

**WORK ETHICS IN THE UNIVERSITY: A CHRISTIAN WORK ETHICS  
PERSPECTIVE**

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**Abstract**

*This paper examines the application of Christian work ethics to the work attitude of the staff of the University of Uyo, Uyo, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. Every university strives to achieve the goals and objectives that established it. However, no university can ever achieve its goals with weak/bad work ethic. It argues that for the University of Uyo to effectively achieve its vision and goals, both the employer (the Federal Government) and the staff of the university must take their duties and responsibilities with a sense of commitment to strong work ethics by inculcating the prescription and principles of the Christian work ethics. The employer must put in place a mechanism that encourages good work ethics by ensuring proper funding of the university system. While, the employees must endeavour to apply daily in their workplace the principles of the Christian work ethic: integrity, honesty, hard work, respect, justice, discipline and sincerity. It concludes that the inculcation of the prescription of the Christian work ethics principles by the university staff will enable them to be committed to their work. This will, in turn, help the university achieve its vision as a centre of academic excellence.*

**Keywords:** University, Work ethics, Christian work ethics, Work, Ethics

**INTRODUCTION**

Several studies have confirmed that strong work ethics contribute to good job performance as to the poor attitude to work (Batainch, 2020; Herman, 2002; Meriac, 2012; Ntayi, 2005). The performance of any organization is affected by the work ethics prevalent in its employees. The work ethic of an employee shows how committed, dedicated, responsible, and hardworking he/she is about the goals of the organization. The attitude to work of many employees in the Nigerian public university leaves much to be desired. These employees have a faulty mentality of work in the public service; they believed that “government work is nobody work” and

they approach their work without any sense of obligation, responsibility or duty. Our concern in this paper is with the poor work attitude of employees of the University of Uyo. The University of Uyo was established by the Federal Government of Nigeria in 1991, with a tripartite mandate of teaching, research, and community service. A strong work ethic is a major strategy to achieve its mandate as far as her obligation and responsibility to the major stakeholders are concerned.

Every university strives to achieve the goals and objectives that established it. This is why universities, like other organizations, have organizational vision statements based on and constant with the institution's values. For instance, the vision statement of the University of Uyo is "To be a centre of academic excellence by utilizing the available human and technological resources for teaching, research, community service and sustainable development". The mission statement of the university is as follows:

To diligently pursue scholarship and deploy its output for human capacity development and economic growth in the society, with active participation in Information and Communication Technology, sensitivity to Nigeria's rich cultural heritage and responsiveness to global environmental changes.

These statements summarize the purpose for which the university was founded and established in the first place. Every member of staff is expected to work and contribute positively towards achieving the fulfilment of the vision, mission and core values of the University. But, despite the simplicity of the purpose for which the university is established, employees (both academic and non-teaching staff) tend to face some ethical dilemmas and issues such as lateness to duty, absenteeism, sorting (demanding money or sex for grades), forcing students to buy textbooks, alteration of examination grade, commitment to teaching, and unlawful collection of unapproved fees/levies from students among others. Unarguably, without a good perception of values and strong work ethics, mere declaration of statements of vision, mission, and core values can hardly be sufficient. The effectiveness of any organization can be determined by the extent to which its goals are achieved through the attitude of its employees to work. This paper is an attempt to examine the poor attitude to work by employees of the University of Uyo within the theoretical framework of Christian work ethics and thereby helping the University of Uyo to achieve its goals and vision of becoming a centre of academic excellence. Let us begin with the clarification of terms.

### **CLARIFICATION OF TERMS: Ethics and Work Ethics**

Ethics as a branch of philosophy concerns itself with the morality of human conduct or a set of moral principles of right conduct. Etymologically, ethics is derived from the Greek word *ethos* which means habit, custom, standards, behaviour, way of life, disposition, character or accepted ways of behaviour of an individual or group of people. So, we can say that ethics evaluates human customs, habits, behaviour or character and places value judgement on them, determining what behaviour or conduct is right and wrong, praiseworthy and blameworthy or good and bad. Ethics or moral philosophy deals with the way things ought to be, the way human beings ought to behave and what humans ought to do as they relate to others in society.

