

SECTION

1

WORK



WORK, TIME MANAGEMENT AND LEISURE

Work, Ethics and Honesty

INTRODUCTION

Your parents engage in meaningful activities to care for you at home and in school. Similarly, you participate in significant activities both in school and outside of it, preparing yourself for adult life, the world of work, and further studies. In this section, you will be introduced to the meaning, types and importance of work, and the teachings on the concept of work by the three main religions in Ghana. You will be further introduced to understanding decent and indecent jobs, roles and careers and making informed choices. The section will also encourage you to dispel gender stereotyping of roles, jobs, and careers in Ghanaian society and develop an interest in offering volunteer services. Finally, the section will lead you to appreciate and live according to good principles of work by exhibiting a high sense of honesty in your student life, world of work, and further studies.

At the end of this section, you will be able to:

- Identify key work ethics and indicate how they can be applied at home, school, and in the world of work.

Key Ideas

- The concept of work is viewed and understood from different perspectives or fields of study. Work could be beneficial or for voluntary reasons.
- Work is a meaningful and beneficial Activity that a person engages in regularly, either to earn a livelihood or gain self-fulfilment.
- Volunteerism is the act of rendering free services to a community or a non-profit organisation in order to gain self-fulfilment.

MEANING, TYPES AND IMPORTANCE OF WORK

The Meaning of Work

There are many ways of understanding the concept of work. Work may be described as;

- An Activity that a person engages in regularly to earn a livelihood or gain self-fulfilment. For example, a teacher provides teaching services to earn income to care

for his or her basic needs. A volunteer engages in community services to gain self-fulfilment.

- b. “Any meaningful” and beneficial act. Some acts are beneficial to the growth and development of individuals and society as a whole. For example, communal labour is beneficial to the development of the community as it may provide some social amenities such as schools, roads, potable water, etc. Work is also beneficial to the individual because it promotes health and wellness.

Note: Health is a state of complete mental, physical, and social well-being, while wellness is a state of a healthy lifestyle (WHO, 1948).

- c. Work is any Activity involving the use of mental or physical efforts to achieve a purpose (income, healthy living, gaining respect, fulfilling God’s command in order to attract blessings, etc.)

Activity 1.1

- Write down what you understand by the “meaning of work.”
- Discuss your views with your colleague about the meaning of work.
- You can use discussion stems like the examples below to engage each other in conversation.

Table 1.1: Questionnaire

What is your understanding of the meaning of work?	I agree because _____
Can you say more about that?	What makes you say that? _____
Can you give another example of that?	I disagree because _____
What is the difference between paid work and volunteer work?	So are you saying that _____
What work would you consider to be beneficial to the community?	My view on that is _____

Types of Work

There are two main types of work:

- Physical Work:** This involves tasks that require more physical strength to execute. Thus, some works require the use of more physical strength than the mind. Examples are farming, carpentry, masonry, sewing/tailoring, weaving, sculpturing, mining, pottery, etc.

- b. **Mental Work:** This involves tasks that require more mental abilities to execute. Thus, some work requires the use of the mind more than physical strength. Some of them are teaching, preaching, nursing, counselling, medicine, engineering, legal practice, etc.

Activity 1.2

Observe the occupations below and indicate the type of work they exhibit (physical or mental work) beneath them.



Fig. 1.1



Fig. 1.2



Fig. 1.3



Fig. 1.4

Importance of Work

Have you ever wondered why your guardians work? What will you gain from working hard in school and outside of it? Reflecting on your responses to these questions, you will realise that work is essential for both human and societal development. Here are some reasons why work should be encouraged:

- Work promotes healthy living.** Through work, people can provide a balanced diet for themselves and their families, ensuring good health. Work also gives peace of mind since it saves the individual from the challenges associated with unemployment. The body is also exercised as workers engage in their daily activities.
- Individuals and nations generate income from work.** Persons who engage in lawful work are paid for the service they render. The income they gain helps them provide for their own needs and those of their dependents. Some of such needs include payment of school fees, provision of food, shelter, etc. Taxes are also paid to the state for national

- development. Hard work is the cure for poverty (*Ninkare* Proverb). The reward of laziness is poverty (Gyekye, 2002).
- c. **Work minimises social vices when people apply their energy to productive activities.** It is often said that the devil finds work for idle hands. When people focus their time and energy on productive activities like nursing, teaching, farming, and trading, these activities help them earn a living and reduce social vices such as prostitution, armed robbery, etc.
 - d. **Work enhances self-confidence and respect.** Engaging in work boosts one’s self-confidence and helps one command respect in society. Conversely, joblessness often leads to frustration and depression.
 - e. **Work attracts blessings from God, Allah, or the gods.** Work is considered a command from God, Allah, or the gods. Therefore, anyone who engages in acceptable work receives blessings from the supreme being.
 - f. **Work draws people closer to God.** Since work is a divine command, engaging in good work fosters an effective relationship with the supreme being. To be religious or righteous, one must undertake meaningful and acceptable work in society.

Activity 1.3

- a. Discuss with a friend the observable impacts of work on human livelihood in your community.
- b. Note the types of jobs and community benefits on the worksheet below.

Table 1.2: Types of jobs and community benefits

Type of job	Community Benefits
<i>Example: Nurse</i>	<i>Support local people with health issues, provide health educational advice</i>

RELIGIOUS TEACHINGS ON THE CONCEPT OF WORK

In Ghana, the three predominant religions—Christianity, Islam, and African Indigenous Religions (AIR)—share a common belief in the importance of hard work. Let us explore what each of these religions teaches about work.

