

CHAPTER THREE

The Beliefs About Work Perspective of Buchholz

3.1 Introduction

Two primary sources are utilised in developing a theoretical framework for the Work Values Questionnaire. The first of these sources is the conceptual framework that Rogene Buchholz developed as a basis for his Beliefs About Work Questionnaire (1976, 1977, 1978). The Beliefs About Work Questionnaire measures five work belief systems namely Work Ethic, Organisational, Marxist-related, Humanistic and Leisure Ethic. My reasoning for considering items that form part of the construct *beliefs* for inclusion in a work *value* questionnaire is the following. Rokeach (1969) developed the theoretical description of beliefs that was used as a basis for the development of Buchholz's questionnaire. Rokeach (1969) describes a value as a type of belief that is central to a person's belief system. In other words, values can be viewed as representative of certain beliefs.

During 1991, I completed a Master's Degree dissertation. This study compared the beliefs about work, measured by the Buchholz Beliefs About Work Questionnaire, of 1167 South African youths between the ages of sixteen and twenty-five of different sex-, age-, language groups, as well as, educational level and political affiliation. After the completion of this dissertation, a further statistical analysis of the data was performed. Questions were posed regarding the Buchholz questionnaire's American origin and whether South African's beliefs about work are structurally similar to American beliefs about work. The results of this factor-and item analysis have not been previously reported. In this chapter, I will report these results insofar as it serves to conceptualise a framework for the Work Values Questionnaire. In the rest of the chapter, I give a brief overview of the Buchholz constructs and discuss my interpretation of the results of factor- and item analysis in conceptualising the framework for the Work Values Questionnaire.

The second source for the development of the Work Values Questionnaire is Hofstede's (1980) conceptual framework for work-related values. Hofstede identified

four dimensions for the measurement of work values. These dimensions are Power Distance, Uncertainty Avoidance, Individualism and Masculinity. Hofstede's dimensions of work-related values will be discussed in Chapter Four.

3.2 The five beliefs about work systems

Each of the five belief systems described in the Buchholz scale consists of unique assumptions about the way in which people perceive the world and specifically the world of work (Buchholz, 1976, 1977, 1978). A brief discussion of each of the scales follows.

3.2.1 Work Ethic beliefs system

This scale (See Table 3.1 for a description of the items) consists of items pertaining to individualism and hard work. According to this description, the working role bestows people with dignity and determines their usefulness in society. All obstacles can be overcome with hard work and success is determined by a person's own efforts. Personal wealth can be viewed as the reward for hard work (Buchholz, 1978).

Table 3.1 Items of the Work Ethic beliefs system

Number	Item
1	By working hard a person can overcome every obstacle that life presents.
4	One must avoid dependence on other persons wherever possible.
6	A person can learn better on the job by striking out boldly on his own than he can by following the advice of others.
7	Only those who depend on themselves get ahead in life.
11	One should work like a slave at everything he undertakes until he is satisfied with the results.
30	One should live one's own life independent of others as much as possible.
39	To be superior a man must stand alone.

3.2.2 Organisational beliefs system

The Organisational beliefs system deals with work done in the group. Items in this scale (See Table 3.2) promote the notion that work only has meaning when it impacts on the group or organisation. The value of work is determined to the extent that it serves group interests and contributes to the individual's success in the company. Such success is determined by conformity as opposed to individual effort (Buchholz, 1978).

Table 3.2 Items of the Organisational beliefs system

Number	Item
3	Better decisions are made in a group than by individuals.
9	One's contribution to the group is the most important thing about his work.
10	One should take an active part in all group affairs.
18	It is best to have a job as part of an organisation where all work together even if you don't get individual credit.
22	Working with a group is better than working alone.
25	Survival of the group is very important in any organisation.
31	The group is the most important entity in any organization.
41	Work is a means to foster group interests.
42	Conformity is necessary for an organisation to survive.

