

# Exploring Work Ethic in Ghana

Ishmael D. Norman

## ABSTRACT

This paper explores the philosophical, sociological and historical basis of work-ethic in Ghana, bearing in mind Marx Weber's Protestant Work Ethic and its effects on largely Christian and capitalistic population of Ghana. It relies on normative ethics, the collective national perception of work and actual productivity in certain industries, the quality of made-in-Ghana goods and services, and the pursuit of professionalism, aided by extensive literature review and content analysis. The author raised the dialectical but main research question as to whether Ghana has a national ethical code beyond the imported Judo-Christian, and other faith-based but incongruent moral dictums on work. The second research question is whether the ethnic groups in Ghana have their unique but positive culturally relative or philosophical takes on work? Third inquiry was whether the myriad cultural values coalesce into a cultural ethical relative value system for Ghana? The key outcome of the exploration revealed, there appears to be disconnect between official rhetoric on productivity and the phenomenon of work in the nation and among the ethnic groups. This is due to the absence of a well-defined national or regional overarching moral basis for work. There is also the lack of the cultural estimation of productivity as a measure of a well-functioning workforce and society like Germany and Japan, or a more *laissez faire* nation like the United States of America. As novel as this paper is about Ghana's work ethic, it may not inform policy on national productivity or even help to define the national work ethic, due to the fact that the author is not a politician with power over policy direction in Ghana.

**Keywords:** Ghana, Normative Ethics, Productivity, Work-Ethic.

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**I. D. Norman\***

Ghana Armed Forces Command and Staff College; Institute for Security, Disaster and Emergency Studies, Ghana  
(e-mail: ishmael.norman@isdesghana.org)

\*Corresponding Author

## I. INTRODUCTION

Barely four months into his four-year term of office had the President of Ghana described the Ghanaian workers as "Clock Watchers" on a 2017 May Day? This was a speech to celebrate the national worker delivered at the Independence Square, Accra, Ghana (Akufo-Addo, 2017). During that period, the micro and macroeconomic indicators appeared sound with the economy growing by as much as 8%. The economic affairs of Ghana have deteriorated from the expected progressive 8% annual growth rate in the following years, and it appears the deterioration would continue for a considerable length of the time ahead. Both national and international think-tanks on the economy provide myriad of reasons why, the key reason among these, is central government mismanagement of the national purse and cash in-flows from internally generated national revenues or from loans, and from external and internal bond markets (Gray & Malone, 2008). The last and first quarters of 2022 and 2023 saw Ghana negotiating Debt Restructuring with both national and external creditors. Debt restructuring has its advantages and disadvantage, including being locked out of access to external credit and the suspension of having to pay one's debt during cash flow challenges (Buchheit *et al.*, 2018). In addition, since November 2022, Ghana has been seeking bail-out of USD\$3bn loan over three years from the IMF through the External Credit Facility, (ECF), which is about 4% of Gross Domestic Product, (GDP). The national public debt stock now is above 100% of GDP. Local and foreign interest payments alone takes 70-100% of all revenue and there is 50% national inflation, with the Ghana Central Bank raising the main interest rate to 27%, (raised to 28% on 30<sup>th</sup> January 2023 by the Central Bank) and a slow recovery from Covid-19, coupled with official mismanagement of the national purse (Economists, 2022).

This author decided to conduct a content analysis of literature and the speech delivered on May Day in 2017 on the national work-ethics, bearing in mind Marx Weber's Protestant Work Ethic as the starting point to assess if there is a nexus between work attitudes of Ghana and the state of the economy. The reason being that Ghana is largely a Christian, capitalistic nation, with norms that are similar to nations similarly situated in the Western Industrialized zone. It should be noted that, in emerging democracies such as Ghana, the analysis of the statements or conduct of a sitting President, and even Parliamentarians could spell trouble for the researcher or analyst. If the analysis is done well, that analyst or researcher is presumed to "be inciting the public against their leaders" as it was recently claimed by the former Speaker of Ghana's

Parliament against astute commentators on national issues (Mike Quaye, personal communications, 12/6/2019). In other more mature democracies and parliamentary systems, such fear or veneration has long been overcome (Hart, 1987; Eshbaugh-Soha, 2010). The nationals of Ghana tend to be hero worshippers and because of this trait, they tend to hold certain persons in undeserved adulation. The proper thing to do is to subject the conduct and statements of such persons to interrogation and evaluation, particularly when a President calls the nationals of his nation as clock-watchers while at the same time, his administration has contributed to rising inflation, devaluation of the local currency and massive unemployment status of the youth (Akuoko, 2008). By October 2022, the Ghana national currency, the Cedis had become the last but one worst performing currency in the world, depreciating by 50% with speed. It was so concerning that Rating Agencies such as S&P as well as Fitch rated the Cedis to junk status in the last quarter of 2022 (BBC News Pidgin, 2022). A nation with good work ethic would not allow its currency to get to this level as a matter of national pride. It is also important to determine the moral fitness of leaders' conduct, to ascertain whether that leader is not a congenital liar in the world of deep fakes (Chesney & Citron, 2018; Edward *et al.*, 2018).

#### A. Reasons for Describing the People of Ghana as Clock-Watchers

Being described as a nation of 'clock-watchers' is both derogatory and stereotypical (Hill, 1996; Anthony, 1977; Tilgher, 1930). 'Stereotypic' means conventional, oversimplified conception, or opinion or image of a person or a thing. Also, it describes one who is regarded as conforming to a set of image or type. 'Derogatory' means showing a critical or disrespectful attitude. It also means belittling, deflating, denigrating and depreciating (www.freedictionary.com, 6/21/2019). This is a pedestrian way of saying someone is, or a group of them are, lazy, dispassionate and nonchalant about work. The President of Ghana certainly ought to know the type of people he is presiding over. If they are lazy, isn't he the one presiding over this lazy lot of people? It is generally accepted that, perhaps, Nana Akufo-Addo as President of Ghana, is first among equals when it comes to the national presidents with the greatest facility for languages. When such a man who is credited with a vast appreciation and command over the English Language called his fellow citizens clock-watchers, he knew precisely what it meant and why he used that phrase. The phrase is stereotypical because not all the workers in Ghana are clock-watchers or lazy. Perhaps, part of the reason for describing the people of Ghana as clock-watchers is that, in delivering public speeches, it is not often advisable to employ the particular about the subject, but it is rather better to speak in generalities. Making an objective statement or appraisal about a commonly observed behavior does not make the statement subjective or invalid (Hart, 1987; Kahn *et al.*, 1999). This approach in public speaking is preferred when, especially, the topic is not being tackled episodically but phenomenally. Among other challenges facing the national economy, is the issue of low employee productivity whether in the public or private sector, hence the label: clock watchers.

