

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1. VICTOR FRANKL'S THEORIES OF PERSONALITY AND MOTIVATION

Viktor Frankl (1905-1997), a psychiatrist of Jewish origin, lived in Vienna during the Nazi take-over of Austria. He lost his wife, parents and all his belongings when shipped to Nazi concentration camps from 1942 to 1945, first to Auschwitz and later to Dachau. Frankl's experiences are documented in "Man's search for meaning" (Frankl, 1984a). It was first published as "From death-camp to existentialism" in 1946, selling more than nine million copies in 24 languages since the original publication (Washburn, 1998). In total, Frankl wrote 32 books, translated into 26 languages. Apart from being an existentialist, Frankl remained a psychiatrist, and spent most of his life as the Head of the Neurological Department of the Vienna Polyclinic Hospital. As an academic, Frankl received 29 Honorary Doctorates, and held five part time Professorships in the USA (Universities of Harvard, Stanford, Dallas, Pittsburgh, and San Diego) (Das, 1998). By the 1980s, more than 90% of all books published in the field of abnormal psychology acknowledged the importance of Frankl's ideas (Sahakian, 1985).

Although Frankl initially was a personal student of Freud, he formed his own theory of human behaviour, called logotherapy. Frankl's concentration camp experiences had a strong influence in shaping the course of his thinking, though he formulated many of his ideas before being imprisoned (Das, 1998). Frankl was able to test his theories under the brutal conditions that prevailed in concentration camps.

Before Frankl, the main views were that man's actions could be explained by certain driving forces. For instance, Freud distinguished a "will to pleasure" and unconscious driven behaviour as the major driving force of behaviour, whereas both Nietzsche and Adler emphasised a "will to power". Contrary to this focus on drives, hedonism or behaviourism, Frankl (1967) argues that man is more than just a body and a psyche. In addition to the physiological, psychosocial and psychological dimensions,

there is a spiritual dimension to human life, the *noös* (Greek for mind). Frankl (1967) notes that most of the time, human beings live in the physical or in the psychological dimensions, but humans have the capacity to transcend or rise above these dimensions. It is only when they rise above their physical and psychological nature that they enter the spiritual dimension (Frankl, 1967). Frankl does not think of the spiritual dimension in a religious sense. He thinks of it as the realm of human existence in which one encounters meanings and values, the very essence of man, and the deepest level of his being (Frankl, 1984a). Frankl (1969, 1970, 1975, 1984a) regard meaning to be distinctly part of, and related to, this spiritual dimension of a person.

In addition to the biological, historical, and sociological factors, Frankl (1970) notes that there are some universal experiences characterising human existence that threaten meaning. Frankl (1970) calls these experiences the tragic triad: suffering, guilt, and transitoriness. Frankl (1970) accepts that no human life is free of suffering. Grief and anguish cause one to question the meaning of the events that bring about such suffering. Guilt arises from not having made the best use of the time that has gone by. Frankl (1970) describes that the transitoriness of human life lends urgency to the task of discovering and fulfilling the purpose of one's life.

Frankl (1970) contends that in every person's search for meaning, he has the ability to take a stand against adversity, against his emotions, and against his fears. If this is true, one can postulate that this also applies to one's situations in the workplace. Two terms are used in this regard, namely self-detachment and self-transcendence. Frankl (1970) uses the terms *self-detachment* as the ability to realise that one has done wrong, and the ability to decide to learn from a mistake. *Self-transcendence* refers to the ability to look away from one's own pain, and reach out to someone else who also needs help (Frankl, 1975, 1984a). Frankl (1984b) describes that when a person is thinking too much about his problems, concentrating too much on that which is lacking in his life, then he is *hyperreflecting*. Hyperreflection worsens the matter, resulting in psychosomatic illnesses. *Dereflection* is not to think about the negatives dominating one's life, and putting something better in its place. Frankl (1992) experienced that by focussing outside himself in the concentration camps, he

somehow succeeded in rising above the situation, above the sufferings of the moment, and observed them as if they were already of the past.

Frankl (1967) describes a form of disorder, collective neurosis, which stems from the conditions of life in the 20<sup>th</sup> century in the absence of meaning. It is characterised by four major symptoms. First, there is an *aimless* day-to-day attitude toward life that stems from the uncertainty about the future. The second symptom is a *fatalistic* attitude arising out of lack of control over one's own life. The third symptom is *collective thinking*. For the sake of security the individual relinquishes his or her personal responsibility to the judgement of the group. The fourth symptom is *fanaticism*, which stems from group loyalty and leads to denigration of others who think or act differently.

Frankl (1984b) explains the prevalence of these symptoms as caused by modernisation due to which man has lost some of the basic animal type instincts in which some behaviour is secured. In contrast to former times, traditions and traditional values which buttressed people's behaviour are rapidly diminishing. Consequently, no instinct tells him what he has to do, and no tradition tells him what he ought to do (Frankl, 1984a). Now, knowing neither what he must do nor what he should do, a person sometimes does not even know what it is that he basically wishes to do. Instead, either he wishes to do what other people does (conformism), or he does what other people wish him to do (totalitarianism) (Frankl, 1984b). He contends that the only way out of this vicious cycle is finding meaning in one's own existence, and thereby a purpose for living. Finding such a meaning and purpose provides the direction for someone's life and the energy to pursue such a direction.

The essence of Victor Frankl's theory of personality consists of three basic premises or assumptions: (a) man has a freedom of will; (b) the will to meaning is the primary motivational force in man; and (c) life has potential meaning under all circumstances. These three premises are discussed in more detail in the following sections.

### 2.1.1. Frankl's concept of freedom of will

Frankl's first premise in his theory of personality is that man has the freedom of will; he can choose his actions and attitudes, although this might not always be easy under certain circumstances. People are subject to a wide variety of limiting conditions and influences - biological, psychological, and socio-cultural. However, Frankl (1969) contends that no matter what these conditions are, an individual can take a stand against them. According to Frankl (1969), human beings have the capacity to resist not only external circumstances but also their physical and psychological drives. In doing so, they essentially open up an advanced dimension of existence, namely the spiritual dimension, the dimension of meaning (Frankl, 1984a).

Frankl (1984a, p. 86) reasons that the experiences from the "living laboratory" of the concentration camps offer sufficient proof that everything can be taken from man but one thing: "to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one's own way". Frankl (1984a, p. 86) reports that in the concentration camps he witnessed how some behaved like "swine while others behaved like saints". Frankl (1984a) is adamant that man has both potentialities within himself; which one is actualised depends on decisions, not on conditions (Frankl, 1984a). He observed that the sort of person the prisoner became was the result of an inner decision, and not the result of camp influences alone: man does have a choice of action. Fundamentally, any person can decide what shall become of him mentally and spiritually, even under such circumstances (Frankl, 1984a). Frankl (1984a) concludes that as a human being, man's freedom is restricted. A person is not free from restricting conditions, but free to take a stand toward the conditions.

However, O'Connel (1970) releases a strong attack on Frankl's conclusions and interpretations based on his concentration camp experiences. O'Connel (1970) argues that Frankl becomes excessive in his praise of himself, and fails to extrapolate his concentration camp experiences into the modern feudal social system. O'Connel (1970) refers to Frankl's theory as a "bootstrap" spirituality whereby one lifts himself to a new ontological position by pulling himself up on his own bootstraps.

In contrast to O'Connell, Gordon Allport comments in the preface of "Man's search for meaning" (Frankl, 1984a) that Frankl's theories and books are more than the story of Victor Frankl's triumph. He describes it as a remarkable blend of science and humanism and an introduction to the most significant psychological movement of the day. Similarly, The American Journal of Psychiatry is cited on the cover of "Man's search for meaning" (Frankl, 1984a), considering the book as "the most significant thinking since Freud and Adler".

### **2.1.2. The will to meaning as motivation theory**

*He who has a "why" to live, can bear with almost any "how".*

*Nietzsche (Frankl, 1984a)*

Frankl's second premise is that the essence of human motivation is the "will to meaning." According to Frankl the primary motivational force in man is a striving to realise, or find meaning in his life; it is not a secondary rationalisation of instinctual drives. Frankl (1969) calls this a "will-to meaning". Frankl (1969) contends that man needs something or someone to live for. Man has the desire to live a life that means something, a life that has a purpose, a meaning. This meaning is unique to each and everybody and one has to discover, or uncover, the specific meaning of one's own unique life (Frankl, 1970).

Frankl (1970) argues that the will to meaning may arouse inner tension rather than inner equilibrium. He emphasises that tension is an indispensable prerequisite for mental health. There is nothing in the world that so effectively helps one to survive even the worst conditions, as the knowledge that there is a meaning in one's life (Frankl, 1970). Thus, having meaning should also provide the motivation to execute one's daily work, even if the work itself does not particularly stimulate the individual.

On the other hand, the unfulfilled inner tension, or will to meaning, can be frustrated in which case logotherapy speaks of existential frustration. Frankl (1969) explains that existential frustration arises if a person is unable to find a purpose. The

frustration of the will to meaning leads to a condition that Frankl (1969) calls an existential vacuum. An individual in a state of an existential vacuum may feel that his life has lost all meaning. The existential vacuum is further characterised by the sense of a void in a person's life, the feeling that something is amiss. Frankl (1984b) states that an existential vacuum leads to boredom and apathy. In other words, a lack of meaning leads to a lack of motivation and a lack of commitment.

