emergence of new cultural participants, the demise of former participants, limited participation of generational members in history, the transmission of cultural heritage, and the continuous nature of generational transitioning.

Gilleard (2004: 108), informed by the work of Mannheim, underscores two elements that are pivotal to the concept of a generation, namely a shared location in historical time, and a distinctive awareness of said historical time, which is shaped by events and experiences that are characteristic of that time. Turner and

colleagues (see Edmunds & Turner, 2005: 559; Parry & Urwin, 2011: 81; Turner, 1998: 302) attempted to refine Mannheim's concept of a generation, by defining it as "a cohort of persons passing through time who come to share a common habitus and lifestyle [and it] has a strategic temporal location to a set of resources as a consequence of historical accident and the exclusionary practices of social closure" (Turner, 1998: 302). As a result, the term "cohorts" came to be used.

Ryder (1965: 845) defined a cohort as "the aggregate of individuals who experienced the same event within the same time interval". Strauss and Howe (cited in Fisher & Crabtree, 2009: 656), popularised the concept of cohorts in their book titled *Generations: The history of America's future, 1584 to 2069*. These authors asserted that social cycles repeat themselves every four generations (Fisher & Crabtree, 2009: 656). Drago (2006: 6) defined a generation as the "aggregate of all people born over roughly the span or a phase of life who share a common location in history and, hence, a common collective character".

In light of the above definitions, Bevan-Dye (2012: 37) affirms that generational cohort research is based on the premise that each generation experiences a communal distinctive combination of circumstances and environmental forces that are prevalent during their formative years, and that this combination of circumstances and environmental forces shapes their behaviour patterns, distinguishing them from other generations. Thus, individuals from the same generation, termed "generational cohorts", are exposed to the same external environment and events, which may potentially influence their behaviour and way of thinking (Napoli, 2014: 184). However, cognisance is taken of individual differences within these generational cohorts.

One aspect which may contribute to individual differences within a generational cohort is the strength of an individual's identification with a particular generation. It is argued that the more a group is involved intellectually and socially with the ideas

of their time, the stronger they identify with that generation (King, 2005: 2). Another aspect which must be taken into consideration is the society in which an individual grows up in. Due to the fact that societies differ, this aspect may also lead to individual differences within a specific generation. Strauss and Howe (cited in Drago (2006: 6), assert that "society alternates between a cycle of growth, conformity, decay, and divisiveness, and that each cycle is driven by the changes in the values and attitudes of each new generation". This assertion is indicative of a mutually influential relationship between society and a generational cohort, in that not only does a society influence a generation, but a generational cohort can also influence a society.

From the above exposition, it is evident that two perspectives exist regarding generational cohorts. On the one hand, a generation is seen as consistent regardless of different societies, while, on the other hand, a generation underscores the differences which may potentially exist between generational cohorts due to the society in which it is cultivated. Codrington and Grant-Marshall (2006: 11) state that turbulent life changes and/or important events that occur in a particular era can shape a cohort living at the time. Furthermore, internalisation of the ideas characteristic of the time may result in stereotyping of members of that particular generational cohort. For example, the generation born between 1990 and 2000 were living in a technological era, where everything was technologically orientated; hence they have been labelled the "Internet Generation", or the "Dot.Com Generation".

According to generational cohort theory, the following generations can be identified: the GI Generation, the Traditionalists, the Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Generation Y. In Table 2.1, the ages of the different generations are summarised according to country of origin (Codrington & Grant-Marshall, 2006: 19).

Table 2.1:   Generational cohorts according to country

Generation	South Africa	USA	Europe/UK	Japan
The GI Generation	1900-1929	1900-1923	1900-1918	1900-1925
The Traditionalists	1930-1949	1923-1942	1918-1945	1925-1945
The Baby Boomers	1950-1969	1943-1962	1946-1965	1945-1965
Generation X	1970-1989	1963-1983	1966-1984	1966-1985
Generation Y	1990-2000	1984-2001	1985-2001	1986-2001
Generation Z: born between 2001-2020				

Although cognisance is taken of the five generations set out in Table 2.1, the study will focus only on the following generational cohorts: the Traditionalists, the Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Generation Y. The reason for excluding the GI Generation is that they are currently older than 83 years of age, and they are thus not part of the economically active population of the country. In the following section, each of these generations will be discussed.

2.2.1.1   The Traditionalists

The Traditionalists grew up during World War II, and most of them travelled extensively in order to find employment (Lancaster & Stillman, 2010: 73). In the workplace, there are only a few members of this generation present, as most members have retired, and those who are still employed are about to reach retirement age. Most of the Traditionalists were regarded as hard workers during their time, and, as a result, most of them have made sufficient provision for their retirement (Codrington & Grant-Marshall, 2006: 29). Table 2.2 provides a description of the Traditionalists, also referred to as the "Veterans" (Codrington & Grant-Marshall, 2006: 29; Van der Walt & Du Plessis, 2010: 3).

Table 2.2:   Description of the Traditionalist generational cohort

Criterion	Description
Childhood	Grew up during the time of World War II, and the greatest influence in their lives was the Great Depression, the Korean War, and the beginning of the atomic and nuclear age. During their early formative years, they played with dolls, tin cars, and homemade wooden toys, and read books.
Value system	Their value system is characterised by loyalty, discipline, trust in government, and an emphasis on family. They are savers, and do not question authority, but respect law and order.
Stereotyped as	The Traditionalists are normally stereotyped and identified as old-fashioned and behind the times. Inherent stereotypical characteristics include inflexible, risk-averse, autocratic, and inclined to resist change.
Entertainment and music	This cohort appreciates movie musicals, conservative love stories, and soap operas. The above entertainment would be perceived as popular for everyone.
Characteristics	The Traditionalists are disciplined, hard-working, dedicated, and respectful of rules and authority, conservative, stable, loyal, traditional, directive, they respect positional power, and they are self-sacrificing.
Work style	The Traditionalists are hard-working and stick to the letter of the book. To them, "how" things are done is most important than "what" is done.
Work environment	The Traditionalists prefer a more hierarchal work environment, with a clear chain of command and a top-down management style for approval. In addition, they have a preference for life-time employment. Success for them means the invisible handshake, and climbing the career ladder in the same organisation. During this era, labour unions and office parks came to the fore.
Authority and leadership	Command, control, and authority will rarely be questioned, and rules and regulations will be adhered to.
Communication	Formal communication through proper and effective communication channels is preferred.
Recognition and rewards	Personal acknowledgement and compensation for work well done are preferred methods of recognition and rewards. As such, the Traditionalists do not place much value on recognition, but rather on authentic acknowledgement from the heart.

Criterion	Description
Work and family	The Traditionalists believe in keeping work and family life separate. When at work, they perform tasks to the best of their ability, and when at home with their families, they relax, without talking about work-related issues.
Loyalty	The Traditionalists are, as a rule, loyal to the organisation, and hold the belief "Don't bite the hand that feeds the mouth".
Technology	The Traditionalists are generally resistant to technological development, and they believe strongly that "if it isn't broke, don't fix it!"
Likes	Security, stability, and mentoring young people.
Dislikes	Debts, borrowing, and courts.

From Table 2.2 one may conclude that in the workplace this generation will be very loyal, and will remain satisfied with a certain organisational culture without feeling the need to change it. This is probably the generation that has a preference to remain with one organisation throughout their lifetime (Van der Walt & Du Plessis, 2010: 3). The information depicted in Table 2.2 clearly indicates that the Traditionalists have respect for authority, and that they will execute tasks as instructed. The Traditionalists may find it difficult to adjust to the contemporary labour market, where things are constantly changing, with little predictability and stability.

2.2.1.2   The Baby Boomers

According to Drago (2006: 7), the Baby Boomers were exposed to some form of violence and social conflict, due to the fact that this era was initiated in the wake of World War II. Furthermore, the Baby Boomers were profoundly influenced by the Vietnam War, the civil rights and women's movements, and Watergate, among other things (Sessa, Kabacoff, Deal & Brown, 2007: 50). Due to the economic prosperity of that time period, this generational cohort did not struggle to find

employment on completion of their schooling career (Drago, 2006: 7). This generation observed the foibles of political, religious and business leaders, which led to a lack of respect for and loyalty towards authority and social institutions (Kupperschmidt, 2000: 67). The Baby Boomers seem to be inclined to spend more time at work than at home with their families (Shragay & Tziner, 2011: 144). In the workplace, they place value on things such as promotions and the size of the office (Shragay & Tziner, 2011: 144). Table 2.3 provides a description of the Baby Boomers, also referred to as the "Yuppies" (Bernstein, Alexander & Alexander, Codrington & Grant-Marshall, Hellekson, Jopling & Lancaster, cited in Roux, 2008: 24).

Table 2.3:   Description of the Baby Boomer generation

Criterion	Description
Childhood	They grew up during the time of nuclear bombs, the space race, the Cold War, the Vietnam War, the civil rights movement, and the first man walking on the moon. They played with Barbie dolls, hula-hoops, electric trains, and bicycles.
Value system	Their value system is to question everything, and not to trust their elders. Generally they have an attitude of "spend now and worry later", with strong anti-war and anti-government sentiments. Equal rights and opportunities are seen as fundamental values.
Stereotyped as	They are normally stereotyped as self-centred, unrealistic, political, and power-driven. They are normally workaholics, and their jobs are everything to them.
Entertainment and music	They appreciate more realistic movies with unhappy endings, and movies that push the limits of the movie censors. The acknowledgement and real influence of teenagers in society, where they were acknowledged as people with opinions and ideas, was realised during their youth. They prefer rock and roll music.
Characteristics	They are open-minded, workaholics, ambitious, optimists, success-driven, and crave for job status. They are service-orientated, self-driven, can build good relations, and have team loyalty.

Criterion	Description
Work style	They have a "get it done whatever it takes" approach, and if they don't get there, they will continue into the night or the weekend.
Work environment	They love to work in a democratic and flat organisational structure that creates equal opportunities, with a warm and friendly atmosphere.
Authority and leadership	They prefer respect for power and accomplishment, and will normally appreciate law and order.
Communication	They prefer formal communication through a structured network.
Recognition and rewards	They like public acknowledgement and career advancement.
Work and family	They believe that work comes first, that this is one's priority in life, and that it takes precedence over traditional family life and being happy at home.
Loyalty	They are normally loyal to the importance and meaning of work.
Technology	They have the frame of reference that technology is necessary for progress and getting the job done well.
Likes	Shopping, flamboyance, winning, leading, and visualisation.
Dislikes	Paying debts, and getting old.

From Table 2.3, several similarities and differences between the Baby Boomers and the Traditionalists can be identified. Unlike the Traditionalists, the Baby Boomers prefer a democratic workplace and a flat organisational structure that allows for equal opportunities. The Baby Boomers seem to be more accepting of technological changes as a means to achieve goals, while this change may be perceived as negative to the Traditionalists. One of the main differences between the Traditionalists and the Baby Boomers is that the Baby Boomers are more inclined to question than to accept, and generally are distrustful of authority, while the Traditionalists are more inclined to adhere to norms, and are trustful of authority. Similarly to the Traditionalists, the Baby Boomers prefer formal communication channels to informal ones.

2.2.1.3   Generation X

Generation X came of age during the social and economic turmoil that the previous generational cohort left in its wake, and they had to strike out on their own in a challenging economic period (Sessa et al., 2007: 51). This generational cohort was profoundly influenced by MTV, the HIV/AIDS epidemic, and an unstable economy characterised by competition (O'Bannon, 2001: 98). Due to the events that this generation was exposed to, as well as their experience of uncertainty, they became more individualistic and independent than the previous generations (Drago, 2006: 9). As explained by Smola and Sutton (2002: 363), Generation X came of age with financial, family and societal insecurity, rapid change, great diversity, and a lack of tradition. According to Codrington and Grant-Marshall (2006: 212), this generation grew up with the notion that the only thing that is constant in life is change. This orientation has led to Generation X being easily adaptable and capable of adjusting to changing situations. Because of their inclination to be open to change, Generation X finds it non-threatening to work in a multicultural environment, where they will strive towards self-satisfaction and happiness (Shragay & Tziner, 2011: 144). In South Africa, this is the first generation to be influenced by labour market regulatory codes, such as the Employment Equity Act, Act 55 of 1998, and the Basic Conditions of Employment Act, Act 75 of 1997 (Codrington & Grant-Marshall, 2006: 135).

Table 2.4 provides a description of Generation X, also referred to as the "Latchkey Generation" and the "Yiffies" (Bernstein, Alexander & Alexander, Codrington & Grant-Marshall, Hellekson, Jopling & Lancaster, cited in Roux, 2008: 26).

Table 2.4:   Description of Generation X

Criterion	Description
Childhood	They grew up during the time of the space shuttle, the dismantling of the Berlin Wall, the fall of communism, HIV/AIDS, and the early stages of the computer boom and the advent of the Internet. The most popular toys during their childhood days were Cabbage Patch dolls, early hand-held video games, new Barbie and Ken dolls, and theme toys based on TV characters and actors.
Value system	They are sceptical and independent, with a lack of organisational loyalty. They are normally highly educated, have technological savvy, and have high job expectations. They will seek to have a balanced life.
Stereotyped as	They are normally stereotyped as slackers, and as selfish, to the extreme. They are sometimes stereotyped as impatient and cynical.
Entertainment and music	They appreciate adventure movies, hero movies, and happy-ending movies with a follow-up, but, like the Baby Boomers, also push the limits of the movie censors. In their music tastes, they are fond of hip hop and rap music.
Characteristics	They are individualistic, self-reliant, pragmatic, hard-working, enthusiastic, and focus on relationships. They are not interested in long-term careers, and have limited corporate loyalty or status. They have an open-to-change attitude, and are adaptable, technologically literate, independent, creative, and not intimidated by authority.
Work style	Their work style is to find the fastest route to results, with protocol regarded as secondary.
Work environment	They are most effective in a functional and efficient organisational structure that moves at a fast pace. Access to leadership and information must be easy, and they love flexibility and fun.
Authority and leadership	They believe that rules are flexible and adaptable, and that collaboration is much more important than being led.
Communication	They have a casual and direct way of communicating, with a somewhat sceptical and questioning approach.
Recognition and rewards	They like a balance of fair compensation and ample time off as a reward for their hard work. They sometimes believe "when you work, you work smart, but when you play, you play hard".
Work and family	They value work, but it is more important to them to achieve work-life balance.

Criterion	Description
Loyalty	They are normally loyal to their individual career goals.
Technology	They see technology as a practical tool for getting things done in a fast and effective way.
Likes	Sharing, individualism, being with friends, and change.
Dislikes	Corporate culture, and being domineered by bossiness.

From Table 2.4, one may assert that this is the first generation to understand technology. Generation X is open to change, and can easily adapt. Unlike the Traditionalists and the Baby Boomers, Generation X prefers casual and direct communication channels, and they are inclined to be cynical. Once again, unlike the Traditionalists, Generation X appreciates flexibility, and will focus on results, rather than on doing things by the book, which is quite different from the work orientation of the previous generations. Another important difference between the previous generations and Generation X is that members of Generation X are more loyal to their individual careers than to the organisation.

2.2.1.4 Generation Y

Generation Y grew up at the time when everything was technologically connected (Sessa et al., 2007: 51). Various terms have been used to describe this generational cohort, including the "Dot.Com Generation" and the "Net Generation", due to their dependence on technology (Tapscott, 1998: 1), "Generation Why" (due to their inquisitive nature), and "Generation Next" (Drago, 2006: 111). Generation Y represents 40% of the South African population (Bevan-Dye, 2012: 37). This generation prefers to work in teams, and enjoys being challenged (Roux, 2008: 31). Generation Y also shows a preference for being employed at organisations that are highly technologically orientated (Codrington & Grant-Marshall, 2006: 136). Bevan-Dye (2012: 38) provides the following summary of the Internet as

representing the habitat of the Generation Y cohort: the place where they congregate, interact with others, acquire knowledge, play, work (Spero & Stone, 2004: 154), and shop (Nicholas, Rowlands, Clark & Williams, 2011: 29).

Apart from showing a preference for being promoted quickly through the ranks in an organisation, they also have a need to experience meaning and fulfilment in the workplace (Twenge & Campbell, 2008: 865). Codrington and Grant-Marshall (2006: 136) note that due to the self-confidence that this generation possesses, it seems that they will become leaders at a very young age. Table 2.5 provides a description of Generation Y, also referred to as "Generation Why", the "Internet Generation", the "PlayStation Generation", "Millennials", and "Nexters" (Bernstein, Alexander & Alexander, Codrington & Grant-Marshall, Hellekson, Jopling & Lancaster, cited in Roux, 2008: 17).

Table 2.5: Description of Generation Y

Criterion	Description
Childhood	They grew up during the time of the death of Princess Diana, the Clinton impeachment trial, scandals in the US government, the Iraq War in the Middle East, and the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 on the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon. The most popular toys during their childhood days were TV and video game systems, the Sony PlayStation, in-line skates, and self-driven toys based on themes from TV and the movies.
Value system	They are the most educated and the most technologically savvy generation. They are self-confident, highly tolerant, and members of the global community.
Stereotyped as	Having a short attention span, spoilt, disrespectful, and technology-dependent.
Entertainment and music	They appreciate the rebirth of Disney movies, superstars in movies, and reality TV everywhere, where average people become household names.

Criterion	Description
Characteristics	They are optimists, confident, morally strong, and ethical. They expect greater workplace flexibility, enjoy brainstorming and challenges, and want everything to be mobile, fast, accurate, and at their fingertips. They are mobile-orientated, technologically informed, and capable of multitasking.
Work style	They will work to the deadline, and not necessarily to work schedules.
Work environment	They prefer a work environment that is highly creative and collaborative. They are achievement-orientated and positive about doing what needs to be done.
Authority and leadership	They value autonomy, and are less inclined to accept a formal leadership position within a hierarchy.
Communication	They have a casual and directive way of communicating, and an attitude of being eager to please.
Recognition and rewards	They like individual and public praise, with the opportunity to broaden their skills and exposure.
Work and family	They value blending their personal life into their work environment.
Loyalty	They are identified as being loyal to the people involved with the project or work being handled at the time.
Technology	They see technology as a must, and not as a luxury. They normally master technology very fast, and have an attitude of "What else is there?" when it comes to technology.
Likes	Shopping, labels, brand names, family and friends, nature, the environment, and technology.
Dislikes	Dishonesty, unbalanced lifestyles, and exaggerated displays of wealth.

When comparing Generation Y with the three other cohorts, it is evident that this generation is in many respects similar and different to the other cohorts. Both Generation Y and Generation X prefer a casual and direct style of communication. By contrast, the Traditionalists and the Baby Boomers prefer formal communication with structured channels. Although both Generation Y and Generation X understand technology, Generation Y is technology-dependent. Conversely, the Traditionalists are more likely to resist technological changes, while the Baby Boomers view technology as only necessary for progress. Generation X and Generation Y can easily adapt to a multicultural type of

organisation, while the other generations will find it difficult to adjust. A similarity between Generation Y and the Baby Boomers is that they both appreciate some form of recognition at work.