Akufo-Addo stated on May Day, 2017 that:

*We have a huge workforce, but the majority of people are underemployed, inappropriately employed or unemployed. We all know that the number of people in what can be described as formal work is a minuscule part of the workforce of our country. The figures I have seen suggest that the size of the workforce in our country is about 13 million people and there are less than 2 million people in formal work. Unfortunately, much of our preoccupation seems to be with this small group in the formal sector. It is time for us all to work to bring more of our people into the formal sector. It would, indeed, be in everybody's interest to do so.*

This was not the first time a leader of this nation called the people of this nation slothful, or the first time many of the workers in Ghana were reported to be under-employed or inappropriately employed. Acting as an ethnographic researcher for this paper, I observed cases of even Chief Directors who reported for duty each day but had very little to do. During visits, we engaged in long, winded conversation about a future project which had no potential of being funded over cups of coffee and muffins that had to be specially procured from a near-by five-star hotel. There are similar cases of managers of various kinds who simply have no job description, no role assignment and no performance objectives and, who merely get dressed and report for duty to do nothing but sit and browse the internet and watch movies or listen to music (GSS, 2010; World Bank, 1985; World Bank/Bank of Ghana Report, 2016). At any rate, being called clock watchers appears to be a descriptive national normative trait. Akufo-Addo added that:

*We all avoid very carefully any mention of the workplace attitudes that retard our progress. I have said it at another forum, but I think it bears repeating: we arrive at work late and then spend the first hour in prayer; we are clock watchers and leave in the middle of critical work, because it is the official closing time. Everything comes to a stop when it rains, and we seem to expect the rest of the world also to stop. We have no respect for the hours set aside for work (...) we pray, we eat, we visit during working hours. We spend hours chatting on the telephone when customers are waiting to be served, thereby increasing our labor costs. We take a week off for every funeral. And then we wonder why we are not competitive (Akufo-Addo, 2017).*

From talking about the collective employees of Ghana and what they do to undermine the national economy and their own economic values, he focused his speech on one industry in which the mediocre performance

of the national worker leaves much to be desired: *the hospitality industry*. This is an industry which is already reeling under difficult market conditions due to the effect of regional insecurities of terrorism, kidnappings, armed robberies and political insurrections on international travel and not too efficient national economy in 2017. As the GDP grew at 8% per annum, the nation imported just about every basic item it needed to operate. For example, in 2020, Ghana exported \$220,000 Rice but imported a whopping \$391 million of the product and the 20<sup>th</sup> largest importer of rice in the same period (Observatory of Economic Complexity, 2020). In 2022 fresh tomato imports from Burkina Faso was \$400 million (NAFCO, n.d.). Today, Ghana imports every product it uses at home, including toothpicks, medicines, matches, and even candles. The impact of Covid-19 has worsened the already poor performance in the tourism industry. Not even the devaluation of the local currency against all major trading currencies had had positive impact on both national and international tourism between 2016 and 2022, although general purpose business and transit travelers have seen incremental growth. In many places in Ghana, many small hotels and motels remain un-patronized and unprofitable. “The service that we provide in our hospitality industry does not match that of our competitors and many of us have sadly come around to accept poor service as the norm” (Akufo-Addo, 2017).

### B. Pernicious Work Attitude of the People of Ghana

Another reason deduced by Akufo-Addo as to why Ghanaians are clock-watchers was that Ghana was a nation of kleptomaniacs. He provided a description which could have sparked diplomatic conflict, if it had been spoken by a foreign diplomat or resident.

*There is a particularly pernicious attitude to property that we find at work. There is the petty stealing of paper, envelopes, tea, milk and other equipment. There is the reckless use of office vehicles. Employees show no inclination to protecting the things that are in the offices and factories, and extreme reluctance to stand up for what we know to be right in our workplaces in general.*

The statement presents us with several effects on work ethic, national morality and ethics in general, which ought to be tested to assess whether there is a concordance to what has been labeled against the people of Ghana by their own President. This evaluation, as has been reported before, would be conducted bearing in mind the values contained in Marx Weber’s Protestant Work Ethic exposition.

The author would focus on the following effects to allow us to understand why the people of Ghana are the way they are:

- i. Effect of the lack of normative ethics on professionalism (Akuoko, 2008)  
Does the nation have a compendium of ethics beyond moral precepts handed down through the Animist, Judo-Christian and Islamic traditions that can be formalized for professional work?
- ii. Effect of the absence of a national work ethic framework (Anthony, 1977; Rand, 1957; Beauchamp& Childress, 2001)  
Does Ghana have a nationally defined Work Ethic that is understood and appreciated by all as a national ideal or goal worthy of pursuit?
- iii. Effect of the acceptance of mediocre performance as a cherished national ideal (Akufo-Addo, 2017)  
Are the people of Ghana Clock Watchers and if so, what keeps them de-motivated from the earnest rendition of productive work?
- iv. Effect of the perceived inferior quality of nationally made products and services rendered (Akufo-Addo, 2017)  
Is the national brand an inferior brand compared to that of the competition, as reported by Akufo-Addo about the hospitality industry?
- v. Effect of the perceived kleptomaniac tendencies of the population (Akufo-Addo, 2017)  
Is the nation of Ghana particularly kleptomaniac and motivated by egoism and self-gratification?

The meaning of “work ethic” actually is: “a system of values in which central importance is ascribed to work, or purposeful activity, and to qualities of character believed to be promoted by work” (Webster’s New World College Dictionary, 2010). This definition breaks down into its unique parts as follows:

1. Good value system equates good work ethic,
2. Good character equates good work outcomes,
3. Therefore, good work outcomes depend on good value system or character.

The foregoing assessment of the national work ethic would take into consideration these values as expressed. The national concept of work appears to date back to the time of Aristotle and his compatriots. The average Ghanaian man or woman does not like to dirty his or her hands, to ensure that his or her neighborhood is kept clean, that the house is clean, the building in which he or she lives is clean, his or her office space is clean, the bathroom or toilets he or she uses is clean. This is so, not because the Ghanaian is intrinsically dirty. It is because, the Ghanaian intrinsically thinks of him- or her-self as a deity or ‘nana’ or royal, even if such deity’s fiefdom or royalty’s total familial net worth is nothing more than a few hundreds

of say, US money, and the royal house is a matchbox house that saw better days several decades past. For centuries various philosophers have said some demeaning things about work, which resonates with the current national attitude towards work. For example, Aristotle (384-322 BCE) felt work took man away from his most important pre-occupations. In the same vein, Ghanaians tend to think that work takes them away from the important things, such as gossip, watching television, texting, sending risqué images to their friends on social media and so on (Akufo-Addo, 2017). Aristotle said the important pre-occupations of man were leisure and philosophy (Anthony, 1977). To Aristotle, work was a corrupt waste of time that would make a citizen's pursuit of virtue more difficult. He made it clear that the purpose for which the majority of men labored was in order that the minority, the elite, might engage in pure exercise of the mind which included art, philosophy and politics (Tilgher, 1930, p. 5; In Cleverism.com/accessed 20/06/2017). Today in Ghana, similar sentiments pervade social arrangements. There are many households, particularly in patrilineal societies, where the male child or person is not allowed to do any household chores. In the patrilineal societies, the male child or male has traditionally been considered to be too valuable to do house chores: real men don't cook, nor sweep, nor wash dishes, nor fetch water. They are encouraged to spend the time they have on valuable and meaningful pursuits, such as reading the newspapers, watching a soccer match on television or engage in politics.