Work ethics, on the other hand, is a set of moral principles, standards of behaviour or set of values that guides one in the workplace. Put differently, work ethics is a set of moral principles or values that an employee abides by and uses in his/her job performance; it covers an employee's behaviour and attitude towards his/her job, career, and workplace. It can also be regarded as a set of values centred on the importance of work and manifested by determination or desire to work hard. Bergh and Theron (2009: 421) define work ethics as a productive orientation which refers to valuing work as compulsory and a worthwhile life interest to achieve certain objectives, while human beings generally do not enjoy work, and have to be coerced into doing or achieving anything. Miller *et al* (2002: 453), indicate that work ethics encompasses attitudes and beliefs concerning work behaviour, and is a multidimensional construct reflected in behaviour. Furthermore, work values relate to work and work-related activities while work ethics refers to attitudes and beliefs, as opposed to behaviour. Hence, work ethics suggests an acceptable norm which makes employees feel personally accountable and responsible for the work that they do. An employee's work ethic can be defined as the overall framework from which work values originate. They, in turn, influence the behaviour of the individual at work. Those employees who have strong work ethics have inculcated moral principles that guide their behaviour regarding what is and is not acceptable to do at work.

### **OTHER DISCOURSES ON WORK ETHICS**

Before examining what constitutes Christian work ethics, we must look at other discourses on work ethics and dimensions of work ethics. Work ethics is nearly identical to work satisfaction or simply attitudes to work. Most adults are expected to work to make a living, the work ethic in this common use of the term is encouraging

for many people. In this section, we shall briefly examine three main discourses on work ethics.

**The Protestant Work Ethic:** The term protestant work ethic was coined by Max Weber in his book, "The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism." The Protestant ethic is a code of morals based on the principles of thrift, discipline, hard work, and individualism. Weber's use of the adjective "protestant" is explained by the fact that these qualities were seen to have been encouraged by the Protestant religion. Weber (1958) argued in his book that there is a causal connection between religion and economic life. The protestant belief in predestination and the unknowable nature of God led to anxieties regarding each individual's state of grace thus leading to a practical means of alleviating these anxieties; hard work, thrift and self-discipline, the rewards of which were not consumed but saved and reinvested. The success gained in the commercial world due to this work ethic tended to reassure the individual that he was in a state of grace. Work then became more of a service to God, a calling. This work ethic according to Max Weber forms the backbone of modern capitalism.

**The Confucian Work Ethic:** The work ethics found in China and some other East Asian countries are predicated upon Confucian teachings. A professional who embodies the Confucian work ethic has to believe in the value of hard work, show loyalty to the organization of which he/she is a part; be thrifty; be dedicated; help in the maintenance of social harmony; have a love of education and wisdom; and show concern for social propriety. The elements of the Confucian work ethic all have positive aspects for economic development. The elements also have positive aspects for societal development. Confucius was of the view that in nation-building, the individual must make sacrifices. These sacrifices are made for the advancement of the nation's interests. This trait of personal sacrifice for the sake of nation-building can be found in all Confucian societies, China included. The difference between the Confucian work ethic and the Protestant work ethic lies in the nature and the goal of work. The protestant ethic is individualistic; the protestant worker accumulates wealth for himself hence he continually seeks the accumulation of personal wealth while the Confucian worker works for the interest of the society at large. One could say that the Confucian work ethic is tilted towards socialism.

**The Marxist Work Ethic:** Marx and Engels conceive work as central to human existence. Engels (1876) maintained that labour is the prime basic condition for all human existence, and this to such an extent that, in a sense, we have to say that labour created man himself. He maintained that walking on two feet freed the use of the hand and made possible its development for complex tasks. Work for Marx shouldn't be merely a means to live but rather the primary necessity of life. By working, the

individual attains all round development which in turn leads to a more abundant flow of cooperative wealth. Marx believed that the concept of "hard work" is meant by capitalists to delude the working class into becoming loyal servants to the elite and that working hard is only a means to creating more wealth for the elite not an honourable thing in itself. The Marxist work ethic contradicts the protestant ethic which sees work as a means to attain personal wealth because it sees work as an ideal to strive for to ensure the cooperative wealth of the society as a whole.