From the above exposition of the various generational cohorts, their differences can be summarised as follows. The Traditionalists are generally loyal to their organisation, they follow rules, and they respect authority. The Baby Boomers seem to be loyal to their work, rather than to the organisation, while Generation X is likely to be loyal to their careers. By contrast, Generation Y is loyal only to their team members. Another important difference is the differing perspectives regarding work-life balance of the various generational cohorts. The Traditionalists are able to separate work and family, although their main focus is the family. Conversely, Generation Y is more likely to bring their personal life into the workplace, and they find it difficult to separate their personal life from their work. The Baby Boomers, on the other hand, regard work as their main priority, and their work is put before their family, while Generation X strives to achieve work-life balance.

2.2.2 Previous research findings regarding generational cohorts

Previous studies have been conducted regarding generational differences in the context of the workplace. In the following section, a summary of the findings of various researchers will be presented.

2.2.2.1 Generational differences regarding feedback

With regard to feedback, generational differences have been reported. Keepnews, Brewer, Kovner and Shin (2010: 155) found that Generation Y prefers a nurturing

workplace that provides constructive feedback on a continual basis. Van Rooy (2010: 13) reported that both Generation X and Generation Y value rewards, autonomy, and immediate feedback for performance, while the Traditionalists and the Baby Boomers prefer honest and thoughtful feedback (Keepnews et al., 2010: 156; Van Rooy, 2010: 13).

2.2.2.2 Generational differences regarding job satisfaction

Kowske, Rasch and Wiley (2010: 3) reported the following generational differences in terms of job satisfaction: the Traditionalist cohort had the highest level of job satisfaction, and Generation Y had the lowest level of job satisfaction. However, Generation Y scored high on overall company satisfaction, job security, and manager performance, while the Baby Boomers reported the lowest scores on these aspects (Kowske et al., 2010: 3). This finding holds important implications for managers, as job satisfaction has been found to be related to other organisational outcomes.

2.2.2.3 Generational differences regarding motivation

Interesting findings have been reported regarding the motivation of different generations. Keepnews et al. (2010: 158) found that the Baby Boomers have a higher level of work motivation than the younger generational cohorts (i.e. Generation X and Generation Y). Contradicting this finding, other empirical studies reveal that Generation Y has a higher level of extrinsic motivation than Generation X, the Baby Boomers, and the Traditionalists. In another study, by Leahy, McGinley, Thompson and Weese (2011: 9), it was established that Generation X has a high level of intrinsic motivation. From the above results, one can conclude that it is difficult to predict work motivation from a generational perspective.

Therefore, other variables also need to be taken into consideration, such as years of service (Yusoff & Kian, 2013: 102).

2.2.2.4 Generational differences regarding rewards

In terms of rewards, Generation X prefers instant rewards and recognition for performance (Gursoy et al., 2008: 455), while the Baby Boomers are very patient, and do not expect immediate rewards, recognition and promotion (Gursoy et al., 2008: 453). In a study by Keepnews et al. (2010: 158), generational differences were reported regarding perceived fairness of rewards. It was found that Generation X has a lack of distributive justice, meaning that they are of the opinion that they are not fairly rewarded for their input (hard work, and commitment), as compared to other employees (Nel, Kirsten, Swanepoel, Erasmus & Poisat, 2008: 15). Van der Walt and Du Plessis (2010: 5) indicated that for the Traditionalists, respect, employment opportunities, and reskilling represent valuable rewards, while for the Baby Boomers, status symbols and visible rewards are important. It was found that Generation X prefers management responsibilities and independence, while Generation Y places a high value on instant rewards and varied and meaningful tasks. All the generational cohorts were found to value recognition, specifically monetary recognition (Van der Walt & Du Plessis, 2010: 5).

2.2.2.5 Generational differences regarding work-life balance

Several researchers have reported generational differences in terms of work-life balance. According to Gursoy et al. (2008: 455), Generation X prefers less demanding jobs with stable working hours, as they allow them to spend sufficient time with their families. Hence, Generation X was rated higher on work-life balance

than other generations (Keepnews et al., 2010: 158). Gursoy et al. (2008: 454) maintain that the Baby Boomers are committed to their work, and that they would rather work longer hours than leave work incomplete. Research indicates that of all the generational cohorts, Generation X values work-life balance the most (Keepnews et al., 2010: 158), followed by Generation Y, with the Baby Boomers and the Traditionalists rating the lowest on this work value (Beutell, 2013: 2550).

Contradicting these findings, Van der Walt and Du Plessis (2010: 4) assert that striving for work-life balance is not unique to any one generation. However, what constitutes this balance differs from one generation to the next. As such, work-life balance for the Traditionalists can be achieved by means of retirement-orientated courses, to assist them with the transition into retirement (Van der Walt & Du Plessis, 2010: 4). By contrast, the Baby Boomers value assistance with finding meaning in their work, and purpose in their lives. Generation X appreciates opportunities to divide their time appropriately between work, family, and recreational activities, while Generation Y values flexibility in their work scheduling and work programmes, as well as in dress code (Van der Walt & Du Plessis, 2010: 4).

2.2.2.6   Generational differences regarding training

Research has been conducted regarding training preferences of different generations. Brown (2010: 270) reported that there is some difference in information technology, education, and entrepreneurial training between Generation X and Generation Y, but that the difference is insignificant. In another study, by Leahy et al. (2011: 4), it was found that Generation Y is more open to change and to acquiring new knowledge than Generation X, while the Baby Boomers are very unenthusiastic to learn new things.

2.2.2.7 Generational differences regarding problem solving

In terms of problem solving, Brown (2010: 270) reports a considerable difference between Generation X and Generation Y. Generation X was found to be confident in problem solving, and in assisting others to find solutions, while Generation Y prefers to work independently, and to avoid solving problems (Brown, 2010: 270). It is argued that Generation Y will most likely wait for a solution to present itself (Brown, 2010: 270), rather than proactively seek a solution to a problem.

2.2.2.8 Generational differences regarding values

In terms of values, Twenge, Freeman and Campbell (2012: 1050) found that Generation Y and Generation X value financial stability, community leadership, and residing close to family, friends, and relatives. Furthermore, Generation X and Generation Y reported not to be particularly interested in developing meaningful philosophies on life, in finding meaning and purpose, in keeping up to date with political affairs, and in becoming involved in programmes to clean up the environment, while the older generations rated high on these aspects (Twenge et al., 2012: 1050; Van der Walt & Du Plessis, 2007: 4).

2.2.3 Concluding remarks

According to Tolbize (2008: 1), there are two views regarding generational differences in the workplace; the one view asserts that shared events influence and define each generation, and the other view argues that ultimately employees may be regarded as "generic", and it therefore rejects generational cohort theory. Although cognisance is taken of the latter perspective, one can conclude from the

preceding exposition that certain generational differences do exist. Therefore, it will be interesting to determine whether significant generational differences in terms of work values and work ethics exist for a South African sample.

2.3   WORK ETHICS

The origin and the make-up of the construct of ethics have been contended for thousands of years, and many philosophers have offered opinions on the topic. Although not all scholars agree, it seems reasonable to conclude that the concept of ethics is derived from the Greek word *ethos*, which originally referred to customs, habitual conduct, usages, and character (Melden, 1967: 1) According to Jones, Sontag, Beckner and Fogelin (1977: 1), the concept of ethics refers to the pattern, norm, or code of conduct adopted by a group of people, although the group will not necessarily obey this code of conduct. It is interesting to note that different ethical codes exist in different societies, and that ethical codes are continually challenged by the members of a particular society, with the result that ethical codes change over time.

The concepts of ethics and morality are often used to explain each other, or they are used interchangeably, but there seems to be a difference between the two concepts. This is confirmed by Chidi, Ogunyomi and Badejo (2012: 117), who state that ethics refers mainly to an individual's character, while morality refers to customs or manners, and is usually applied to acts constituting behaviour. In order to obtain a proper understanding of the concept of ethics, it seems necessary to first understand the concept from the perspective of various theories that have been proposed over time.

2.3.1 Ethical theories

According to Kaptein and Wempe (2011: 1), there are three competing approaches to ethical analysis, namely consequentialism, deontology, and virtual ethics. It would appear that the main difference between these approaches lies in the focus area of each approach. Consequentialism focuses mainly on the outcome or consequence of an action, while deontology underscores the action itself. By contrast, virtual ethics focuses on the intention behind the action, in determining whether a particular behaviour was ethical or not. Each of these approaches to ethics will be discussed in the following sections.

2.3.1.1   Consequential theories of ethics

Consequential theories of ethics focus on the moral content of an action, which is determined by the real and the expected consequences of an action (Kaptein & Wempe, 2011: 1). Consequentialist ethics is also referred to as teleological ethics, due to these theories' emphasis on the outcome, or the "end" result. Rawls (cited in Fink, 2007: 144), refers to a teleological theory as one in which "the good is defined independently from the right, and then the right is defined as that which maximises the good". In this regard, Fisher and Lovell (2006: 124) state that the "rightness or goodness of an action is not intrinsic to that action but can only be judged by its consequences". Peterson (2008: 3) concurs with the previous authors, which confirms that teleology is concerned with the consequences of an action performed; he refers to teleology as "from the ends".

From the above definitions, one may conclude that in accordance with consequential, or teleological, theories of ethics, the ethicality, or moral content, of an action is determined by its outcome. If the outcome of an action is bad, it implies

that the action that was performed to reach that outcome was morally bad, and the converse is also true. In order to judge or determine whether the outcome of an action was good or bad, consequentialists use a standard, which is also referred to as a purpose, or an end.

Within the teleological theory, there are two different approaches that can be distinguished, namely egoism, which is a perspective of personal consequences, and utilitarianism, which is a perspective of social consequences (Racelis, 2013: 20).

2.3.1.1.1   Utilitarian theory of ethics

The theory of utilitarianism mainly refers to the usefulness of an act. Thus, when determining whether an action is right, consideration should be given to what a particular decision or act will lead to. If the decision or act leads to a great amount of good, the decision or act will be regarded as right, and therefore ethical. Racelis (2013: 19) asserts that utilitarianism only takes into consideration the act itself, the agent's character, and past occurrences or traditions that have a bearing on the act, which are irrelevant except insofar as they have an effect on the action. Kaptein and Wempe (2011: 2) state that in utilitarianism, the morality of an action is judged based on whether the consequences of that action have brought happiness to society. Thus, when faced with an ethical decision, the right decision will be the one that leads to the greatest good.

Within the utilitarian theory, a sub-theory can be identified which focuses mainly on the application of rules or policies. Kaptein and Wempe (2011: 7) refer to this theory as rule utilitarianism, and they state that according to this theory, every action should be judged separately on the basis of the criterion of the common good. Rule utilitarianism is mainly concerned with the rule that forms the basis of

the decision or act, which should be used to judge the decision or act in terms of its utility for society.

It seems that the utilitarian theory allows for different individuals to perceive different acts and behaviour as ethically correct based on the utility for the specific community. When viewing this assertion from a generational perspective, it would be interesting to establish whether different generations view different behaviour as ethically sound.

2.3.1.1.2   Egoistic theory of ethics

According to Kaptein and Wempe (2011: 2), the egoistic theory of ethics focuses on the criterion that one uses to determine whether an action is morally good or not, in other words to establish the pain or pleasure that one will derive as a result of said action. Fisher and Lovell (2006: 127) refer to the "greatest happiness principle" as "the foundation of morals". Racelis (2013: 20) asserts that the egoistic paradigm underscores the "maximization of shareholders' wealth", thus emphasising "the greatest happiness for the largest possible number of people", at times ignoring individual human rights in the process. Thus, the theory holds that an action is ethically correct if it results in the happiness of society, and that it is wrong if it does not result in the happiness of society (Fisher & Lovell, 2006: 127). Therefore, people are morally obliged to engage in actions that hold more benefits, at the lowest cost to society.

One of the weaknesses of this theory is that although certain actions can be beneficial to society, they can be morally wrong. Another major criticism of this theory is that the contention to "act in such a way that the impartial observer can sympathize with the said behaviour" raises the question of whether or not objective

norms of morality exist in this theoretical framework (Crockett, 2005: 191). This concern is addressed by the deontological theories of ethics.

2.3.1.2   Deontological theories of ethics

Quick and Nelson (2009: 53) stated that the deontological theories of ethics focus on the act itself, rather than its effects. According to these theories of ethics (also referred to as rule-based ethics), every individual has certain obligations, which are formed by different kinds of indisputable rights (Kaptein & Wempe, 2011: 10). Therefore, an action will be regarded as morally right if it was committed as a result of a certain duty, or if it conforms to a moral norm.

Kaptein and Wempe (2011: 11) distinguish between three types of deontological theories. The first type holds that duties are God-given. This sub-theory is based on God's commandments, and most religions established on revelation use this type of deontology. The second type maintains that duties are based on common sense. This approach is underpinned by the assumption that the nature of an action committed is used to determine whether the action is morally right or wrong. This can be determined by engaging in rational arguments, using intuition, or by following the "voice of one's conscience". The third approach states that duties are initiated by social contract (also referred to as contractarianism). This approach is mainly concerned with social relations in a particular society. This sub-theory's focus is on any obligation that an individual has towards another, such as promises made (spoken or unspoken), agreements (written or unwritten), and rules or conduct agreed upon (written or unwritten).

Many scholars believe that the theory proposed by Kant (1785) is "deontology personified" (Dierksmeier, 2013: 3; Louden, 1986: 473). In Kant's seminal work titled *Groundworks of the Metaphysics of Morals*, the author elaborated on (a) the idea that duty is the cornerstone of ethicality, (b) the notion that ethical behaviour must be a result of respect for moral law, (c) the idea that for moral action to be valid, consideration of probable outcomes is irrelevant, and (d) the notion that a disdainful disregard for results was the trademark of a good conscience (Dierksmeier, 2013: 3). Kant's (1785) theory stated that all moral rules can be traced back to a general rule, which could be called the "categorical imperative" (Kaptein & Wempe, 2011: 13). According to Fisher and Lovell (2006: 108), a categorical imperative refers to a command or principle that must be obeyed, without exception. Kant (1785) argued that an individual should place themselves in another person's position, and ask themselves whether they would make the same decision if placed in that situation (Quick & Nelson, 2011: 53).

Theorists such as John Rawls (1971) have extended the original theory of contractarianism, by including hypothetical agreements, which refers to decisions that a rational individual would make in an ideal situation. For example, although it may not be included in an individual's conditions of employment, it is generally agreed that employees must respect their colleagues. The modern view of contractarianism went beyond this hypothetical agreement, stating that the golden rule is to treat others in the way you want to be treated; thus, if you want to be respected, respect others (Kaptein & Wempe, 2011: 11).

2.3.1.3 Virtue ethics theory

Virtue ethics, also referred to as character theories of ethics, is premised on Aristotle's popular doctrine of virtue as a "mean". This implies that acting virtuously requires behaviour on an appropriate intermediate level between two extremes

(Racelis, 2013: 17). Virtues are referred to as "personal qualities that provide the basis for individuals to lead a good, noble or happy life" (Fisher & Lovell, 2006: 101). Racelis (2013: 18) defines virtue as a disposition to choose according to a rule, namely the rule by which a truly virtuous man with inherent moral insight would choose. According to Kaptein and Wempe (2011: 19), virtue ethics underscores the traits of the individual in question, rather than judging moral obligations in terms of the action, or the consequences of the action. The term "traits" seems to be an all-encompassing concept, referring not only to personal characteristics, but also to a person's values, emotions, motivators, and perceptions, that is, a person's character. Consequently, an individual with a good character will act ethically and with integrity. According to Solomon (2003: 44), virtue ethics consists of six dimensions, namely community, excellence, role identity, integrity, judgement (*phronēsis*), and holism.

An understanding of the various theoretical paradigms that underpin the study of ethics increases one's awareness of the different ways in which individuals distinguish between right and wrong. If organisational leadership takes cognisance of different ethical theories, it is likely to improve their understanding of employees' behaviour at work. In the following section, ethics will be discussed in the context of work, that is, work ethics.

2.3.2 Work ethics

Due to the fact that the distinction between right and wrong has become increasingly blurred, employees are faced with ethical dilemmas on a daily basis (Robbins et al., 2009: 16). Bergh and Theron (2009: 421) define work ethics as a productive orientation which refers to valuing work as compulsory and a worthwhile life interest in order to achieve certain objectives, while human beings generally do not enjoy work, and have to be coerced into doing or achieving anything. Miller et

al. (2002: 453), as well as Ravangard, Sajjadnia, Jafari, Shahsavan, Bahmaie and Bahadori (2014: 3), indicate that work ethics encompasses attitudes and beliefs concerning work behaviour, and is a multidimensional construct reflected in behaviour. Furthermore, work values are associated with work and work-related activities, but work ethics, as such, refers to attitudes and beliefs, as opposed to behaviour. Thus, employees' work ethics may be regarded as the overall framework from which work values emanate, which, in turn, influences individuals' behaviour at work. According to Fox (2006: 17), ethical behaviour forms the foundation of all managerial actions, and is crucial in developing countries such as South Africa.

In the current study, work ethics is measured as consisting of seven components, namely self-reliance, morality, leisure, hard work, centrality of work, wasted time, and delay of gratification. In Table 2.6, each of these components are defined.

Table 2.6:   Definition of work ethics components

Component	Definition	Author(s)
Self-reliance	Depending/leaning on oneself, and not relying on others.	Dwyer (2012: 103)
Morality/ethics	Morality refers to customs or manners that are usually applied to one's behaviour, while ethics mainly has to do with an individual's character.	Chidi et al. (2012: 117)
Leisure	Refers to spending time in personally meaningful and pleasurable activities.	Chun, Lee, Kim and Heo (2012: 440)
Hard work	Belief in the value of hard work, that is, the assumption that hard work yields desired results, and ultimately fosters job satisfaction.	Mahembe and Chipunza (2009: 35); Miller et al. (2002: 451)
Centrality of work	Beliefs about work in general.	Bal and Kooij (2011: 499)

Component	Definition	Author(s)
Wasted time	Spending time on wasted activities, which will not result in the production of any valuable goods or services.	Horman and Kenley (2005: 52)
Delay of gratification	Is associated with receiving immediate rewards, or attaining one goal immediately, in order to chase long-range objectives.	Abd-El-Fattah and Al-Nabhani (2012: 93)

Unethical decision making is a major concern for the majority of contemporary workplaces (Robbins et al., 2009: 16). The question which now arises is whether work ethics can be fostered, or whether it is something an individual brings to the organisation, which cannot be changed. In an article by Bowden and Smythe (2008: 19), this question was raised, and it was concluded that although training may increase an employee's intellectual awareness of ethical decision making, it does not ensure that the employee will act ethically.

It would appear that a logical point of departure for organisations would be to develop a code of ethics, in order to raise employee awareness of ethical behaviour and decision making, as well as the values that the organisation subscribes to. Bowden and Smythe (2008: 21) support this assumption, but state that when such a code is developed, it is crucial that employees participate in the development of the code and assume ownership for it, and that the code is observed by all employees.

2.3.2.1   Code of work ethics

Previously it was mentioned that organisations cannot ensure ethical behaviour by employees through provision of training and development initiatives. However, it does seem important that organisations develop guidelines to assist employees to become more aware of ethical conduct. A code of ethical behaviour is also crucial for new entrants, so as to raise awareness of the ethical behaviour that is expected

in a particular organisation. This assertion is confirmed by Mafunisa (2008: 83), who asserts that employees need to know the basic principles and standards they are expected to abide by, as well as the boundaries of acceptable conduct. As such, a concise, well-published statement of core ethical standards and principles is essential. According to Outten (cited in Hoiles & Corney, 2007: 3), a code of ethics can be defined as a set of norms based on the belief system or values of a group of individuals who agree to adhere to universally held philosophical principles.