3.2.3 Marxist-related beliefs system

Productive activity forms the basis for human fulfilment. Within the organised capitalist system, people cannot realise their creative and social human potential. This results in the exploitation and alienation of workers from their productive activity. This situation can only be addressed by giving workers more say and control in organisations (Buchholz, 1978).

Table 3.3 Items of the Marxist-related beliefs system

Number	Item
2	Management does not understand the needs of the worker.
13	Workers should be represented on the board of directors of companies.
15	Factories would be run better if workers have more of a say in management.
26	The most important work in South Africa is done by the labouring classes.
27	The working classes should have more say in running society.
28	Wealthy people carry their fair share of the burdens of life in this country. (R)
29	The rich do not make much of a contribution to society.
34	The work of the labouring classes is exploited by the rich for their own benefit.
36	Workers should be more active in making decisions about products, financing and capital investment.
44	The free enterprise system mainly benefits the rich and powerful.
45	Workers get their fair share of economic rewards of society . (R)
(R) reverse item	

3.2.4 Humanistic beliefs system

Human fulfilment is fundamentally achieved through work. The experiences of individuals within the working environment are more important than the output achieved. Work must be designed to have meaning and to be fulfilling for people. Growth and development are crucial aspects of work and should even be regarded as more important than material lower wants and needs (Buchholz, 1978).

Table 3.4 Items of the Humanist beliefs system

Number	Item
8	Work can be made satisfied.
14	The work place can be humanised.
17	Work can be made interesting rather than boring.
19	Work can be a means of self-expression.
24	Work can be organised to allow for human fulfilment.
32	The job should be a source of new experiences.
33	Work should enable one to learn new things.
37	Work should allow for the use of human capabilities.
38	One's job should give him a chance to try out new ideas.
40	Work can be meaningful.

3.2.5 Leisure Ethic beliefs system

This scale (Table 3.5) focuses on the positive aspects of leisure time and the negative aspects of work. Although work is necessary, it can never provide people with fulfilment. Human fulfilment can only be found outside the working role in leisure activities. Leisure activities will create a context for people to develop and grow (Buchholz, 1978).

Table 3.5 Items of the Leisure Ethic beliefs system

Number	Item
5	Increased leisure time is bad for society (R).
12	The less hours one spends working and the more leisure time available the better.
16	Success means having ample time to pursue leisure activities.
20	The present trend towards a shorter work week is to be encouraged.
21	Leisure time activities are more interesting than work.
23	Work takes too much of our time, leaving little time to relax.
35	More leisure time is good for people.
43	The trend towards more leisure is not a good thing. (R)

(R) reverse item

3.3 Statistical analysis of the Buchholz questionnaire

3.3.1 Method

The BMDP 4M-program was used to perform a factor analysis. This process consists of a principal component analysis followed by a principal factor analysis. These processes were repeated twice, whereafter an iterative item analysis was conducted with the NIPR NP50 program. The Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient was utilised to determine which items should be accepted and which items should be rejected.

The data of the responses of the 1167 South African youths to the 45 items of the Buchholz's Questionnaire, was used to conduct the factor analysis. Three second order factors were identified. The results of the distribution of items according to the second order principle factor analysis are summarised in Table 3.6 on a conceptual level.

Table 3.6 Conceptual analysis of the second order factor analysis

Factor One	Factor Two	Factor Three
The importance of group work and group participation. Discrepancy between the position of workers and superiors. The need for worker participation and representation in management structures.	Personal growth and development Work can be meaningful. Work can provide a person with new experiences. Work allows for human fulfilment. The humanisation of the work place.	Independence The importance of productive activity and hard work. Remuneration and wealth is the result of hard work

3.3.2 Results of the factor analysis

The 45 items of the five beliefs about work systems are grouped in three factors only. The first factor contains all the items that were part of the Organisational system. The remaining part of this factor is compiled of nine items of the Marxist-related belief system and six items of the Leisure Ethic system. Although these three systems are independent in American studies, Scottish studies showed some dependency between these systems (Dickson & Buchholz, 1977). Scottish research indicates that the more exploited Scottish workers felt, the more they valued leisure activities and the less they valued hard work and independence. Dickson and Buchholz (1977, 1979) could not explain this phenomenon.