## **DIMENSIONS OF WORK ETHICS**

When discussing work ethics, different criteria determine what constitutes good work ethics. To harmonize these various criteria and create a more structured means of measuring work ethics, Miller *et al* (2002) came up with what they called the Multidimensional Work Ethic Profile (MWEP) which has seven dimensions in which the attitude to work is reflected: Self Reliance, Leisure, Wasted Time, Work Centrality, Hard work, Delay of Gratification and Morality.

### **Self-Reliance**

This dimension of work ethic encompasses different attitudes but they all tilt towards the ability to work autonomously. Workers are expected to exhibit a propensity for self-expression. Every worker must avoid conformity and false consistency and follow his instinct and ideas, be innovative. The expectations of employers are for workers to take the initiative and deal with situations that pop up unexpectedly. This shows not only the ability to make influential decisions and function independently; it also shows a readiness to take on more responsibility. Professionals, it is expected for them to be self-reliant. To be self-reliant is to be able to think independently, embrace one's individuality and strive for goals confidently. In his essay "Self-Reliance" Ralph Waldo Emerson (1841) points out that conformity is death to an individual. He argues that a polite society hurts one's personal growth. Self-sufficiency, he says, gives one the freedom to discover one's true self and attain true independence.

### **Hard Work**

This is the belief in the value of hard work, that is, the assumption that hard work yields desired results, and ultimately fosters job satisfaction (Miller *et al*, 2002: 451). Traits reminiscent of hard work include motivation, diligence, perseverance, dependability and so on. Furnham (1984) found that individuals that subscribe to the tenets of the protestant work ethic are predisposed to hard work and commitment. To

be hard working is to put high levels of passion and effort into work, to go above and beyond to achieve goals that one has set for oneself as well as the goals an organization has set for him/her. Hard work is indicative of a strong work ethics. When one works intelligently and vigorously at a given task to complete it with maximum efficiency, he/she could be said to be a hard worker. One is expected as an employee or professional to be a hard worker.

### **Morality**

Loosely translated, morality is a reference to issues surrounding character, customs and behaviour. In studying work ethics, morality is used to describe the belief in a just and moral existence. This dimension encompasses attitudes like integrity, honesty, trustworthiness, fairness, candour, respect for rules, and loyalty among others. Morality is a necessary component of strong work ethics. Employers and employees need to behave morally. Organizations have rules and those rules are meant to be followed and every employee has a responsibility to follow those rules. In the same vein, organizations and employers have a responsibility to their employees to be fair, just and respectful to them.

### **Centrality of Work**

The centrality of work refers to the importance an individual places on the opportunity of work. The centrality of work transcends the need and/or the desire for compensation and represents a major frame of reference in one's self-identification (Hirschfield and Fields, 2000). There are three different conceptualizations of the centrality of work:

1. Work is good and provides dignity (Buchholz, 1978);
2. Work centrality is a residual concept, that is, the less one is interested in non-work activities, the greater the centrality of work (Pryor, 1987);
3. There is the affective interest one has in the work, the passion for the process (Dubin, Champoux and Porter, 1975).

As an employee, in an organization, a certain level of commitment is expected towards one's work. While one's instinct may be to downplay the importance of work, it is advised to go against this instinct and attach a level of importance to his/ her work as is expected and maybe more if so inclined. The same goes for employers as well.

### **Wasted Time**

Wasted time in this context refers to two extremes with one extreme representing a high commitment to time management to maximize productivity and the other indicating a low commitment to time management. This dimension is concerned with time management. The efficient and constructive use of time is consistent with a strong work ethic (Herman, 2002). It has been long understood that improved performance is inexorably linked to efficient use of time (Mudrack, 1999). Poor time management and procrastination have been identified as an obstacle to productivity (Dembo and Eaton, 2000).