Frankl (1969) emphasises that an existential vacuum itself is not a mental disorder; rather it represents spiritual distress. However, if the condition of an existential vacuum continues for a long time, this vacuum may lead to the development of a disorder that Frankl (1969) calls noögenic neurosis, a neurosis of the spiritual dimension. Frankl (1975) contends that noögenic neurosis has been recognised as a common psychological problem. Frankl (1984b) estimates that in 25% of psychiatric cases, people suffer from noögenic neurosis. It was shown above that a lack of meaning appears to be strongly associated with a lack of motivation and commitment. This high prevalence of noögenic neurosis cases is indicative of the serious influence that a lack of meaning can have in the workplace. On the other hand, one can speculate that having meaning will have positive associations with work motivation and commitment.

### **2.1.3. The meaning of life**

The third premise of Frankl's theory of personality is that life has possible meaning under all circumstances. Frankl (1969) comments that the meaning of life always changes, but it never ceases to be. He notes that one can discover this meaning in life in three different ways: first, by creating something or doing a deed; secondly, by experiencing something such as goodness and truth, and by encountering another human being in his very uniqueness, and by loving him. Thirdly, Frankl (1969) suggests that meaning is most of all realised through one's attitude in situations of unavoidable suffering.

By evaluating the work and the work place, one can conclude that all three of these aspects are potentially present in the workplace. A person can therefore potentially

find meaning in his work or through his work. Furthermore, the benefits of having found meaning outside the workplace in aspects such as mentioned above may also overflow into the workplace with positive effects on work motivation and commitment.

Frankl sees a drastic change in the problems of modern society. Frankl (1984b) comments that psychiatrists increasingly have to deal with existential frustration. He notes that young people visit advisory centres increasingly because of existential questions about the meaning of life, and connected with it problems of suicide (Frankl, 1984b). He says that young people see life, work and the future closely linked. If they see no meaning in life, they have no future, with strong implication for their work situations (Frankl, 1992). If someone cannot find meaning in life, it is difficult to see how such a person can be motivated to work, or be committed to the work facets of his life.

#### **2.1.4. The relationship between meaning in life and work**

*A man, who becomes conscious of the responsibility he bears toward a human being or to an unfinished work, will never be able to throw away his life.*

*Jones (1997).*

Frankl's personality theory suggests that there is no irreducible will to work (Frankl, 1970). What is irreducible in man is his will to meaning. Although for most people much of the meaning during the working years comes from their jobs, Frankl (1975) argues that working - having a job - is not a sufficient, nor even a necessary condition for attainment of meaning. He reasons that people without work can live more meaningful lives than those who cling neurotically to jobs in order to gain a false sense of self-worth or security. However, he notes that work can be the epitome of truly meaningful human activity (Frankl, 1975).

People's natural relationship to their employment as the area for possible actualisation of creative values and self-fulfilment is often distorted by prevailing conditions of work (Frankl, 1969). For instance, Frankl (1984b) sees the unemployed as being in particular danger of existential neuroses. He notes that even

if individuals are protected by social security, they still experience psychological distress. He suggests that the principal cause of depression and despair is not unemployment, but a faulty interpretation of being unemployed. People equate unemployment with being useless, and therefore with a meaningless life. Frankl (1984b) describes how he succeeded in placing jobless clients as volunteers to help in welfare organisations without remuneration. Although their economic situation remained unchanged, depression caused by their feeling of meaninglessness vanished as soon as they were given a chance to fulfil tasks they considered meaningful (Frankl, 1984b). Frankl (1984b) cautions that similar problems in psychological health arise from the trend toward increasingly shorter work hours.

Not only do the unemployed suffer from a frustrated longing for meaning but so could workers and managers. Workers demand work they consider meaningful. Frankl (1992) cites reports from psychiatrists of patients who, despite good pay and external success, see no meaning in their work. Frankl (1992) also cites a report that indicates that people would work very long hours if they knew their work had meaning, but they don't want to work at all if they don't see any meaning in it.

Frankl (1984b) reasons that the belief that managers become sick from stress, caused by too much responsibility (distress) (Ivancevich & Matteson, 1980; Matteson & Ivancevich, 1989), is false. He argues that contrary to general opinion, there is little danger in an overload of responsibility and stress for managers. This holds true as long as the person has found meaning, and experiences that his work plays a role in fulfilling that meaning. He emphasises that eustress (Ivancevich & Matteson, 1980; Matteson & Ivancevich, 1989) is psychologically healthy in the correct quantity. It represents the tension between what people are and what they could be; the stress between their actuality and their potential (Frankl, 1984b).

Frankl (1992) posits that managers who want efficiency from workers must offer meaning to their work. Because management cannot dictate what the employees' work meaning should be, they can only provide them with a freedom of responsible choices. Frankl (1992) notes that this has had far-reaching effects in management theory. He cites examples in Yugoslavia and China, where absenteeism was reduced to 1% compared with the "normal" 5% as a result of management using

meaning orientation as incentive to work. Frankl (1992) cites another example in Israel where workers are motivated by a will to meaning expressed in the betterment of their society and in the service of their community. In this case, production was 20% to 30% higher than in comparable plants. These findings strongly support the propositions in the current study that work motivation and commitment are associated with having found meaning and a purpose in life.

### 2.1.5. Summary: Frankl's theories of motivation

Being one of the few psychologists who have dealt directly with the phenomena of meaning (Kovacs, 1985), the writings of Victor Frankl made a substantial contribution toward the development of a theoretical foundation for meaning (Zika & Chamberlain, 1992). Frankl did not intend to replace other theories of personality but to supplement and complement them (Misiak & Sexton, 1973). Frankl (1984b) explains that his contribution must be seen as complimentary to the contributions of other theorists. It is almost the same as viewing a three-dimensional object such as a cylinder that has been cut diagonally. If one views it from different directions, one sees different objects. Together these three views, apparently completely different pictures of reality, describe the real object as illustrated in Figure 2. Figure 2 has been developed by the author of the present study based on Frankl's (1984b) description of how different perspectives of the same object are additive in describing that objective.

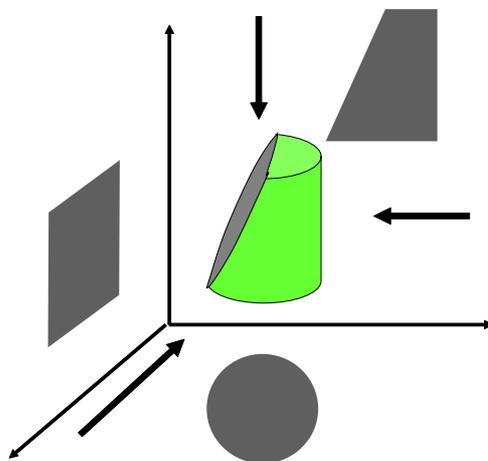


Figure 2. 3D model of complementary perspectives.

Similarly, to understand the human nature, one should not only select one theory of personality, but should look at all types as they all represent different angles of viewing mankind. Together they probably explain the human nature comprehensively.

## **2.2. MEANING IN RELATION TO OTHER THEORIES ON MOTIVES FOR BEHAVIOUR**

*There is no psychotherapy without foundation in philosophy. The contemporary psychotherapist has to be a philosopher, consciously or not, methodically or haphazardly, in earnest or not, spontaneously or following contemporary fashions.*

*Jaspers (Kovacs, 1985)*

The natural starting point for any theory of motivation or commitment is the nature of the individual himself (Steers & Porter, 1979). All theories on work motivation are based on one or more theories of personality, each with his own implicit philosophy of the nature of man (Locke & Latham, 1990). The different theories of human nature all view the sources, origins, reasons for motivation, and motives of behaviour differently.

It is essential to study the different theories and their motivational in order provide the context in which Frankl's theory fits. This will enable comment on the reality and applicability of Frankl's theory in relation to the other theories. Section 2.1 provides an overview of Frankl's theories and perspectives. Section 2.2 is an overview of some of the other perspectives on human nature, and causes of human behaviour, specifically with reference to Frankl's theories and postulations.

### **2.2.1. Meaning and psychoanalytical and psychodynamic theories**

Many of the well-known work motivation theories have their roots in Freud's theories (Mackay, 1989). Freud viewed the mind as an entity containing primitive and sophisticated elements, in a hierarchical order (Giovacchini, 1977). The primitive end

of the hierarchy (the unconscious or “id”), has biologically based instincts striving for expression against more structured reality based elements (the preconscious or “ego”), which strive to make instinctual gratification consonant with internalised moral standards (the conscious or “superego”) (Giovacchini, 1977). In other words, in Freud’s view, an individual’s consciousness is determined by the unconscious which influences everything that a person says and does (Mackay, 1989).

In contrast, Frankl (1984a) argues that man does not always obey unconscious drives. People are able to live and even to die for the sake of much higher order ideals and values. Frankl (1984a) cites a public opinion poll in France indicating that 89% of the respondents admitted that a person needs "something" for the sake of which to live for. Moreover, 61% indicated that there was something or someone for whose sake they were even ready to die for (Frankl, 1984a). One can argue that this should also hold true for the workplace: people need “something” to work for. Having a purpose in one’s daily activities will solicit different motivations for work behaviour, than being driven through unconscious instincts or needs.

Freud reasoned that unconscious drives or instincts result in internal tension in the human being who then acts or reacts to get into a condition of homeostasis (Wrightsmann, 1992). This unconscious striving towards homeostasis is, according to Freud, the prime motivational force for man (Buhler, 1959; Sartain, North, & Strange 1973). Contrary to Freud, Frankl (1972) reasons that mental health is based on a certain degree of tension, the tension between what one has already achieved and what one still ought to accomplish. Frankl (1975) argues that the will to meaning arouses inner tension rather than equilibrium. Das (1998) adds that contemporary neuroses are characterised not so much by the seeking of homeostasis, as they are characterised by a lack of a sense of purpose and meaning. If these postulations holds true, then the inner tension should lead to higher intensities of work motivation and work commitment.