African Indigenous Religions (AIR) Teaching about Work

Teachings in African Indigenous Religions (AIR) mostly take the form of proverbs, wise sayings, and songs. Through these mediums, advice on work is passed on to people. Proverbs and wise sayings are believed to have been passed down from generation to generation throughout African societies. They are often used in storytelling to convey messages, lessons, and wisdom on good virtues, including hard work, to individuals.

Here are some examples of proverbs in selected local languages, translated into English, along with their meanings:

- a. *Mm den b bu musuo aba so* (Twi) – **Hard work dispels curses.** This means that putting in effort and working diligently can help overcome negative influences or setbacks. By working hard and persisting through challenges, one can negate or dispel any negativity associated with them. It implies that determination and perseverance can help counteract and overcome any negative forces or obstacles in one’s life. Hard work, therefore, promotes blessings to the individual, families, and society.
- b. *Edwumadzen nnkum nyimpa* (Fante) – **Hard work does not kill.** This proverb emphasises that hard work is not harmful or fatal. It is used to remind people, especially the young ones, that working hard will not endanger or kill them. Instead, it is believed that hard work is essential for succeeding and accomplishing one’s goals. It inspires people to push themselves and take on challenges without worrying that the task at hand will overwhelm or destroy them. It encourages the idea that, despite possible difficulties or demands, hard work is eventually fruitful and beneficial. One is expected to work hard to stay healthy and prosperous.
- c. *Fara je mahum/gom* (Dagbanli) – **Poverty hates sleeplessness.** This adage implies that individuals facing financial hardships often have to work tirelessly and sacrifice sleep to improve their situation. It highlights that poverty is a challenging and persistent issue that requires ongoing effort and dedication to overcome. By emphasising that poverty “hates sleeplessness,” the adage stresses the importance of constant vigilance and diligence for those striving to improve their lives.
- d. *Tuma kakuuri* (Nankani) – **Work does not kill.** (Refer to point B above.)
- e. *Ne le dade koli y3 wadei* (Ewe) – **When you lift it to your knee, they will help you take it unto your head.** This implies that an initiated act is always supported. An individual is not supposed to be idle but should find something to do.
- f. *Atsu dani aye* (Ga) – **Before you eat, make sure you work.** This implies that one ought to work before getting food to eat. Through work, a person gains a livelihood.

- g. *Kuviat fe agble mee da dzia vi do* (Ewe) – **Snakes breed on lazy people’s farms.** This implies that lazy people’s sources of livelihood and their surroundings are breeding grounds for corrupt or dangerous activities. To be at peace in society, you are encouraged to work hard.

Below is a link to some songs that encourage hard work in Ghanaian indigenous settings.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rZTe59cJwCk>

Christian Teaching about Work

Unlike African Indigenous Religion, Christian teachings are established in the Holy Scriptures—the Bible. One such teaching is about work. The Bible places great importance on the concept of work, dedicating several passages to its teachings. These passages encourage humankind to work diligently.

- a. Humankind was charged to work from the onset of creation (Genesis 2:4–15)—work as a command from God.
- b. The Parable of the Talents (Matthew 25:14–30): Use your God-given talents to promote religious and social development.
- c. You shall not steal (Exodus 20:15)—carry out legitimate work in order to acquire legitimate property.
- d. My father is always at work to this very day, and I too am working (John 5:17–18)—carry out legitimate work as if everything depends on you.
- e. The one who is unwilling to work shall not eat (2 Thessalonians 3:10–13)—engage in decent work in order to make a living.
- f. Don’t forget to do good and share with those in need (Hebrews 13:16)—engage in voluntary work.

Islamic teaching about work – Islam teachings about work can be found in the Qur’an, Hadith and Sunnah. E.g.:

- a. Man will not get anything unless he works hard (Holy Qur’an 53:39). This Qur’anic quote implies that no healthy person should earn their daily bread except through their own labour. The Prophet Muhammad (SAW) worked as a sales boy for a widow called Khadijah. Through this, she saw and acknowledged the works of the Prophet (SAW) and ended up marrying him.
- b. And He taught him the art of making garments (Qur’an 21:80a). David was taught by Allah how to make garments to earn a living. It is a fact that even as a prophet, David did not sit idle but worked to earn his daily bread. Thus, Islam teaches that one must engage in meaningful and acceptable work to earn a daily wage. This is supported by the statement, “Nobody has ever eaten a better meal than that which one has earned by working with one’s own hands” (Sahih al-Bukhari, 2072, Book Number 34, Hadith, 25), narrated by Al-Miqdam. The Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said, “The Prophet (AS) of Allah, David, ate from the earnings of his manual labour.” This is affirmed

by the statement, “David would never eat except from the earnings of his own hand’s work” (Sahih Bukhari). This implies that one must engage in religiously and morally acceptable work.

- c. I asked Aisha, “What did the Prophet use to do at home?” She said, “He used to work for his family, and when he heard the Adhan (call to prayer), he would go out” (Sahih al-Bukhari 5363, Book Number 69, Hadith 13), narrated by Al-Aswad bin Yazid. In relation to the above quotation, one of the disciples of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW), Al-Aswad bin Yazid, said he asked Aisha, the beloved wife of the Prophet (SAW), whether the Prophet (SAW) used to work. She responded that the Prophet (SAW) worked unless he heard the Adhan (call to prayer), at which point he would stop and go to pray. This encourages individuals to engage in religiously and morally acceptable work and pray when it is time to pray. In effect, work is a continuation of prayer but not a substitute for prayer. You must work hard to make a living as if everything depends on you, and you must pray as if everything depends on God.