Mafunisa (2008: 85) distinguishes between two types of ethical codes of conduct, namely phantom codes of ethics, and formal codes of conduct. The former can be defined as examples of ethical behaviour cited by senior management, which are unwritten, and not provided for by legislation, or any formal rules or regulations (Mafunisa, 2000: 25). It is reported that employees entering the workplace are more sensitive to, and feel the need to challenge, apparent hypocrisy, for example when a manager fails to live up to the standards as stipulated in the organisational code of ethics (Webley, 2011: 7). Rosenow and Rosenthal (cited in Mafunisa, 2008: 86), define a formal code of conduct as a set of principles that is adopted by associations or institutions to delineate the values that the institution stands for.

Other strategies which organisations can consider to create an ethical organisational culture include ethics committees, ethics communication systems, ethics audits, a helpline to report unethical behaviour, whistle-blower protection, rewards for ethical behaviour, and punishment for unethical behaviour (Nelson & Quick, 2006: 139). Robbins et al. (2009: 435) assert that it is important that organisations create cultures that are high in risk tolerance, and low to moderate in aggressiveness, and that focus on means as well as outcomes.

2.3.2.2   Ethical decision making in the workplace

Decision making is one of the most important activities in an organisation, as every decision has either positive or negative implications for the organisation. Bergh (2011: 247) asserts that ethics is of particular importance during the decision-making process. Viewed from a holistic perspective, a particular decision may have implications for not only employees and the organisation, but also for the community at large. Robbins et al. (2009: 129) affirm that it is increasingly expected of organisations to behave in an ethical and socially responsible way. Therefore, it seems crucial that "right" decisions are made at all times in any given organisation. For a decision to be regarded as ethical, employees should strive not only to do the right thing, but also to uphold their moral duty throughout the decision-making process (Bowen, 2005: 315).

The ethical theories which were presented in section 2.3.1 view ethical decision making from various theoretical perspectives. The deontological theories regard autonomy as a "moral absolute", and a condition for ethical decision making (Sullivan, cited in Bowen, 2005: 314). This implies that individuals should be able to make an ethical decision on their own, without the influence or vote of the majority. Utilitarianism, on the other hand, holds a different view in this regard. In terms of behavioural utilitarianism, an ethical decision should be based on the outcome of an act, but the act must be for the "greater good" (Robbins et al., 2009: 129). Rule utilitarianism proposes that a decision should be based on predictive outcomes of similar past occurrences, and should be favoured by the majority (Bowen, 2005: 315).

When one considers the democratic nature of South African society, one can argue that in this context, ethical decision making should be viewed from a utilitarian perspective. On the other hand, management are expected to act autonomously, which implies that they should be able to make decisions independently. Robbins

et al. (2009: 247) argue that for an individual to make ethical decisions, they must possess three qualities. The first quality is the ability to identify an ethical issue and the different consequences of each alternative decision. The second quality is confidence to seek out different opinions about what is right in a particular situation. The third quality is willingness to make a decision when there is no clear answer to, or complete information available regarding, a particular ethical issue. Even when all three qualities are present, there is no guarantee that ethical decisions will be made in every situation (Robbins et al., 2009: 247).

2.3.3 Concluding remarks

An organisation's reputation in terms of ethical behaviour will have an impact on the type of recruit that enters the workplace (Bergh, 2011: 247). It is assumed that ethical individuals will want to work for organisations that are ethical, and that ethical consumers will prefer to support ethical organisations. Similarly, individuals will want to work for companies that have the same values that they have. In the following section, values, with specific reference to work values, will be discussed.

2.4   VALUES

Values are often thought of as something highly esteemed or particularly important to an individual (Schwartz, 2006: 1). Due to individual differences, what is perceived as important or valuable to one individual may not be important or valuable to another individual (Schwartz, 2006: 1). For example, one employee may value job security, and another employee may value fiscal reward, and ultimately these values will influence their behaviour at work. Values also contain a judgemental element, since they influence what an individual regards as right or wrong, thus referring to ethical behaviour (Robbins et al., 2009: 100). Hence,

values do not only predict attitudinal and behavioural outcomes (Rohan, cited in Montgomery, 2011: 130), but are also regarded as a significant predictor of ethical behaviour (Quick & Nelson, 2011: 126).

2.4.1 Definition of values

Values, according to Rokeach (1973: 4), can be defined in terms of permanent beliefs and specific behavioural patterns which are preferred. Notwithstanding this definition of values, various authors have offered differing definitions for this construct. In Table 2.7 a summary is presented, in chronological order, of some of the definitions which have been proposed for the construct of values (Koivula, 2008: 6; Montgomery, 2011: 131).

Table 2.7:   Definitions of values

Author(s)	Definition of values
Lewin (1952)	Values influence behaviour, but they do not have the character of a goal. Values can determine which type of activity has a positive valence and which type of activity has a negative valence for an individual in a given situation.
Kluckhohn (1954)	A concept of the desirable, which influences selection from available modes, means, and ends of action.
Rokeach (1973)	An enduring belief that a specific mode of conduct or end-state of existence is personally or socially preferable to an opposite or converse mode of conduct or end-state of existence.
Feather (1975)	Abstract structures or schemas that can be represented as associative networks, with each central value linked to a set of attitudes and beliefs.
Hofstede (1983)	Broad tendencies to prefer certain states of affairs over others.

Author(s)	Definition of values
Schwartz and Bilsky (1987)	Concepts or beliefs pertaining to desirable end-states or behaviours, transcending specific situations, guiding selection or evaluation of behaviours and events, and ordered by relative importance.
Schwartz (1992)	A criterion people use to select and justify actions and to evaluate people (including oneself) and events.
Hechter (1993)	Relatively general and durable internal criteria for evaluation.
Feather (1996)	Values are beliefs about desirable or undesirable ways of behaving or about the desirability or otherwise of general goals.
Schwartz (1999)	Values are conceptions of the desirable that guide the way social actors select actions, evaluate people and events, and explain their actions and evaluations
Verplanken and Holland (2002)	Cognitions that may define a situation, elicit goals, and guide action.

Table 2.7 indicates that researchers have defined the concept of values differently over time. Although several researchers have suggested different definitions for the concept of values, it is evident that there are also points of similarity in the definitions of some authors. From the cited definitions, it can be distilled that values are "desirable beliefs" that are used as "criteria for evaluation" to "influence behaviour".

Some of the definitions of values offered in Table 2.7 underscore the presence of a ranking when it comes to values. When an individual ranks their values in terms of importance and intensity, this is referred to as a value system (Bergh, 2011: 260). According to Koivula (2008: 7), the worth that an individual will attach to a specific value will be influenced by the individual's unique frame of reference, thus their life experiences (Koivula, 2008: 7). An individual's value system will be used as a frame of reference to evaluate behaviour, not only their own, but also that of other people. Due to the fact that people are different, they value different things, and, as a result, each individual will have a unique value system.

2.4.2 Characteristics of values

The main characteristics of values are summarised as follows (Schwartz, 2006: 1; Quick & Nelson, 2011: 127):

- Values are enduring beliefs, which implies that values are developed over a lifetime, and they are firmly held opinions that individuals embrace, which guide their life and their decision making.

- Values are learned, which means that individuals are not born with values, but that they are learned as the individual develops and matures. Various events and significant others influence an individual's values, such as parents, societies, and cultures. Therefore, values may be regarded as relatively stable and enduring (Robbins et al., 2009: 100).

- Values are a motivational construct, which implies that they are inherent elements that push the individual to attain certain goals. For example, if an individual values power and achievement, they will be motivated to work hard in order to achieve, and to be promoted in the workplace.

- Values transcend particular actions and situations. Thus, even though values significantly influence particular actions and situations (Latkovikj et al., 2015: 313), they are not limited to those actions and situations.

- Values are guidelines, which means that they guide an individual's judgement of behaviour, people, and actions.

When considering the characteristics of values, the importance of studying the concept of values come to the fore. De Groot and Steg (2008: 331) argue that there are two reasons why values must be questioned. Firstly, research has proved that values can be used to explain behaviour, as well as particular beliefs, and that values can thus be used to predict variables such as attitudes and behavioural intention (De Groot & Steg, 2008: 331). This argument is confirmed by Pakizeh,

Gebauer and Maio (2006: 459), who assert that values are the linking concept between attitudes and personality, and are thus the "most important predictor of behaviour and attitudes". Secondly, values can be used to explain differences and similarities between individuals, groups, nations, and cultures (De Groot & Steg, 2008: 331). This assertion confirms the relevance of studying values from a generational perspective.

2.4.3 Individual values

Individuals differ in terms of the values they hold. According to Hofstede (1983: 40), individual differences occur in terms of four dimensions, namely power distance, individualism versus collectivism, uncertainty avoidance, and masculinity versus femininity. The first dimension, namely power distance, underscores the "extent to which power is distributed equally within a society and the degree to which that society accepts the power distribution" (Hofstede, 1983: 40). For example, in societies characterised by high power distance, inequality of power is rife, and the preference is for an authoritarian leadership style. By contrast, low power distance is indicative of a de-emphasis on individual differences in power and wealth, with a focus on equality and opportunity for all. Thus, individuals in such a society may prefer to have more autonomy and independence (Blake-Beard, 2009: 15).

The second dimension focuses on the difference between individualism and collectivism, which refers to "the extent to which individuals base their actions on self-interest versus the interests of the group" (Hofstede, 2001: 30). In highly individualistic cultures, the rights of the individual are paramount, and relationships with others are regarded as unattached. In collectivistic societies, the extended family, and collective relationships that fosters mutual responsibility, is valued (Blake-Beard, 2009: 15). Thus, in a society characterised by high individualism,

autonomy and self-interest are valued, while a highly collectivistic society is characterised by concern for group interest.

The third dimension relates to uncertainty avoidance, which can be defined as "the degree to which individuals require set boundaries and clear structures" (Hofstede, 1983: 40). Blake-Beard (2009: 15) refers to uncertainty avoidance as the level of tolerance for uncertainty and ambiguity. A society categorised by a high degree of uncertainty avoidance emphasises enforced laws, rules and regulations, to ensure order, and to reduce uncertainty and ambiguity. In contrast, a society with low levels of uncertainty avoidance is characterised by few rules, where flexibility and openness to change, as well as risk taking, are promoted (Blake-Beard, 2009: 15). In this regard, Sharifi and Zhang (2001: 774), as cited in Salamzadeh, Nejati and Salamzadeh (2013: 178), introduced the concept of agility, which has two parts to it, namely responding to change appropriately, and exploiting change as vital opportunities for growth.

The last dimension relates to masculinity versus femininity, that is, differentiation between masculine characteristics and feminine characteristics within a societal context (Hofstede, 1983: 42). Cultures which are characterised by a high degree of gender differentiation, thereby reinforcing traditional masculine work role models, value male characteristics, such as achievement, control, and power (Blake-Beard, 2009: 15). Thus, a predominantly masculine culture places value on success, competition, and career achievement, while a predominantly feminine culture highly esteems relationships, compromise, life skills, and social performance.

Whetten and Cameron (1998: 325) postulate that cultural differences can have either a positive or a negative impact on the organisation. Some of the challenges that could arise as a result of cultural differences in the organisation include miscommunication and misperceptions, which may ultimately lead to loss of

productivity and conflict (Merchant, 2010: 24). Conversely, Whetten and Cameron (1998: 325) assert that when people of different cultural backgrounds interact, it affords opportunities for creativity and innovation, as well as improved decision making.

2.4.4 Values and personality

Personality is defined as the way in which individuals react and interact with others and the world around them (Crafford, Moerdyk, Nel, O'Neil, Schlechter & Southey, 2007: 48). Research indicates that values and personality influence each other (Bergh, 2011: 273). However, personality traits and values differ in terms of the following. Firstly, values consider what an individual conceives as important (i.e. enduring goals), while personality traits refers to what an individual is like, that is, the individual's enduring disposition (Roccas, Sagiv, Schwartz & Knafo, cited in Koivula, 2008: 8). Secondly, personality traits are regarded as innate and enduring, guiding an individual (e.g. preferences and communication style), while values are vulnerable to change, and may be influenced by the social environment (Harding & Hikspoor, 1995: 447; Steyn & Kotze, 2004: 6).

Apart from the differences between values and personality traits, which have been cited above, similarities have also been established. Roccas, as cited in Koivula (2008: 8), asserts that individuals seek alignment between their values and their behaviour, which implies that the individual will display preferred behaviour which is in line with their values. In addition, personality traits may have an influence on values, as individuals justify or judge right from wrong based on their individual preferences (Roccas, cited in Koivula, 2008: 8). Spranger, cited in Bergh (2011: 273), distinguished six value orientations, which are intrinsic in the personality of each individual, namely theoretical, economic, social, power, religious and aesthetic value orientations. One of these value orientations is usually dominant in

an individual's personality. For example, the aesthetic person will value harmonious relationships with colleagues and supervisors.

2.4.5 Values and needs

According to Montgomery (2011: 132), values originate from needs. Rokeach (cited in Koivula, 2008: 9), states that the core objective of values is to satisfy needs. Dose (1997: 210) suggested that values can be seen as goals, by examining them as a system of needs. Thus, values correspond to goals, which are based on a system of needs. Needs thus precede values. Arnolds and Boshoff (2001: 39) assert that one of the most widely used theories to explain needs is Maslow's hierarchy of needs. This theory is characterised by a number of individual needs, which are hierarchically subordinated to the supreme value of psychological growth, self-actualisation, and taking control of one's own life and destiny (Pietersen, 2005: 55). However, when satisfying needs, it must be done in a socially acceptable manner (Koivula, 2008: 9). For example, when a person has a physiological need, such as hunger, one cannot steal food.

2.4.6 Values and demographic variables

Demographic variables refer to factors such as background, age, education, and gender, which seem to influence individuals to display some values more often or more easily than others. Kraut and Korman (1998: 5) identify the changing demographic structure of the workforce as one of the main influences that cause value changes to occur over time.

2.4.6.1   Values and background

In terms of background, Schwartz (2006: 5) mentions that individuals regard values that they have access to as more important than values that are not easily accessible. However, this does not apply to all values. It would appear that values concerning material well-being (e.g. power and security) increase in importance with decreased accessibility, and, conversely, with increased accessibility, their importance diminishes (Schwartz, 2006: 5).

2.4.6.2   Values and age

The differences in values across different age groups might be attributed to a distinct psychosocial environments (Koivula, 2008: 39). According to Inglehart, as cited in Schwartz (2006: 6), it seems that older persons around the world value economic and physical security, rather than self-expression and quality of life, while younger people esteem the latter to be more important. Steyn and Kotze (2004: 8) argue that societal changes over time have resulted in significant differences in values between the traditional workforces of the industrial era and the emerging workforces of the knowledge economy.

2.4.6.3   Values and gender

In the social arena, primary relations have changed dramatically, owing to the decline of the patriarchal family (Castells, 1997: 134). Traditional social conventions dictated that a women's place was at home, raising children, while a man was seen as the breadwinner, who provided for the family. These were the same conventions that shaped individuals' value system, consequently leading to

males and females having different values. In a study conducted by Yegletu and Raju (2009: 125), findings show that values of tradition, conformity, and benevolence are most important to women, while men value self-direction, stimulation, and achievement. Another study, conducted by Tangen (2010: 4), confirmed previous findings, when it found that males and females have different values. According to Tangen (2010: 4), males value accomplishment, and are competency-orientated, while females value moral and intrinsic values. It is therefore evident from the above findings that there are gender differences in values, and that values may be shaped by the conventions dominating societies.

2.4.6.4   Values and education

With increases in education, an individual's frame of reference changes, and, consequently, the way they see and interpret stimuli changes. Although values may be developed from a young age, education can influence value changes. According to Huotari, Kujanpää, Sihvonen and Stenvall (2010: 132), education provides students with the foundation of values that they need for the world of work. On the other hand, for those who are already in the work environment, "education builds up their professional identities" (Huotari et al., 2010: 132) and provides a strong value base. It is thus important to acknowledge that education forms values as people mature. Furthermore, management must acknowledge that the more qualified employees become, the more their values and professional qualities may change.

2.4.7 Societal values within which organisations operate

Each society has its own unique values, derived from the culture of that particular country. Because this study was conducted in South Africa, specific reference will be made to the values applicable to this country.

2.4.7.1 South African values

Empirical research conducted by Schwartz (1992: 2) states that there are 10 universal values which are embraced by all individuals in every part of the world. However, in the South African context, *ubuntu* values are considered as the building block of a South African value system, and are therefore extremely important to South African society. To be able to understand the value systems of South Africans, it is important that one first understand *ubuntu* values.

2.4.7.1.1 The value of *ubuntu*

In English, the word "*ubuntu*" is translated as "humanity", or "humaneness" (Poovan, 2005: 16). It is an Nguni (i.e. an ethnic group within South Africa) word that conveys that all people are connected with each other, and are reliant on each other (Poovan, 2005: 16). In isiXhosa (i.e. another ethnic group within South Africa) where the concept of *ubuntu* originated, the term means "Umntu ngumntu ngabantu", which, translated into English, means "I exist because you exist" (Sayers, 2009: 8), or "A person is a person because of other people", or "I am because we are" (Mbigi, 1997: 2, cited in Poovan, 2005: 16).

The word "*ubuntu*", in various forms, can be found over a wide geographical area, encompassing Eastern, Central and Southern Africa. For example, the Sukuma tribe in Tanzania refers to "*bantu*", while the Herero ethnic group in Namibia refers to "*avandu*". In Central Africa, three words, namely "*ngumtu*", "*kubunty*", and "*edubuntu*", are used to express the same sentiment (Taylor, 2014: 331). One can therefore conclude that *ubuntu* is an African way of life that caters for healthy human relationships, and also paves the way for non-discrimination on the basis of culture, age, and gender, as it promotes the spirit of humanity, interdependence, and oneness. It further embraces differences, and encourages a sense of belonging to one big family (community), as well as a relationship with nature (Sayers, 2009: 8).

Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu, former Archbishop of Cape Town, describes *ubuntu* as follows: "Ubuntu ... It speaks to the very essence of being human. When we want to give high praise to someone we say, 'Yu, u nobuntu': he or she has Ubuntu. This means that they are generous, hospitable, friendly, caring and compassionate. They share what they have and are able to go the extra mile for the sake of others. I am human because I belong, I participate, I share. A person with Ubuntu is open and available to others, affirming of others, does not feel threatened that others are able and good; for he or she has a proper self-assurance that comes with knowing that he or she belongs in a greater whole. We believe that a person is a person through other persons, that my humanity is caught up, bound up, inextricably, with yours. When I dehumanize you, I inexorably dehumanize myself." (Tutu, 1999: 34-35) From this definition, it is clear that *ubuntu* values are closely related to or defined using elements such as humanity, sharing, caring, compassion, respect, empathy, and generosity (Matolino & Kwindingwi, 2013: 199).