## II. METHOD AND PROCEDURE

The author relied on a single speech of the president of Ghana (Circa 2017-Present) on the issue of work, buttressed by what other luminaries in the national industrial and manufacturing bases have also commented on the issue. The author conducted a content analysis of the Presidential speech within the context of Max Weber's Protestant Work Ethic, vis-à-vis the competing philosophical thoughts about work, such as Aristotle, (2009), Bentham's "*Anarchical Fallacies*" (1789), Mills' (1863) "*Utilitarianism*"; Nietzsche's "*Dignity of Work: Beyond Good and Evil*" (1886), Karl Max's theory of capitalism: "*Das Kapital*" (1890), Sarpong (1974), and Ayn Rand's "*Atlas Shrugged*" (1957). The author also conducted a loose ethnographical investigation by observing workers in various offices visited during the writing of this paper, without keeping day to day epidemiologic records of how many times he observed the people, how many people he observed and which offices he visited in order to have the flexibility to move among workers without calling attention to himself. Additionally, many of the observations of this author are commonplace events that many others whether they were co-workers or employers have also observed about the job place practices of the Ghanaian, be it a bureaucratic office, a university, factory or banking halls and even within certain units in the security agencies. The historical and sociological relationship of the nation to work was also reviewed. The author searched for philosophy, psychology, economics, applied sociology, productivity and ethics journals and databases such as Scopus, Medline, Hunari, Springer and Google Scholar for thematic materials on the various effects. In addition, the author conducted searches of the various publications of United Nations-cum-International Labor Organization and other agencies dealing with development, human rights, labor and personal security for policy papers on, or that addressed the central themes of Marx Weber's work-ethic theory, productivity and organizational theory. Additionally, economics and worker compensation as well as motivation issues, together with searches on ethics, duty, responsibility, and autonomy were conducted. Journal and newspaper editorials, blogs and published papers in the English Language were assessed from several institutional libraries such as the University of Ghana, that of the Institute for Security, Disaster and Emergency Studies, Ghana Armed Forces and Command College, and others that are virtually or physically accessible to the author. Hand searching of selected printed journals many of which were cited in this paper was conducted to find reported studies arising out of the work-ethic of the sub-region. During the documentary and the internet searches, the author used carefully designed phrases like, "historical evidence on national work ethic", "work-ethic of Ghana", "work ethic of West African nations", "what is exemplifying good regional work-ethic?", "What are the variations in the work-ethic of the respective nations in West Africa?"

The inclusion criteria of the national and regional work-ethic literature and other published papers were hard work as linkage between the person and faith, work-ethic as a national source of pride and basis of applause, hard work as attribute of patriotism; faith; religion; godliness and scholarly papers on ethics and work; production; economic performance and executive reward and pay. Opinions, book chapters on work-ethic, duty, obligation and responsibility, and even newspaper articles dealing with the issue were accessed. For general ethics, the paper or document should have had any combination or grouping of any; or all of the following keywords: Work-Ethic, Productivity, Normative Ethics and autonomy, as part of its topical focus, or be a major theme in the paper or book or report. All in all, 100 papers were selected from over two million entries from the different jurisdictions and sources, most of which were rejected. Those selected opportunistically from the random searches, were analyzed and the findings summarized and reported as part of the literature review and results. The author found a few pertinent gray and published literature on

Ghana in relation to work-ethic which was included in this report. Each of the specific papers was read and briefed after a step-by-step and page-by-page investigation to assess how it impacted or affected the national work-ethic. The author disaggregated the papers, read them again and selected the ones that dealt with the topic. After that the papers were grouped into their respective units, the author summarized the findings and interpreted them based upon the author's education, skills, knowledge in professional codes of ethics, law and normative ethics.

### III. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

#### A. *Effect of the Lack of Normative Ethics on Professionalism*

Does the nation have a compendium of ethics beyond moral precepts handed down through the Animist, Judo-Christian and Islamic traditions that can be formalized for professional work?

First, the author theorizes that productivity in the national workforce cannot be improved exponentially without a corresponding improvement in the knowledge, awareness and internalization of good ethical and moral precepts about work and being, irrespective of professional competencies. The author began this part of the inquiry into the normative ethics or moral precepts of Ghana by posing the question, what is the moral value of a person from Ghana? By moral value, it is literally meant if the Ghanaian was measured in moral weight, where each kilogram of weight is equal to one "moral gram of virtue", what would be his weight or value? Would he suffer from "moral obesity", that is to say would he be fraught with exemplary moral conduct? Or would he be a "moral anorexic" (devoid of communitarian consideration beyond egoism)? Moral values are the standards of good and evil that governs an individual's behavior and choices. This may be derived from society, government, religion and, or self. Moral values of society or even religion do change over time with changes in society (Bentham, 1789; Bradley, 2009; Crane, 2001; Feldman, 2001, 2006; Hume, 1751; Mill, 1863; Nietzsche, 1889). A single individual may be a person who is capable of showing great love to another person but be utterly dishonest when it comes to accounting for money entrusted to him or her: a condition with which many in Ghana appear to be afflicted (Akufo-Addo, 2017). 'Ontology has revealed to us the origin of value or moral description. It shows us the ethical meaning of various human projects such as (work, love, compassion, kindness, co-operation, honesty and trust). It shows us the necessity of abandoning the psychology of (personal) interests along with any utilitarian (common good) interpretation of human conduct. Such meanings are beyond egoism (selfishness) and even altruism (community service) or disinterested (Samaritanism) conduct extended to others (Sartre, 1957: 91-92).

Does a person from Ghana have a set of code that can be described as national values, unique to him or her and certainly very definitional of the core values of what it is to be of a Ghanaian pedigree? For example, the Ghana Parliament or the Ghana Bar Association or Ghana Medical and Dental Council has its own set of professional code of ethics. This can be mainstreamed among different successive and consecutive cohorts of politicians that become parliamentarians, or Ghanaians that become lawyers or medical doctors. Is there a set of moral precepts that can pedagogically be passed on from one generation of Ghanaians to another? It is known that our basic schools teach Moral and Religious Knowledge, but the emphasis is on religious faith and social etiquette and not ethics, the pillars of ethics, the tools for ethical analyses and so on. It is entirely possible that today's young adults in Ghana suffer from a severe lack of ethics and therefore are morally anorexic. Due to the systemic corruption practiced in Ghana, there are often encroachment and breaches of examinations even at the basic school level, serious corporate and governmental corruption and abuse of fiduciary duties by various heads of companies and public institutions (Global Corruption Barometer, 2015-2020, Afrobarometer, 2022). On the Global Competitiveness Report of 2018, Ghana was 106 (51.3%) out of 140 nations that were ranked (World Economic Forum, Global Competitiveness Report, 2018). That is not an impressive position to be in, considering the vast mineral and other resources of the nation (ILO, 2009). Although Ghana attained middle income status in 2007, employment availability is very weak. The growth of Ghana in the period leading to its attainment of middle-income status was mainly driven by reported high labor absorption in the agricultural and mining sectors, without subjecting the reported growth to the negative environmental degradation caused by both sectors (GSS, 2014; Global Employment Trend, 2014; NDPC, 2015).