Another fundamental postulation of Freud is that behaviour has its roots to some extent in the pleasure principle (hedonism), having pleasure and sensuous gratification just for the sake of enjoying life (Mackay, 1989). Urges for immediate gratification of pleasure are, according to Freud, basic to human nature

(Wrightsmann, 1992). In contrast, Frankl (1972) argues that the will to pleasure is merely a substitute for the frustrated will to meaning. Frankl (1984a) argues that the will to pleasure defeats itself. Frankl (1984a) explains that the more one makes pleasure or happiness an aim, the more that aim will be missed. He concludes that pleasure and happiness cannot be pursued. Pleasure and happiness ensue, and it only does so as the unintended side effect of one's personal dedication to a cause greater than oneself. In the workplace this implies that job satisfaction seems to be less important than working for a "cause".

Freud's contribution also attracted other criticism (Steers & Porter, 1979). First, the list of instincts continued to grow, reaching nearly six thousand in number. Secondly, researchers found that there might be little relation between the strengths of certain motives and subsequent behaviour. Locke and Latham (1990) argue that Freud's theories are not viable because instincts such as sex and aggression are only potentialities in people, as are thousands of others' activities. Whether these potentialities become actualised depends on a person's decisions.

Another motivational theory that contrasts with Frankl's views is Alfred Adler's individual psychology. Adler ascribed most human behaviour to a sense of inferiority in every person, which the person hides behind a superiority complex (Orgler, 1973). This manifests, inter alia, as a need for power, or exaggerated demands upon himself and others (Orgler, 1973). In contrast to Adler's inferiority/superiority complex, Frankl (1967, 1969, 1984b) posits that often the frustrated will to meaning is compensated for by a will to power, including the will to money (Frankl, 1984b).

In terms of goal orientation, which forms the basis of Locke's (1968) goal attainment theory of work motivation, Adler could not imagine a mental and emotional life without a goal toward which life is directed (Orgler, 1973). He argued that as soon as one discovers the goal that a person has set for himself, one can explain his actions (Orgler, 1973). This notion of Adler appears to be similar to Frankl's will to meaning.

Carl Jung's theory of individuation refers to the spiritual search for a meaning and a sense of one's place in the bigger scheme of things. In congruence with Frankl,

Jung (1960) maintains that meaninglessness inhibits the fullness of life, and is therefore equivalent to illness. Jung (1969) observes that when conscious life has lost its meaning and promise for an individual, it is as though panic breaks loose. Jung (1969) estimates that approximately one third of his psychiatric cases suffer from a lack of meaning or purpose in their lives rather than any other identifiable psychiatric syndrome.

It is obvious that Jung's observations as a psychiatrist and his resulting theories are related and complementary to Frankl's theories of a will to meaning, and life having meaning under all circumstances. He even prescribed similar treatments for psychiatric patients resulting to similar success as Frankl. Jung, therefore, provided much support for the theories and postulations of Frankl as used, applied and tested in the present study.

### **2.2.2. Meaning in relationship with behaviourism and social learning theories**

The behaviourism theory of B.F. Skinner and Konrad Lorenz are based on stimulus-response, and reinforcement theories (Locke & Latham, 1990). Skinner (1953) claimed that the environment determines the individual, and that a person can be conditioned to display certain behaviour by changing the environment. In behaviour modification, desired behaviour is maintained and strengthened by positive reinforcers, or inhibited through negative reinforcement (punishment) following given responses (Lunden, 1977). Likewise, behaviour can be altered when reinforcement is withdrawn. Skinner (1953) thus saw a limited number of standard behaviours according to different behaviour modification activities (Locke & Latham, 1990).

In contrast, Frankl (1970) concludes that the human personality remains essentially unpredictable. Frankl (1975) emphasises that every human being has the ability to be self-determining. In support of Frankl, Locke and Latham (1990) explained that reinforcers do not change behaviour unless people want or value them, are aware of the connection between the response and the reinforcers, and believe they can make the required responses (Locke & Latham, 1990). With the inherent shortcomings of behaviourism, it is obvious that there is a need for theories of motivation that cater for the higher order motives of behaviour that cannot be

explained through mechanistic predictions. Frankl and Jung's theories are obvious candidates to fill this gap in the theories of work motivation.

Some theorists explain motivation as a function of the interaction of the individual with his social environment (Battista & Almond, 1973). These theories of motivation can be regarded as a variant of behaviourism: modify the environment and you modify the personality (Corsini, 1977). For instance, Karl Marx believed that the kind of person one is, and the kind of things one does, are determined by the kind of society in which one lives (Appignanesi, 1994).

One of the more prevalent social learning theories is that of Albert Bandura. Bandura's (1977, 1986) theory of social learning suggests that socialisation forms people's personalities through observation and through imitation, which in turn influence behaviour. Frankl (1975) accepts that the conditions of social life under which people live impose certain kinds of limitations on them, and bring to bear a host of determining forces that shape and mould them. However, Frankl (1975) contends that despite all these diverse forces and influences that act on a person and mould him, a person has the freedom to decide what he wants to do in a given situation.

In terms of work, it seems that social learning plays an important role, as it appears that work centrality is being shaped by the socialisation of the individual (Kanungo, 1982). People learn to value work through their families, friends, religion, or culture. Paullay et al. (1994) and Sverko (1989) comment that work involvement is produced by cultural conditioning or socialisation which leads to the internalisation of norms and values associated with work. One can therefore expect that work commitment and motivation will be influenced somewhat through social learning.

Another construct closely related to social learning theory is values, in particular work values. Ambrose and Kulik (1999) comment that PWE has become conceptualised as a key variable that influences work attitudes and behaviours. They report from their study of motivation research that studies since the 1970s demonstrated that individuals who score highly on the PWE were more satisfied with their jobs, more involved with their jobs, and more committed to their organisations

(Ambrose & Kulik, 1999). Social learning theory therefore seems to play an important role in any theory of work motivation. Its role might not be deterministic, but social learning influences an individual's perspectives, perceptions, and probably much of his behaviour.

### **2.2.3. Meaning in relationship with humanism**

While both Freudianism and behaviourism emphasise man's continuity from the animal world, humanistic psychology pays special attention to characteristics and capacities, which make man uniquely different from the animals. Humanistic psychology focuses on distinctively human qualities such as choice, creativity, and self-realisation (Corsini, 1977). It has an ultimate concern with, and valuing of, the dignity and worth of man, as well as an interest in the development of the potential inherent in every person (Corsini, 1977). Abraham Maslow, the father of humanism, regards the actualisation of the self, of one's own potential, as the primary motive of behaviour (Maslow, 1954).

On the surface, humanistic psychology appears to have many commonalities with Frankl's views of personality and motivation. Not only does humanism recognise the spirit of man and his need to fulfil himself and find meaning in his life, but it also asserts that each person is the most responsible agent in his own life (Misiak & Sexton, 1973). However, Frankl (1984b) argues that the main area of deficiency in the humanistic psychology is its overemphasis of the individual looking inward. Frankl (1984b) comments that self-actualisation can never be a goal in itself, because then it will be missed. If people choose goals and values outside themselves and direct themselves toward them, they are actualising themselves *through* self-transcendence. With this connotation, self-actualisation appears in the context of existential thinking as fulfilment (Marks, 1972). However, with fulfilment the person's energies are focussed outside the individual, whereas with self-actualisation the energies are focused internally.

In reaction to Frankl's criticism (the 1959 edition of "From death camp to existentialism") on the validity of his theories, Maslow (1966) agrees mostly with Frankl's views. Maslow (1966) reasons that his own theories are being

misunderstood and that self-actualisation actually implies actualisation outside and beyond oneself. Maslow (1966) agrees with Frankl that man's primary concern is his will to meaning. Maslow (1963) calls it "highest concern". Secondly, he agrees with Frankl's notion that people, who seek self-actualisation directly, or selfishly, do not achieve it. Maslow (1966) explains that self-actualising people practically always have a mission in life, a task which they have identified with and which becomes a defining-characteristic of the self. Maslow (1966) puts it that self-actualisation can best be carried out via a commitment to an important job.

It is obvious from the debate between Maslow and Frankl that some of the aspects of Maslow's humanistic theory are actually very close and complementary to Frankl's existential theories of motivation. However, the stronger internal focus of humanism, the lack of focus of humanism on the noögenic dimension and the emphasis of Frankl on self-transcendence still maintain a difference between these conceptualisations. Although humanism cannot be ignored in any theory of work motivation, it needs to be complemented by other theories of motivation such as that of Frankl.

#### **2.2.4. Meaning in relation to cognitive theories of motivation**

Sechrest (1977) describes George Kelly's theory of personal constructs as a unique motivational theory consisting almost entirely of a way of looking at how people cognitively construe life, how they organise, perceive, evaluate, structure and predict events. As such, it is almost entirely a cognitive theory and gives practically no attention to learning, emotions, objective motivations, or needs (Holdstock & Rogers, 1977; Sechrest, 1977). Yalom (1980) contests that existential concerns seem to be weighted with greatest importance when people make cognitive decisions and take subsequent actions. These existential concerns include fear of death, fear of isolation, purposefulness and meaning in life.