At the heart of every African lies the spirit of togetherness, collectivism, and servicing others (Taylor, 2014: 332). Hence, the South African government deemed it important to include the principles of servicing people in a warm and pleasant manner, also referred to as the "Batho Pele principles", in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996 (SA, 1996).

2.4.7.1.2   Batho Pele principles

The Batho Pele principles (*batho pele* is a Sesotho phrase, which translates as "people first") were introduced in the White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery, which was passed in 1997, and which changed the way services were delivered, to a more customer-orientated service delivery (Ingle, 2011: 76). According to Fraser-Moleketi (2006: 46), prior to 1994, services were delivered based on direct discrimination on the basis of race and gender. According to the Department of Public Service and Administration, the Batho Pele principles are about improving the quality of service delivery to customers, and they call attention to accessibility, efficiency, and accountability to the larger public (the end users).

The Batho Pele principles consist of the following, as explained by Fraser-Moleketi (2006: 69-70) and Khoza, Du Toit and Roos (2010: 59):

- Consultation: The public must first be consulted in terms of which services they would like to be provided to them, and how they would like them to be provided.
- Service standards: The public must be informed of the type of services to be provided, so that they can be able to benchmark.
- Increasing access: All members of the public must have equal access to the service.
- Ensuring courtesy: Services must be provided in a civil and pleasant 3

- Providing more and better information: The public must know of all the services they will be provided with, and how they will be provided.
- Increasing openness and transparency: Iinformation about the services to be provided must be availed in detail to the public. The details can include costs, departments, and person(s) responsible for service delivery.
- Remedying mistakes and failures: In the case where the public is not happy about services rendered, corrective measures should be taken.
- Getting the best value for money.

The Batho Pele principles are guiding principles for not only government institutions, but for both public and private organisations operating within the South African context. From the above exposition, one may conclude that application of these principles in an organisation will yield many benefits. The organisation that implements the Batho Pele principles is likely to satisfy its customers and increase customer loyalty, and, as a result, increase profits, competitiveness, and sustainability (Pietersen, 2005: 55). Mangolisa and Damane (2001: 31) assert that organisations infused with a pervasive spirit of caring, harmony, hospitality, and respect will enjoy a more sustainable competitive advantage.

2.4.8 Work values

From the above exposition on values, one may conclude that individuals have different values, which are the standard, the norm, or the criterion used for judging what is right and what is wrong, or what is preferred and what is not preferred. When applied to the workplace, this concept is referred to as work values (Steyn & Kotze, 2004: 5). In the organisational context, values can be used to select desired or desirable work, or a desired or desirable work situation. Although the concept of values is very broad, work values are more specific, as they apply to only one sphere of an individual's life, namely work (Uçanok, 2008: 157).

The study of work values is very important to organisations, because of the relationship of work values with other organisational outcomes. Ho (2006: 10) states that "work values and sense of life purpose can be major factors in the level of commitment and personal involvement that people have in the workplace". Thus, work values are conceived of as a determining factor of work commitment, and as an influence that enforces the meaning of work (Ho, 2006: 10). Ueda and Ohzono (2013: 98) defines work values as "important factors that influence motivation and positive behaviour at work". Thus, one may argue that an individual's commitment, motivation, and behaviour towards their work depend on the work values that they hold. Furthermore, if an individual holds positive work values, they are more likely to be committed and motivated, and to display positive behaviour within an organisation.

Previously it was indicated that individual differences occur with regard to values. Applied to the work context, different employees hold different values, and thus work values. This study will investigate whether work values differ when one considers the different generational cohorts that are currently represented in the workplace. Torgler (2011: 1) maintains that it is important for organisational leaders to study and understand the work values of individuals, because people spend most of their days, and a quarter of their lives, at work. In addition, Twenge, Campbell, Hoffman and Lance (2010: 5) argue that understanding the work values of young individuals will assist organisations to appropriately structure jobs, working conditions, compensation packages, and human resource policies in such a way as to attract individuals from Generation Y. Furthermore, work values influence employees' affective responses in the workplace (Ho, Oldenburg, Day & Sun, 2012: 64).

2.4.8.1   Definition of work values

The literature on work values is characterised by a proliferation of definitions of this concept (Steyn & Kotze, 2004: 13). Wong and Yuen (2015: 31) cite Ros (1999: 51) and Super (1995: 56) when they state that "work values" is a term used to describe feelings, attitudes, and beliefs held in regard to employment in general, and to specific types of occupations, in particular including attributes such as prestige, remuneration, job security, and the work environment. Hattrup, Mueller and Joens' (2007: 481) definition confirms the above definition, when they define work values as "beliefs about the desirability of specific outcomes of working". Consistent with these definitions, Ho (2006: 11) and Zedeck, cited in Uçanok (2008: 157), define work values as the goals that one attempts to achieve through working. Although these definitions refer to desirable beliefs, as well as the outcomes of these beliefs, in the work context, it seems that these definitions are somewhat vague, since they do not specifically refer to the evaluative component of values, nor the way in which they influence behaviour.

Yet-Mee, Chuen-Khee and Aik-Phoay's (2008: 147) definition of work values is more all-encompassing; it states that work values "comprise one's preferences for the type of work or work environment, beliefs about the importance of the prerequisites in a work situation and the guiding principles of job related decisions, action and behaviours". Another comprehensive definition, by Uçanok (2008: 159), states that work values "function as the evaluative standards employees use to interpret their work experiences and determine the meaning that individuals attribute to work, jobs, organizations, and specific events and conditions". For the purposes of this study, work values will be regarded as individual work preferences, which will function as the evaluative standards for employees to determine whether their work and their work environment are desirable, which, in turn, will influence their behaviour towards their job, their work, and the organisation.

2.4.8.2 Work centrality

The concept of work centrality is derived from work values, and may be regarded as the significance (or value) of work to an individual, that is, the degree of importance that work plays in an individual's life (Sharabi, 2014: 507). Another more general definition offered defines work centrality as beliefs about work in general (Bal & Kooij, 2011: 499; Sharabi & Harpaz, 2010: 379). These beliefs are known to be learnt when one grows up, through the process of socialisation (De Klerk, 2001: 6). The term "work centrality" is often used interchangeably with the term "work involvement", but work centrality is distinguished from job involvement and organisational commitment, because these constructs do not specifically refer to an individual's work (Kanungo, cited in Sharabi & Harpaz, 2010: 380).

Work centrality is also distinguished from workaholism (Bal & Kooij, 2011: 499). The construct of workaholism refers to spending an unnecessarily large amount of time and energy on work which is beyond the employer's expectations and the job requirements, which may result in undesirable work and health consequences (Burke & Fiksenbaum, 2009: 257; Schaufeli, Taris & van Rhenen, 2008: 175). The main difference between work centrality and workaholism seems to lie in the outcomes thereof. While workaholism is associated with low quality of interpersonal relations and social malfunction (Schaufeli et al., 2008: 179), work centrality is associated with organisational commitment, job satisfaction, participative decision making (Kanungo, cited in Sharabi & Harpaz, 2010: 380), and employee engagement (Bal & Kooij, 2011: 499). Generational differences have been reported regarding work centrality, where it has been found that Generation X and Generation Y place higher value on leisure time than do the Baby Boomers (Bergh, 2011: 283).

2.4.8.3 The dimensions of work values

Previously, most research regarding work values has focused on determining the dimensionality of these values, and identifying the factors that influence, or are influenced by, work values (Ueda & Ohzono, 2013: 98). Work values may be categorised according to their types. Each of these classification sytems of work values will be discussed briefly.

Nord, Brief, Atieh and Dohery, (cited in Uçanok, 2008: 158), posit a two-dimensional structure for work values, and they distinguish between intrinsic and extrinsic work values. Intrinsic work values include values such as self-actualisation, personal growth and development, the opportunity to be creative, and use of initiative (Steyn & Kotze, 2004: 14). Hirschi (2010: 6) indicates that intrinsic work values refer to variety at work, helping other people, independence at work, leadership and responsibility, and interesting work, while extrinsic work values refer to high income, job security, fast and easy entry to the job, leisure time besides work, and prestigious work. Thus, intrinsic work values refer to the work that an employee does, while extrinsic work values are regarded as the outcome or consequence of the work (Twenge et al. 2010: 5), or the end-state that comes after the work, which are independent of the work itself (Nord et al., cited in Uçanok, 2008: 158). Various scholars (i.e. Hirschi, 2010: 6; Liu & Lei, 2012: 50; Twenge et al., 2010: 5) support the dichotomy of intrinsic and extrinsic work values.

Lui and Lei (2012: 50) also divide work values into a two-dimensional structure, but link them with rewards, and they conceive of work values as intrinsic rewards and extrinsic rewards. In their conception of work values, intrinsic rewards refer to the pleasure that an individual gets from the work itself, such as interest, challenge, and responsibility, while extrinsic rewards are the pleasures that an individual gets from the work, but that are not related to the work tasks, such as prestige, security, and salary (Lui & Lei, 2012: 50). Rokeach (cited in Popovska, Latkovic, Jakimovski

and Popovski (2015: 158), distinguishes between terminal and instrumental values. Terminal values are personal beliefs aimed at achieving lifelong goals, while instrumental values are personal beliefs about behaviour patterns that are needed to achieve terminal values. Robbins et al. (2009: 101) define terminal values as desirable end states, while instrumental values are defined as preferable modes of behaviour or means needed to achieve the terminal values.

Elizur (cited in Uçanok, 2008: 158), developed a trichotomous classification of work values, and labelled the three categories "instrumental values" (e.g. work conditions and benefits), "cognitive values" (e.g. interests and achievement), and "affective values" (e.g. relations with others). Other researchers have also posited a three-dimensional structure for work values, but they have divided work values into different categories. Although the three categories of work values posited differ among researchers, it seems that most researchers use the labels "intrinsic values", "extrinsic, or materialistic, values", and "social values" to classify different work values (Sergio, Dungca & Ormita, 2015: 169).

Ros, Schwartz and Surikiss (1999: 49) identified a fourth dimension of work values, and they classified these values as extrinsic, intrinsic, social and power values. The power value can be defined as the amount of authority, influence, and prestige that an individual has over others (Lui & Lei, 2012: 50). This posited four-dimensional structure for work values was confirmed by Papavasileiou and Lyons (2014: 2). Salamzadeh, Nejati and Salamzadeh (2014: 180) proposed five work value dimensions, and labelled them self-development, contribution to society, job satisfaction, interpersonal harmony, and work-life balance.

O'Connor and Kinnane (cited in Lui & Lei, 2012: 51), also considered a six-dimensional structure for work values, and proposed the following classification: security-economical-material values, social-artistic values, work conditions and associates, heuristic-creative values, achievement-prestige values, and

independence-variety values. Wang and Liao, as cited in Lui and Lei (2012: 51), label their posited six dimensions of work values as "interpersonal relationships", "self-development", "contribution", "prestige", "household", and "material life".

Van Ness, Melinsky, Buff and Seifert (2010: 3) classify work values into seven catgories, namely self-reliance, morality/ethics, leisure, hard work, centrality of work, wasted time, and delay of gratification. Hu, Lian and Shao (cited by Lui & Lei, 2012: 51), assert that work values can be divided into eight dimensions, namely individual development, social development, development, interpersonal relationships, economic rewards, achievement-prestige, the environment, and family influence.

Sergio et al. (2015: 169) cite Super (1970) and posit 15 work values, namely achievement, management, aesthetics, prestige, altruism, security, associates, supervisory relations, creativity, surroundings, economic returns, variety, independence, way of life, and intellectual stimulation. In the current study, 22 work values are measured, namely ability utilisation, achievement, advancement, aesthetics, altruism, authority, autonomy, creativity, cultural identity, economic rewards, economic security, own lifestyle, personal development, physical activities, physical prowess, prestige, risk, social interaction, social relationships, spirituality, variety, and agreeable working conditions.

The preceding exposition relating to the structure of work values clearly shows that there are multiple different conceptions of work values, and that researchers are not in agreement on what, exactly, constitutes work values. Hence, it is essential that further research be conducted regarding work values, due to the fact that values are used to interpret experiences, which, in turn, influence motivation and behaviour in the workplace (Ueda & Ohzono, 2013: 98). For the purposes of this study, the work values included in the study are defined in Table 2.8.

Table 2.8:   Definitions of work values included in the study

Work value	Definition	Author(s)
Ability utilisation	Refers to an employee's ability to use skills and knowledge.	Lock (2005: 278)
Achievement	The long-term concern about doing things better, surpassing one's standard of excellence and/or wanting to do something challenging and unique.	Schreuder and Coetzee, 2011: 9
Advancement	Opportunity to move ahead; getting promotions.	Lock (2005: 278)
Aesthetics	Making life more beautiful and being appreciative of it.	Lock (2005: 278)
Altruism	Being involved in activities that help people, or improving life for others.	Lock (2005: 278)
Authority	Leading and managing people in what they do.	Lock (2005: 278)
Autonomy	The degree to which an individual has the freedom to organise their life and work.	Schreuder and Coetzee, 2011: 12
Creativity	Discovering, inventing, or designing new ideas or things.	Lock (2005: 278)
Cultural identity	Being accepted as a member of a cultural group.	Lock (2005: 278)
Economic rewards	Compensation that an employee receives for a specific job or task.	Govender (2010: 14)
Economic security	A sense of safety and assurance that one will always be able to deal with aggressive economic situations, such as recessions.	Standing (2008: 2)
Own lifestyle	Planning life and work according to one's own needs.	Lock (2005: 278)
Personal development	Continuous learning, either formally or informally, with the aim of bettering oneself.	Beausaert, Segers, van der Rijt and Gijselaers (2011: 249)
Physical activities	The use of skeletal muscles to create bodily movement, which results in energy usage.	Warburton, Nicol and Bredin (2006: 801)
Physical prowess	Using physical strength.	Lock (2005: 278)

Work value	Definition	Author(s)
Prestige	It can be referred to as respect, recognition, or praise.	Kacos (2011: 6)
Risk	The possibility of finding a different outcome from the expected outcome.	Raj and Sindhu (2013: 63)
Social interaction	Individual engagement in a particular behaviour with other groups or people.	Rege, Telle and Votruba (2012: 1211)
Social relationships	A value that drives employees to seek fulfilling social relationships within the workplace, and to make a positive contribution to society.	Steyn and Kotze (2004: 14)
Spirituality	The quest to unite one's inner life and outer world.	Schreuder and Coetzee, 2011: 18
Variety	In the work context, it is referred to as diverse professional and institutional experiences that a person has, has had, or would like to have.	Crossland, Zyung, Hiller and Hambrick (2014: 652)
Working conditions	Working conditions refers to the physical work atmosphere, including, but not limited to, space, lighting, ventilation, and equipment.	Baylor (2010: 30)

2.4.8.4   Outcomes of work values

Work values influence employees' behaviour, perceptions, and attitudes towards work (Ueda & Ohzono, 2013: 100). Work values have been investigated in relation to other work attitudes. Ho et al. (2012: 67) reported a correlation between work values and job involvement, but indicated that the relationship is not very strong (Ho et al., 2012: 67). Work values have also been found to be positively related to organisational commitment (Ho et al., 2012: 67). In a study by Ueda and Ohzono (2013: 98), it was found that work values influence satisfaction, a sense of personal growth, and perceived skills.

2.4.8.5   Work values of generational cohorts

Previously, work values of different generational cohorts have been investigated. The rationale underlying such a research interest is the hypothesis that work values differ in relation to generational cohorts, and that work values have an impact on the workplace, due to their perceived influence on values, beliefs, goals, work attitudes, and attitudes towards leadership (Sessa et al., 2007: 48). Studies have indicated generational differences in terms of work structure, meaning of work, achievement, success, and work-life balance (Van der Walt & Du Plessis, 2010: 4). According to Robbins et al. (2009: 105), the Traditionalists value a comfortable life and family security, while the Baby Boomers value achievement and material success more, with Generation X placing higher value on work-life balance. Rodriguez, Green and Ree (2003: 67) indicated that Generation X has a preference for flexible work hours, while the Baby Boomers prefer regular scheduled hours. Cherrington (cited in Sessa et al., 2007: 52-53), found that when compared, the Baby Boomers and Generation X differ from Generation Y in terms of pride in workmanship. Thus, Generation Y, more than the other two generational cohorts, felt that it was acceptable to do a poor quality job, and they were less concerned about their work being of service to others (Sessa et al., 2007: 52-53). It should also be noted that research by Jurkiewicz (2000: 56) found that the Baby Boomers and Generation X are more alike than different in terms of their work values.

Apart from the generational differences, some work values are shared by the different generational cohorts. In terms of altruistic values, which refers to behaviour that is directed towards helping others, even at a personal cost (Oackley, 2013: 10408), researchers (e.g. Cennamo & Garder, 2008; Twenge et al., 2010) have reported no generational differences (i.e. between the Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Generation Y). When considering intrinsic values, Twenge et al. (2010) reported no differences between the Baby Boomers and

Generation X, and slight decreases in these values from the Baby Boomer generation to Generation Y. The latter finding was confirmed by Sessa et al. (2007: 53).

2.4.8.6   Concluding remarks

Values do not apply only to individuals, but also to groups, and the organisation as a system. Bergh (2011: 273) asserts that an organisation develops values that are shared by organisational members, and that these shared organisational values influence many processes and behaviours, such as ethical behaviour. These values are normally reflected in the organisation's culture. Organisations that value ethical values such as openness, honesty, social justice, trust, diversity, and social responsibility are likely to attract employees that share similar values. This, in turn, will have a positive impact on employee attitudes and behaviour.

2.5   CONCLUSION

Chapter 2 consisted of a literature review of generational cohort theory, ethics, and values. In this chapter, generational cohort theory was discussed, by describing the differences and the similarities between the different generational cohorts. This was followed by a discussion of ethics, with specific reference to different theories underpinning the constructs of ethics and work ethics. It included a discussion regarding ethical decision making and ethical behaviour in the workplace. From the discussion, one may conclude that organisations have implemented various initiatives in order to create an ethical organisational culture. In the following section, values were discussed. Values seem to influence not only employee behaviour and attitudes, but also ethical behaviour and decision making. Definitions were given of values, work values, and centrality of work, which refers

to work as a central life role. Previous research findings regarding generational differences in terms of work values were briefly presented.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1   INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, the literature review of the study was presented. The present chapter will discuss the research methodology employed in order to profile generational differences in terms of work values and work ethics. In addition, the research design and procedure will be discussed. However, before these are discussed, it is important to understand what research is. Welman, Kruger and Mitchell (2005: 2) define research as a process of gathering scientific knowledge by using objective methods and techniques. A more all-encompassing definition is offered by Leedy and Ormrod (2013: 2), who define research as a "systematic process of collecting, analysing, and interpreting information in order to increase understanding of a phenomenon about which we are interested or concerned". In the current study, the researcher collected scientific information in order to profile generational differences in terms of work values and work ethics.

3.2   RESEARCH DESIGN

Anderson (2009: 50) describes a research design as the overall plan that the investigator uses to demonstrate how they intend to achieve the aim and objectives of the research. Leedy and Ormrod (2013: 74) define a research design simply as "planning". Therefore, it seems that proper planning is essential before a scientific

research project is conducted, in order to ensure that the research objectives are reached.