#### B. *Parental and Domestic Influences on Personal Work Ethic*

A good national work ethic starts from home. However, the average Ghanaian home is often not a place of contemporary education and personal edification due to the low levels of general education and skills of the average parent. A recent study revealed that, at least among African American families in the United States, "a father's work ethic was positively linked with older siblings' work ethic, which in turn was linked with more positive youth adjustment in the domains of school functioning and externalizing and internalizing problems. Moreover, the results indicated that the work ethics of older siblings, but not

parents, was linked to those of younger siblings” (Bora *et al.*, 2016). Looking at it critically, it seems many of the adults of Ghana grew up with no real set of moral values other than the occasional admonition of their parents to do this, and not to do that, as part of social etiquette and not as part of normative or descriptive morality or ethics. No reason is probably often attached to the admonitions. Basic set of family etiquette cannot rise to be called a set of national normative morality. For example, ‘kindness’ as a moral value is cherished and desired by all nations, including even among some animal colonies. Being hospitable is, therefore, not uniquely Ghanaian or African. Even if ‘kindness’ is to be operationalized in the context of Ghana as an everyday occurrence, how does it work on a day-to-day basis in our cultural or national situation in order to give meaning to the doings of our peer? There does not appear to be a unifying definition for the nation as to what we mean by, for example, kindness and how it is supposed to be manifested in our dealings with each other (Crisp, 1997, 2006; Flanagan, 1992; Heathwood, 2007; Hooker, 1996, 2000). And because the adults, the parents themselves appear to have no set of moral code or taxonomy to pass on to their children, the socialization continuum in Ghana is made vulnerable to moral challenges and hurdles or moral dilemmas (Bora *et al.*, 2016). Since the nation does not appear to have a set of values called the national ethical framework, this makes it difficult to combine values, to create consensus and to develop group or national identity. What we end up with is identitarian philosophy at the exclusion of others (Norman, 2023, pp. 55-57). And because of this phenomenon, any congregation of Ghanaians is a dynamic aggregate of conflicting values, jostling over each other, most times, for the same things (Rachels, 2003).

### C. *The Lack of Patriotism among the People of Ghana*

Ghana’s lack of specific normative values appears to have led to the lack of national passion or patriotism and unity, although Ghana is generally perceived to be a peaceful nation in the West African sub-region. There is always something to fight about and to quarrel about, leading to polarization of opinions, policy interpretation, legal interpretations and national developmental agenda and the administration of justice. A nation with no fixed moral values or ethics also lacks passion because “all human existence is passion” (Sartre, 1957). Therefore, it takes a longtime for the Ghanaian’s sense and sensibilities to be offended by the foreigner or others, the husband or wife, the politician or superior at work. Because of this gap, this defect, or cultural trait in the socialization continuum, Ghanaians are able to gloss over serious offences and wrongs against them with subjectivism and religiosity. They tend to wash out of their conduct, the ontological essence of their actions in a material way without the need for moral evaluation of whether they were right or wrong. In this way, they are able to rationalize that which should not be acceptable and accept it due to considerations of identity politics, consanguinity or political affiliations (Norman, 2023). In the same vein, it takes utterly outrageous conduct to arouse the community’s indignation as a people. This is why, perhaps, (and going back into the nation’s history) slavery thrived so well amongst the people for so long. This may be why corruption, even big documented scandalous events continue to be committed in the nation by men and women whom the public has come to hold in high esteem, by excusing that which is improbity, indecent and immoral and accept as proper, a thing of high probity and morality (Afrobaroter, 2023).

### D. *The National View of Professionalism*

The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines professionalism as “the conduct, aims, or qualities that characterize or mark a profession or a professional person.” Others define professionalism as the level of excellence and competence that a professional is expected to have (<http://www.cleverism.com>). Professionalism in some instances is not defined but implied in the way one does his or her work; the way of dressing; behaving; speaking and treating others that embodies productivity and ethics. The Japanese call it “*ichiban*” or number one. A professional demonstrates competence and excellence in job planning and execution, awareness for the environment and human rights. His work shows efficiency in execution and the quality of the deliverables is very high. In Ghana we do not have a word to denote “professionalism”. We also do not seem to have single words that denote “excellence” or “competence”, although there are phrases that describe what is exceptional, or extraordinary. Something could be exceptional without necessarily being excellent or even extraordinary such as the display of stupidity. In the various ethnic groups’ languages, for example, in Akan Twi, we have words to show that one is ‘smart’, ‘strong’, or ‘clever’ but we don’t seem to have a single nomenclature for competence, professionalism or excellence. This may be due to several reasons. Although the culture developed weights and measures for trading and measuring precious metals and ornaments for sale; and has extensive alpha-numeric values, it does not seem to show that the same culture developed standards for measuring the degrees of performance of one’s output on graduated basis. For example, a goalkeeper is good, or he is bad. In the local languages, relative comparisons are done every day, but this is done in an abstract way without assigning numerical strengths or statistical values to the significance. A thing is good or bad, or very good or very bad, depending on what the situation demands, based purely on subjective considerations. We do not employ measurement scale such as on a scale of one to five, with five being the highest, how bad is ‘A’ compared to ‘B’. On a

typical westernized framework of analysis, the Likert scale type of a tool provides a cogent, statistical approach, although there is an element of subjectivity. But when a group of people use this scale to assess a phenomenon, the aggregated result of that cohort could be said to be empirical and near objective standard. Thus, one can say that on a scale of one to five, I think 'A's competency in his field is 4, while 'B' is 3. Such a scale allows us to have both pictorial and numerical basis for our conclusions. In Twi and in Akan culture, a person is very generous or very wicked. The same person can be very good or very, very good. The reverse is also true that he can be very bad, or very, very bad. Therefore, traditionally, subjective consideration was the standard for the evaluation of performance or output, using the superlative, "very".