In a similar direction as Kelly's cognitive theory of personal constructs, Albert Ellis argued that behaviour is not the result of events, but due to the interpretation of events (Corsini, 1977). That is, consequences (behaviour) are not a function of

activators (stimuli), but rather of beliefs (interpretations and perceptions). Direct decision theory, introduced by Greenwald (Corsini, 1977) is closely related to both Kelly's cognitive view of personality, and Ellis' perceptual view. Direct decision theory states that people operate in terms of their perceptions of the payoffs of anticipated actions. Perception is the process by which individuals selectively screen, organise and interpret stimuli from the environment, in order to give meaning to their environment (Robbins, 1989). What matters in determining a person's behaviour and his cognitive decisions is not necessarily the situation in which he finds himself, but his perception of the situation (Saari, 1991). Cognitive decision-making is therefore based on perception of reality, and not reality itself (Munitz, 1993). Thompson and Janigian (1988) argue that meaning plays an important role in how people interpret and react to their environment. Finding meaning is therefore a process of firstly changing one's perception of events, so that feelings of order and purpose are restored.

Frankl's theories accommodate most of the cognitive based theories of motivation. Frankl (1967) supports the view that it is not the actual event that influences people, but their interpretation and perception of the event. He also adds that it is based on the interpretation of the event or the situation that man has the ability to decide cognitively what his attitude will be towards it. However, Frankl (1984b) argues that in addition to the cognitive psychological dimension, there is also a spiritual dimension to human life. He argues that cognitive based psychological theories do not take account of the spiritual dimension and can therefore not account for the whole spectrum of behaviour, which sometimes include "irrational" or non-predictable behaviour.

### 2.2.5. Existential psychology as the foundation of meaning based motivation

*There is no escape from philosophy. The question is only whether a philosophy is conscious or not, whether it is good or bad, muddled or clear. Anyone who rejects philosophy is himself unconsciously practising a philosophy.*

*Karl Jasper (Misiak & Sexton, 1973)*

Existential psychology developed from existential philosophy as fathered by Sören Kierkegaard (Misiak & Sexton, 1973). Earlier existential philosophers such as Kierkegaard and Heidegger did not see much meaning in life at all (Roffey, 1993). However, they did emphasise the devastating effect that “not having meaning” can have (Misiak & Sexton, 1973). Nietzsche viewed anxiety, dread, and despair as the consequences of inaction and a lukewarm commitment to life (Gane & Chan, 1997). Jean-Paul Sartre was much more cynical and could find no reason to explain why the world, and man in it, should exist (Misiak & Sexton, 1973). Unlike Sartre, Frankl (1967) believes that life does have meaning, and unlike Camus, Frankl (1967) believes that humans discover meanings; they do not invent them.

Existential psychology's aim is to understand man in his total existential reality. It is the psychology of man as far as he questions his existence; man's behaviour considered in terms of his individual value system (Kobasa & Maddi, 1977; Misiak & Sexton, 1973). Existential psychology views the person as the biological, social and psychological being whose primary task is to search and establish meaning (Misiak & Sexton, 1973). This endeavour goes on within a spatial/temporal context, confronted with limitations such as past experiences, environmental conditions and the exercise of freedom by others (Kobasa & Maddi, 1977).

Existential psychology has forced psychologists to re-examine their notions about man and his nature and to take a stand with regard to man's existential problems (Fellows, 1966). The whole truth of the human existence therefore rather lies in an integration of the different truths and perspectives. The field of psychology has unfortunately since its inception devoted much more attention to human unhappiness and suffering than to the causes and consequences of positive functioning (Ryff, 1989).

The present study takes a different approach, it attempts to provide new insights into causes of positive functioning, especially in the workplace. It is postulated that the will to meaning plays a significant role in work motivation and work commitment, yet this role has been neglected in the literature and scientific studies. Due to the vast scope of these fields, this study can merely be an exploratory study, to be followed by much more research to understand relationships more thoroughly.

### **2.3. MEANING IN LIFE AS A SCIENTIFIC PSYCHOLOGICAL CONSTRUCT**

*You can live as if life has meaning and you are part of the web of life, or you can live as if life is chaotic and you are a victim of its whims.*

*Fabry (1988).*

#### **2.3.1. The context of meaning**

It was shown in the previous sections that having a personal meaning and a personal sense of purpose are fundamental to Frankl's theories, and his views of human nature. This section investigates whether personal meaning and purpose in life is a mere speculative philosophical notion, or whether it can be substantiated as a scientific construct.

Throughout history people have been grappling with existential and spiritual issues: What is the meaning of life and death? What is the meaning of suffering and evil? How do we find personal significance in a hostile world? Why is it that progress and prosperity have not yet satisfied the yearnings for meaning and purpose? Increasingly, individuals are experiencing a lack of meaning in their lives (King & Nicol, 1999). Western philosophy and psychology historically concentrated almost exclusively on man's unconscious and on his rational nature (Misiak & Sexton, 1973). It has bypassed man's existential questions. The individual with his unique personal problems of everyday existence and the basic existential problems has been left out of the philosophical enquiries. Reacting to this deficiency, existentialism centres on man as he exists in the world, and his relation to the world

and his fellow men. Existentialism as a psychology has put itself in opposition to materialistic reductionism and rationalism (Misiak & Sexton, 1973).

Not everyone view meaning in life, or meaning of existence the same way. For instance, Freud argued that one must be mentally ill to question the meaning of life (Munitz, 1993). On the other hand, Einstein argued that a person is hardly fit for life if he thinks that life is meaningless (Munitz, 1993). Many psychologists and psychiatrists consider purpose in life to be a crucial factor for successful psychological functioning, with meaninglessness often resulting in pathologies (Doerries, 1970; Frankl, 1972; Maddi, 1967; Maslow, 1963).

Despite an increasing concern in modern society with the meanings and values of life, the construct of meaning in life has received marginal attention in mainstream psychology (Battista & Almond, 1973; Chamberlain & Zika, 1988). The construct of meaning has tended to be ignored in empirical work, perhaps because of difficulty in conceptualisation, and also because questions relating to meaning are regarded as more philosophical than psychological - vague and boundless for the purposes of empirical psychology (Baumeister, 1991; Debats, 1999; Debats & Drost, 1995). This is especially true for the field of organisational behaviour as virtually all empirical work on meaning was conducted in the fields of psychiatry and clinical psychology.

The existence of the construct of meaning in life as a real psychological phenomenon rather than a mere philosophical notion was confirmed by Chamberlain and Zika (1988). They applied three different measuring instruments that was designed by other researchers (described in the next section) to measure the construct of meaning in life. A preliminary principal components analysis of all three instruments (N = 194) indicated factor loadings ranging from 0.68 to 0.90 on the three different measures. These results suggest that a general meaning in life dimension does exist that underlies and describes the specific components of meaning as conceptualised by the authors of the instruments. Most of the other research on meaning focused on the relationship of meaning with a person's psychological and physiological health and quality of existence.

### 2.3.2. Measurement of meaning in life

There have been four main attempts to derive measures for meaning in life. Crumbaugh and Maholick (1964) were the first researchers to adopt a psychometric approach to measure meaning in life as conceptualised by Frankl. They devised the Purpose in Life Test (PIL), a self-report assessment method used to operationalise perceived meaning and purpose in life. Crumbaugh (1968) later on revised the PIL slightly, omitting two of the initial 22 items. The PIL test is a 20-item measure, designed to assess the degree to which an individual experiences a sense of meaning and purpose (Crumbaugh, 1968; Crumbaugh & Maholick, 1964). Earlier investigations almost exclusively used the PIL to assess Frankl's construct of meaning in life.

Battista and Almond (1973) developed the Life Regard Index (LRI), a 28-item measure, to overcome some difficulties identified in the PIL. This instrument measures the degree to which meaning in life is being sought and fulfilled (two dimensions). The measure was developed to assess the two important dimensions that Battista and Almond (1973) identified as relevant to an understanding of meaning in life, meaning framework and meaning fulfilment.

The 39-item Sense of Coherence (SOC) scale developed by Antonovsky (1979, 1983) is a more general scale, which attempted to measure three different components, comprehensibility, manageability, and meaningfulness (Chamberlain & Zika, 1988).

Chamberlain and Zika (1988) examined (N = 188) the factor structure of the three main scales to measure meaning in life, the PIL, LRI and the SOC scale. Their results suggest that meaning in life can be regarded as a multidimensional construct, with meaning attained in several different ways. Chamberlain and Zika (1988) conclude that all three of the PIL, LRI, and SOC measures are rationally derived instruments (Chamberlain & Zika, 1988). The intercorrelations (0.63 to 0.74) between the PIL, the LRI, and the SOC indicated that similar constructs were being assessed by the three tests. It thus supported the existence of a meaning in life

dimension. Chamberlain and Zika (1988) comment that the moderate correlations indicate that these measures might relate to different aspects of meaning in life.

Reker and Peacock (1981) developed the Life Attitude Profile (LAP) test. This is a 56-item scale, intended to assess both the degree of meaning and purpose as well as the strength of motivation to find meaning and purpose. The LAP is a measure of attitudes towards life, measuring six dimensions: purpose, coherence, life control, death acceptance, existential vacuum and goals seeking (Reker & Peacock, 1981). Reker (1994) revised the LAP and constructed the Life Attitude Profile-Revised (LAP-R) test, a 48-item measure of meaning and purpose in life and the search for meaning.

In addition to these better known and more frequent used instruments, Crumbaugh (1977) developed the Seeking of Noetic Goals (SONG) test to complement PIL. Subsequently, other meaning scales have been developed such as the Meaning In Life Depth Instrument (MILDI) (Ebersole & Sacco, 1983) and the Sources of Meaning Profile (SOMP) (Reker, 1994) (Moomal, 1999). Table 1 illustrates the main characteristics of the various measuring instruments of meaning, or purpose in life.