Jackson *et al* (2003) point out to us that wasted time and poor performance may be caused by procrastination. Procrastination, according to Eerde (2003), can work in different ways, such as underestimating the amount of time required for specific tasks and therefore not investing the time and effort necessary for performing well or delaying or avoiding the execution of a task resulting in under-performance or wasted time. Efficient use of time is a good skill to have both for the sake of the organization and one's well-being as it can reduce anxiety and increase satisfaction.

### **Leisure**

In talking about leisure, Shamir and Ruskin (1983) point out that we should be able to distinguish between three concepts: leisure potential, leisure activity and leisure orientation. Leisure potential is the flexibility to do what one wishes when he/she wishes to do it (Parker, 1981). Leisure activity is the participation in non-working activities and leisure orientation is the desire to participate in non-working activities. In this context, leisure refers to leisure orientation.

It has been suggested that individuals who are more interested in the pursuit of leisure activities would gain less fulfilment from their work. In a way, it can be said that a high leisure orientation may be the inverse of a strong pro-work ethic. Scholars are conflicted on this point as some like Furnham (1990) claim that a high leisure orientation and a high work ethics are not necessarily at opposite ends of a spectrum. It is somehow difficult to determine if a high leisure orientation may be a good or bad work ethic on its own hence it would have to depend on the extent. Should the leisure orientation have a detrimental effect on one's productivity, then it would be ill-advised.

### **Delay of Gratification**

Delay of gratification is reflected in the ability to forgo short-term benefits to reap some future benefits. According to Reynolds and Schiffbauer (2005), an individual can sustain a chosen course of action for the achievement of a long-term goal even though

there are tempting alternatives that offer short-term gratification. Doerr and Baumeister (2011) point out that a person's ability to delay gratification relates to other similar skills such as patience, impulse control, self-control and willpower, all of which are involved in self-regulation. Broadly, self-regulation encompasses a person's capacity to adapt the self as necessary to meet the demands of the environment.

## **CHRISTIAN WORK ETHICS**

Christian work ethics is a scriptural revelation on how God expects Christians to behave in their workplace. Christians are expected to represent Christ in their workplace and must serve their employers as a witness of Christ here on earth. For the Christians, God originated work and expected humans to work in line with His approach concerning it. The Christian work ethic involves both the employee and the employer. In the Bible passages of Ephesians 6: 5 - 9 and Colossians 3: 22 - 4: 1, we discover the basic tenets and principles of Christian work ethics for both the employees and the employer. The Christian work ethics attempts to answer questions concerning the behaviour of the employee in the workplace (what are God's expectations from the employee concerning his/her behaviour in the workplace?) and also questions relating to the employee-employer relationship in the workplace: how is the employer to relate with the employees under his/her employment? What kind of salaries or wages is the employer expected to pay to the employee? What are the benefits for the employee? What conditions of service are available for the employee? The scriptural answers to these questions represent the tenets and ethical principles of Christian work ethics.

It is pertinent to note at this point that the principles Paul taught to masters and slaves or bondservants apply today to employees and employers. The scriptures teach Christians that all work is God-centred. The scripture makes it clear that work matters to God. No matter what the career, profession or occupation is, God cares about Christian work. Employees are obliged to work as to God, not men (their employers). Employees are expected to work with sincerity of heart and employers are required to treat the employees with respect and pay them well. Paul advises Christians in Ephesians 6: 5-9:

Bondservants, be obedient to those who are masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in the sincerity of heart, as to Christ; not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, with goodwill doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men, knowing that whatever good anyone does, he will receive the same from the Lord, whether he is a slave or



free. And you, masters, do the same things to them, giving up threatening, knowing that your own Master also is in heaven, and there is no partiality with Him.