Staying with the Akan group, we have a word for work or "*adwuma*" or the one who works, "*adwumani*", with the "*ni*" denoting the one who works. Although we have words for "*obroni*" meaning a white person, or "*obibini*" meaning a black person, whenever in Akan we add "*ni*" at the end of a noun such as "*teacher-ni*" it becomes an adjectival noun which describes the profession of the one about whom we speak. In this case, a teacher. Incidentally, the Akans have a specific word for teacher and do not normally add the 'ni' in order to describe someone who teaches. In ontology, essence precedes existence therefore work or "*adwuma*" is the basic form, raw form of existence of a worker, where professionalism is a higher form of work or "*adwuma*", because it describes the processes of doing that work. Since we are at the level of essence, we need to move from essence to being or to move from work to being a professional worker or the worker who is a professional, which requires certain values such as 'competence' and 'excellence'. Again, since we seem to be stocked at the basic level of existence, we have not transcended from working (a profession) to professionalism (quality of our work together with other values) and subsequently to having competence (skills which are above basic work roles) to excellence (high level of quality outputs) in order to become 'ichiban'. Due to the apparent absence of three of the most important words in defining work ethic: "excellence", or "competency" or "professionalism", we have to learn to become professionals, and competent, in order to become excellent in what we do. These values are not part of who we are, it appears. To be a professional in the modern workspace is to have the core competencies for the duties you perform over and above the basic entry requirements for the same job. In the modern marketplace, a new worker to a position is often placed on probation for a set number of months or years, because it is assumed that although the person may have the basic entry requirements, he or she may not yet have the competencies to be considered a professional as yet. Being a professional, therefore, implies that you have the technical knowledge, skills and abilities to perform the role which is assigned to you. It means that you embody humility, respect, punctuality, cleanliness, hospitability, integrity, reliability and legality. Your yes is a reliable yes, and your no, is not a gullible, malleable no, where the inducement of money or other things could easily get you to change your mind.

#### IV. EFFECT OF THE ABSENCE OF A NATIONAL WORK ETHIC FRAMEWORK

Does Ghana have a nationally defined Work Ethic that is understood and appreciated by all as a national ideal or goal worthy of pursuit?

This part of the paper is probably the most contentious due to the claims made by African revisionist philosophers that there is a body of works, a compendium called 'African morality and ethics' (Ocholla-Ayayo, 1976; Kigongo, 2002; Onunna, 2008). The author has previously proffered that 'many African researchers were 'extravagant in claiming that Africa was bequeathed with ethics, morality or systematic religion before the advent of Western religious and philosophical thought in Africa' (Norman, 2016). 'It would have been preferred if a restatement of their positions was thus: individual African nations, indeed, individual ethnic groups in Africa had their own moral codes and religious observances which may or may not be different from each other' but these separate codes and religious practices were not amalgamated in the Continent. This author still holds the proposition that, there is no coordinated, no single unifying system of morality in Africa that can be labeled as 'African morality', 'African religion' or 'African philosophy'. For example, among the Shona of South Africa, the Ubutu concept of self is actually different from the concept of autonomy among the Ashanti of Ghana (Ollenu, 1966; Osei-Hwedie, 1997). Whereas elsewhere the individual defines his or her autonomy from the lens of his or her community, among the Ashanti of Ghana, it is the family and not the entire community that inures him or her with autonomy (Castellano, 2004; Sivalingam, 2011; Osei-Hwedie, 1997). No evidence was found to support the hypothesis that, there is in existence a compendium of ethics or morality called 'the' African Traditional ethics. The development of western philosophical thought had been nurtured by its religious ethos. There does not appear to be an overriding common religious ethos in Sub-Saharan Africa, because it was found that African traditional religion was never organized with hymns and songs and sermons offered in a systematic manner and which could have potentially led to systematic thinking in African religion. The chief priests and priestess danced, gyrated, conjured, jumped before a small group of drummers, did incantations, poured libation, threw fossils, threw cowry shells and other unidentifiable fossilized objects of supposedly animal and human

bones, and muttered things to himself or herself. Such discordant liturgy could not have provided the inspiration to the observers to engage in intellectualism or a higher-level thinking about being or things. The villagers simply watched in awe or detachment as spectators and were not involved in the proceedings at the voodoo house. Each household had a stool, a wooden doll, a clay god, a tin god to which blood and alcoholic libations were poured at certain days of the month by the head of the family in a secretive, supposedly, spiritual manner. There was no organized worship, organized liturgy, and supplication or service, at least, in the case of traditional religious situations in Ghana and among certain Akan groups. The author cannot describe what pertains in other ethnic groups in Ghana, let alone Africa, because it has not been seen how the people gathered as a congregation to worship together with the head priest or priestess anywhere. It was also found that in Africa 'moral conduct is usually evaluated on a fairness scale calibrated to appease everyone. Among the various tribal groups in Ghana, there is plethora of evidence of moral values which, in strict universal terms, would be nothing more than the rules of etiquettes' (Norman, 2016). The morality of the motley collection of nations in Africa were not concerned with organized religion or organized morality because the weighing of moral dilemma was dependent on the status of the actors in the dilemma and their personal social value. The respective African nations had their respective moral codes which differed from one tribal corporate entity to the other in many respects in terms of meaning, ritual and interpretation (Nkrumah-Boateng, 2007). It is therefore disingenuous for modern day researchers to impose a collective value of morality on the people of Africa which cannot be sustained by the respective cultures and history of the collective in their individual parts.

#### *A. Traditional Farming Culture as Proxy for Poor Professionalism in Ghana*

Here, the emphasis is on the taxonomy of work on the farm. The Ghanaian traditional habit of farming was that he or she went to the farm in the morning with his cutlass or hoe to weed and plant. Farming was generally motivated by short term considerations. Cash crops that did not take forever to mature, dictated what was to be planted. The farming season too was a major consideration. Where there were barely a few months of rain fall, since agriculture in Ghana has been rainfall dependent, the farmer's work period was dictated by the season. Farm sizes were invariably determined by the rains or the lack of it. The land was not really tilled or ploughed, at least, in the Southern part of Ghana. In the Northern part of Ghana, the land was often ploughed because they had animals such as donkeys and cows that could be used to pull the ploughs. The farming of the land in the south and the ploughing in the north would go on from morning until when the sun rose and sent down oppressive heat. Understandably, the activities on the farms would cease, because the heat would be unbearable. In several regions of Ghana, farmers do not go to their farms on Fridays to appease the land god. Fishermen do not go to sea on Tuesdays to appease the sea goddess. Saturdays are Church going days for some and rest days for others, with a handful of the respective regional farmers actually going to farm on Saturdays. Sundays are decidedly Church and rest days. On days where farms are attended to, the farmer retired home to his compound or to his hut and rest for the day in the afternoon. Farming actually occurs in only four out of the seven days of the week, because of Sunday being a day of worship, due to the fact that Friday is the day of appeasement of the gods, and Saturday is the day of funerals and other social engagements, and Tuesday is the day the Sea goddess is honored (Buah, 1980). The work period for the entire day would not last for more than a few hours. Due to the limited work periods, the farms were not big. To increase the tillable area for farms, the farmer married several wives to begat children who would eventually form the backbone of the livelihood of the household. In the process of increasing farm sizes, two ethical and moral values were compromised in a major way: the first is the domination of women, and the second is the internal enslavement of children. Farming culture in Ghana contains the genesis of slave labor, indentured servitude, child labor, polygamy and big family sizes (Boahen, 1966). The Ghanaian farmer did not device the means of production for his produce but allowed nature to show the way. A nation with a good work ethic generally, would have had farmers who controlled, to a large extent, the means of production on the farms. Irrigation, deep knowledge of the soil, improvements in the farm implements, composting and crop science would have been some of the approaches adopted to exercise dominion over their own farms.