Table 1

Instruments for measuring meaning in life

<b>Instrument</b>	<b>What does it measure?</b>	<b>Researchers</b>	<b>Items</b>
Purpose in Life Test (PIL)	Degree to which meaning has been found by the individual	Crumbaugh and Maholick (1964) Crumbaugh (1968)	20-Items
Life Regard Index (LRI)	Degree that life goals are being sought and fulfilled	Battista and Almond (1973)	28-Items 2 sub-scales
Life Attitude Profile (LAP)	Multidimensional measure of attitudes toward life	Reker and Peacock (1981)	48-Item 6 dimensions
Sense of Coherence (SOC)	Sensemaking Comprehensibility Meaningfulness Manageability	Antonovsky (1979)	39-Items 3 dimensions
Seeking of Noetic Goals (SONG)	Strength of motivation to find meaning Complementary to PIL	Crumbaugh (1977)	20-Items
Meaning in Life Depth Instrument (MILDI)	Depth of meaning	Ebersole and Sacco (1983)	Judges rating 5 levels
Sources of Meaning Profile (SOMP)	Meaningfulness of different sources	Reker (1994)	16-Items 4 categories

It was decided to use Battista and Almond's (1973) Life Regard Index in this study to measure the sense of meaning and purpose in the lives of the subjects, rather than Crumbaugh's (1968) better known PIL. The reasons being the shortcomings of the PIL as presented by Battista and Almond (1973) (see section 3.2.2). Other reasons include better face validity and the threats of social desirability in responses on the PIL as discussed. Moreover, the two dimensional factor structure of the LRI allows not only measurement of the level of meaning, but also distinguishing between a meaning framework and the fulfilment of the framework. Several studies attest to the satisfactory psychometric properties of the LRI (Chamberlain & Zika, 1988). As the LRI was chosen as the measure of choice for this research, the structural aspects, the validity and the reliability of this measure will be discussed in further detail in section 3.2.2.

### **2.3.3. The psychological and physiological outcomes of meaning**

Meaning plays a significant role in defining one's sense of self and identity. Lack of meaning and values may result in an amorphous or fragile sense of self as is often found in borderline personality disorders (Baumeister, 1991). Yet, a conscious sense of self is critical for social functioning (Saari, 1991). Debats, Van der Lubbe, and Wezeman (1993) explain that meaning in life is described in association with a variety of concepts like fulfilment and self-actualisation (Maslow), engagement (Sartre), responsibility (Yalom), sense of coherence (Antonovsky), commitment and self-transcendence (Frankl), integration and relatedness (Buhler), and a sense of wholeness and belonging (Weisskopf-Joelson). Despite the great differences debated by these theorists, they concur on the central issue, that a sense of meaningfulness is essential to psychological well-being (Debats et al., 1993). They also conclude that the process of constructing meaning is more important than the specific content of the meaning itself.

Research on meaning in life has been focused mainly on the relationships between meaning, meaninglessness and well-being. Research from a number of perspectives has shown that a sense of meaning in life is an important correlate of physical and mental health and longevity. Empirical research in the fields of psychiatry and clinical psychology strongly supports the importance of meaning in people's lives. For instance, strong positive associations are empirically found between meaning and psychological well-being, and even physiological well being, as illustrated in Table 2.

Table 2

Positive effects as outcomes of having found meaning or purpose in life

<b>Effects</b>	<b>Researchers</b>
Physiological health, quality of life and subjective well-being	Chamberlain and Zika (1987), Reker et al. (1987), Reker and Wong (1988), Zika and Chamberlain (1992), Reker (1994), Debats (1996), Moomal (1999)
Self-esteem, self-concept, and ego resiliency	Tryon and Radzin (1972), Reker (1977), Reker and Cousins (1979), Chamberlain and Zika (1987), Reker (1994)
Internal locus of control and responsibility	Crumbaugh (1971), Yarnell (1972), Battista and Almond (1973), Reker (1977), Phillips (1980), Hardcastle (1985), Furnham, Brewin and O'Kelly (1994)
Sociability, social participation, extraversion and relatedness	Frankl (1969), Doerries (1970), Yarnell (1971), Pearson and Sheffield (1974), Yalom 1980), Chamberlain and Zika (1987)
Active engagement	Hardcastle (1985), Chamberlain and Zika (1987)
General life satisfaction, happiness, and positive life attitude	Maslow (1963), Reker (1977), Reker and Cousins (1979), Debats (1990), Zika and Chamberlain (1992), Debats et al. (1993), Chamberlain and Zika (1987), Reker (1994)
Positive life experiences, elation and future hope	Reker and Cousins (1979), Harlow, Newcomb and Bentler (1986), Reker et al. (1987), Debats (1990), Debats (1999)
Work motivation and positive work attitudes	Sargent (1973)
Goal orientation and commitment	Yalom (1980), Thompson and Janigian (1988), Debats (1999)
Stress resistance and coping	Lazarus and DeLongis (1983), Thompson and Janigian (1988), Reker (1994), Moomal (1999)
Successful life changes and occupational certainty	Tryon and Radzin (1972), Heatherton and Nichols (1994)
Spiritual well-being	Debats and Drost (1995), Reker (1994)
Successful aging, life-span identity and acceptance of death	Amenta (1984), Reker (1994), Debats and Drost (1995)

These studies all attest to the importance of meaningful value orientations and of commitments to personal life satisfaction and psychological health. These studies

consistently show that possession of a substantial degree of "purpose" seems to be one of the usual properties of normal functioning, but it is not necessarily a prerequisite for abnormal personality (Crumbaugh & Maholick, 1964). These authors imply that the attainment of meaning is associated with positive mental health.

In contrast, lack of meaning has been found to be associated with a lack of well-being and with psychopathology in a roughly linear sense: the less the sense of meaning, the greater the severity of psychopathology (Debats & Drost, 1995; Yalom, 1980). Lack of purpose or meaning implies a failure to perceive an integrated pattern of goals and values in life, with a consequent dissipation of energies which can be debilitating (Crumbaugh & Maholick, 1964). The lack of meaning in life is the cognitive component of existential neurosis (Frankl, 1984a). Without meaning, the individual loses ability to believe in the importance, usefulness or interest of any actions (Chamberlain & Zika, 1988). Meaninglessness is a substantial human problem, and particularly significant in the present times. Table 3 illustrates empirical findings of associations of dimensions of the lack of well being, associated with a lack of meaning.

Table 3

Negative effects of a lack of meaning

<b>Effects</b>	<b>Researchers</b>
Psychopathology and lowered well being	Yalom (1980), Reker, Peacock and Wong (1987), Zika and Chamberlain (1992)
Psychoticism	Crumbaugh (1968), Zika and Chamberlain (1992)
Schizophrenia	Crumbaugh (1968), Yarnell (1972), Zika and Chamberlain (1992)
Neuroticism	Crumbaugh (1968), Pearson and Sheffield (1974), Zika and Chamberlain (1992)
Alcoholism, drug and substance abuse	Crumbaugh (1968), Crumbaugh (1971), Frankl (1972), Yarnell (1972), Crumbaugh (1977), Harlow, Newcomb and Bentler (1986), Newcomb and Harlow (1986), Debats (1999).
Negativity and negative affect	Sharpe and Viney (1973), Zika and Chamberlain (1992), Debats et al. (1993)
Alienation, loss of social identity, social isolation, disengagement and anomia	Maddi (1967), Frankl (1969), Garfield (1973), Florian and Snowden (1989)
Uncontrollable stress and burnout	Yarnell (1972), Harlow, Newcomb and Bentler (1986), Yiu-kee and Tang (1995)
Lack of goals	Sharpe and Viney (1973)
Depression	Pearson and Sheffield (1974), Ryff (1989), Zika and Chamberlain (1992), Debats (1990), Debats et al. (1993)
Anxiety	Yarnell (1972), Pearson and Sheffield (1974), Debats (1990), Zika and Chamberlain (1992), Debats et al. (1993)
Suicidal ideation	Harlow, Newcomb and Bentler (1986)
Physical discomfort	Reker et al. (1987)
Self derogation	Harlow, Newcomb and Bentler (1986)
A criminal inclination (being imprisoned) and hostility	Reker (1977), Debats (1990)

These research findings confirm the claims of existential theorists (e.g., Frankl, Maddi, and Fabry) that absence of meaning is related to poor psychological or

mental health and psychopathology. When people are unable to find meaning, or when they lose or outgrow the meanings that they once had, they become distressed. Many emotional problems result from a failure to find meaning in life and can be resolved only through finding something to make life worth living (Frankl, 1992). These research findings also confirm earlier clinical observations that to live without meaning, goals or values provoke considerable distress and results in a lack of physical and psychological well-being (Yalom, 1980).

The findings of the studies mentioned, show with overwhelming consistency that meaning in life relates to almost every component of well-being with only slight variations in the strength of the associations. These studies confirm the notion that positive life regard is essential for meaningful life and takes a critical role in maintaining and preserving psychological health and general life satisfaction. One can postulate that the strong associations of meaning with mental health and well-being could suggest that meaning should also be related to work motivation and commitment. Both these constructs can be regarded as facets of mental health. Similarly, the lack of meaning is associated with mental illness, and could therefore be related to the lack of motivation and commitment.

Whether a lack of positive life regard is caused or followed by psychological problems, remains a subject for further investigation. One cannot determine causation from the above-mentioned studies. The relation between meaning in life and well-being is complex, and several issues need to be addressed in future research. Firstly, more studies are needed to investigate how meaning in life exerts its effects on well-being outcomes. Secondly, it is important to understand why some people are inclined to search for meaning, and find meaning, especially in difficult situations, whereas others are not.

#### **2.3.4. Structural components of meaning**

The construct of meaning consists of different structural features (Reker & Wong, 1988). These relate to where meaning comes from (sources), the diversity with which it is experienced (breadth), and the degree of self-transcendence involved

(depth). These structural components are interrelated and common to people's experience of meaning (Reker & Wong, 1988).