In this vein, Paul restated the same counsel to employees and employers in Colossians 3:22- 4:1:

Bondservants obey in all things your masters according to the flesh, not with eyeservice, as men-pleaser, but in the sincerity of heart, fearing God. And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ. But he who does wrong will be repaid for what he has done, and there is no partiality. Masters, give your bondservants what is just and fair, knowing that you also have a Master in heaven.

The two scriptural passages suggest that God is the Supreme Employer of all workers. Both the employer and employee belong to God and they are both working for Him as their maker and rewarder of the works of their hands. Hence, Christians are expected to recognize the fact that their service in any organization and any capacity should be seen as a service to God and humanity. This rule applies to both the employer and the employee. The duties and responsibilities of the employee to his/her employer are entrenched in the Christian work ethics principles for the employee. Also, the obligations of the employer to the employees are embedded in the Christian work ethics principles for the employer. What are these moral principles that can be derived from the passages cited above?

### **The Moral Principles of Christian Work Ethics for Employee and Employer in the Workplace**

1. **Integrity:** the employee is expected to show personal integrity and the tenacity of his/her convictions by doing what he/she thinks is right without supervision. He /she possesses and steadfastly adheres to high moral principles which in turn draw out the desirable personality that mirrors his/her integrity. The employee is expected to do his/her work and service their employer with integrity: "...not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God...". The attitude with which an employee approaches his/her work matters greatly. It speaks volumes of his/her integrity. Employees who work as unto the Lord are not bothered by the presence or absence of their superiors or employers.

2. **Honesty, Respect and Sincerity:** the employee is obliged to be honest and sincere: “Bondservants, be obedient to those who are masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in the sincerity of heart, as to Christ”. This principle talks about the moral uprightness, truthfulness, trustworthiness, and faithfulness of the employee and employer. It is believed that an employee that lacks honesty will steal time and other resources from his/her employer. Moreover, the employer and employee are expected to be honest and sincere to those who depend on and benefit from the services rendered by the organization. Respect should be reciprocal between the employer and the employee. Both must see each other as persons of dignity, that is, human beings that should not be used as a means to an end. They are expected to treat everyone with equal respect and dignity regardless of race, gender, ethnic group, religion or political affiliation.
  
3. **Hard work:** this principle speaks of the employee’s commitment, diligence, and conscientiousness to his/her work in the workplace: “... whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ”. An employee is not expected to be lazy at the workplace. Hard work teaches the employee discipline, dedication, and determination. This principle is essential because it is only through hard work that employees and employers can achieve organizational goals and their personal life goals.
  
4. **Justice:** the employer and the employee are expected to exhibit fairness, impartiality, and fair dealing in their relationship with people. They must strive to be fair and just in all their dealings; they demonstrate a strong commitment to both fairness and justice when making decisions. They are obliged to make it a point of duty to treat everyone in an equal manner. The employer is expected to be fair and just in the payment of employees’ salaries and other welfare packages that would make the employees committed to their jobs.
  
5. **Discipline:** this principle entails being obedient to superiors, respecting organizational rules, and behaving in line with the organization’s guidelines. Both the employer and the employee are obliged to be disciplined to achieve the organizational goals in the best possible way. Discipline is the fundamental value of achieving organizational objectives. The employer must establish a disciplined environment in the organization by developing a sense of self-responsibility in the employees.

The primary principles of Christian work ethics are integrity, hard work, justice, discipline, honesty, respect and sincerity. These principles can be applied to work in any workplace as guiding standards for a strong work ethic. One does not have to be a Christian to apply these principles in the workplace. Let us at this juncture, examine how these principles could be beneficial to the human resources of the University of Uyo in particular and the nation's workforce in general.