In order to answer the formulated research questions, as set forth in section 1.7, a cross-sectional quantitative research design was employed. A cross-sectional study is defined as a type of study where several groups of respondents are examined at a specific point in time, without repeat measures (Salkind, 2012: 253). In the current study, information was collected once-off by means of a structured questionnaire. A structured questionnaire is a measuring instrument which consists of a set of closed-ended questions in which the respondents must choose an option that best expresses their opinions (Salkind, 2012: 149). For the purposes of this study, the structured questionnaire consisted of two sections, namely a biographical section, and a section with two subsections containing questions to measure work values and work ethics.

The researcher decided to use a structured questionnaire, as this type of data-collection method is time-efficient, and the questionnaire can be completed in the absence of the researcher (Salkind, 2012: 147). Furthermore, using questionnaires as a data-collection method is cost-effective, and participants are often more willing to participate truthfully, as confidentiality is guaranteed (Salkind, 2012: 148). However, one of the greatest shortcomings of questionnaires is that they have a low return rate (Salkind, 2012: 148).

3.3   POPULATION AND SAMPLING

A population is defined as the whole set of objects or group of people that the researcher intends to investigate (Bless, Smith & Kagee, 2006: 99). The population of this study are individuals belonging to the generational cohorts which constitute the current labour force, namely the Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Generation

Y. The labour force of a country may be regarded as "the population of working age people that is working or that wants to work" (Barker, 2015: 9).

South African organisations were approached to participate in the study, and three organisations from different sectors confirmed that they would participate in the study, and were included in the sample. The reason for including these organisations in the sample was their willingness to participate in the study, and logistical factors that made it conducive to use them; thus, a convenience sampling method was employed (Wagner, Kawulich & Garner, 2012: 92). Because the definition of "labour force" includes those who want to work, it was decided to include a student sample consisting of respondents who want to work, but cannot find employment. The student sample was drawn from the population of students in the Faculty of Management Sciences at the Welkom campus of Central University of Technology who want to work, but cannot find employment. The population for this study consisted of employees working at three different organisations in the Lejweleputswa district, as well as unemployed students from the Faculty of Management Sciences at a university of technology in the Lejweleputswa district.

Due to time and budget constraints, it was not possible to include the entire population in the study, and therefore a sample was drawn. Bless et al. (2006: 98) define a sample as a "subset of the population which is actually investigated by a researcher and whose characteristics will be generalised to the entire population". To ensure that the sample was representative of the population, the researcher ensured that every unit of analysis met the required population parameters. A unit of analysis refers to a specific element that a researcher intends to learn about (Shaw, as cited in Van Rooy, 2010: 29). In this study, the unit of analysis is individuals, and the population parameter is working-aged individuals who work, or who want to work.

When sampling, the researcher can use either a random sample selection method or a non-probability sampling method. For the purposes of this study, a non-probability sampling method was used to select respondents, namely the convenience sampling method. This method is employed when the researcher uses only the available individuals of the targeted population. Use of the convenience sampling method would ensure that all classes of employees can participate in the study, and that there would be no forced participation. Every individual included in the sample met the required population parameters, hence the findings of the study can be generalised to the population from which the sample was drawn. However, caution is advised when generalising the findings, due to the fact that a non-random sampling technique was used, which would influence the external validity of the study (Wagner et al., 2012: 94).

Questionnaires were distributed to different economic sectors, including university of technology students who are currently unemployed. A total number of 540 questionnaires were distributed. According to Babbie (2001: 256), when conducting a mail survey, a response rate of 50% is adequate for analysis and reporting, a response rate of 60% is good, and 70% is a very good response rate. In total, 301 completed questionnaires were returned, which equates to a 55.7% response rate. A possible factor which could have had a negative impact on the response rate is that questionnaires were distributed at a peak period (towards month end). However, the response rate may be regarded as adequate to conduct the data analysis.

The sample of the study varied in terms of sociodemographic variables. A biographical profile of the respondents is presented in Table 3.1, based on the questions which were asked in Section A of the questionnaire (see Appendix A).

Table 3.1:   **Biographical details of respondents (N=301)**

Variable	Level of the variable	N	%	Cumulative %
Employment status	Employed	131	43.5	43.5
	Job seekers	170	56.5	100
Gender	Male	112	37.2	37.3
	Female	188	62.5	100
Population group	Black African	275	91.4	91.7
	White	17	5.6	97.3
	Coloured	7	2.3	99.7
	Indian/Asian	1	0.3	100
Age	Generation Y	155	51.5	51.5
	Generation X	112	37.2	88.7
	The Baby Boomers	34	11.3	100
Years of service	0-1 years	133	44.2	44.9
	2-5 years	114	37.9	83.4
	6-10 years	24	8.0	91.6
	11-15 years	8	2.7	94.3
	15+ years	17	5.6	100
Highest academic qualification	Below Grade 12	10	3.3	3.3
	Grade 12	189	62.8	66.3
	National diploma	70	23.3	89.7
	Honours/bachelor's degree	23	7.6	97.3
	Master's degree	7	2.3	99.7
	Doctorate	1	0.3	100

From Table 3.1, it is clear that the employment status of the respondents was distributed almost evenly, with 170 (56.5%) of the respondents unemployed but seeking work, and 131 (43.5%) currently employed. The gender distribution was skewed towards females accounting for 62.5% (n = 188) of the respondents. The male respondents accounted for 37.2% (n = 112) of the sample. The overwhelming majority of the sample consisted of Black African respondents (n = 275; 91.4%), followed by whites (n = 17; 5.6%), Coloureds (n = 7; 2.3%), and Asian (n = 1, 0.3%).

With regard to age, the majority of respondents belonged to Generation Y (n = 155; 51.5%), followed by Generation X (n = 112; 37.2%), and the Baby Boomers (n = 34; 11.3%). Only one respondent indicated that they belonged to the Traditionalist category (i.e. respondents 64 years and older). Since the sample was drawn in an employment context, the Traditionalists would represent pensioners. Consequently, the respondent was not included in subsequent calculations. The majority of the respondents had 0 - 1 years of service (n = 133; 44.2%). With regard to educational attainment, the majority of respondents had a Grade 12 qualification (n = 189; 62.8%), followed by respondents that had a national diploma (n = 7; 23.3%), and those that had an honours or a bachelor's degree (n = 23; 7.6%).

3.4   DATA COLLECTION

The aim of the study was to profile generational differences in terms of work values and work ethics. Primary data was collected by means of a quantitative research approach. A structured questionnaire was designed to collect the quantitative data. The questionnaire consisted of closed-ended questions, and the respondents were requested to select one response from a list of possible responses. Because of the large geographical area over which the participants were distributed, it was

decided that it would be most appropriate to use self-administered questionnaires to collect the primary data.

3.5   RESEARCH PROCESS

3.5.1   The questionnaire as data-collection tool

A self-administered questionnaire was chosen as the data-collection tool, the reason being that this is an acceptable data-collection method to use when individuals are the unit of analysis in a study. The choice of use of a questionnaire as data-collection method was also motivated by a desire to ensure anonymity of the respondents, and to try to ensure truthful, or honest, responses (Salkind, 2012: 148).

When considering the format of the questionnaire, the researcher made certain that the questions were evenly spread out, and that simple and understandable language was used. Furthermore, subsections were used, and questions were presented in the form of a table, which made it easy for the respondents to read and select their answers. Consideration was also given to the ordering of items in the questionnaire, as well as the general appearance of the questionnaire.

The questionnaire consisted of two sections, namely Section A, which solicited biographical data from the respondents, and Section B, which consisted of two unabridged questionnaires, measuring work values and work ethics, respectively. Participants were given clear instructions to complete the questionnaire. In addition, each subsection started with a short overview of the content and the purpose of the subsection, to ensure that the respondents understood the subsection, to ensure that they selected appropriate responses to the questions

posed. An introductory letter was attached to the questionnaire which was sent out to the respondents (see Appendix B).

3.5.2 Measuring instruments

A self-administered questionnaire was designed, which consisted of two sections. The sections were arranged in such a way that it made it easy for the respondents to understand the purpose of the items in each subsection. The two constituent sections of the questionnaire will be discussed below.

3.5.2.1   Section A: Biographical information

Section A of the questionnaire required the respondents to provide their biographical information, and it included five questions, relating to the respondents' population group, their gender, their age (to determine the respondent's generational cohort), years of service with the current organisation, and highest academic qualification. Responses to the question regarding highest academic qualification were used as a guide to indicate whether respondents had an adequate level of literacy to read, understand, and respond to the questions in the questionnaire. The information collected was used to describe the sample from which the data was collected. It was decided to start the questionnaire with general biographical questions, as it was deemed that this would make the respondents comfortable with answering the questionnaire.

3.5.2.2   Section B: Work values and work ethics

Section B of the questionnaire consisted of two unabridged questionnaires, which were used to measure work values and work ethics, respectively. To measure work values, the Values Scale was used, and to measure work ethics, the Multidimensional Work Ethic Profile was used.

3.5.2.2.1   Values Scale

The Values Scale (VS) was developed by Langley (1992: 2) with the aim of determining the value of certain work-related aspects to individual respondents. Statements are rated on a four-point Likert scale, with options ranging from "of little importance" (1) to "very important" (4). Respondents had to select the most appropriate option. The VS includes questions such as "I find pleasure in the beauty of my work", and "I make my own decisions at work", to determine individual preferences, and, most importantly, generational differences with regard to work values. In a study by Boonzaier (2008: 83), it was found that the VS is a reliable instrument to use for a South African population. Langley (1992: 2) reported a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.7 for the VS for a South African sample. Thus, based on previous research findings, the VS can be used with confidence in the South African context to measure work values.

3.5.2.2.2   Multidimensional Work Ethic Profile

The Multidimensional Work Ethic Profile (MWEP) was developed by Miller et al. in 2002. The MWEP is a 65-item scale that was developed to "measure seven conceptually and distinct facets of the work ethic construct" (Miller et al., 2002: 1).

The seven constructs are identified as hard work, self-reliance, leisure, centrality of work, morality/ethics, delay of gratification, and wasted time (Miller et al., 2002: 12). Participants were requested to select the most appropriate option from a five-point Likert scale, with options ranging from "strongly agree" (1), to "neutral" (3), to "strongly disagree" (5). Miller et al. (2002: 30) states that the MWEP is a reliable measure of overall work ethics and the dimensions thereof. In order to ensure that the questionnaire is reliable for a South African sample, a Cronbach's alpha coefficient will be determined for the current sample.

3.5.3 Pilot study

Although use of a questionnaire as data-collection method may have numerous advantages, the opposite is also true. One of the weaknesses of using a questionnaire as data-collection method is that participants may potentially interpret questions differently, and may potentially respond differently based on their level of reading and writing skills (Leedy & Ormrod, 2013: 190). In the current study, this limitation was minimised by conducting a pilot study, and by including only those participants that had an acceptable literacy rate. From the biographical data presented in Table 3.1, it was indicated that only 10 participants (3.3%) had a qualification lower than Grade 12. However, the participating organisations indicated that the minimum academic qualification of employees was Grade 10, which implies acceptable literacy levels.

Ten respondents from the target population were included in the pilot study. The aim was to check for any ambiguous, biased, or leading questions, and to determine the minimum time required to complete the questionnaire. Thus, face validity was determined (Jonck, 2014: 347). In addition, two psychologists were requested to provide insight into the content of the questionnaire items, in order to determine initial content validity (Jonck, 2014: 347). Respondents that were used

for the pilot study were not considered for the final sample. All questionnaires were then returned, and comments were considered. Changes were made to the layout of the questionnaire, after which the final questionnaire was distributed to the sample.

3.5.4 Questionnaire administration

The questionnaires were distributed to the sample, and the researcher collected the questionnaires within 14 days of distributing them. This allowed the respondents sufficient time to complete the questionnaire in their own time and at their own convenience. After completion, respondents were requested to place the completed questionnaires in a sealed envelope. The researcher collected the questionnaires personally from the respondents at a central point. This ensured that the questionnaires were treated confidentially.

3.5.5 Data analysis

The analysis of the responses was planned and directed by the researcher in collaboration with the study supervisor, and the statistical analysis was carried out by an independent research psychologist. The responses on the returned questionnaires were captured on an Excel spreadsheet, after which the data was analysed by the independent research psychologist, using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) version 20.

Statistical analysis was performed by means of descriptive analysis, including frequencies, percentages, medians, means, and standard deviations. Cross-tabulation of the biographical variables for each generational cohort was performed to provide a generational perspective on these variables. A Kolmogorov-Smirnov

test was performed to assess the normality of the distribution (Pallant, 2011: 63). The results of this test indicate that the data was not normally distributed. Hence, non-parametric tests were used to investigate the null hypothesis. As such, the Mann-Whitney U test and the Kruskal-Wallis test were executed to determine the influence of the sociodemographic variables on the dependent variables (i.e. work values and work ethics). Spearman rank-order correlations were used to determine the relationship between the subcategories of the dependent variables. To determine the reliability of the measuring instruments, Cronbach's alpha coefficients were determined. The results are presented in Chapter 4.

3.6   ETHCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

The researcher approached organisations to participate in the research study (see Appendix A). After permission was granted, the researcher ensured that participants were treated in an ethical manner. In order to obtain informed consent from the participants, an introductory letter was attached to the questionnaire (see Appendix B). In the introductory letter, the purpose of the research project was explained. The introductory letter also contained the name and logo of the educational institution, the title of the research project, information about the researcher and the supervisor, and their contact details. Respondents were informed that participation would be voluntary and anonymous, and that the information would be treated confidentially. The respondents were also requested to personally complete the questionnaire on their own, and they were assured that they had the right to withdraw from the study at any stage should they wish to do so.

3.7 CONCLUSION

The present chapter described the research methodology used in this study. In the following chapter, the findings of the study will be presented.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The present chapter provides a discussion of the findings of the study, based on the research objectives stated in Chapter 1. The reliability of the research instrument used will be discussed, after which the results will be presented.

4.2 RELIABILITY OF THE RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

A Cronbach's alpha coefficient was determined to measure the reliability of the measuring instrument (Gay, Mills & Airasian, 2011: 166). Table 4.1 provides the Cronbach's alpha coefficient results for the measuring instrument, as discussed in section 3.5.2.

Table 4.1:   Reliability of the measuring instrument

Subscale	Number of items	Cronbach's alpha
VS (Work values)	110	0.95
MWEP (Work ethics)	65	0.94

Table 4.1 indicates that the reliability of the questionnaire, as measured by Cronbach's alpha coefficients, was 0.95 for the VS, which was used to measure work values, and 0.94 for the MWEP, which was used to measure work ethics. According to Salkind (2012:208) a correlation coefficient of between 0.8 and 1.00

may be regarded as very strong. This shows that both the VS and the MWEP have very strong levels of reliability, which enable them to be used in the current sample to measure work ethics and work values.

Previously the VS has been used in the South African context. Both Carvalho (2005: 75) and Langley (1992: 2) reported a Cronbach's alpha of 0.7 for the VS for South African samples. With regard to the MWEP, Van Ness et al. (2010: 10) reported Cronbach's alphas for the individual scales as follows: self-reliance (0.89), morality/ethics (0.77), leisure (0.90), hard work (0.89), centrality of work (0.85), wasted time (0.79), and delay of gratification (0.81). Thus, the Cronbach's alphas for the current study are somewhat higher for the VS and the MWEP than have been reported previously.

4.3 PROPORTIONAL DISTRIBUTION OF INDEPENDENT VARIABLES FOR EACH GENERATIONAL COHORT

The proportional distribution of the independent variables, namely population group, gender, years of service, and highest academic qualification, will be presented for each generational cohort.

To indicate the proportional distribution of population group for each generational cohort, a cross-tabulation was performed. The results are presented in Table 4.2 below.

Table 4.2:   Distribution of population groups for each generational cohort

Generational cohort	Population group				Total
	Black African	**White**	**Coloured**	**Indian/ Asian**	
Generation Y	97.4%	0.6%	1.9%	0.00%	100%
Generation X	90.1%	6.3%	2.7%	0.9%	100%
The Baby Boomers	70.6%	26.5%	2.9%	0.00%	100%

Table 4.2 indicates that 97.4% of the respondents in the Generation Y cohort were black African, followed by 1.9% Coloured respondents, and 0.6% white respondents. In the Generation X cohort, 90.1% of the respondents were black African, 6.3% were white, 2.7% were Coloured, and 0.9% were Indian/Asian respondents. The Baby Boomer cohort consisted of 70.6% black African respondents, 26.5% white respondents, and 2.9% Coloured respondents.

Table 4.3:   Gender distribution of the sample according to generational cohort

Generational cohort	Gender		Total
	Male	**Female**	
Generation Y	27.1%	72.9%	100%
Generation X	45.5%	54.5%	100%
The Baby Boomers	57.6%	42.4%	100%

With regard to gender, the majority of the Generation Y cohort consisted of female respondents (72.9%), with 27.1% male respondents (see Table 4.3). The gender distribution of the Generation X cohort was fairly even, with 54.5% female and 45.5% male respondents. By contrast, male respondents were in the majority in the Baby Boomer cohort, with 57.6% male and 42.4% female respondents.

Table 4.4:   Years of service of the sample according to generational cohort

Generational cohort	Years of service					Total
	0-1	**2-5**	**6-10**	**11-15**	**15+**	
Generation Y	66.9%	30.5%	2.0%	0.7%	0%	100%
Generation X	27.0%	55.9%	13.5%	1.8%	1.8%	100%
The Baby Boomers	5.9%	17.6%	17.6%	14.7%	44.1%	100%

As can be seen from Table 4.4 above, the majority of respondents in the Generation Y cohort (66.9%) had 0-1 year of service, followed by those that had 2-5 years (30.5%) and those that had 11-15 years (0.7%). Respondents in the Generation X cohort had mostly 2-5 years of service (55.9%), followed by those that had 0-1 year (27%), 6-10 years (13.5%), and 15 plus years (1.8%). In the Baby Boomer cohort, the majority of respondents had 15 plus years of service, accounting for 44.1% of the sample. This was followed by those that had 6-10 years and those that had 2-5 years of service, respectively, each accounting for 17.6% of the respondents. Respondents that had 11-15 years of service accounted for 14.7% of the sample, while only 5.9% of respondents had 0-1 year of service.

Table 4.5:   Educational qualifications for each generational cohort

Generational cohort	Educational qualification						Total
	Below Grade 12	**Grade 12**	**National diploma/ degree**	**Honours /BTech degree**	**Master's degree**	**Doctoral degree**	
Generation Y	3.2%	83.2%	13.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100%
Generation X	1.8%	47.7%	35.1%	13.5%	1.8%	0.0%	100%
The Baby Boomers	8.8%	20.6%	29.4%	23.5%	14.7%	2.9%	100%

According to Table 4.5, the overwhelming majority of respondents in the Generation Y cohort held a Grade 12 qualification. This was followed by 13.5% of respondents that had a national diploma or degree, and 3.2% with less than a Grade 12 qualification. In the Generation X cohort, the educational attainment was more evenly distributed, with 47.7% of the respondents holding a Grade 12 qualification, 35.1% of respondents having a national diploma or degree, 13.5% having an honours or BTech degree, 1.8% of respondents with less than a Grade 12 qualification, and 1.8% with a master's degree. The distribution was even more even in the Baby Boomer cohort, with 29.4% of respondents having a national diploma or degree, 23.5% having an honours or a BTech degree, 20.6% having a Grade 12 qualification, 14.7% having a master's degree, 8.8% having less than a Grade 12 qualification, and 2.9% having a doctorate qualification.