Activity 1.4

Read from the Revised Standard Version of the Holy Bible (RSV), reflect on the following passages, and write your understanding about what each portrays about work.

In your reflection and writing, consider the following prompts on the values of work:

- a. Work teaches responsibility.
- b. Work teaches honesty.
- c. Work connects people.
- d. Work increases self-esteem.
- e. Work allows independence.
- f. Work improves society.

Activity 1.5

Islam teachings about work can be found in the Qur’an, Hadith and Sunnah.

Read from the Qur’an and reflect on the following passages. Write your understanding about what each portrays about work. In your reflection and writing, consider the following prompts on the values of work:

1. Work teaches responsibility.
2. Work teaches honesty.
3. Work connects people.
4. Work increases self-esteem.
5. Work allows independence.
6. Work improves society.

GENDER STEREOTYPING OF WORK

We have learned from previous lessons that everyone needs to work. However, in the field of work, there is serious discrimination regarding which jobs one should or should not do. This study aims to help you reduce barriers caused by socio-religious beliefs and gender biases about work.

The Meaning of Gender Stereotypes

Gender stereotypes can be explained in various ways. Some explanations are captured below:

- a. They are preconceived, usually generalised views about how members of a certain gender do or should behave, or which traits they should have. Gender stereotyping reinforces gender norms, typically in a binary way (male or female).
- b. Gender stereotyping is a generalised view or preconception about attributes or characteristics, or the roles that are, or ought to be possessed by, or performed by, women and men. We can infer from this definition that gender stereotyping is a commonly held belief about the characteristics and roles that are attributed to men and women. For example:
 - i. Girls are more fragile. This means that girls are naturally weak and vulnerable.
 - ii. Boys don't cry. This implies that boys are not supposed to show their emotions, and they do not worry about issues.
 - iii. Girls are interested in fashion and the arts. This implies that girls are more interested in sewing and pursuing arts-related programmes in schools. Fashion and arts jobs are more common among females.
 - iv. Boys like video games and sports. Boys play video games and sports more than females.
 - v. Girls are perfectionists and better at housework. They are good at keeping their environment clean. Girls want things done in an orderly manner.
 - vi. Boys are more disorderly and less engaged by their guardians in doing housework. This means that, from their childhood, most men don't keep themselves and their surroundings clean and they are less engaged in household chores.
 - vii. Girls are good with language. Thus, girls are attracted to language-related courses like communication studies, general arts (literature), among others.
 - viii. Boys are good at mathematics. This means males are interested in subjects that involve calculations and diagrams, such as engineering.

Gender Stereotyping of Work

Now that you have learnt and understand the concept of gender stereotyping, let us look at how it relates to the field of work or the work environment.

Gender stereotyping of work is a generalised view or preconception about work roles that are or ought to be performed by women or men. It is assumed that the gendering of occupations arises from cultural beliefs about femininity or masculinity. In society, certain jobs are generally assigned to men and women based on their features or characteristics. This gender stereotyping of work can restrict people's talents and skills. For example, childcare workers are perceived to be extremely caring, to the point of being seen as lacking the strength to be good leaders (Carson, 2016). The common view of children about scientists or mathematicians is that they are basically men and white (Barman, 1995).

Copy and paste the google link below into your browser for video presentations on gender stereotyping.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wwZReORVyhE&t=2s>

Activity 1.6

The Powerpoint below relates to gender stereotyping at work. It provides activities which will encourage you to think about the subject of gender stereotypes and involves questions and prompts for whole class or group discussions.



t2-t-225-challenging-
stereotypes-activity-p

Activity 1.7

Work stereotypes

Below are examples of various occupations. Group them under the roles perceived to be played by men and those played by women. Justify the reasons for your choices and explain the link between gender stereotyping and biases and specific job roles.

Table 1.3: Occupations

Occupations	Male Roles	Female Roles	Reasons for gender biases
Truck & commercial bus driving			
Electrical works			
Babysitting			
Reception jobs			

Occupations	Male Roles	Female Roles	Reasons for gender biases
Construction works			
Medical practice			
Barbering			
Hunting			
Teaching (early grade)			
Palm wine tapping			
Farming			
Nursing			
Chop bar operating			
Butchering			

Activity 1.8

Some work stereotypes are influenced by religious beliefs, practices and teachings.

1. Research roles in the various religions within your locality that are gender-based.
2. Summarise your findings in a one-page write-up.

Ways of Minimising Gender Segregated Work in Ghanaian Society

Issues about segregated work in the Ghanaian society have become a matter of concern. Minimising gender-segregated work requires a serious effort from all and sundry—you, employers, and society as a whole. Ways that this could be addressed are as follows:

1. **Promotion of Formal Education and Training:** Encouraging both genders to go to school and receive formal education and training will encourage people to venture into careers that were originally considered to be gender-specific. The individual is provided with the necessary skills, knowledge, and guidance regarding career choices. Some educational institutions that help in training and providing knowledge acquisition include the polytechnics, technical universities, senior high technical schools, Technical and Vocational and Training (TVET) institutions, among others. Courses offered in these institutions are studied by both males and females. Students are encouraged to

consider programmes that may lead to careers in non-gender-specific roles, i.e. women working in engineering and men working in the caring sector.