### **WORK ETHICS IN THE UNIVERSITY OF UYO: A CHRISTIAN WORK ETHICS PERSPECTIVE**

To achieve the vision of the University as "a centre of academic excellence", the University of Uyo came up with its core values:

- a) Faith in God
- b) Academic Excellence in Teaching and Research
- c) Institutional Autonomy
- d) Academic Freedom
- e) Peer and Professional Review
- f) Qualitative Service Delivery
- g) Strong Work Ethics
- h) Equal Opportunity
- i) Creativity and Innovation
- j) Integrity
- k) Transparency and accountability
- l) Peace and Orderliness (University of Uyo, 2022)

The University of Uyo presently has a staff (academic and non-teaching) strength of 3,613 and its student population is over 20,000. The academic staff are referred to as lecturers and the non-teaching staff are of different professional groups: administrators, lawyers, engineers, accountants, medical and health personnel, technologists, technicians, secretaries, porters, and security personnel among others. The total number of staff that are Christians is 3,589, while the total number of staff that are Muslims is 24. Hence, Christians made up 99.3 per cent of the staff strength and Muslims the remaining 0.7 per cent. Going by the percentage of the staff that are Christians, one would have expected a strong work ethic among the staff. Unfortunately, the poor attitude to work by a large majority of the staff of the University is not in consonant with the core values of the University and the Christian work ethics discussed earlier.

There are several numbers of Internal Memorandum with the caption: "Poor Attitude to Work, Lateness and Irregularity" from the office of the Registrar to all staff

members cautioning them about their continuous poor attitude to work and reminding them of the appropriate sanction by the provisions in the University of Uyo Regulations Governing Staff Conditions of Service. With a great level of indiscipline, poor work attitude, dishonesty and unethical behaviours among staff, the university can hardly achieve its vision and goals. Poor attitudes to work and unethical practices among staff can hardly bring about the attainment of the vision of the university as a centre of academic excellence.

Some of these unethical practices and misconduct include the following: absenteeism from lectures without justification, sexual harassment and exploitation of students, irregular attendance at lectures only to come and load students a few days or weeks before examinations, making it mandatory for students to buy books overtly or covertly using tactics such as keeping records of students' names and attachment of assignments to books, demanding money or sex for grades (sorting), writing projects or assignments for students in exchange for gratification, demanding and receiving gratification for official duties, and using official time for private business among others. To address these negative dispositions among the staff of the University, the management of the University formulated and introduced the *University of Uyo Code of Conduct and Ethics for Staff and Students* (2015) to provide a framework to guide the University of Uyo community.

The Code of Conduct for Academic Staff is as follows:

- i. Obey the laws and regulations of the University.
- ii. Maintain Honesty, Integrity, Fairness and High Performance in all activities.
- iii. Respect the statutory rights of staff and students.
- iv. Must not engage in or be a member of any secret cult.
- v. Should not divulge official secrets, alter or forge official documents, or aid/abet others in doing same.
- vi. Commence lectures promptly, adhering strictly to the official University timetable and venue. Changes require written approval of the HOD.
- vii. Provide a detailed schedule of lectures/practicals/clinical during the first lecture.
- viii. Provide adequate explanation while lecturing and only staff officially assigned by the departmental board are permitted to give lectures.
- ix. Must not compel students to buy books/handouts overtly or covertly using tactics such as keeping records of students' names and matriculation numbers, attachment of assignments to books and withholding of grades or results of assignments/tests/examinations.

- x. Must not write projects/assignments for students in exchange for gratification or collude with students in examination misconduct.
- xi. Must not victimize students for sex, immoral, ethnic, religious or personal reasons.
- xii. Observe all copyright laws and acknowledge authors/students whenever their works are used.
- xiii. Should not do anything that will tarnish the image of the university.
- xiv. Timely release and proper custody of examination scripts and results.
- xv. Shutting of offices and other facilities at the close of work.
- xvi. Should ensure proper conduct, supervision and invigilation of examinations when scheduled.
- xvii. Shall not attempt to injure falsely and maliciously the employment position of a colleague (University of Uyo, 2015:4-6).