#### *B. Linkages between Predominant Farm Culture and Modern Bureaucratic Culture*

The culture of work which farming reveals in the traditional setting is not a positive one and does not aid us in this investigation to identify the attributes of the Ghanaian work ethic. What the farming culture really reveals is the importation of the easy-going farming culture and work ethic from the rural areas into administrative and bureaucratic offices in the urban centers, which has produced these observations:

- a) The culture of work now demonstrated in the various offices in modern, globalized marketplace in Ghana, is the seasonality approach to farming, short work hours on the farms, and lackadaisical management of work schedules on the farms, about which there have been so much complaint (Akufo-Addo, 2017).



- b) On the farms, one does not till the land when there is a big funeral. So in the various offices, bureaucracies and administrative centers, in the various hospitals and clinics, one does not work when there is going to be a funeral on the weekends. That is why we habitually take long periods from work for funerals (Akufo-Addo, 2017).
- c) On the farms, one does not work when there is a big rainfall and in modern company situations, one does not go to work when it rains. One does not plant when the sun is too hot, and in the modern offices, when one goes out for lunch one does not return to work when the sun is too hot, when it is noon, when one is to rest. Never mind that the offices have air-conditioners which run even in some cases, with the windows wide open as observed by this author in the Ministries in Accra and other offices in Ghana (Akufo-Addo, 2017).
- d) On the farms, other family members help during harvest, so one is expected to also help others harvest their crops. In the modern offices, the employee who was helped to go to university by other family members, or who got financial, even emotional support to do a professional study, must also help his or her relatives to also advance. The help can come in the form of job placement, even if the relative is not qualified, or in the form of promotion even if the relative has not served long enough and does not meet the mandatory qualification for the position. In this limited context, it can be said that the Ghanaian basic morality and ethics is still evolving, to say the least.

It is fair to conclude that the review of traditional farming methods in Ghana explains the loose cultural approach to work in Ghana today. Due to the seasonality of work on the farms, the short work durations on the farms, our modern and collective approach to work in offices, shops and factories, tends to be seasonal, and comes in short durations.

#### V. EFFECT OF THE ACCEPTANCE OF MEDIOCRE PERFORMANCE AS A CHERISHED NATIONAL IDEAL

Are the people of Ghana Clock Watchers and if so, what keeps them de-motivated from the earnest rendition of productive work?

The above effect is in several parts. The first part posits the question, are the people of Ghana clock-watchers? In the speech delivered by the President of Ghana on May Day, 2017, his use of the proverbial 'we' in the sentence, "(...) we are clock watchers (...)" is overly broad to even include almost all the men and women the President has appointed into his own government and to high management positions in other critical state corporations and entities as well as himself. It however tells us what we want to know. Yes, the people are as described by their leader. What the President's speech succeeded in doing in actual sense were two things, which incidentally are what all other Presidents of this nation who have spoken about the Ghanaian Work Ethic have done. All CEOs in Ghana doing likewise, have also done. The average Ghanaian has made similar comments about him or herself too. The first outcome of the speech is that it is a complaint about the poor or mediocre work attitude of Ghanaians, inclusive of the speaker. The second is about how the bad attitude towards work undermines the national and individual productiveness and which reduces his significance as a man or a woman, again, including the speaker. Both complaints are made from the emotional and subjective viewpoints, irrespective of who complained. Therefore, the consideration of the social and cultural conducts with which the Ghanaian strongly associates, with regards to work have also been made. The issue of if the presumption is sound, which the President was arousing among the Ghanaian citizens or those who consider themselves as subjects, was not about the work ethic of the Ghanaian per se. The issue, as a policy matter, is bigger: The issue is about the ethical and moral values of the Ghanaian (Ayee, 2013). As far as Ghana is concerned, the concept of Work Ethic does not appear to be an important research focus. Searching through the literature and even searching on the internet for work ethic specific scholarly articles and papers by Ghanaian or African researchers, leaves one empty. There is a paucity of research papers on this topic on the continent. South Africa, as usual, has done some appreciable amount of research on its work ethic and even has undertaken comparative studies. Most of such publications appear to be authored by white/Indian South Africans and not by members of the majority blacks. The author stands to be corrected, but it seems, the concept of work ethic is not important to Sub-Saharan Africa, because work itself, does not carry the same weight in importance as, for example, being slothful as in lateness to work and functions. There is, however, a great deal of research on corruption, both massive and petty, and both intimate pre-occupations of black Africa, including Ghana.

##### A. *Reasons for Success of the Ghanaian Émigré in other Cultures*

It appears there is a certain degree of cabalism or magic about the success of the Ghanaian while in foreign lands. This is because the Ghanaian émigré in the United States of America or the United Kingdom; measured against himself or herself, measured against his or her performance and productivity while in Ghana; compared to the same person's output in the USA or UK reveals many interesting phenomena. The average Ghanaian overseas, particularly in Canada, the United States of America or the United Kingdom materially and academically accelerates faster than his or her counterpart back in Ghana, bribery and

corruption notwithstanding. The same thing cannot be said about Ghanaians or even of Africans who sojourn in Europe. It appears the upward mobility available to Africans in Canada, the U.S.A and UK is not reachable in Europe due to entrenched and insidious racism and identitarian approaches to social integration, despite official programs for social integration (Norman, 2022b). It seems the Ghanaian spirit becomes more dynamic and flexible in nature while living and working overseas. In a moment, the author would explain this observation in detail. Since the overall national attitude towards work does not combine to create an enabling environment for productive activity, the Ghanaian's whole foreign training and experiences become a wash upon return to Ghana despite how long he or she might have lived and worked overseas, or it becomes a value that is not transferable in Ghana. The inadequacies he observed about himself while overseas becomes pale in comparison with the overall inadequacies of his peer back home, due in part to the pernicious attitude of pulling down apparently rising peer. Notice also that many of the émigré may not have occupied upper management positions while overseas. Many worked in menial jobs such as security guards, taxi drivers, hotel chamber maids and house boys, factory floor hands and seasonal employment. They are able to pull themselves up through their own shoestrings. Before the advancement, they were part of the workforce that was in subordinate roles. When they return to Ghana and become elevated a little bit above their previous jobs overseas, they begin to lord it, to look down on their own nationals in subordinate positions to them. There are a few material manifestations of this reality which is even recognized by governments, universities, and employers in the open market. The foreign trained Ghanaian due to the opportunity to learn many processes at work experientially speaking; is able to assume more responsibilities than the Ghanaian with similar background but trained locally is able to assume within the same time frame. Typically, employers and government place foreign trained Ghanaians in middle management and upper management positions without fear or doubt that they would do a good job. However, the nationally trained Ghanaians do not get such confidential treatment. They are often placed as senior managers or managers whereas the foreign trained ones would be placed as deputy directors and directors. Although the observation about the placement of foreign trained Ghanaians in positions of authority over their counterparts who are trained in Ghana is an objective reality, there are also exceptions in cases where the nationally trained employee is providentially placed, such as having a relationship to the CEO, or high-ranking government official, a minister or even the presidency. In that case, it is immaterial whether one is foreign trained or not or not trained at all.