2. **Non-gender-biassed job sharing at home, school, and workplaces:** You must undertake all appropriate activities perceived to be a preserve of a particular gender, either at home, in school, or at workplaces. For example, cooking, cleaning, and washing utensils, perceived as female roles in some parts of the country, should be carried out by both genders. Similarly, rearing animals, crop production, commercial bus driving, carpentry, and masonry, perceived in some Ghanaian societies as jobs preserved for men, should be undertaken by both males and females.
3. **Provision of mentorship and sponsorship programmes:** Encouragement and support for both genders to be trained in broad workplace skills will allow both males and females to work in non-gender-specific careers.
4. **Gender-neutral recruitment:** Recruitment or nomination to various positions of service in school, at home, in workplaces, and the nation should be gender-neutral. Positions like girls prefect and boys prefect in some mixed schools in the country create the impression that girls must lead girls and vice versa. This practice should give way to a neutral gender selection process where competent students in the school should be nominated and voted for to lead the student body. For example, Tamale Senior High School in Northern Ghana has replaced girls prefect and boys prefect with school prefect creating room for either a boy or a girl to be selected and voted for to lead other students in the school.

Similarly, job recruitment agencies should recruit people to work based on their skills or competencies instead of being gender biassed.

5. **Deliberate policy direction for affirmative action by state agencies:** This is also one way to help reduce gender segregated works in Ghana. Laws or policies on affirmative action should be enacted and enforced to help minimise gender stereotypes of work. This will help women in Ghanaian society undertake areas of work such as governance and others that are currently male-dominated.
6. **Deliberate enforcement of religious teachings on equal gender participation in work.**

The commonly held notion is that religion largely prescribes gender roles to men and women. In many indigenous Ghanaian communities, kingship is reserved for men. Some Christian churches, like the Catholic Church, make the priesthood a preserve of men only. Similarly, in Islam, women cannot lead congregational prayers when men are part of the congregation. They can only lead their fellow women to pray when there are no men to lead. That notwithstanding, many religious teachings promote equal gender participation at work.

In Christianity, Paul commended Deaconess Phoebe for her outstanding leadership (*Roman 16:1*). Phoebe was a highly regarded deaconess in the early church. This provides evidence that women also play leadership roles in some churches today. For instance, the Presbyterian Church of Ghana (PCG) ordains women as priests.

In *Judges Chapter 4*, Deborah was presented as a model judge and political leader. God chose Deborah as a judge over her people, the Israelites. She was also a military strategist

in Israel's war with the Canaanite king Jabin. This is an encouragement to women who want to undertake male-dominated roles, or jobs, or professions.

In Islam, *the Holy Qur'an 3:195* states that “*never will I allow to be lost the work of [any] worker among you, whether male or female; you are of one another.*” This statement portrays Allah's zeal to treat both males and females as equals in all spheres of life, including the field of work.

Likewise, Allah indicates that “*...whosoever does good work, whether male or female, and is a Muslim, then they shall enter Paradise and they shall be provided therein without count*” (*Holy Qur'an 4:124*). The verse teaches that Allah rewards people who do good work, whether they are males or females. Their ultimate reward will be their admission into paradise. Thus, males and females have equal access to paradise when they do what Allah requires of them.

In the context of AIR, females are admitted into the priesthood. In Ghanaian matrilineal societies, the queen is the kingmaker. Thus, in most Ghanaian societies where people inherit from their mothers' line, it is the mandate of the queen mothers to enstool or destool kings.

There are some Ghanaian ethnic groups who also crown queens as overlords. Examples include Nana Barnieh Adu-Amopmah (the Ankobiahene of Akyem-Asuoso), Tindan paga Sulemana Memunatu of Katariga in the Sagnarigu Municipality, and Nana Adepa Amponsah Yeboah 1 (the Kyidomhene of New Tafo-Akyem) among others.

Activity 1.9

- a. Identify **ten (10)** Ghanaian female leaders and describe the positions they hold.
- b. Explain the importance of their position in society and what this tells us about the complementary roles men and women play in Ghanaian society.

GENDER STEREOTYPING OF WORK (DEBATE)

This lesson includes a debate. The class will be divided into small groups, each selecting speakers to argue either for or against the motion. Some points will be provided to guide you in your debate on the motion: “*Gender-stereotyped work (roles, jobs, or careers) should be maintained amidst the current economic circumstances in the country.*” The groups can collaborate using the following points to prepare for the debate:

Some Potential Points to Support the Motion.

1. **It is culturally appropriate:** From the cultural point of view, in most Ghanaian communities, certain jobs are strictly carried out by a certain gender. For example,

among the Akans, it is the duty of the women to cook. Men are tasked with doing hard labour like carrying heavy loads, weeding, etc.

2. **Some of the jobs are biologically convenient:** The natural characteristics of both genders dictate the kind of work each ought to do. For example, due to the perceived assumption of the fragile nature of women, they are not permitted to engage in jobs like hunting that require more strength. On the other hand, men are considered to be strong, thereby required to do work that requires more strength.
3. **Religious injunctions:** The main religions in Ghana mandate in their teachings that their members perform certain duties reserved for either males or females. This could be associated with priesthood. In Christianity, some denominations, such as the Catholic Church and the Church of Pentecost, ordain only men as priests or pastors. In Islam, women are not given the chance to become imams. In African indigenous religion, in some Ghanaian communities, females are not allowed to play the role of a priest. For instance, among the people of *Mirigu* in Upper East region of Ghana, men are the legitimate leaders in offering sacrifices.
4. **Reduction of gender war:** In the field of work, certain jobs are undertaken by women; men do not have the dream of engaging themselves in such jobs. For instance, reception jobs are usually undertaken by women. Similarly, electrical work among others, is reserved for men. This enhances harmonious living in society.