The code of Conduct for Non-Teaching Staff is as follows:

- i. Obey the laws and regulations of the University.
- ii. Maintain honesty, integrity, fairness and Total Quality Management (TQM) in all activities (i.e. doing the right things at the right time).
- iii. Must respect the statutory rights of staff and students.
- iv. Must not engage in or be a member of any secret cult.
- v. Must not divulge official secrets, mutilate, expunge, conceal, alter or forge official documents/receipts or aid/abet others in doing same.
- vi. Must not intercept or misappropriate University money or approved expenditure for goods/services not delivered or over-invoicing of same.
- vii. Must not aid/abet examination malpractice or engage in dubious transactions, including demanding or receiving gratification for official duties.
- viii. Must respect and maintain the hierarchy in Administration.
- ix. Must adhere strictly to the official resumption/closing time and must dress decently and appropriately.
- x. Must not use official time for private business or engage in practices such as trading and enrolment in full-time studies.
- xi. Must not use unauthorized persons to perform official duties.
- xii. Must exercise self-discipline and restraint at all times and deal politely with staff, students and the general public.
- xiii. Must not be absent from duty without official approval or approved sick leave (Excuse Duty Certificate) authenticated by the University Health Centre.
- xiv. Must not do anything that will tarnish the image of the University.
- xv. Must not attempt to injure falsely and maliciously the employment position of a colleague (University of Uyo, 2015:7-9)

These codes of conduct for both the academic and non-teaching staff were made available to prevent and discourage misconduct among staff. Despite the above codes of conduct, some staff are still involved in unethical practices and misconduct. For instance, unpremeditated observations on campus show that students are always complaining about the unhelpful and poor attitudes of some non-teaching staff towards them. Students often waste several hours that could have been used for attending lectures at the doors of Faculty finance officers and administrative officers. Moreover, these staff members come late to work and some leave their tables to hawk products around the campus. Some hardly show up in their offices, and some who do neglect their duties of attending to students to gossip and close before the official closing time. While some demand kickbacks (bribes) from students before they can treat students' files or attend to them. Staff that engage in these unethical practices and misconduct lack strong work ethics and they are morally bankrupt.

Consequently, the codes of conduct are necessary but not sufficient to dissuade or prevent staff from engaging in unethical practices and misconduct listed above without a personal moral conviction and a personal strong work ethic. Hence, the position of this paper is that for the University of Uyo to effectively achieve its vision and goals, both the employer (the Federal Government) and the staff of the university must take their duties and responsibilities with all sense of commitment to strong work ethics by inculcating the prescription and principles of the Christian work ethics. The employer must put in place a mechanism that encourages good work ethics by ensuring proper funding of the university system. It is the employer's responsibility to provide a good working environment for teaching, learning and research and ensure that the employees are well remunerated with comfortable wages and salaries. The employees must endeavour to apply daily in their workplace the principles of the Christian work ethic: integrity, honesty, hard work, respect, justice, discipline and sincerity.

The inculcation of these principles will change their perspective and approach to work in their workplace and the way they relate with other stakeholders in the university community. It would help them to start seeing their work as unto the Lord and not as "government work". These principles will mould them into more responsible, more committed, more discipline and more determined individuals. There is no way that an honest, hardworking and disciplined employee (academic or non-teaching) would report for duty late, leave before the official closing time, sexually harass and exploit students in any way whatsoever or involve in any unethical practice and misconduct.

## **CONCLUSION**

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Work ethics refers to the attitudes and behaviour individuals display in the process of their work. The success and performance of any organization are affected by the work ethics that exist in its employees. Work ethics decides the level of productivity displayed by workers and the value which an organization places on the employee. Good/Strong work ethics leads to higher levels of productivity and a higher value placed on the employee while bad/weak work ethics bring about lower levels of productivity and in turn, lead to a lower value placed on the employee. There is an urgent need for academic and non-teaching staff in our universities to inculcate strong ethical work within the framework of the Christian work ethics principles: integrity, respect, honesty, sincerity, hard work, justice and discipline at work among others. The inculcation of the prescription of the Christian work ethics principles by the university staff will enable them to be committed to their work. This will, in turn, help the university achieve its vision as a centre of academic excellence.

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