The returnee Ghanaian, who comes back to Ghana buys into the prevailing social dogma and ways of doing things. While in foreign lands, the Ghanaian also buys into the predominant views and approaches to capabilities and functioning of the new place. It is not only that the new place or country has underlying enabling ecosystem such as the USA or UK has. It is because the Ghanaian also makes a determination to succeed whether the underlying social and political systems are fair to him or not while away from Ghana. He or she is aware that getting a job is not dictated by who you know but on merit. Ghana is not a meritorious nation. Ghana is not a pragmatic nation, by and large, and does not evaluate skills sets of its job seekers on pragmatism but on blood and social foundations. Ghana is not generally an honest nation because, generally, it defends acts that should not be defended, such as the CEO of a public company employing his or her relative on the justification that the applicant was qualified without assessing that applicant against the pool of applicants for that job.

In the United States of American and in the United Kingdom, the Ghanaian resident is confronted with a myriad of social and political challenges, besides issues of immigration and housing or racism. Despite these challenges, the Ghanaian has to steel himself or herself against such events in order to succeed. The Ghanaian overseas has to battle deep-seated national stereotypes against all peoples of African heritage and physical features. He or she has to prove that he or she is as good, if not better, than the other person to justify why the job he or she is holding should not be taken away and given to a nonblack man or woman. Unlike Ghana, the émigré is allowed to compete fairly for the available opportunities. What is unequal about the Ghanaian economy compared to the American economy is the availability of opportunities coupled with blatant discrimination and exclusionary tactics on the basis of tribal affinity, political association and gender considerations. There is also the absence of rampant cronyism, rampant nepotism, and favoritism in the US or UK, generally speaking. In the Western Industrialized nations, there is discrimination based on race, and ethnicity, but the type of discrimination practiced in some foreign lands against people of color is very subtle. This is because the legal system works to right the wrongs against individuals aggrieved by discriminatory actions.

In Ghana, the type of discrimination in practice not only in private businesses, but in official governmental appointments and promotions is arrogantly blatant, very ethnocentric and very much influenced by existing partisanship, filial, and prior professional associations and identity politics (Norman, 2023). The blatant type of discrimination practiced in Ghana, is probably the singular difference between pursuing opportunities in the United States or Canada or UK compared to the same individual pursuing similar opportunities in Ghana. No matter how hateful the citizens of one's new nation may be, they tend to give the foreigner or the person different from them, a fighting chance to excel. Despite the staggering

hurdles the Ghanaian émigré has to maneuver, he or she is able to overcome the challenges, persevere and prevail due again to his or her belief that if he works hard, he has the opportunity to be successful. He can feel the reality of hope in his own lifetime. It is not uncommon to hear that a Ghanaian who had barely a secondary school education while in Ghana, has, since going to the USA, become a Ph. D holder, and, sometimes from an Ivy League school. It is not unusual to read about a Ghanaian who did not have a cent to rub on while in Ghana, becoming very wealthy or even a millionaire in a space of a decade or less dealing in real estate and many other businesses through the dint of hard work. In the United States of America and in other industrialized nations, many of such persons are able to climb the social ladder by their own bootstraps. They do not need any uncle, daddy, or mum to help them achieve their goals, although along the way, they may have people who encourage them, people who give them the breaks they need. The successes of the Ghanaian émigré are not motivated by magic. It is an outright application of strength, wisdom and commitment to a goal in nations, where the people admire those who take the time to apply themselves to a trade or industry until success becomes second nature to them. Even if others hate them because they are black, because they are women, because they are not as tall as them, still they would show their admiration for their efforts, and the results they are able to create for themselves. In the successes of the Ghanaian émigré lies the indicators and hope for building the framework for the Ghanaian local work ethic: eschew hate and sabotage of others whose only fault is to try to achieve greater heights in life.

#### VI. EFFECT OF THE PERCEIVED INFERIOR QUALITY OF NATIONALLY MADE PRODUCTS AND SERVICES RENDERED

Is the national brand an inferior brand compared to that of the competition, using the hospitality industry as the basis?

The economy of Ghana grew “at a rate of 5 percent between 1990 and 2010”. “Industry in Ghana accounts for about 25.5% of total GDP” “while industrial production has also been rising at a 25% of total GDP at 7.8% rate” and “making Ghana the 38<sup>th</sup> fastest growing industrial production in the world” during that period (Addo, 2017, pp. 73-76). Addo’s (2017) assessment of the competitiveness of Ghana’s industries was based on manufacturing, construction, mining, quarrying, electricity and water and sewerage (ibid, p. 75). These inputs do not fit into conventional definition of industries and manufacturing. Ackah *et al.* (2016) agree that “industry in Ghana is mainly dominated by micro and small firms, privately owned and mainly located within urban areas in the form of industrial clusters. They add that, “patterns of labor productivity and wages indicate the food processing sub-sector privately owned and older firms as the most productive” (Ackah *et al.*, 2016, p. 50). Decardi-Nelson *et al.* (2019) in their study of the perception of Shop Operators on packaging of made in Ghana products, offered that the perception of the local retailers and sellers of locally packaged goods cannot be compared to the foreign packaging of the same goods. In 31% of the retailers who participated in that study of local products considered these as being shabby with almost 25% describing the local packages as lacking vital product information on the labels and another 25% described them as unattractive” (Decardi-Nelson *et al.*, 2019, p. 31).

Made-in-Ghana products are tagged as inferior because, perhaps, the broader majority of Ghanaians see themselves as inferior or their nation is an inferior one. In addition, made-in-Ghana goods are also considered poorly packaged, and with poor supply chain management and pitiable promotional incentives for sales or shelf space. In 2019 a national news media outfit reported that “only 18% of the goods sold in supermarkets in Accra City are made in Ghana, after sampling 7,462 brands in eight supermarkets by a team of national and international researchers. Out of the sample, 6,108 brands were foreign brands representing 82% with only 1,354 brands or 18% being made in Ghana (Konfidants, 2019, p. 6). The percentage representation of nationally made goods sold in Supermarkets in Ghana rose to 26% as of March 2021 (Konfidants, 2019). Respondents offered that price and packaging were the main determining factors in whether to buy made in Ghana or not, in addition to the quality of the product. All of such studies, such products, such outcomes affect the branding of the nation. A nation’s branding could be due to the quality of its products (Nagashima, 1970; Jordan, 2007; Fan, 2006; Fetscherin, 2010; Hakala *et al.*, 2013). The perception that made in Ghana goods are of poor quality should therefore be a concern to central government and the productive members of the nation. When the Ghanaian rejects ‘made in Ghana’ goods, he seems to reject himself. Some of the reported claims that made in Ghana goods are not often good are true and of a national concern, but in many cases, the relative degree of quality between say, a pair of shoes which is made in Ghana and one from China may be simply a matter of perception rather than reality (Fan, 2006). The national work ethic is to be blamed for this outcome. Ghanaians do not attend to piecemeal work as a form of supplication, homage to a Supreme Being, while the workers in, for example, Asiatic nations do the opposite. A good Japanese craftsman does not see his handiwork as a means to the Yen, but rather as a link between him and his maker. The product becomes an extension of his being. His being is only a miniscule part of his nation, Japan. Patriotism is not well understood in Ghana because it appears the

population does not appreciate the superior status of Ghana to their own families. When the people's consciousness about a nation crystallizes into the conclusion that there are no opportunities for self-actualization, that 'Ghana is not a country worth dying for', that Ghana has been hedged literally and figuratively to the international bond market for the next two or three decades, they also lose the enthusiasm for caring for the same nation (Imani Ghana, 2023; Jordan, 2013; Fan, 2006).