Some potential points against the motion.

1. **Unemployment rate:** Currently, certain programmes, like medical practice, that were offered by men are now pursued by women too. Due to this, there is pressure on the job market, creating graduate unemployment.
2. **Undermines individual autonomy:** Everyone should have the right to choose their jobs or careers based on their interests and skills.
3. **Contributes to work place hostility:** When people are judged in their work place based on gender, a toxic work environment could be created, leading to conflicts and low productivity.
4. **Changing societal dynamics:** With the advancement of technology, what was previously accepted can no longer remain the same in this modern era. Men can now choose to do jobs traditionally noted as being for women, and vice versa.
5. **Education and training:** Both girls and boys are given the chance to acquire formal education and skills. This helps them become responsible adults in the future. For instance, Rose Margenu Ekeng-Itua (PhD) acquired a doctoral degree in cybernetics, a male-dominated profession, because of the educational opportunities offered to her to develop her talent (vanguardngr.com).
6. **Impede progress in society:** Gender stereotypes limit the expectations placed on certain genders, and those who do not conform to these stereotypes are often subject to ridicule. However, in the modern era, many people are challenging these stereotypes and breaking free from their constraints. Consequently, relying solely on stereotypes as a guiding force for society hinders progress.

Activity 1.10

- a. Develop points for or against, the motion “*Gender stereotyped work, roles, or job or careers should be maintained amidst the current economic circumstances in the country.*”
- b. Ballot to speak for or against the motion. Prepare your arguments and debate the motion together. The presentation below will provide you with guidance and tips on debating techniques.



An Introduction to
Debating Presentati

DECENT AND INDECENT WORK

You are most welcome to this session. The focus of this session is on decent and indecent work.

Activities or works or professions people engage in for livelihood or as a hobby may be grouped into decent and indecent work. All social and religious groups consider some work as decent while others are indecent. The religious groups in particular with their different beliefs and practices in Ghana, have a common trend amongst them, namely, the promotion of virtues such as honesty, kindness and respect for others in determining what constitutes decent work and indecent work (NaCCA,2024). You are encouraged to appreciate the need to engage in meaningful and socially acceptable work as a hobby or as a way of making a livelihood.

Activity 1.11

Kindly read the moral dilemma scenario below;

Two beautiful twin girls from a royal family graduated from Junior High School but could not progress because of weak passes. The eldest chose to be a nudist (showing naked images and video of herself on the social media), and the youngest chose to be a baker. Although both are earning income from their chosen occupations, the eldest is far richer. It is time to enthrone one of them as queen of their community (NaCCA, 2024).

Which of these two ladies would you choose to be your queen who will sit on throne, if you were one of the king or queen makers?



Figure. 1.5: Royal Thrones in Ghana

Justify your response(s).

Hope your response has shown that certain jobs or actions are decent or indecent. From the above scenario, distinguish between decent and indecent work.

Decent Work

Decent work is productive work for men and women in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity(ILO, 2022). Thus, decent work is any meaningful and beneficial Activity that is socially appropriate and culturally approved of. The Activity may be a hobby or a way of helping one to make a livelihood.

Features of Decent Work

- It pays a fair income.
- It also guarantees a secure form of employment and safe working conditions.
- It ensures equal opportunities and treatment for all.
- It includes social protection for the workers and their families.
- It offers prospects for personal development and encourages social integration.

Examples of decent work are teaching, farming, nursing, truck pushing, hawking kayaye (“head porter”), etc. The importance of decent work in economic growth cannot be overlooked (SDG 8).



Fig. 1. 10

Indecent Work

Indecent work: It is any Activity regardless of how economically viable, or how much one derives satisfaction from it, that is socially inappropriate and culturally disapproved of.

Features of Indecent Work

- It pays an unfair income.
- It does not guarantee a secure form of employment and safe working conditions.
- It does not ensure equal opportunities and treatment for all.
- It does not include social protection for the workers and their families.
- It does not offer prospects for personal development and encourages social integration etc., (ILO, 2022)

Examples of indecent work are stealing and pickpocketing, robbery, gambling or betting, prostitution (sex trade/hook-up), scamming (Sakawa), begging, nudity and pornography, gather them and sell (Galamsey or illegal mining), trading in examination questions (Apogalore) among others.

Activity 1.12

Compose a song or write an imaginary story to discourage a specific indecent work Activity which is common in your community or country.

Tips for song writing

Step 1 Draft the lyrics – choose what your song will be about and come up with some rhyming words as well as words that you want to include.

Step 2 Say the lyrics - to yourself and others and refine them until you feel that have covered the subject area.

Step 3 Find a tune – once you're happy with your lyrics, think about the syllables and rhythm in words. You will need to stress different syllables in order to make the words fit in the song. You may need to change the lyrics at this point.

Step 4 Make it catchy - come up with a good chorus which everyone can sing along to often referred to as a “hook” in rap songs

Step 5 Practice - The more you sing it the better it will sound.

WORK ETHICS

Hello learner, welcome to the next focal area of this section. In this area, you will learn to appreciate positive work ethics in any task at the workplace or in your further studies. You will also adopt various positive attitudes to make you a better adult in future, apply them in the field of work and foster a sense of nation building in you.

Work Ethics

Ethics is the set of moral principles that influence a person's behaviour or the conduct of an Activity is considered as Ethics. A person may act or behave in a particular way due to certain principles that he or she believes in. Such principles could be considered as ethics.