Sources of meaning are the areas of a person's life from which meaning is derived. The meaning of life varies from person to person and from situation to situation. Frankl (1967) notes that meanings are as unique as the situations encountered. The meaning of a whole life is unique insofar as life is a series of unique situations. O'Connor and Chamberlain (1996) comment that people experience meaning in the beliefs they hold, the actions they take, and the feelings that result.

Research studies indicated that different sources of meaning exist, and that meaning can be derived from a wide variety of sources (De Vogler-Ebersole & Ebersole, 1985a). Sources of meaning vary according to socio-demographic background, developmental stage (De Vogler & Ebersole, 1983), and cultural and ethnic background (Yalom, 1980).

Table 4 indicates the empirical findings of sources of meaning according to studies from various researchers. All of the sources indicated are in chronological order of importance, ranging from more important sources to less important sources as found by the specific researcher. The researchers that found work as a source of meaning are listed in the beginning of the table.

Table 4

Sources of meaning according to various researchers

Sources of meaning	Researchers
Interpersonal, service, understanding, obtaining, expressive, ethical, life <b>work</b> , growth, pleasure/happiness, and health	De Vogler and Ebersole (1983)
Relationships, belief, growth, life <b>work</b> , pleasure, and service	De Vogler-Ebersole and Ebersole (1985a)
Men: <b>work</b> , love and marriage, and independent pursuits Women: children, love and marriage, and <b>work</b>	Baum and Stewart (1990)
Interpersonal, service, understanding, obtaining, expressive, ethical,	Battista and Almond (1973)
Relationships, service, growth, belief, and existential-hedonistic.	De Vogler and Ebersole (1980)
Relationships, health and belief (people over the age of 72 years)	McCarthy (1983)
Religiosity	Zika and Chamberlain (1992)
Relationships, creativity, personal development, nature, religion, social and political	O'Connor and Chamberlain (1996)
Future hope (for young adults)	Debats (1999)

It is obvious from the conflicting and divergent findings of the various studies on the source of meaning that Frankl's (1972) postulation is true that meaning varies from person to person, and from situation to situation. A person can find possible meaning in virtually anything, depending on his own situation and characteristics. Research on the sources of meaning therefore appears not to add much value. However, an important insight from these research studies is that work often features as a source of meaning.

Table 4 illustrates clearly that although work is generally not seen as the most important source of meaning, or the most frequent source of meaning, it does play a

significant role as a source of meaning. This confirms the necessity of investigating the role of work in people's lives, and how to make work more meaningful. If work is so important in finding meaning, this observation also supports the notion that work motivation and work commitment could be associated with meaning.

In contrast to the positive sources of meaning, there are “negative” sources of meaning. These “negative” sources of meaning refer to a situation or an event that is normally seen as undesirable, but they can have a positive influence on a person's sense of meaning. These sources come to being mainly due to severe psychological disturbances (life changing events) (Lazarus & DeLongis, 1983). The loss of a job (becoming unemployed) is a typical life-changing event (Frankl, 1992). Crumbaugh and Maholick (1964), Frankl (1969) and Yalom and Yalom (1998) note that the onset of life changing events may, on one hand, obscure individuals' values and personal meanings in life but, on the other hand, initiate a renewed search for what really matters in their lives. These findings of the meaningful experience of “negative” life changing events confirm Maslow's (1979) view that striving for something one lacks, inevitably makes one feel that life has a meaning (Debats, 1999).

Breadth of meaning is based on the likelihood that an individual will experience meaning from several different valued sources, and that a greater variety of these will lead to an increased sense of meaning. De Vogler-Ebersole and Ebersole (1985a) found that most people possess several sources of meaning, rather than only one. They report that their subjects experienced an average of 4.26 different categories of meaning in their lives. O'Connor and Chamberlain (1996) report in a similar trend that participants in their study on average reported about four (3.68) specific categories of sources of meaning.

De Vogler-Ebersole and Ebersole (1985b) caution that the danger of having too many meanings might result in shallowness in pursuit and fulfilment of each of them. In contrast, Reker and Wong (1988) postulate that a greater variety of sources of meaning is likely to lead to an increased sense of meaning. Building on this, Reker (1991) demonstrates that greater breadth is associated with higher levels of purpose and coherence.

De Vogler and Ebersole, (1983) suggest that meaning exists at three levels: (a) ultimate meanings, (b) meaning of the moment, and (c) common, day-to-day meanings, which for Frankl (1967) were the cultural meanings and values. Reker and Wong (1988) classified the depth of meaning on four hierarchical levels: hedonistic pleasure (level 1, the shallowest level); devotion of energy to the realisation of personal potential (level 2); service to others and commitment to larger societal causes (level 3); and values that transcend individuals and encompass ultimate purpose (level 4, the deepest level).

Although there has been little research on depth of meaning, a rating approach for a depth of meaning in life measurement has been developed by Ebersole and Sacco (1983), De Vogler and Ebersole (1981, 1983) and De Vogler-Ebersole and Ebersole (1985b). Results from these studies confirm that depth of meaning varies substantially over different sources of meaning within the same people. O'Connor and Chamberlain (1996) confirmed that depth of meaning was found to be related to the content of the source of meaning. Das (1998) describes that sources of ultimate meanings are in religion, philosophy, science, and art. Debats (1999) also found that LRI scores are significantly related to the degrees of their commitment to personal meanings.

### **2.3.5. Meaning in relationship to biographical and demographical variables**

A number of psychologists have theorised about the development stages of man over the course of life. Most notable is Erik Erikson's developmental theory (Corsini, 1977). Erikson maintains that the individual is in a constant process of challenge and growth, the individual is programmed to grow through various developmental stages through life, each stage having its own specific characteristics and behaviours attached to it (Corsini, 1977). Similarly, it could be argued that man must progress through preliminary stages in the development of meaning (Battista & Almond, 1973; Frankl, 1972; Yalom, 1980).

However, empirical research results on the relationship of the degree of meaning with age or sex is contradicting. Most of the research failed to find significant

relationships between meaning and life stages (age) or sex (Crumbaugh & Maholick, 1964; Crumbaugh, Ebersole & Kobayakawa, 1989; Debats, 1990; Debats et al., 1993; Debats, 1999; De Vogler-Ebersole & Ebersole, 1985b; Meier & Edwards, 1974; Reker & Cousins, 1979). Debats et al. (1993) conclude that the absence of significant associations with sex, age and educational level, suggest that the search for meaning is a general phenomenon and not linked with demographic variables. They reason that it is therefore correctly postulated by some theorists as a basic human drive. It changes its appearance throughout one's life cycle, but never disappears. In agreement, Debats (1999) concludes that meaning in life is a universal phenomenon that is independent of specific demographics.

On the other hand, some of the research studies indicated relationships between meaning with age (Baum & Stewart, 1990; Clark, Oswald & Warr, 1996; Debats & Drost, 1995; Peacock & Reker, 1982; Reker, 1994; Reker et al., 1987), and sex (Harlow et al., 1986; Sargent, 1973). Although research results are contradictory, and there is no conclusive evidence on correlations or the lack thereof, the majority of research appears to suggest that there is not significant correlation between PIL and age, years of schooling, IQ, or sex. It is evident that neither unemployed, nor retired people should characteristically have weaker meaning orientations than employed individuals. However, the fulfilment thereof might differ substantially.

### **2.3.6. Conclusion: meaning in life as a scientific construct**

People look at work, vocational interests, relationships and religion to provide meaning (Hoff, 1986). When things are going smoothly in these areas of life, people experience their lives as meaningful (Hoff, 1986). When things go wrong in any important area of life (e.g., the loss of a job, the unexpected death of a loved one), people may begin to question the meaning of life because the assumptions on which they had built their lives are shaken (Hoff, 1986).

Research provides strong evidence for a positive relationship between meaning and successful functioning. The results of these studies support that meaning is more than merely a philosophical notion, but a critical psychological construct. Meaning in

life therefore seems to be a particularly important and relevant topic. Further research into the role of meaning in life can make a valuable contribution towards the understanding of the factors which influence mental health.

If meaning plays such an important role in the psychological and physiological well-being of a person, one can deduce that meaning should play a similar important role in the workplace. If meaning plays such an important role in people's attitudes toward life and their mental and physical health outside the workplace, these positive effects could be expected to also be prevalent in the workplace. Human beings act as integrated (or largely integrated units or personalities). One could speculate that a search for meaning displayed by an individual outside the work situation will probably mean that the individual will do the same in the work situation. Furthermore, meaning should directly affect mental health in the workplace. Work related mental health could be translated into positive work attitudes such as work commitment and work motivation. The study of meaning therefore also belongs to the fields of Organisational Behaviour and management.

## **2.4. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WORK AND IN MEANING IN LIFE**

*At any moment, man must decide, for better or for worse, what will be the monument of his existence.*

*Frankl (1984)*

When Freud was asked what he considered the basic requirements of human existence, he answered, to love and to work (Neff, 1965). It was shown in the previous section that work often acts as a source of meaning. This raises the questions, what role does work play in the human life, and when does it act as a source of meaning?