In terms of the South African society the following explanation was given. In 1991 the political power and the influence of the labour movement were closely associated and formally aligned. The relatedness of work in group context (organisational), the demands of exploited workers for a greater say (Marxist-related) and negotiations pertaining to working conditions and a shorter work week (leisure) seemed to be an expression of the situation in the country at the time.

The second factor can be described as the Humanistic Factor. All items of the Humanist scale and one item of the Work Ethic scale form part of the second factor. The item of the Work Ethic scale that was included in this factor is “By working hard a person can overcome every obstacle that life presents.” In my opinion, this item can be interpreted from a humanist perspective.

The third factor includes all items of the Work Ethic system, save for the item in factor two, as well as, two items each of the Marxist related and Leisure systems. The Leisure systems item included in this factor are those that were scored reversibly. Both these items refer to bad tendencies with regard to leisure time. This can possibly lead to a conclusion that the Work Ethic and Leisure Ethic systems are interpreted as opposites of one another. The Marxist-related items that were included in this factor both related to financial compensation for work.

3.3.3 Results of the item analysis

After completing the factor analysis, an item analysis was performed. The reliability of the items was calculated with Cronbach's reliability coefficient Alpha. For the first factor, all 24 items were included in the most reliable item analysis. The Cronbach Alpha value for this factor was 0,78. The highest reliability coefficient of 0,74 for factor two was obtained for all items with the exclusion of item one. The highest reliability coefficient for factor three was only 0,47. This indicates that the inclusion of these items in the development of a Work Values Questionnaire is debatable. The results of the item analysis indicate that 35 items could be regarded as reliable enough for inclusion in the Work Values Questionnaire.

3.4 A proposal for three scales to be included in the Work Values Questionnaire

The outcome of the factor analysis and item analysis is incorporated in a proposal for three scales that can be considered for inclusion in the Work Values Questionnaire. The three scales are Collective Values, Humanist Values and Protestant Work ethic.

3.4.1 Collective values

A number of items in the first factor as discussed in paragraph 3.2 refer to fairness in the current organisation of the world of work. Aspects such as exploitation of the worker and material gain are discussed in this context. Second, reference is made to workers' participation in organising the work place. Third, collectively as it manifests through group work and -participation emerges as part of this factor. In summary, this factor consists of the constructs of fairness, participation and the role of the group. It seems that South African workers might value fairness and participation in the context of the group.

3.4.2 Humanist values


The second factor as obtained in the second order factor analysis refer to humanist values in the world of work. According to Reber (1985) humanist science includes

higher human motives, self-development, knowledge, insight and aesthetics. Buchholz (1976) describes humanist beliefs as those beliefs that view individual growth and development as more important than products.

3.4.3 Protestant Work Ethic

Factor three consists of items referring to independence, individualism, hard work and material reward. These elements are traditionally part of what is known in literature as a construct named the Protestant Work Ethic. Results of the item analysis indicate that this construct should be treated with caution. At the moment these items will be retained in the initial stages of development of the Work Values Questionnaire as this construct can possibly be joined with elements of the construct of individualism as described by Hofstede. Comparative research between cultures showed distinctions between scores of different cultures with regard to this construct (Hofstede, 1980; Schwartz, 1990; Graves, 1970).

3.5 Conclusion



Statistical analysis of responses of 1167 South African youths to the Buchholz Questionnaire produced a structure consisting of three possible scales that can be included in the Work Values Questionnaire. These proposed scales would be compared to the dimensions of the Hofstede (1980) Work Values Study. A combination of these two theorists' work will serve as the theoretical model underpinning the Work Values Questionnaire that is utilised to formulate and investigate the validity of a work values structure during an early stage of career process. The work-related values perspective of Hofstede is discussed in the next chapter.