Work Ethics is a set of values, beliefs, intentions, and objectives that drive people to perform a given task. It refers to principles of human behaviour and attitudes that are exhibited towards a given task (NaCCA, 2024). These values or principles guide the behaviour of people when performing a task. Some individuals could show good attitudes to work while others demonstrate the opposite. In the subsequent discussions, you will be exposed to some examples of good or positive work ethics as well as bad or negative work ethics. This knowledge will help you to work better.

Positive Work Ethics

There are attitudes that enhance progress, productivity, growth and development of individuals and organisations. These attitudes are best described as positive work ethics (NaCCA 2024). In other words, positive work ethics are rules about rightful behaviour at workplaces. In other words, positive work ethics are the good and acceptable behaviours individuals demonstrate when performing a task. These attitudes are not only cultivated at the place of work but also at home, school and the community. Positive work ethics is sometimes referred to as the spirit of hard work (Twumasi and Adade, 2019). Examples include :

1. **Diligence:** This is about the display of qualities such as hard work, dedication and commitment to a task. The individual works efficiently at the workplace to enhance productivity.
2. **Honesty:** This is about the individual being truthful, sincere, and transparent when working. Honest workers avoid cheating and demonstrate qualities such as hardwork that will make them reliable and help increase productivity.
3. **Teamwork:** This is when people work together in a group to perform a given task. Teamwork promotes a sense of togetherness among workers. They share responsibilities and ideas on a given task to aid productivity. They also end up supporting each other even in times of crises. For instance, for a drama to be well performed, roles must be assigned to individuals.

Symbolism of team spirit

Fig. 1. 11: Symbolism of team spirit



4. **Punctuality and regularity:** Being punctual and regular at work assists both management and workers to ensure high productivity. This is because workers report to work on time and are always ready to work.
5. **Tolerance:** This is the ability to respect the views and opinions of others regardless of their religious, gender or cultural background at the workplace. Through tolerance, individuals are encouraged to share freely their new ideas targeted at accomplishing the objectives of a task.
6. **Volunteerism:** This is the act of dedicating ones time and other resources in rendering services without being paid. Through volunteerism, the individual or worker brings his or her knowledge and skills to support the progress of the task at hand. He or she also learns new skills from others who have also volunteered to work. People who engage in volunteerism are joyful when they realise their efforts had yielded results. Volunteerism can be said to promote teamwork, innovation and foster productivity.
7. **Discipline:** This refers to the rules, policies and methods that workers are expected to obey in order to maintain order, increase production and to ensure a favourable working environment. For there is a saying that discipline is the key to success. Therefore, there is the need for every worker to be disciplined at his or her workplace.
8. **Time consciousness:** This means being regular, managing time effectively and meeting deadlines when given a task. As a worker, one needs to consider all these aspects of time consciousness for the organisation to achieve its objectives

Negative work ethics

Negative work ethics are the attitudes and behaviours exhibited at the field of work that discourage productivity, growth and development of individuals and organisations (NaCCA 2024). Examples of such attitudes and behaviours include:

1. **Sluggishness/ laziness:** This act is against the principles of organizational ethics such as hardwork, duties and productivity which will prevent the organization from achieving its set goals.
2. **Tardiness or lateness:** This shows lack of respect for others' time and disrupts workflow. it leads to low productivity and even kills individual's morale. Click the link below to watch a video on the effects of lateness and the reward of punctuality <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MYSZCnYLZkU>
3. **Absenteeism and presenteeism:** Absenteeism and “presenteeism” are negative work ethics for they negatively affect productivity and the spirit of teamwork. While absenteeism means that workers deliberately don't go to their places of work to carry out their assigned duties, presenteeism means a worker is merely present at the work site without carrying out his or her assigned task or duty. Both absenteeism and presenteeism reduce morale and trust at the workplace. For instance, a student who refuses to go to class is considered absent while the one who goes to class without participating in the teaching and learning processes is merely present hence exhibits the attitude of presenteeism.
4. **Truancy:** This is when a worker being at post leaves without seeking permission from the rightful person. This behaviour can affect workflow, results in low productivity, loss of trust and respect, affect teamwork, and places additional burden on other workers.

5. **Corruption:** A person or organization given authority to obtain improper benefits or abuse that position for personal gain is said to be engaging in corruption, which is a form of dishonesty or criminal offence. This posture is highly possible to affect the quality of work.
6. **Pilfering:** This is an act whereby a worker takes away petty things such as production materials, spare-parts of vehicles, stationary, etc. at the workplace. This is done in a hidden way without the knowledge of the heads of departments or managers of the various institutions.

Well done! So far you have read and understood that some attitudes exhibited at work promote or discourage productivity. Read on!

Some religious teachings on positive work ethics

African Indigeneous Religion teachings encourage its practitioners to practice positive work ethics in their proverbs, myths, songs, prayers, festivals etc. In Ghana like other countries in Africa, songs play a vital role in educating people on the need to practice good work ethics. They further encourage citizens to exhibit values such as hardwork, peaceful coexistence and to instill a sense of patriotism in them. Example of a song that teases out the need for good work ethic is *Aniha mu nni biribi se ohia (Laziness or sluggishness leads to poverty)*.

Click the link to listen to the song <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EKC6VVPsO08>

Ask your colleague or to interpret it fully to you if you are not an Akan speaking person. Kindly pay critical attention to the lyrics and their relevance to you in your studies and world of work.

Below are a few lessons from Ghanaian proverbs that encourage positive work ethics.

“You reap what you sow.”- decent work is rewarding while indecent work is humiliating.

“An obedient person succeeds in all that he or she does” - The implication is that, following laid down rules in ones work place is rewarding.