### **2.4.1. The role of work in the human life**

The concept of work has changed over the years. In the Western world, work historically has been associated with different value assessments. For instance, the

ancient Greeks regarded work as a curse, reserved only for the slaves and the poor (Super & Sverko, 1995). Under the influence of religious indoctrination, these negative attitudes toward work gradually changed. With the rise of Catholicism, work was seen as good for moral and spiritual integrity, whereas leisure and idleness was seen to bring about all kinds of weaknesses (Super & Sverko, 1995). The greatest glorification of work came with the Reformation. Hard work was perceived as the best way to serve God, a pathway to salvation, and work became to many a religious obligation and the highest virtue. These teachings led to the moral code described by Max Weber as the Protestant work ethic (Thomas, 1999). Gill (1999) concludes many of the psychological needs that earlier societies met through social structures, such as religious rituals, the expanded family and the village community, have now been taken over by the institution of paid work (Gill, 1999). This comment illustrates the importance of finding meaning also in one's work.

For most people, having a job serves other functions than the one of earning a living. This conclusion came primarily from the study by Morse and Weiss (1955) which became a classical study in the sociology of work. They designed a question to remove the economic function of working hypothetically. Morse and Weiss (1955) instructed 401 subjects to assume that they had enough money to take care of their lifetime needs. They posed the question: "If by some chance you inherited or win enough money in a lottery to live comfortably without working, do you think you would work anyway or not?" Morse and Weiss' (1955) study indicated that:

- 80% of the respondents would keep on working.
- 63% of the respondents gave positive reasons for continuing working.

Morse and Weiss (1955) note that the vividness and emotionality of the responses indicated that they were tapping an area which was real and meaningful to people. They conclude that for most people, having a job serves other functions than just the one of making a living. Working gives them a feeling of being tied into the larger society, of having something to do, of having a purpose in life (Morse & Weiss, 1955).

Work can provide a sense of fulfilment by giving an employee a sense of purpose and by clarifying his or her value to society (Steers & Porter, 1979). Conversely, it

can also be a source of frustration, boredom, and feelings of meaninglessness, depending on the characteristics of the individual and on the nature of the task. Johada (1982) explains that the modern work institution came to serve important psychological functions that in pre-industrial societies were provided outside the domain of paid work. For the majority of people, the workplace became the sole institution capable of satisfying these psychological needs, needs that are deemed essential to well-being (Johada, 1982).

However, work has different meanings for the professional person than for the industrial worker. Friedman and Havighurst (1954) found that their sample of blue-collar workers saw work as a way of earning a living, while their white-collar workers attached meanings beyond that of economic utility to work. Similarly, Morse and Weiss (1955) report from their study that white-collar employees saw a larger purpose or cause in their work than blue-collar workers. Blue-collar workers saw work more as a means to keep occupied. White-collar workers also indicated significant higher levels of career commitment (Morse & Weiss, 1955).

Kornhauser (1972) support these findings. He found that mental health was poorer among factory workers as one moves from more skilled, responsible, and varied types of work, to jobs lower in these respects. In further support of these findings, Orzack (1972) found that professionals regard work significantly more as a central life interest than industrial workers do. Furthermore, professionals see work significantly more as the preferred source of personal satisfaction than industrial workers do (Orzack, 1972). One can speculate that these findings suggest relationships between meaning and the career commitment and organisational commitment facets of work commitment.

Several researchers investigated the psychological functions of work in the human life. Most researchers that investigated the functions of work found the same functions. Table 5 provides a summary of some of these functions of work. Work as a source of purpose came out strongly as one of the functions of work.

Table 5

Psychological functions of work in human life according to different studies

Functions of work	Authors
<p><b>Work as a source of sense of purpose</b> - work prevents signs of alienation, feelings of powerlessness, isolation and of meaninglessness. The prospect of finding a purpose such as helping on a common aim may be a powerful incentive.</p>	<p>Friedman and Havighurst (1954), Morse and Weiss (1955), Firth (1972), Steers and Porter (1979), Johada (1982), Fagan and Little (1984), Terkel (1985), Gill (1999).</p>
<p><b>Work as a source of identity</b> - work helps individuals and society to classify them in terms of class, status and influence.</p>	<p>Friedman and Havighurst (1954), Firth (1972), Steers and Porter (1979), Johada (1982), Fagan and Little (1984), Depolo and Sarchielli (1986).</p>
<p><b>Work as a source of relationships outside the family</b> - work enriches the scope of interpersonal relationships; an important opportunity for socialisation.</p>	<p>Friedman and Havighurst (1954), Morse and Weiss (1955), Firth (1972), Johada (1982), Fagan and Little (1984), Depolo and Sarchielli (1986), Steers and Porter (1979), Hoff (1986), Lonkila (1998).</p>
<p><b>Work as a source of obligatory activity</b> - work provides a resourceful framework of regular, purposeful activity; whereas too much activity may induce fatigue and stress, too little results in boredom and restlessness.</p>	<p>Friedman and Havighurst (1954), Morse and Weiss (1955), Firth (1972), Steers and Porter (1979), Johada (1982), Fagan and Little (1984), Depolo and Sarchielli (1986).</p>
<p><b>Work as an opportunity to develop skills and creativity</b> - it allows for the mastery, control, or altering of the environment, it permits the development of personal skills.</p>	<p>Firth (1972), Steers and Porter (1979), Johada (1982), Fagan and Little (1984), Depolo and Sarchielli (1986).</p>
<p><b>Work as a factor which structures time</b> - work structures time into regular, predictable periods involved with rest, refreshment and actual work, it structures the day.</p>	<p>Friedman and Havighurst (1954), Morse and Weiss (1955), Steers and Porter (1979), Johada (1982), Fagan and Little (1984), Depolo and Sarchielli (1986).</p>
<p><b>Work as a source of income and control</b> - it provides money for independence and free choice of leisure. Material income, earning the means to live by.</p>	<p>Friedman and Havighurst (1954), Morse and Weiss (1955), Firth (1972), Steers and Porter (1979), Johada (1982), Fagan and Little (1984).</p>

It appears that the important role that work plays in people's lives is a multi-cultural and widespread phenomena. The Meaning of Work Study (M.O.W.) an international research team (M.O.W. International Research Team, 1987) conducted an eight-nation study on the role of work. They found general evidence of man's considerable attachment to work. About 86% of the 15 000 respondents said they would continue to work even if they had enough money to live comfortably for the rest of their life without working. Over 25% of the respondents placed work above the following roles: family, community, religion, and leisure. The M.O.W. International Research Team (1987) found no association between religion and work attitudes. Hence the M.O.W. research team believe work centrality is primarily a function of industrialisation.

Work has become the centrepiece of modern lives (Fairholm, 1996). Work is the place where most people find their sense of meaning. The organisation within which people work is becoming their most significant community. For some, work is replacing family, friendship circles, and social groups. Work gives people a feeling of being tied into the larger society, of having something to do, of having a purpose in life (Fairholm, 1996). Work is essential for an individual's well being, as it is a person's occupation that makes life arguably meaningful (Howard & Howard, 1997). Strong (1998) reports that engagement in meaningful work is a central tenet of occupational therapy, although little is known about *how* meaningfulness of work relates to recovery (Strong, 1998). While work has become a negative cultural value for some, it nevertheless remains as a principal guiding force in people's lives, and as an activity which frequently moulds and affects their attitudes and perspectives, and patterns their social relationships with others.

#### **2.4.2. Work involvement (work centrality) and meaning**

The concept of work centrality has historically mostly been of interest to sociologists rather than psychologists. Kanungo (1982) investigated the existence of the difference between job involvement and work involvement. He designed a 10-item job involvement questionnaire (JIQ) and a six-item work involvement questionnaire (WIQ) and applied it to 703 part-time students at three universities in Montreal. The

scores on job involvement and work involvement items were factor analysed and yielded two clear interpretable factors of job involvement and work involvement. The two factors explained 47.2% of the total variance. These results suggest distinctiveness and uni-dimensionality of the job involvement and work involvement constructs and lends considerable support for the conceptual distinction between job and work involvement proposed by previous researchers (Kanungo, 1982). As both these instruments have been chosen to measure the constructs of work involvement and job involvement respectively, their psychometric properties will be discussed later in this dissertation in section 3.2.

In another study (N = 313) by Paullay et al. (1994), results from Confirmatory Factor Analysis confirmed that work centrality and PWE are separate constructs and that a distinction should therefore be made between work centrality and Protestant work ethic. The significant chi-squared difference between two models (model 1: CFI = 0.86, GFI = 0.85 and model 2: CFI = 0.99, GFI = 0.85) indicates that the latter model, which represents the two constructs as distinct, is a better model than the former, which considered work centrality and PWE as one latent construct. The comparative fit index increase of 0.06 from the first model to the second model further justifies the distinction between the two constructs. The Confirmatory Factor Analysis provided additional evidence of the uniqueness of the two constructs. More specifically, it showed that the correlation between the PWE and work centrality latent variables was 0.43 (Paullay et al., 1994). There is therefore a moderate correlation between the constructs of PWE and work centrality. Paullay et al. (1994) argue that endorsement of PWE may influence the degree of work involvement, but that they should be regarded as separate, but correlated constructs.

Although there seems to be reasonable clarity and agreement on the definition of the construct of work involvement, a clear understanding on the origin and antecedents of work involvement have still not been established. For instance, Lefkowitz, Somers and Weinberg (1984) found that work involvement was stronger related to higher-order motivation needs (such as self-actualisation and interesting work) than to the satisfaction of both lower-order needs (such as security and high pay). In a similar vein, Loscocco (1985) found in her study of 52 American (N = 3549), and 46 Japanese manufacturing plants (N = 368) that work commitment was positively

related to intrinsic rewards (0.31,  $p < 0.01$ ). According to Super and Sverko (1995), the importance of the work role is determined by three basic components viz. commitment (emotional component), participation (behavioural component) and knowledge (cognitive component).