4.4 LEVEL OF SCORES FOR WORK ETHICS AND WORK VALUES FOR THE CURRENT SAMPLE

Before the results of the inferential statistical analysis are discussed, it is necessary to assess the level of respondents' scores with regard to work values and work ethics. Measures of central tendency, including the mean, the median, the standard deviation, and the maximum and minimum scores, for each generational cohort are depicted in Tables 4.6-4.8. In Table 4.6, the level of scores for Generation Y is presented.

Table 4.6: Measures of central tendency for Generation Y, with reference to work values and work ethics

Level of the variable	Min	Max	Median	Mean	SD	50%
WORK VALUES						
Ability utilisation	1	4	3.60	3.58	0.446	3.60
Achievement	1	4	3.60	3.51	0.455	3.60
Advancement	1	4	3.60	3.51	0.450	3.60
Aesthetics	2	4	3.20	3.13	0.525	3.20
Altruism	1	4	3.40	3.26	0.561	3.40
Authority	1	4	2.80	2.81	0.509	2.80
Autonomy	1	4	3.00	2.87	0.597	3.00
Creativity	1	4	3.20	3.23	0.496	3.20
Cultural identity	1	4	3.00	3.01	0.625	3.00
Economic rewards	1	4	3.40	3.39	0.590	3.40
Economic security	2	4	3.40	3.40	0.508	3.40
Own lifestyle	2	4	3.20	3.09	0.544	3.20
Personal development	1	4	3.60	3.48	0.423	3.60
Physical activities	1	4	3.00	2.97	0.619	3.00
Physical prowess	1	4	2.60	2.58	0.669	2.60
Prestige	1	4	3.40	3.29	0.561	3.40
Risk	1	4	2.40	2.49	0.628	2.40
Social interaction	1	4	3.00	2.87	0.553	3.00
Social relationships	1	4	2.60	2.68	0.607	2.60
Spirituality	2	4	3.20	3.14	0.523	3.20
Variety	1	4	3.00	2.94	0.569	3.00
Working conditions	1	4	3.20	3.10	0.497	3.20
WORK ETHICS						
Self-reliance	1	3	2.00	2.01	0.50	2.00
Morality/ethics	4	5	4.50	4.47	0.332	4.50
Leisure	3	5	3.75	3.8	0.502	3.75
Hard work	1	3	1.50	1.57	0.453	1.50
Centrality of work	1	5	2.10	2.13	0.597	2.10
Wasted time	1	4	2.00	1.99	0.559	2.00
Delay of gratification	1	5	2.00	2.06	0.593	2.00

As is evident from Table 4.6, only six of the 22 work values subscales had average scores exceeding 50%, namely authority, creativity, cultural identity, economic security, risk, and social relationships. For the work ethics subscales, only two subscales, namely morality (or ethics) and wasted time, had average scores of less than 50%. The work ethics subscales that recorded scores exceeding 50% were self-reliance, leisure, hard work, centrality of work, and delay of gratification. This shows that only six of the 22 work values measured were important to Generation Y, while five of the work ethics subscales were perceived as important by this generation.

The level of scores for Generation X is presented in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7: **Measures of central tendency for Generation X, with reference to work values and work ethics**

Level of the variable	Min	Max	Median	Mean	SD	50%
WORK VALUES						
Ability utilisation	2	4	3.60	3.54	0.428	3.60
Achievement	2	4	3.60	3.51	0.417	3.60
Advancement	2	4	3.60	3.53	0.408	3.60
Aesthetics	2	4	3.40	3.30	0.498	3.40
Altruism	2	4	3.60	3.43	0.485	3.60
Authority	1	4	3.00	2.95	0.578	3.00
Autonomy	2	4	3.00	2.99	0.556	3.00
Creativity	2	4	3.40	3.32	0.493	3.40
Cultural identity	2	4	3.20	3.05	0.616	3.20
Economic rewards	2	4	3.60	3.46	0.495	3.60
Economic security	2	4	3.60	3.45	0.443	3.60
Own lifestyle	2	4	3.20	3.14	0.570	3.20
Personal development	2	4	3.60	3.57	0.403	3.60
Physical activities	1	4	3.00	3.05	0.596	3.00
Physical prowess	1	4	2.60	2.59	0.722	2.60
Prestige	2	4	3.33	3.26	0.528	3.33

Level of the variable	Min	Max	Median	Mean	SD	50%
WORK VALUES						
Risk	1	4	2.60	2.50	0.646	2.60
Social interaction	2	4	3.00	3.08	0.541	3.00
Social relationships	1	4	2.80	2.71	0.629	2.80
Spirituality	2	4	3.23	3.25	0.509	3.23
Variety	1	4	3.20	3.09	0.538	3.20
Working conditions	1	4	3.20	3.16	0.545	3.20
WORK ETHICS						
Self-reliance	1	4	2.00	2.10	0.568	2.00
Morality/ethics	4	5	4.6	4.55	0.370	4.60
Leisure	3	5	3.83	3.83	0.484	3.83
Hard work	1	4	1.50	1.61	0.565	1.50
Centrality of work	1	4	2.00	2.07	0.626	2.00
Wasted time	1	5	2.00	2.00	0.649	2.00
Delay of gratification	1	5	2.14	2.17	0.705	2.14

The results presented in Table 4.7 illustrate that only three of the 22 work values measured recorded an average score of more than 50% for Generation X. These include physical activities, social interaction, and spirituality, which seem to be of importance to Generation X. Similar to Generation Y, Generation X indicated that most of the work ethics subscales were perceived as important, except for the subscale of morality/ethics. Thus, Generation X regards the following work ethics as important: self-reliance, leisure, hard work, work centrality, wasted time, and delay of gratification.

The level of scores for the Baby Boomer cohort is presented in Table 4.8.

Table 4.8: Measures of central tendency for the Baby Boomer cohort, with reference to work values and work ethics

Level of the variable	Min	Max	Median	Mean	SD	50%
WORK VALUES						
Ability utilisation	3	4	3.60	3.55	0.341	3.60
Achievement	3	4	3.55	3.48	0.347	3.55
Advancement	2	4	3.40	3.39	0.407	3.40
Aesthetics	2	4	3.00	3.01	0.617	3.00
Altruism	2	4	3.20	3.23	0.465	3.20
Authority	1	4	2.80	2.85	0.632	2.80
Autonomy	1	4	2.80	2.79	0.701	2.80
Creativity	2	4	3.00	3.10	0.457	3.00
Cultural identity	1	4	2.70	2.61	0.810	2.70
Economic rewards	2	4	3.23	3.26	0.540	3.23
Economic security	3	4	3.40	3.38	0.383	3.40
Own lifestyle	2	4	3.00	2.94	0.562	3.00
Personal development	3	4	3.40	3.37	0.381	3.40
Physical activities	2	4	3.20	2.98	0.598	3.20
Physical prowess	1	4	2.35	2.45	0.754	2.35
Prestige	2	4	3.00	3.01	0.557	3.00
Risk	1	4	2.00	2.08	0.768	2.00
Social interaction	2	4	2.80	2.86	0.559	2.80
Social relationships	1	4	2.40	2.47	0.618	2.40
Spirituality	2	4	3.20	3.16	0.578	3.20
Variety	1	4	2.80	2.77	0.655	2.80
Working conditions	2	4	2.90	3.02	0.555	2.90
WORK ETHICS						
Self-reliance	1	4	2.20	2.23	0.551	2.20
Morality/ethics	3	5	4.60	4.50	0.395	4.60
Leisure	3	5	3.67	3.60	0.520	3.67
Hard work	1	5	1.85	1.89	0.643	1.85
Centrality of work	1	4	2.20	2.15	0.574	2.20
Wasted time	1	4	1.86	1.91	0.461	1.86
Delay of gratification	2	5	2.29	2.42	0.577	2.29

Table 4.8 depicts that the Baby Boomer cohort perceived 11 of the 22 measured work values as important to them, as indicated by the number of average scores exceeding 50%. The work values which were measured as important to the Baby Boomers were aesthetics, altruism, authority, creativity, economic rewards, physical prowess, prestige, risk, social interaction, social relationships, and agreeable working conditions. In addition, the Baby Boomer cohort indicated that three of the work ethics subscales were of some importance (less than 50%), namely morality (or ethics), centrality of work and leisure. The work ethics that are important to the Baby Boomers are self-reliance, hard work, wasted time, and delay of gratification.

From the above results, it would appear that the generational cohorts differ in their evaluation of the work values and work ethics that they perceive as important. Both Generation Y and Generation X regard work values as less important in comparison with the Baby Boomers.

4.5   INTERCORRELATIONS BETWEEN WORK VALUES AND WORK ETHICS

To investigate the intercorrelations between the different work values and work ethics subscales, Spearman rank-order correlations were performed. A Spearman rank-order correlation may be regarded as a type of non-parametric test that is used to measure the strength of a correlation between dependent variables. Due to the fact that there were 29 variables, results will only be discussed, and not illustrated.

The work value of achievement had a strong intercorrelation ($p \leq 0.000$; $r = 0.73$) with the work value of ability utilisation. Advancement had a strong intercorrelation with both ability utilisation ($p \leq 0.000$; $r = 0.643$) and achievement ($p \leq 0.000$; $r =$

0.655). Aesthetics had a weak intercorrelation with ability utilisation (p ≤ 0.000; r = 0.355), and a moderate intercorrelation with both achievement (p ≤ 0.000; r = 0.426) and advancement (p ≤ 0.000; r = 0.481). Altruism had a moderate intercorrelation with ability utilisation (p ≤ 0.000; r = 0.447), achievement (p ≤ 0.000; r = 0.446), and advancement (p ≤ 0.000; r = 0.461). A weak intercorrelation was found between altruism and aesthetics (p ≤ 0.000; r = 0.381). Authority had a moderate intercorrelation with ability utilisation (p ≤ 0.000; r = 0.405), achievement (p ≤ 0.000; r = 0.420), advancement (p ≤ 0.000; r = 0.465), and aesthetics (p ≤ 0.000; r = 0.442). A weak intercorrelation was found between authority and altruism (p ≤ 0.000; r = 0.397).

Autonomy had a weak intercorrelation with ability utilisation (p ≤ 0.000; r = 0.260), achievement (p ≤ 0.000; r = 0.307), advancement (p ≤ 0.000; r = 0.346), and aesthetics (p ≤ 0.000; r = 0.355), and a moderate intercorrelation with authority (p ≤ 0.000; r = 0.494). A moderate intercorrelation was found between creativity and ability utilisation (p ≤ 0.000; r = 0.493), achievement (p ≤ 0.000; r = 0.473), advancement (p ≤ 0.000; r = 0.485), aesthetics (p ≤ 0.000; r = 0.429), altruism (p ≤ 0.000; r = 0.466), authority (p ≤ 0.000; r = 0.445), and autonomy (p ≤ 0.000; r = 0.413). A weak intercorrelation was noted between cultural identity and ability utilisation (p ≤ 0.000; r = 0.263), achievement (p ≤ 0.000; r = 0.316), advancement (p ≤ 0.000; r = 0.345), aesthetics (p ≤ 0.000; r = 0.372), altruism (p ≤ 0.000; r = 0.351), authority (p ≤ 0.000; r = 0.371), autonomy (p ≤ 0.000; r = 0.318), and creativity (p ≤ 0.000; r = 0.337).

The Spearman rank-order correlation results also indicate a strong intercorrelation between economic rewards and the following work values: achievement (p ≤ 0.000; 0.545), advancement (p ≤ 0.000; r = 0.592), and aesthetics (p ≤ 0.000; r = 0.529). A weak intercorrelation was found between economic rewards and ability utilisation (p ≤ 0.000; r = 0.465), altruism (p ≤ 0.000; r = 0.217), authority (p ≤ 0.000; r =

0.427), autonomy (p ≤ 0.000; r = 0.392), creativity (p ≤ 0.000; r = 0.358), and cultural identity (p ≤ 0.000; 0.394).

4.6 THE ASSOCIATION BETWEEN DIFFERENT GENERATIONAL COHORTS IN TERMS OF WORK ETHICS AND WORK VALUES

To test the research hypothesis for this study, which states "There is no statistically significant difference between various generational cohorts in terms of work values and work ethics in the South African work environment" (see section 1.7.1), a Kruskal-Wallis test was performed. The results of this test are depicted in Table 4.9.

Table 4.9: **Kruskal-Wallis test results for work values and work ethics as dependent variables, and generational cohort as independent variable**

Level of the variable	Chi-square	DF	*p*
WORK VALUES			
Ability utilisation	1.314	2	0.518
Achievement	0.769	2	0.681
Advancement	3.848	2	0.146
Aesthetics	9.138	2	0.010**
Altruism	8.378	2	0.015*
Authority	4.919	2	0.085
Autonomy	3.209	2	0.201
Creativity	6.283	2	0.043*
Cultural identity	8.697	2	0.013*
Economic rewards	3.669	2	0.160
Economic security	1.365	2	0.505
Own lifestyle	4.042	2	0.133

Level of the variable	Chi-square	DF	p
WORK VALUES			
Personal development	8.192	2	0.017*
Physical activities	0.666	2	0.717
Physical prowess	1.195	2	0.550
Prestige	8.270	2	0.016*
Risk	9.379	2	0.009**
Social interaction	11.426	2	0.003**
Social relationships	3.519	2	0.173
Spirituality	3.164	2	0.206
Variety	8.192	2	0.017*
Working conditions	2.726	2	0.256
WORK ETHICS			
Self-reliance	4.320	2	0.115
Morality/ethics	4.830	2	0.089
Leisure	4.531	2	0.104
Hard work	9.645	2	0.008**
Centrality of work	2.180	2	0.336
Wasted time	0.876	2	0.645
Delay of gratification	11.346	2	0.003**

* $p \leq 0.05$ ** $p \leq 0.01$

According to Table 4.9, statistically significant differences were found between the various generational cohorts in terms of work values and work ethics. On the 99th percentile, statistically significant differences were noted for aesthetics, risk, and social interaction. On the 95th percentile, statistically significant generational differences were found for altruism, creativity, cultural identity, personal development, prestige, and variety. The greatest generational difference was in terms of social interaction. With regard to work ethics, statistically significant generational differences were noted for hard work and delay of gratification, both at the 0.01 level of significance.

Based on the results in Table 4.9, with regard to aesthetics, Generation X had the highest mean ranking (mean ranking = 169.58), followed by Generation Y (mean ranking = 142.78) and the Baby Boomers (mean ranking = 127.26). Thus, for Generation X, aesthetics as work value was more important than it was for the other generational cohorts. With regard to altruism, Generation X once again had the highest mean ranking (mean ranking = 169.39), followed by Generation Y (mean ranking = 141.72) and the Baby Boomers (mean ranking = 132.74). Thus, it would appear that altruism was also more important to Generation X than it was to Generation Y and the Baby Boomer cohort. Similar results were observed for creativity, where Generation X once again had the highest ranking (mean rank = 164.05), followed by Generation Y (mean ranking = 147.64) and the Baby Boomers (mean ranking = 123.32). With regard to the work ethic of cultural identity, Generation X and Generation Y were almost evenly distributed, with Generation X recording a mean ranking of 159.76, followed by 153.55 for Generation Y. The Baby Boomers had the lowest mean ranking (mean ranking = 110.53).

When considering the results for personal development, a sizable difference was noted between the mean ranking of Generation X and the Baby Boomer cohort. The mean ranking of Generation X was 165.29, while the mean ranking was 118.44 for the Baby Boomers. Generation Y had a mean ranking of 147.82. When considering prestige, Generation X (mean ranking = 159.34) and Generation Y (mean ranking = 151.22) were almost evenly distributed, while the Baby Boomers had the lowest mean ranking, at 112.25. As regards risk, there was a difference of only 0.75 between Generation X (mean ranking = 156.90) and Generation Y (mean ranking = 156.15). However, the Baby Boomers had a mean score of 108.12, which was significantly lower than Generation X and Generation Y. The converse was observed for social interaction. Generation X had the highest mean score (mean ranking = 172.89), while Generation Y (mean ranking = 138.39) and the Baby Boomer cohort (mean ranking = 136.40) were almost equal. When considering variety, Generation X once again had the highest mean ranking (mean ranking =

159.64), followed by Generation Y (mean ranking = 148.74) and the Baby Boomers (mean ranking = 132.87).

When it comes to work ethics, the picture changes. The Baby Boomer cohort had the highest mean ranking in terms of hard work (mean ranking = 194.51), while Generation X (mean ranking = 146.33) and Generation Y (mean ranking = 144.83) differed by only a small margin. Similarly, in terms of delay of gratification, the Baby Boomer cohort had the highest mean ranking (mean ranking = 194.68), followed by Generation X (mean ranking = 153.45) and Generation Y (mean ranking = 139.65).

It would appear that work values are more important than work ethics to Generation X, while work ethics are more important than work values to the Baby Boomer cohort. The Generation Y cohort scored in the middle for both work values and work ethics. This trend in terms of the scores for the Generation Y cohort may be attributed to the lack of long service of members of this generation. Thus, they are not yet certain about what they deem important, due to their lack of experience.

4.7   SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC DETERMINANTS OF WORK VALUES AND WORK ETHICS

To determine the influence of the sociodemographic variables on the dependent variables, non-parametric tests, namely Mann-Whitney U tests and Kruskal-Wallis tests, were performed, due to the fact that the data was not normally distributed. The Mann-Whitney U test is used to determine the influence of gender on work values and work ethics, due to the fact that gender has only two levels, namely male and female. The results of the Mann-Whitney U test for gender are presented in Table 4.10.

Table 4.10: Mann-Whitney U test results for work values and work ethics as dependent variables, and gender as independent variable

Level of the variable	Mann-Whitney	Z-score	*P*
WORK VALUES			
Achievement	9866.50	-0.922	0.357
Advancement	9776.00	-1.049	0.294
Aesthetics	9174.50	-1.875	0.061
Altruism	9787.00	-1.027	0.304
Authority	9775.00	-1.042	0.297
Autonomy	10390.00	-0.191	0.849
Creativity	9628.50	-1.247	0.212
Cultural identity	10216.50	-0.431	0.667
Economic rewards	9640.50	-1.234	0.217
Economic security	10274.50	-0.353	0.724
Own lifestyle	10246.50	-0.389	0.697
Personal development	10494.50	-0.047	0.963
Physical activities	9937.50	-0.816	0.414
Physical prowess	9342.00	-1.637	0.102
Prestige	7964.50	-3.550	0.000**
Risk	9132.50	-1.927	0.054
Social interaction	10482.50	-0.063	0.950
Social relationships	9883.00	-0.891	0.373
Spirituality	10060.50	-0.648	0.517
Variety	8983.50	-2.139	0.032*
Working conditions	10051.50	-0.661	0.509
WORK ETHICS			
Self-reliance	9719.00	-1.115	0.265
Morality/ethics	10220.50	-0.348	0.728
Leisure	9022.50	-1.487	0.137
Hard work	9223.00	-1.800	0.072
Centrality of work	10377.00	0.208	0.835
Wasted time	10431.50	-0.133	0.894
Delay of gratification	8737.00	-2.471	0.013*

* p ≤ 0.05 ** p ≤ 0.01

According to Table 4.10, gender had a statistically significant influence on the work values of prestige (p ≤ 0.01) and variety (p ≤ 0.05). Similarly, gender had an influence on work ethics, particularly delay of gratification (p ≤ 0.05). In terms of the work value labelled "prestige", females had a higher mean ranking (mean ranking = 164.14) than their male counterparts (mean ranking = 127.61). The median value for females was 3.40, and for males it was 3.20. With regard to the work value labelled "variety", females once again outscored males, with a mean ranking of 158.72, compared to a mean ranking of 136.71 for males. The median for both groups was 3. In terms of delay of gratification, males had a higher mean ranking (mean = 166.49) than their female counterparts (mean = 140.97). The median for females was 2.2, and for males it was 2.00.