Christianity and Islam also provide Biblical and Qur’anic quotations to encourage the practice of positive ethics when working. The Bible for example in Colossians 3: 23-24 and in Proverbs 14:23 encourage people to adopt the virtue of hardwork. This is because hardwork pays. Thus, one receives rewards in the form of blessings from God.

Islam teachings from Qur’an 5:1 call on believers to be honest or truthful when dealing with a fellow at the workplace. Both workers and employers should demonstrate fairness in the working environment.

The need to practice positive work ethics.

- It increases in productivity
- Promotes team work
- Increases public image or reputation of the company

- Less legal issues and provides a safe environment for employer and employee satisfaction
- Protection of property

Activity 1.13a

Script/write a short story to educate your peers on one specific work ethic. If possible, record it as a video for screening.

Activity 1.13b

Create a poster using digital tools to show religious quotations that promote positive work ethics.

Steps To Develop a Poster

- Select the reason for the poster.
- Select a theme about the purpose.
- Gather the right information, relevant images and graphics.
- Make a rough drawing of the poster considering the message and the design.
- Select colours and writing style.
- Choose colours that will make reading easy.
- Your message should be brief and understandable.
- Check for correctness and clarity.
- Print the poster and display it at vantage points on campus.

HONESTY AT WORKPLACES

Hello learner, in our previous lesson, you were exposed to some examples of positive and negative work ethics. This theme will expose you to understanding the importance of instilling and maintaining honesty in the workplace. The concept is important because it results in a healthy and ethical work culture. Therefore, honesty must be applied right from the classroom to enable you demonstrate it in the field of work effectively.

Let us now begin to discuss the concepts of honesty, dishonesty and their related discussions.

1. **Honesty**, It refers to the level of being faithful and transparent in a person's actions and words. This implies speaking and acting with truthfulness.

2. **Dishonesty:** This refers to the level of being unfaithful and not transparent to oneself or others. In other words, dishonesty is about not speaking the truth. Dishonest people demonstrate dishonest acts through cheating in exams, extorting monies from clients, stealing from workplaces, writing the wrong time in attendance book, falsification of age (a.k.a football age), etc.

Forms of Dishonesty

Dishonesty can take many forms but for the purpose of this lesson, we will be looking at the forms listed below:

1. **Age-cheating:** this is a situation where by a person decides either to increase or decrease his or her age in order to take undue advantage. For example, football age as most of you are aware of.
2. **Bribery:** It is giving someone something valuable or money to persuade him or her to favour you over others.
3. **Corruption:** It is a form of dishonesty or criminal offence undertaken by an individual or an institution trusted with a position of authority to acquire illicit benefit or abuse of power for one's private gain.
4. **Fraud:** It is a crime of stealing. It is also called scam (Sakawa).
5. **Extortion:** when someone takes money or property from an unwilling person by using physical force or torture.
6. **Over/under-invoicing:** When a company or a person gives an invoice to a customer for a higher amount (over invoicing) or less amount (under invoicing) than the actual goods or services provided.
7. **Lying/false witness:** Not being truthful to one's words. This act makes a person lose respect.
8. **Misrepresentation and fabrication (falsification of facts to one's benefit):** This is an act of not giving true information about oneself. For instance, when someone pretends to be what he or she is not.
9. **Impersonation:** this is a situation where by a person pretends to be someone else. For example using someone else's certificate to get a job or for further studies.

Issues of corruption have become a matter of concern to the country. When matters of corruption are handled well, it will go a long way to help the government to protect the nation's purse. In other words, monies that could have gone into the pockets of corrupt officials will be secured and directed to improve education and other social amenities in the country. Attached to this statement is a link to a report from Corruption Watch for you to study. <https://cddgh.org/corruptionwatch/>

You are also encouraged to search other online resources on corruption to aid you to develop a good understanding of corruption and the discussions on honesty.

Activity 1.14

Together with some of your colleagues, dramatise a play on a scenario that shows dishonesty in the workplace. It could be about stealing from workplaces, extorting monies from clients, writing the wrong time in the time book, cheating in an examination or falsification of age or signature.

Reflect on the lesson the play teaches. The reflection should be around the urge to discourage dishonesty and the need to encourage honesty. After reflecting, discuss your thoughts with a colleague. Remember to share your thoughts with your colleagues when the topic is treated in class. For this Activity you can produce your own play based on a relevant scenario from the examples above. You may produce this information yourselves or use any of the suggested templates below to help you get started on the writing process.

Table 1.4: Play/Script writing guide

Characters - Who are they? Describe them.	
Character Name	Description
Scene 1 - Set the scene - where is it? Who is there?	
Narrator:	
(Stage Directions):	
1st Speaker's Name	How They Talk/Behave
2nd Speaker's Name	How They Talk/Behave

Source: <https://www.twinkl.co.uk/resource/t3-e-367-writing-a-play-script-1a-Activity-pack>

Play Script Checklist

Have I.....

Included a cast list?
Used a narrator?
Put the speakers' names in?
Written dialogue for the narrator/speakers?
Structured my play using scenes?
Written stage directions in brackets?
Included a props and costumes list?
Used appropriate language for the play/ Used punctuation appropriately?

Source: <https://www.twinkl.co.uk/resource/t2-e-1617-features-of-a-play-script-writing-checklist>

It is important to note that as a citizen, you should continue to remain loyal and honest in all that you do. It is for this reason you recite the national pledge each day in school.