The perceived inferior quality of products made in Ghana or services rendered in Ghana undermines the national image or brand. Here the focus is on the image of the nation Ghana as a unique brand. The image of Ghana is the image of the people who consider themselves as Ghanaian. Therefore, the branding of Ghana is linked to the nationals who are branded as belonging to the nation Ghana (Hakala *et al.*, 2013; Jordan, 2013; Fan, 2006). According to Hakala *et al.* (2013), the image of a nation is generated from its products, national characteristics, economics and political background, history and traditions (Nagashima, 1970, *as cited in* Hakala *et al.*, 2013, p. 543). We have already noticed that the moral description of value provides the meaning of various human activities or actions. We were also admonished that our essence was present; before our existence; and, therefore, egoism should be discarded in favor of our basic humanity. The essence of our basic humanity over time becomes the attributes of our environment and therefore our communities and finally our nation through our conduct. As a people from Ghana, therefore, the products made in Ghana reflect their personalities and essence captured in a single moment in the aesthetics of a manufactured product (Freire, 2001; Gallarza *et al.*, 2002).

Ghanaians talk about patriotism as a vector of nationalism, communitarianism and the common good, but conduct themselves in actions and activities that do not support patriotism, communitarianism or the common good (Akufo-Addo, 2017). The lack of patriotism is partly the reason why Ghanaian industries, apart from the high electricity tariffs, high corporate taxes, employee pilfering and high cost of inputs, do not do well and are dying or almost dead. Ishio's study of the social bases of American patriotism found that about 85% of Americans consider themselves very proud to be Americans and are willing to carry out activities to support, protect, defend and build that nation with all their might if that includes personal sacrifices (Ishio, 2010). The same thing cannot be said about Ghana and Ghanaians.

## VII. EFFECT OF THE PERCEIVED KLEPTOMANIAC TENDENCIES OF THE POPULATION

Is the nation of Ghana particularly kleptomaniac and motivated by egoism and self-gratification?

In a recent paper, "*Setting Thomas Kuhn's Paradigm Shift against Dunning-Kruger Effect on the Eradication of Corruption in Ghana*" Ghana was described as a corruption endemic nation (Norman, 2022, p. 24). This is because corruption is found in just about everywhere: Presidency, Parliament, Judiciary, Universities, Banks, Industry, Basic Schools, Sports, and even religious centers (Afrobarometer, 2022). The President of Ghana provided a rather caustic statement about whether or not the average office worker in Ghana is a kleptomaniac. This was not flattering to the Ghanaian worker as it should have been on May 1<sup>st</sup>, when workers are to be celebrated, glorified and pampered. The reason why the nation's workers did not react, let alone overreact to that speech was, perhaps, just about every single charge in that speech is compatible with the collective behaviors and own perception of the people of Ghana. As a social and environmental observer, this speech is perhaps, the greatest speech about the Ghanaian work force that has ever been delivered to the people of Ghana for its directness, simplicity of the statement of the truth and the vehemence with which it affirms the national compulsion for laissez faire work attitude. "There is a particularly pernicious (meaning, wicked, evil, or malicious) attitude to property that we find at work. There is the petty stealing of paper, envelopes, tea, milk and other equipment. There is the reckless use of office vehicles (which is often assigned to the top brass of public entities). Employees show no inclination to protecting the things that are in the offices and factories, and extreme reluctance to stand up for what we know to be right in our workplaces in general" (Akufo-Addo, 2017). Here again, the Ghanaian worker is not only being told that he or she is basically bad, a thief, but he or she also is irresponsible. Notice that the statement was not gender biased.

## VIII. CONCLUSION

In order to have good work ethics, there ought to be a generally accepted ethical framework on work and conduct that is subscribed to by all in that society, whether it is as heterogeneous such as the USA, the UK or Canada or homogeneous such as Japan or China. Due to the national penchant for polarization of issues, it may be difficult without consensus to develop a nationally accepted normative basis for work and conduct. In Ghana, capitalism itself is abused by the various dominant political parties due to the institutionalization of a kind of selfishness that Ms. Ayn Rand detested. The kind of capitalism practiced in Ghana and elsewhere in Africa is dictated by greed and theft, by gang mentality, not productiveness or inventiveness (Norman, 2023; Akufo-Addo, 2017). If Ghana were in Ayn Rand's world, no one would have

qualified as the embodiment of “John Galt”. Ms. Rand began her novel, “The Atlas Shrugged” with a philosophical sentence, “Who is John Galt?” Who in Ghana is an accomplished inventor of the engine of growth without deep political patronage? Almost every materially successful politicians’ and businessman’s wealth could be traced to a shady past of wheeling and dealing between him and politicians or political appointees running national institutions. In Ayn Rand’s universe, compassion should not be displayed undeservingly to those who have not applied themselves to productiveness. Such display of compassion to the so-called vulnerable members of society undermines man’s innate ability to do great things. Or achieve what may have appeared as impossible and create systems, nirvana for those who can exchange their value with those of equal value. It seems many of our national politicians go to the field of politics with no well-articulated philosophy of governance, or of dealing and being. Ms. Rand’s philosophy fits squarely into the national philosophy of reciprocity, where each member of the Ghanaian society is to add value to him or herself genuinely and barter such value in the marketplace of value exchanges. In such a space, everyone benefits (Greenfield, 2011). It may be interesting to note that, despite the admonition of President Akufo-Addo on that fateful day in May of 2017 reminding Ghanaians of the “the Haymarket Affair that gave the name May Day” and therefore, “Ghanaians ought to pay homage to those who fought the heroic battles that made today’s ordinary things possible”, his government has been generally labeled as inefficient, corrupt, and bedeviled with identity politics, consanguinity and cronyism. In October 2022, the national currency, the Ghana Cedis became the last but one worst performing currency in the world, with the Ghana Cedis depreciating by 50% and S&P as well as Fitch rating the Cedis to junk status (BBC News Pidgin, 2022). A nation with good work ethic would not allow its currency to get to this level as a matter of national pride.

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