The Kruskal-Wallis test results for work values and work ethics as dependent variables, and race as independent variable, are illustrated in Table 4.11.

Table 4.11: Kruskal-Wallis test results for work values and work ethics as dependent variables, and race as independent variable

Level of the variable	Chi-square	DF	*P*
WORK VALUES			
Ability utilisation	2.542	3	0.468
Achievement	2.780	3	0.427
Advancement	6.448	3	0.092
Aesthetics	2.501	3	0.475
Altruism	2.531	3	0.470
Authority	5.207	3	0.157
Autonomy	3.584	3	0.310
Creativity	5.436	3	0.143
Cultural identity	5.377	3	0.146
Economic rewards	3.419	3	0.331
Economic security	4.888	3	0.180

Level of the variable	Chi-square	DF	*P*
WORK VALUES			
Own lifestyle	2.285	3	0.515
Personal development	4.017	3	0.260
Physical activities	4.393	3	0.222
Physical prowess	2.274	3	0.517
Prestige	0.142	3	0.986
Risk	2.808	3	0.422
Social interaction	3.905	3	0.272
Social relationships	1.759	3	0.624
Spirituality	2.432	3	0.488
Variety	4.183	3	0.242
Working conditions	3.065	3	0.382
WORK ETHICS			
Self-reliance	2.675	3	0.444
Morality/ethics	2.926	3	0.403
Leisure	4.798	3	0.187
Hard work	3.019	3	0.389
Centrality of work	5.681	3	0.128
Wasted time	6.205	3	0.102
Delay of gratification	3.009	3	0.390

$* p \leq 0.05; ** p \leq 0.01$

According to Table 4.11, the variable of population group does not have a statistically significant influence on any of the work values or levels of work ethics measured. It should, however, be noted that even though the sample corresponded to the racial distribution in South Africa, it consisted mostly of black African respondents.

The Kruskal-Wallis test results for work values and work ethics as dependent variables, and years of service as independent variable, are indicated in Table 4.12.

Table 4.12: Kruskal-Wallis test results for work values and work ethics as dependent variables, and years of service as independent variable

Variable	Chi-square	DF	*P*
WORK VALUES			
Ability utilisation	6.396	4	0.171
Achievement	6.013	4	0.198
Advancement	7.995	4	0.092
Aesthetics	4.115	4	0.391
Altruism	2.238	4	0.692
Authority	2.816	4	0.589
Autonomy	4.355	4	0.360
Creativity	2.814	4	0.589
Cultural identity	2.121	4	0.713
Economic rewards	13.014	4	0.011*
Economic security	2.931	4	0.569
Lifestyle	3.850	4	0.427
Personal development	4.181	4	0.382
Physical activities	5.917	4	0.205
Physical prowess	13.407	4	0.009**
Prestige	10.629	4	0.031*
Risk	18.212	4	0.001**
Social interaction	9.304	4	0.054
Social relationships	7.808	4	0.099
Spirituality	2.405	4	0.662
Variety	4.483	4	0.345
Working conditions	2.586	4	0.629
WORK ETHICS			
Self-reliance	6.950	4	0.139
Morality/ethics	0.381	4	0.984
Leisure	7.560	4	0.109
Hard work	17.412	4	0.002**
Centrality of work	5.207	4	0.267
Wasted time	0.820	4	0.936
Delay of gratification	20.682	4	0.000**

* p ≤ 0.05; ** p ≤ 0.01

The Kruskal-Wallis test results depicted in Table 4.12 reveal that years of service had a statistically significant influence on the following work values: physical prowess (p = 0.009), risk (p = 0.001), economic rewards (p = 0.011), and prestige (p = 0.031). The work ethics that were statistically significantly influenced by years of service were hard work (p = 0.002) and delay of gratification (p = 0.000). In terms of economic rewards, respondents that had 0-1 year of service had a median of 3.6, those with 2-5 years of service had a median of 3.4, those with 6-10 years of service had a median of 3.8, those with 11-15 years of service had a median of 3.7, and those with 15 plus years of service had a median of 3. For physical prowess, the median scores were as follows: 2.6 each for the categories of 0-1 and 2-5 years of service, 2.2 for 6-10 years of service, 3.2 for 11-15 years of service, and 1.8 for those with 15 plus years of service.

For prestige, the median scores were 3.4 each for the categories of 0-1 and 6-10 years of service, 3.2 for 2-5 years of service, 3.55 for 11-15 years of service, and 3 for 15 plus years of service. With regard to risk, the median scores were as follows: the categories of 0-1 and 6-10 years of service each had a median of 2.4, 2-5 years of service had a median of 2.5, 11-15 years of service had a median of 2.8, and the lowest median was observed for the category of 15 plus years of service, which had a median of 2.

The following median scores were recorded for the work ethics subscale of hard work: 1.5 each for the categories of 0-1 and 2-5 years of service, 1.9 for 6-10 years of service, 1.65 for 11-15 years of services, and 2.20 for respondents with 15 plus years of service. Delay of gratification had the following median scores: 2 for 0-11 years of service, 2.14 for 2-5 years of service, 2.43 for 6-10 years of service, 2.21 for 11-15 years of service, and 2.29 for 15 plus years of service.

The Kruskal-Wallis test results for work values and work ethics as dependent variables, and educational level as independent variable, are indicated in Table 4.13.

Table 4.13: **Kruskal-Wallis test results for work values and work ethics as dependent variables, and educational level as independent variable**

Level of the variable	Chi-square	DF	*P*
WORK VALUES			
Ability utilisation	3.502	5	0.623
Achievement	4.924	5	0.425
Advancement	9.538	5	0.089
Aesthetics	3.436	5	0.633
Altruism	2.482	5	0.779
Authority	3.846	5	0.572
Autonomy	5.022	5	0.413
Creativity	4.531	5	0.476
Cultural identity	10.210	5	0.07
Economic rewards	14.374	5	0.013*
Economic security	11.922	5	0.036*
Own lifestyle	6.371	5	0.272
Personal development	5.429	5	0.366
Physical activities	4.854	5	0.434
Physical prowess	7.571	5	0.182
Prestige	11.773	5	0.038*
Risk	4.684	5	0.456
Social interaction	7.331	5	0.197
Social relationships	5.246	5	0.387
Spirituality	6.281	5	0.280
Variety	6.108	5	0.296
Working conditions	4.520	5	0.477

Level of the variable	Chi-square	DF	*P*
WORK ETHICS			
Self-reliance	4.964	5	0.420
Morality/ethics	4.934	5	0.424
Leisure	3.167	5	0.674
Hard work	5.172	5	0.395
Centrality of work	2.723	5	0.743
Wasted time	4.152	5	0.528
Delay of gratification	10.849	5	0.054

* p ≤ 0.05 ** p ≤ 0.01

According to Table 4.13, highest academic qualification had a statistically significant influence on work values related to economic rewards and economic security, as well as prestige, at the 0.05 level of significance. The results showed no statistically significant influence between educational level and work ethics. With regard to economic rewards, respondents with less than a Grade 12 qualification had a median score of 3.3, the categories of Grade 12 and national diploma each had a median score of 3.6, followed by honours or bachelor's degree, which had a median score of 3.2, master's degree, which had a median score of 3, and doctorate degree, with a median score of 4.

For the work value of economic security, the following median scores were observed: 3.2 for the category of less than Grade 12, 3.4 for Grade 12, 3.6 for national diploma, 3.4 for honours or bachelor's degree, 3.2 for master's degree, and 4 for those with a doctorate degree. The work value of prestige recorded the following median scores: 3.2 for less than Grade 12, 3.4 each for Grade 12 and national diploma, 3 for honours or bachelor's degree, 2.6 for master's degree, and 4 for those with a doctorate degree.

4.8   CONCLUSION

The aim of this study was to determine and profile the work values and work ethics of different generational cohorts. The results presented in this chapter show that there are differences and similarities between the different generational cohorts in terms of work values and work ethics. The secondary objective of this study was to determine whether other sociodemographic variables measured had a statistically significant influence on work values and work ethics. The results presented in this chapter indicate that some of the sociodemographic variables measured do have a statistically significant influence on work values and work ethics. Similarly, intercorrelations between the various components of work ethics and work values were found. In the following chapter, these results will be discussed and interpreted.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1   INTRODUCTION

In Chapter 1, the research objectives of the study were stated. In line with the first objective of the study, a literature review of the different generational cohorts, work values, and work ethics was presented in Chapter 2. In Chapter 3 the research methodology was described, after which the findings of the study were presented in Chapter 4. In this chapter, the research questions of the study will be answered, and the most important findings will be discussed. Thereafter, the limitations and contribution of the current study will be highlighted, and recommendations will be made for future research.

5.2   WORK ETHICS OF THE DIFFERENT GENERATIONAL COHORTS

The second objective of the research study was to determine the work ethics of different generational cohorts in the South African work environment (see section 1.6.2). The results presented in Table 4.6 (see section 4.4) reveal that two of the work ethics measured, namely morality/ethics and wasted time, are less important to the Generation Y cohort, and five of the work ethics measured are important to Generation Y, namely self-reliance, leisure, hard work, delay of gratification, and centrality of work.

The results presented in Table 4.7 (see section 4.4) show that the work ethics of Generation X respondents are somewhat different from the work ethics of Generation Y respondents. The results indicate that only one of the work ethics measured is less important to Generation X, namely morality/ethics. All the other work ethics measured are regarded as important to Generation X, namely self-reliance, leisure, hard work, centrality of work, wasted time, and delay of gratification. The results presented in Table 4.8 (see section 4.4) reveal that two of the work ethics measured are less important to the Baby Boomers, namely morality/ethics and leisure. Five of the work ethics subscales measured are important to the Baby Boomers, namely self-reliance, hard work, wasted time, delay of gratification, and centrality of work.

The results regarding the work ethics of the different generational cohorts show some similarities and some differences across the generational cohorts. Of the seven work ethics measured, the following work ethics are important to all generational cohorts: self-reliance, hard work, and delay of gratification. With regard to self-reliance, the literature reports differences regarding the level of self-reliance of the different generational cohorts. For instance, Egri and Ralston (2004: 13) report that the Baby Boomers are self-reliant, while Martin et al. (cited in King, 2005: 6), state that Generation X is the first generation which shows high self-reliance. Therefore, the findings of the current study are mostly consistent with previous research findings regarding self-reliance. The finding that self-reliance is important to all generational cohorts included in this study is not surprising if one considers that South Africa is a capitalist country, and it is asserted that capitalism promoted individualism, in the sense of self-reliance (Tawney, cited in Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011: 7).

In terms of hard work, the literature (see section 2.2.1.2 and Table 2.3) indicates that the Baby Boomers are perceived as workaholics, who will stay at work until they have got the job done, and will thus spend more time at work than at home

(Shragay & Tziner, 2011: 144). The results of the current study confirm that the Baby Boomers are hardworking. Contrary to the literature (see Codrington & Grant-Marshall, 2006; Hellekson, 2007), which perceives Generation X as "slackers", the current study shows only a small difference between the Baby Boomers and Generation X with regard to the importance of hard work. In fact, the results indicate that the importance of hard work is the same for both Generation X and Generation Y, and is only slightly higher for the Baby Boomers. This may be because the Baby Boomers were found to be more service-orientated and success-driven, while Generation X was perceived to have less interest in long-term careers and status (see Tables 2.3 and 2.4).

With regard to delay of gratification, the findings of the current study contradict previous research findings. Previous research findings indicate that all generational cohorts value instant gratification (Govitvatana, 2001: 11; King, 2005: 4; Schultz & Schwepker, 2012: 35), rather than delayed gratification. One possible explanation for the difference in findings regarding this work ethic may be that all generational cohorts are becoming increasingly concerned about the future, and thus the importance of delay of gratification.

Three of the work ethics measured, namely leisure, centrality of work, and wasted time, produced different results for the different generational cohorts. Leisure was found to be important to Generation X and Generation Y, but not to the Baby Boomers. These findings are consistent with previous research findings, which indicate that the Baby Boomers do not value leisure time as much as Generation X and Generation Y do (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011: 15). One possible explanation could be that Generation X and Generation Y are concerned with creating work-life balance, and that work for them may be regarded as a means to enjoy leisure activities (or to live, as was indicated in Table 1.1). Furthermore, they are less concerned with wasted time, which may be interpreted as time spent on leisure activities. The Baby Boomers, on the other hand, live to work (see Table

1.1), and, therefore, to them leisure time may be seen as wasted time, since leisure activities fall outside the context of work (Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011: 14). Leisure activities would thus not be seen as necessary to create meaning in their lives.

Centrality of work was found to be important to both Generation X and Generation Y, but less important to the Baby Boomers. This finding contradicts previous research findings. Twenge (2010: 203) asserts that previous studies have found that work centrality is declining for all generations. Other authors have indicated that the Baby Boomers regard work as their main priority, while Generation X strives to achieve work-life balance. One possible explanation for the finding of the current study could be that the Baby Boomers are now approaching (or have entered) their late life and career stage, and have possibly come to the realisation that work is not as important as they had previously believed. In addition, Generation X is at a career stage which is referred to as the "settling-down phase", during which promotion and psychological success become increasingly important (Levinson et al., cited in Schreuder & Coetzee, 2011: 170). This implies that Generation X will possibly regard their work as their main priority at this stage, in order to progress in their careers. However, work centrality remains important to organisations, since previous research has established a relationship between work centrality and organisational commitment, job satisfaction, and participation in organisational decision making (Kanungo, cited in Sharabi & Harpaz, 2010: 380).

The findings further indicate that morality and ethics are less important to all generational cohorts. As was explained in section 2.3, the concepts of ethics and morality are often used interchangeably, but, in general, ethics refers to a person's character, while morality means customs or manners, and is usually applied to acts and behaviour (Chidi et al., 2012: 117). The finding of the current study with regard to morality/ethics generally confirm previous research findings. Twenge (2010: 204) asserts that most previous studies have found, in contrast with previous

research findings, that Generation X and Generation Y express weaker work ethics. This was confirmed by the research results discussed in the previous chapter, where it was shown that the Baby Boomers seem to be more concerned with work ethics, while Generation X seems to be the least concerned with work ethics. This finding is cause for concern, if one takes into consideration that ethics and morality are essential in order to make ethical decisions, and to uphold moral behaviour in the workplace (Bowen, 2005: 315; Bowden & Smythe, 2008: 19). Furthermore, it would seem that ethics and morality are especially important in a country such as South Africa, where societal and business leaders are increasingly engaging in unethical behaviour.

5.3   WORK VALUES OF THE DIFFERENT GENERATIONAL COHORTS

The third objective of the study was to determine the work values of the different generations working within the South African organisational context (see section 1.6.2). The results presented in Table 4.6 indicate that six of the 22 work values measured are important to Generation Y, namely authority, creativity, cultural identity, risk, economic security, and social relationships. The work values of Generation X respondents are somewhat different from those of Generation Y respondents, as is indicated above. The results presented in Table 4.7 indicate that only three work values are important to respondents belonging to Generation X, namely physical activities, social interaction, and spirituality. Table 4.8 indicates that 11 of the 22 work values measured are important to respondents belonging to the Baby Boomer generational cohort, namely aesthetics, altruism, authority, creativity, economic rewards, physical prowess, prestige, risk, social interaction, social relationships, and agreeable working conditions.

From the above results, one may conclude that there are certain similarities and certain differences between the generational cohorts of this sample in terms of work values. More similarities were established between the Baby Boomers and Generation Y than between the Baby Boomers and Generation X, and than between Generation Y and Generation X. The above results indicate that both the Baby Boomer respondents and the Generation Y respondents value authority, creativity, risk, and social relationships in the work context. These findings contradict those reported by Robbins et al. (2009: 105) and Jurkiewicz (2000: 56), who found that the Baby Boomers and Generation X are more alike than different.

Ching and Kee (2012: 243) assert that previous generational studies have mainly been conducted in a Westernised setting. Their findings for a Malaysian sample differ considerably from the findings of previous studies conducted in Westernised countries, and they are consistent with the findings of this study. The most interesting differences reported were, firstly, that both Generation Y and the Baby Boomers value authority. This is particularly interesting, since Generation Y has been described as less inclined to accept authority and formal leadership (see Table 2.5).

Secondly, both Generation Y and the Baby Boomers seem to value relationships through which they can make a contribution to society. Furthermore, Generation X seeks to connect with others, but their connection is more spiritually based. Another interesting finding was that only Generation Y values cultural identity. This may be indicative of the fact that Generation Y has a longing to identify with their culture, which can provide them with more meaning in life.

5.4 GENERATIONAL PROFILE OF WORK ETHICS AND WORK VALUES FOR A SOUTH AFRICAN SAMPLE

The fourth objective of the study was to profile the work ethics and work values of different generational cohorts for a South African sample (see section 1.6.2). This profile is presented in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1: **Work values and work ethics profile of different generational cohorts working within the South African work environment**

Cohort	Born between	Work values	Work ethics
Generation Y	1990-2000	Authority Creativity Cultural identity Risk Social relationships Economic security	Self-reliance Leisure Hard work Centrality of work Delay of gratification
Generation X	1970-1989	Physical activities Social interaction Spirituality	Self-reliance Leisure Hard work Centrality of work Wasted time Delay of gratification
The Baby Boomers	1950-1969	Aesthetics Authority Creativity Economic rewards Economic security Physical prowess Prestige Risk Social interaction Social relationships Agreeable working conditions	Self-reliance Hard work Wasted time Delay of gratification

5.5 THE ASSOCIATION BETWEEN WORK VALUES AND WORK ETHICS AND SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES

The fifth objective of the study was to investigate the association between work ethics and work values and sociodemographic variables, such as gender, race, years of service, and highest educational level (see section 1.6.2).

5.5.1 Work values and work ethics and gender

The results presented in Table 4.10 indicate that gender is statistically significantly associated with the work values of prestige (p = 0.000) and variety (p = 0.032). In both instances, females had a higher mean ranking than males. In most of the other work values measured, males and females reported the same median scores. These findings differ from the findings of previous studies. For an Asian sample, Ueda and Ohzono (2013: 28) reports that males had higher levels of work values than females, except in the work value of monetary rewards. This shows that for the current sample, males and females have similar work values.