Figure 1. 12: Students in an inclusive School reciting the national pledge

Pause a bit and recite the National Pledge

I promise on my honour
 To be faithful and loyal to Ghana my Motherland
 I pledge myself to the service of Ghana with all my strength and with all my heart.
 I promise to hold in high esteem
 Our heritage won for us through the blood and toil of our fathers;
 And I pledge myself in all things to uphold and defend the good name of Ghana.
 So help me God.

From the above, you realise that all religious groups in Ghana cherish the National Pledge and recite it. You should note that not following through on our commitment to the national pledge amounts to being dishonest.

Government officials are also encouraged to be loyal, honest and defend the integrity of Mother Ghana as they engage in their duties.



Figure. 1.13: Members of Parliament Reciting the National Pledge

Activity 1.15

Highlight areas within Ghanaian society or your community where people are doing things against what the pledge expects them to do

Write your reflections down and provide brief responses.

The youth through songs have joined the campaign to champion the spreading of honesty in all aspects of the lives of Ghanaians. Pay particular attention to the lyrics of the songs.

- A video of Kofi Kinata's Song, Things Fall Apart: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rD9RK446eNQ>
- A video of Safo Newman's song, "Akoko" <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1-N83qNTt38>

Try to relate the message of the songs to your country Ghana's situation. You can do so by thinking about:

- The reasons for the economic crisis in the country.

- Public servants not doing what is expected of them as they engage in their national duties,
- Some workers skipping the payment of taxes.

Write your reflections down and provide brief responses. Share them with a colleague or a member of the RMEC team.

The Need for honesty at workplaces

Dishonesty should not be encouraged in the workplace due to its negative effects. It is therefore necessary to encourage honesty, considering the benefits or importance that are related to it. The following are some of the most important reasons for honesty.

1. Honesty is a divine command that yields blessings.
2. Honesty can be rewarding eg. promotion
3. Honesty improves productivity
4. Honesty builds good relationships or teamwork
5. Honesty enhances job satisfaction
6. Honesty promotes security
7. Honesty promotes trust and respect

Effects of dishonesty in the workplace

People who are not honest are not in the position to receive the blessings that come with being honest.

1. Dishonest people are most likely to be demoted or sacked (fired) from the workplace.
2. Dishonesty destroys relationships, breaks loyalty and reputation thereby affecting teamwork.
3. Dishonesty damages ones self-esteem. Every piece of false information that we give about ourselves make others conclude that we are not good enough.
4. It destroys customer loyalty. People who normally do not tell the truth lack transparency with their commitment and never fulfil their commitment.
5. Dishonesty can lead to the collapse of the organisation.

Extended Reading

- Sahih al-Bukhari 2072 book number 34 Hadith 25) Narrated by Al-Miqdam
- Speaking to the Heart: The Power of African Proverbs and Sayings in Brand Messaging and Marketing, <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/speak-heart-power-african-proverbs-sayings-brand-dian-b-schutte>
- <https://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/ghana/10484.pdf>
- <https://www.gse.harvard.edu/ideas/usable-knowledge/18/11/preventing-gender-bias>
- <https://www.betterhelp.com/advice/stereotypes/22-ways-to-overcome-gender-stereotypes/>
- <https://www.ohchr.org/en/women/gender>
- (<https://www.verywellhealth.com/gender-stereotypes-5323771>)
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- <https://eptura.com/discover-more/blog/honesty-at-work/>
- <https://discover.hubpages.com/business/The-importance-of-work-in-the-life-of-the-individual-and-society>
- https://qknowbooks.gitbooks.io/class_5_citizenship-the-individual-education-and-w/content/importance_of_work.html
- Meaning of Ethics.
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rr7U49RPpTs&list=PLibktoKopBg5Qk40PAU--oAFcSXQo6lnm>
- Importance of positive work ethics-
- <https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/why-ethics-is-important-in-the-workplace>
- <https://www.careerguide.com/career/working-professionals/8-benefits-of-workplace-ethics#2>
- The Holy Bible (any version you have access to): Matthew 25:40, Galatians 6:9-10, Titus 3:8
- The Holy Qur'an: 53:39, 4:31, 3:195
- Sustainable development goal:8 - <https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal8>

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REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. How do you understand the concept of work? Write your opinion and compare it with that of a colleague.
2. What factors will you consider when selecting work in the future? Provide meaningful examples to support your opinion.
3. Explain any three common factors that support the teachings on work of the three main religions in Ghana.
4. The voice of women in leadership positions in Ghana was previously minimal, but in recent times, there has been a rise of women in leadership. Discuss the impact of this to both women and Ghanaian society as a whole.
5. Write an essay on your understanding of the following statement “Gender stereotyped work (roles/ jobs/careers)”.
6. Explain the meaning of decent work and indecent work
7. Identify jobs that you perceive as decent or indecent in your community. Justify why they are decent or indecent.
8. The table below contains lists of words or expressions about positive and negative work ethics. Tick the ones that will encourage to promote productivity in the field of work.

Always ready to work	I provide the service willingly without receiving payment.
Sharing ideas to achieve a common goal.	Being truthful
Not regular to work	Discipline or doing things right
Leave the place of work anytime without permission	Taking things from the workplace without permission
Disagree to agree	Putting in less effort

9. Justify the need to uphold positive work ethics in the Ghanaian society.
10. Click the link below and watch the videos of a gold coin and the honest boy and the reward of honesty.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=827-xKrb6bY> A gold coin and an honest boy

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xlxUwUuWaOs&t=49s> The reward of honesty

 - a. What three lessons have you learnt from the videos?
 - b. How will you apply the lessons learnt from the videos in your dealings with colleagues in school and your family at home?

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