In terms of gender and work ethics, the results presented in Table 4.10 indicate that there is a correlation between gender and the work ethics subscale of delay of gratification (p = 0.013), with males showing a higher mean ranking than their female counterparts. Delay of gratification refers to an individual's ability to sustain a chosen course of action for the achievement of a long-term goal while there are other alluring alternatives that offer short-term gratification (Reynolds & Schiffbauer, cited in Van Ness et al., 2010: 8). This shows that male respondents focus more strongly on achieving long-term goals than on achieving short-term goals. One possible explanation for this could be that males are often the dominant

party in marriages, making decisions in terms of long-term investments, such as purchasing a house or a car.

5.5.2 Work values and work ethics and race

The results presented in Table 4.11 show that race did not have a statistically significant influence on work values and work ethics. Different results were reported by Steyn and Kotze (2004: 21) for a South African sample. Their study was published in 2004, and their data was collected in 2001. With regard to income, Indians/Asians ranked the highest, followed by Coloureds, then blacks, and whites ranked the lowest on this work value (Steyn & Kotze, 2004: 21). For the work values of accomplishment, whites attached much importance to these values, while blacks attached the least importance to these work values.

Job security was reported to be most important to Indians/Asians, followed by Coloureds, then blacks, and then whites. Considering the changes that are happening in South Africa, it is reasonable to postulate that studies of this kind conducted at different times will yield different results. Steyn and Kotze (2004: 21) conducted their study a decade after democracy, and published their results. However, the current study was conducted two decades (20 years) after democracy, and it yields completely different results. This indicates that much progress has been made to eradicate the effects of apartheid, not only through enforcement of legislation, such as the Employment Equity Act, Act 55 of 1998 (SA, 1998), but also in individuals' mindsets and work values. One may postulate that South Africans are now moving away from the notion of identifying oneself in terms of skin colour.

5.5.3 Work values and work ethics and years of service

The results presented in Table 4.12 indicate a significant correlation between years of service and the work values of economic rewards (p = 0.011), physical prowess (p = 0.009), prestige (p = 0.031), and risk (p = 0.001). In terms of prestige and risk, employees with 11-15 years of experience had the highest mean scores for these work values, followed by those with 0-1 and 6-10 years of experience, while employees with 15 or more years of experience had the lowest mean scores for these work values. None of the work ethics measured were statistically significantly correlated with years of service. While these findings are interesting, they are not surprising, as employees that have many years of experience will possibly become fairly settled in the organisation, and this may allow them to become more concerned with upward mobility within the organisational hierarchy, which can potentially give them prestige within and outside the organisation. Furthermore, employees that move to higher levels within the organisation are likely to be more exposed to risks, because of the nature of the work in higher-level positions.

5.5.4 Work values and work ethics and educational level

The results presented in Table 4.13 indicate that educational level is not statistically significantly correlated with any of the work ethics measured. However, statistically significant correlations were established between educational level and the work values of economic rewards (p = 0.013), economic security (p = 0.036), and prestige (p = 0.038). Doctors (doctorate holders) had the highest mean ranking, with individuals with a national diploma ranking the second-highest in all three work values, while individuals with a master's degree ranked the lowest in all three work values. Individuals with Grade 12 and those with less than Grade 12 ranked second and third, respectively, on the work values of economic rewards

and prestige, and third and fourth, respectively, on the work value of economic security. The results further indicate that individuals holding a bachelor's degree ranked the second-lowest on the work values of economic rewards and prestige, and that they ranked third-highest on the work value of economic security. The results show a rather interesting pattern. The most qualified individuals (doctorate holders) ranked the highest on these three work values, withn people holding a national diploma ranking the second-highest on all three of these work values. This may be because when people are more educated, they are more inclined to strive for a comfortable life defined by high income and acknowledgement.

5.6   CONCLUSION, AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE CURRENT STUDY

In terms of the work ethics of different generational cohorts, it is interesting to discover that at least three work ethics are common across all three generational cohorts (Generation Y, Generation X, and the Baby Boomers), namely self-reliance, hard work, and delay of gratification. This could have positive implications for generational members (as employees), management, and the organisation as a whole. A work environment where employees have similar work ethics could mean, among other things, less conflict between employees, thus resulting in a more harmonious workplace, more manageable employees, and a potentially successful organisation. However, these generations still have different work ethics, which may not hold positive implications for management.

However, none of the generations have morality/ethics as a work ethic. This could have serious implications for the organisation. An employee who does not have good morality/ethics may not be trusted to work with confidential information, as it may lead to leakage of information, and, in a worst-case scenario, even industrial espionage. Morality/ethics also informs the way a person makes decisions. Thus, a person with poor morality/ethics is more likely to make unethical decisions, which

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may have serious implications for the organisation. Some examples of unethical behaviour, as outlined by Trevino and Nelson (2010: 1), include forging of signatures and lying about sick leave, cheating on expense accounts, and paying or accepting bribes and kickbacks. This lack of ethics has cost South Africa significant amounts of money (Esterhuyse, cited in Trevino & Nelson, 2010: 1). Furthermore, individuals with good ethics aspire to do what is morally right all the time. Thus, an individual with no morality/ethics may sometimes not do what is morally right, but only what is personally beneficial, which may lead to corruption in the workplace.

In terms of the work values of different generations working within the South African work environment, it is interesting to discover that there are more similarities between Generation Y and the Baby Boomers than between Generation Y and Generation X, although few similarities were also found between the Baby Boomers and Generation X. This could have both positive and negative implications for the organisation. When employees have similar work values, it may become easier for management to structure work in such a way that will satisfy all of their employees. Among other things, similar work values across generations could bring mutual understanding and cooperation in the organisation, with employees working towards a common vision. Considering the definition of work values offered by Uçanok (2008: 159) (see section 2.4.8.1), it is beneficial for a company to have employees who share the same work values. However, the generational cohorts in this study expressed differences in work values. This could hold negative implications for the organisation. When employees have dissimilar work values, the organisation will have to work hard to satisfy the diverse needs of their workforce, according to the preferences of each cohort. If these needs are not met, high labour turnover, job dissatisfaction, a high number of conflicts, and disloyalty to the organisation could be some of the implications that such an organisation will face.

5.7 LIMITATION OF THE CURRENT STUDY

The current study is a cross-sectional study, and data was collected only once. The study was localised, and data was therefore collected from individuals in one town, but from different companies, so as to ensure a more diverse sample. Although generational cohort theory is based on the notion that a group of people (a cohort) born in the same era in different parts of the world share the same values, the results of this study cannot be generalised, since the size of the sample that was used was small.

5.8 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

As this was a cross-sectional study, future research should account for life and career stages as generational members mature and progress. A larger sample should be used, to enable generalisability of the results to a more diverse population. Furthermore, considering that much research has been done on the Baby Boomers, future research should concentrate more on Generation X and Generation Y. In addition, further research is essential to show how Generation Y is going to change the running of workplaces in terms of the management style employed, the communication channels used, the use of technology in the workplace, and many other factors.

5.9 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PRACTICE

In terms of the work ethics of different generations working within the South African work environment, it is important for management to orientate new employees regarding the organisational culture of the organisation concerned, so that the

employees can align themselves with it. Aligning themselves with the organisational culture will give employees a better understanding of the organisation's vision, mission, and policies. However, if the organisational culture does not correspond with the work ethic of an individual, or a certain cohort, this individual, or this cohort, may have low organisational commitment, or they may be less satisfied with their jobs and with the organisation. Low organisational commitment may in some cases lead to high labour turnover. Therefore, it is recommended that, when forming an organisational culture, management take into consideration the diverse nature of the workforce, which has arisen as a result of the many different generations employed in the organisation. Together with the need for a more accommodating culture, management should also put in place a code of ethics, which must be adhered to by all members of the organisation. A code of ethics may encourage employees to be more aware of the ethics they should have, and it may also be used to guide employees on how they should conduct themselves in the workplace. However, to some employees, such a code could be seen as "just one of those documents". Thus, it is important that management (as leaders) lead by example, and that they conduct themselves in an ethical way, so as to influence the behaviour of their employees (the followers).

In terms of the work values of different generations working within the South African work environment, it is imperative that the needs of the organisation always correspond with the needs of the employees. For this reason, the organisation must first understand employees' needs, and the work elements (work values) that are important to them, and the needs must then be aligned, so as to create a healthy and productive work environment. The Baby Boomers and Generation Y share the work value of social relationships, while both the Baby Boomers and Generation X attach much importance to social interaction. It is thus recommended that organisations make use of teams, as the findings of the study indicate that all of the generations investigated would be good team players, and teams would be an effective and competitive advantage to organisations which make use of them.

It is further recommended that management styles in organisations not be autocratic, but that they allow for employee contributions and creativity. Organisations must offer training and development for their employees, in order to create opportunities for personal development and growth. Furthermore, employees should be allowed to use office space creatively, to make the office more appealing and comfortable.

5.10   CONCLUSION

This study and its findings have offered an in-depth understanding of generational differences in terms of work values and work ethics within the South African work environment. It is evident that differences between generational cohorts in terms of work values and work ethics in the South African workforce do exist. However, it should also be acknowledged that there are certain similarities between these cohorts in terms of work values and work ethics, and that organisations should capitalise and build on these similarities. Furthermore, differences and similarities in terms of sociodemographic variables, such as gender, race, educational level, years of service, and organisation, should also be acknowledged. Lastly, organisations must consider all these similarities and differences, so that they can structure work in such a way that it will help them not only to retain their workforce, but also to retain a more satisfied workforce.

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Annexure A: Introductory letter

Central University of Technology, Free State

PO Box 1881
Motse-Thabong
9460
20 June 2013

The Human Resource Manager
Lejweleputswa District Office

Dear Sir/Madam

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH STUDY

This letter serves as an application to conduct a research study at the Lejweleputswa District Office. I am a Junior Lecturer at Central University of Technology (CUT), Free State within the Department of Business Management. I am also a registered Master's Degree student in Human Resources Management at CUT, Free State (Welkom campus), under the study supervision of Dr Freda van der Walt. The research topic is "Work ethic and work values: a generational perspective". Permission was granted to proceed with this intended topic by CUT's Central Research Committee.

Kindly take note of the following:

• All information received will serve no other purpose than purely for academic research.
• It is estimated that it will take each participant approximately 30 minutes to complete the questionnaire.
• The questionnaire will be completed at the participant's free time and will not interfere with the participant's working time.
• An executive summary will be submitted to your organisation indicating the findings of the study.

Your positive consideration to conduct the intended research study at your institution will be highly appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

_____   _____
RESEARCHER   **STUDY LEADER**
Ntomzodwa C. Zwede   Dr F. Van Der Walt
Faculty of Management Sciences   Faculty of Management Sciences
CUT, Free State   CUT, Free State
Contact no: 0847421831   Contact no: 0834590351

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Annexure B:

SECTION A: BIOGRAPHICAL QUESTIONNAIRE

Please answer the following questions by choosing the option that is applicable to you. Place a cross (x) on your option.

1. Age group

23 and younger	24-43 years	44-63 years	64 and older

2. Ethnic group

Black African	White	Coloured	Indian/ Asian	Other

3. Gender

Male	Female

4. Years of service with current organisation

0-1 year	2-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	15 or more years

5. Highest educational qualification

Below Grade 12	Grade 12	National diploma	Bachelor's degree	Honours/ BTech degree	Master's degree	Doctorate degree

6. Job title

SECTION B: WORK VALUES INVENTORY

In this section we will be asking you questions concerning your work values. The statements below represent values which people consider important to their work. Read each statement below carefully, and indicate how important it is for you. Place a cross (x) on your option.

1	2	3	4	5
Very important	Important	Moderately important	Of little importance	Unimportant

1. Work in which you have to keep solving new problems.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Work in which you help others.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Work in which you can get a raise.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Work in which you look forward to changes in your job.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Work in which you have freedom in your own area.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Work in which you gain prestige in your field.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Work in which you need to have artistic ability.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Work in which you are one of the gang.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Work in which you know your job will last.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Work in which you can be the kind of person you would like to be.	1	2	3	4	5
11. Work in which you have a boss who gives you a square deal.	1	2	3	4	5
12. Work in which you like the setting in which your job is done.	1	2	3	4	5
13. Work in which you have a feeling of having done a good day's work.	1	2	3	4	5
14. Work in which you have authority over others.	1	2	3	4	5
15. Work in which you try out new ideas and suggestions.	1	2	3	4	5
16. Work in which you create something new.	1	2	3	4	5
17. Work in which you know by the results when you have done a good job.	1	2	3	4	5

1	2	3	4	5
Very important	Important	Moderately important	Of little importance	Unimportant

18. Work in which you have a boss who is reasonable.	1	2	3	4	5
19. Work in which you are sure of always having a job.	1	2	3	4	5
20. Work in which you add beauty to the world.	1	2	3	4	5
21. Work in which you make your own decisions.	1	2	3	4	5
22. Work in which you have pay increases that keep up with the cost of living.	1	2	3	4	5
23. Work in which you are mentally challenged.	1	2	3	4	5
24. Work in which you use leadership abilities.	1	2	3	4	5
25. Work in which you have adequate lounge, toilet and other facilities.	1	2	3	4	5
26. Work in which you have a way of life, while not on the job, that you like.	1	2	3	4	5
27. Work in which you form friendships with your fellow employees.	1	2	3	4	5
28. Work in which you know that others consider your work important.	1	2	3	4	5
29. Work in which you do not do the same thing all the time.	1	2	3	4	5
30. Work in which you feel you have helped another person.	1	2	3	4	5
31. Work in which you add to the well-being of other people.	1	2	3	4	5
32. Work in which you do many different things.	1	2	3	4	5
33. Work in which you are looked up to by others.	1	2	3	4	5
34. Work in which you have good contacts with fellow workers.	1	2	3	4	5
35. Work in which you lead the kind of life you most enjoy.	1	2	3	4	5
36. Work in which you have a good place in which to work (good lighting, quiet, clean, enough space, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5
37. Work in which you plan and organise the work of others.	1	2	3	4	5
38. Work in which you need to be mentally alert.	1	2	3	4	5

1	2	3	4	5
Very important	Important	Moderately important	Of little importance	Unimportant

39. Work in which you are paid enough to live right.	1	2	3	4	5
40. Work in which you are your own boss.	1	2	3	4	5
41. Work in which you make attractive products.	1	2	3	4	5
42. Work in which you are sure of another job in the company if you current job comes to an end.	1	2	3	4	5
43. Work in which you have a supervisor who is considerate.	1	2	3	4	5
44. Work in which you see the results of your efforts.	1	2	3	4	5
45. Work in which you contribute new ideas.	1	2	3	4	5

Please continue on the next page

SECTION C: WORK ETHICS

In this section we will be asking you questions on work ethics. Work ethics is often referred to as the value and importance of work. This questionnaire contains **65** statements. Please read each statement carefully. For each statement, place a cross (x) on the response that best represents your belief or opinion.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

1. It is important to stay busy at work, and not waste time.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I feel uneasy when there is little work for me to do.	1	2	3	4	5
3. If I want to buy something, I always wait until I can afford it.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I feel content when I have spent the day working.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Life would be more meaningful if we had more leisure time.	1	2	3	4	5
6. To be truly successful, a person should be self-reliant.	1	2	3	4	5
7. One should always take responsibility for one's actions.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I would prefer a job that allowed me to have more leisure time.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Time should not be wasted; it should be used efficiently.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Even if I were financially able, I would not stop working.	1	2	3	4	5
11. I get more fulfilment from items I had to wait for.	1	2	3	4	5
12. I schedule my day in advance, to avoid wasting time.	1	2	3	4	5
13. A hard day's work is very fulfilling.	1	2	3	4	5
14. The more time I can spend in leisure activity, the better I feel.	1	2	3	4	5
15. One should always do what is right and just.	1	2	3	4	5
16. I would take items from work if I felt I was not getting paid enough.	1	2	3	4	5
17. Nothing is impossible if you work hard enough.	1	2	3	4	5

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

18. The less time one spends working, and the more leisure time one has, the better.	1	2	3	4	5
19. Things that you have to wait for are the most worthwhile.	1	2	3	4	5
20. Working hard is the key to being successful.	1	2	3	4	5
21. Self-reliance is the key to being successful.	1	2	3	4	5
22. If one works hard enough, one is likely to make a good life for oneself.	1	2	3	4	5
23. I constantly look for ways to productively use my time.	1	2	3	4	5
24. Hard work makes one a better person.	1	2	3	4	5
25. One should not pass judgement until one has heard all of the facts.	1	2	3	4	5
26. People would be better off if they depended on themselves.	1	2	3	4	5
27. Work takes too much of our time, leaving little time to relax.	1	2	3	4	5
28. One should live one's own life independent of others, as much as possible.	1	2	3	4	5
29. A distant reward is usually more satisfying than an immediate one.	1	2	3	4	5
30. It is very important for me to always be able to work.	1	2	3	4	5
31. More leisure time is good for people.	1	2	3	4	5
32. One must avoid dependence on other people, whenever possible.	1	2	3	4	5
33. Even if I inherited a great deal of money, I would continue to work somewhere.	1	2	3	4	5
34. I do not like having to depend on other people.	1	2	3	4	5
35. By working hard, a person can overcome every obstacle that life presents.	1	2	3	4	5
36. I try to plan my workday, so as not to waste time.	1	2	3	4	5
37. You should never tell lies about other people.	1	2	3	4	5

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

38. Any problem can be overcome with hard work.	1	2	3	4	5
39. How a person spends their time is as important as how they spend their money.	1	2	3	4	5
40. Even if it were possible for me to retire, I would still continue to work.	1	2	3	4	5
41. Life without work would be very boring.	1	2	3	4	5
42. I prefer to save until I can afford something, and not buy it on credit.	1	2	3	4	5
43. The world would be a better place if people spent more time relaxing.	1	2	3	4	5
44. I strive to be self-reliant.	1	2	3	4	5
45. If you work hard you will succeed.	1	2	3	4	5
46. The best things in life are those you have to wait for.	1	2	3	4	5
47. Anyone who is able and willing to work hard has a good chance of succeeding.	1	2	3	4	5
48. Stealing is all right as long as you don't get caught.	1	2	3	4	5
49. The job that provides the most leisure time is the job for me.	1	2	3	4	5
50. Having a great deal of independence from others is very important to me.	1	2	3	4	5
51. It is important to treat others the way you would like to be treated.	1	2	3	4	5
52. I experience a sense of fulfilment from working.	1	2	3	4	5
53. A person should always do the best job possible.	1	2	3	4	5
54. It is never appropriate to take something that does not belong to you.	1	2	3	4	5
55. Only those who depend on themselves get ahead in life.	1	2	3	4	5
56. Wasting time is as bad as wasting justified.	1	2	3	4	5
57. There are times when stealing is all right.	1	2	3	4	5

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

58. People should have more leisure time to spend in relaxation.	1	2	3	4	5
59. It is important to control one's destiny by not being dependent on others.	1	2	3	4	5
60. By simply working hard enough, one can achieve one's goals.	1	2	3	4	5
61. People should be fair in their dealings.	1	2	3	4	5
62. The only way to get anything worthwhile with others is to save for it.	1	2	3	4	5
63. Leisure-time activities are more interesting than work.	1	2	3	4	5
64. A hard day's work provides a sense of accomplishment.	1	2	3	4	5
65. A distaste for hard work usually reflects a weakness of character.	1	2	3	4	5