Sverko (1989) comments that the assertion that work involvement is produced by cultural conditioning or socialisation is too general. He notes that it does not explain the cognitive process through which the socialisation process influences individual differences in the importance of work (Sverko, 1989). Moreover, it reduces the individual's attitudes to work to a passive product of early socialisation. Sverko (1989) developed a model of work importance determinants (Figure 3). The central place in the model is given to work values, serving as important goals which individuals seek to attain in their work (Sverko, 1989). The more important such values are to individuals, the more important or salient their working roles will be to them as well. Sverko (1989) argues that the work-values aspect which exerts the major influence on the importance attached to work is the individual's perceptions of the value-attainment possibilities in work (VAP) (Sverko, 1989).

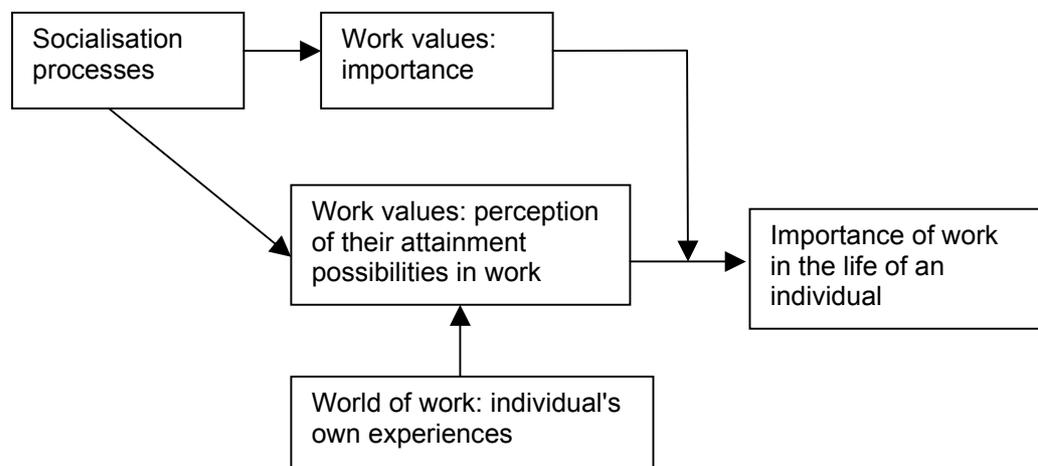


Figure 3. Sverko's (1989) model of determinants of work-importance.

Sverko (1989) reports that results from his study (four samples,  $N = 923, 949, 348$  and  $344$  respectively) provide support for his model (Figure 3) of work-importance. The determinants ranged from  $F = 19.73$  to  $5.13$  ( $R = 0.66$  to  $0.73$ , significant at  $p < 0.001$ ) for the four different sample groups. The model (Figure 3) further shows that

work values are influenced by the socialisation processes, which also influence the values attainment perceptions (Sverko, 1989). Finally, the VAP are also determined by the individual's own experiences from the world of work. Sverko (1989) notes that the model presumes that individuals have thoughts, expectations, and anticipations which affect their attitudes and behaviour. Thus, it adopts a cognitive approach, assuming a cognitive structure of attitudes, to motivation and work behaviour (Sverko, 1989).

Loscocco (1989) reports that the results of her study (N = 4604) suggest that the strength of people's commitment to work is determined in response to the whole configuration of their work and non-work experiences. For instance, age ( $r = 0.25$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), education ( $-0.097$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), promotion opportunities (0.31), and intrinsic rewards (0.41) all correlated somewhat with commitment to work. She also comments that one cannot generalise about the effect of gender on work commitment since it depends upon the type of work role that an individual holds (Loscocco, 1989).

Paullay et al. (1994) note that because work centrality is partly the result of cultural conditioning or socialisation processes, it is presumed to be a relative stable set of beliefs that does not fluctuate greatly in response to conditions in the immediate work environment. Ros et al. (1999) comments that differences in the meaning of work can be dependent on differences in the importance of work to individuals. Moreover, differences in the meaning of work apparently reflect differences in the experiences that respondents have in the world of work (Ros et al., 1999).

No research studies could be found that investigate the possibility that work involvement could have any relationship or association with existential constructs such as having meaning or a purpose in life. This is deemed an oversight as it is difficult today for people to separate work from the rest of their being. People spend too much of their time at work or in work-related social and leisure activities to compartmentalise their lives into separate work, family, religious and social domains. If personal or social transformation is to take place, it will most likely take place at work (Fairholm, 1996). Most of the other facets and dimension of life and their relationships with work have been investigated, except for the spiritual dimension. It

is therefore of the utmost importance that the relationship between work and a person's spirituality is investigated and understood.

### **2.4.3. The role of "meaning" in work**

*If man lives by his work, so too may he sicken and die by his work, as well as suffer and develop mental illness as a result of it.*

*Bryant (1972a)*

Giving meaning to work implies giving people a sense that they are not instruments in the hands of others, but that they are responsible participants in a larger process (World Council of Churches, 1949). According to Menninger (Neff, 1965), 75% of psychiatric patients are suffering from an incapacity of satisfaction in work or from their inability to work. Too often, the fact that man's physical and mental conditions are significantly related to his occupational specialisation is overlooked (Bryant, 1972b). Pathological idiosyncratic behaviour patterns, neurotic tendencies, and mental breakdowns are legendary in business, and the pressures of bureaucratic existence may produce psychological disorders. Similarly, the relationship between the monotony and the meaninglessness of work, and mental malaise has been recognised (Bryant, 1972b).

Sargent (1973) reports alienation as an increasing issue in the workplace. Alienation indicates a lack of integration between the private and public worlds of the worker. Instead of working for himself directly, or working in a small community where his services are easily evaluated, a person works for others and is usually separated from his community. His children often have no conception of what he does from the time he leaves the house in the morning until he returns home in the evening (Sargent, 1973). Often a person's only sense of worth and status is conferred by his title, occupation and salary. In this orientation a person values himself only to the extent he has economic value to others, and therefore he denies himself leisure (Sargent, 1973).

Cherrington (1980) developed a matrix to illustrate the importance of meaning in life. His matrix also illustrates the relationship between meaning in life and meaningful work. This matrix explains the concept of dual meaning, i.e. meaningful life and meaningful employment, is illustrated in Figure 4.

		View of work	
		Work is meaningful	Work is meaningless
View of life	Life is meaningful	Strong work ethic Happy and productive workers. Work is a terminal and/or instrumental value.	Work is an obligation that is not consistent with the meaning of life. Solution: inculcate work values, redesign the job, or change jobs.
	Life is meaningless	Work is a displaced terminal value. Work is the reason for existence. Solution: enforced rest, assessment of priorities, and diversification of interest.	Work is soulless, mind-numbing drudgery. Welfare is preferred to work. Solution: "right actions" and "contributing to live".

Figure 4. Cherrington's (1980) matrix of meaning in life and meaningful work

The areas in the quadrants describe the outcomes of the resulting combinations of the matrix according to Cherrington (1980). Cherrington's (1980) matrix suggests that the ultimate state of meaning is reached if a person finds both life and his work meaningful. It is in this stage that the individual will be work motivated and work committed. If a person's personal sense of purpose is congruent with his occupation, his work becomes an expression of meaning (Savickas, 1991).

One way to relate occupation to meaning is through the use of time (Howard & Howard, 1997). An appreciation of time as an exhaustible resource gives people ultimate meaning. Doerr (1998) comments that some people are retiring early because they want more time and more meaning in their lives. However, having time available is not the only issue. For instance, the unemployed has lots of time available, but being unemployed is very different from having leisure time (Fryer & Payne, 1986). Pascarella (1998) notes that people are seeking out "communities of

meaning" in the workplace where they often sacrifice financial rewards to meet a more balanced set of needs (Pascarella, 1998).

Most people do not understand how to go about finding meaningful work. Individuals therefore expect organisations to promote their search for meaning (Smircich & Morgan (1982). Employees consequently often look to those in authority to tell them what is meaningful in their work life (Gemmil & Oakley, 1992). Leaders are therefore being called on to facilitate the spiritual development of their followers (Konz & Ryan, 1999). Sosik and Dworakivsky (1998) confirmed some of these theorisations about leadership finding meaning in the workplace. They found in their study of 64 managers and 194 subordinates that leaders' purpose-in-life scores were significantly and positively related to charismatic leadership (path coefficient = 0.21,  $t(9) = 33.71$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ).

#### **2.4.4. Boredom in the workplace from a lack of meaning**

Boredom occurs when people are unable to find or create meaning in their work life and existence altogether (Frankl, 1992; Gemmil & Oakley, 1992; Terkel, 1985). The technological revolution of work has been accompanied by fragmentation of labour, increasing complexity and bureaucratisation of organisations. These phenomena tend to make work meaningless (Appiganesi, 1994). Consequently, work has for some members of the workforce become a monotonous, repetitive and seemingly meaningless routine (Howard & Howard, 1997). The amount of research devoted to the topic of boredom is astonishingly small when compared to the importance of the topic in the workplace. In reviewing studies of boredom from the period of 1926 to 1981, Gemmil and Oakley (1992) found only 40 articles directly concerned with boredom, which is less than one article per year for 53 years.

Gemmil and Oakley (1992) conclude that research indicates that boredom is associated to *either* too little *or* too much stimulation; repetition per se does not result in boredom. Repetitive work can free the mind and spirit to a state similar to meditation, and can be experienced as quite meaningful. In contrast, highly stimulating work can be experienced as meaningless, and overwhelming (Gemmil &

Oakley, 1992). According to Frankl, the issue is whether a continuous basis exists for experiencing personal meaning in the activity. Without such a basis every choice seems random and arbitrary (Gemmil & Oakley, 1992).

However, admission of boredom in one's own personal life is often seen as a sign of personal failure or sickness (Gemmil & Oakley, 1992). People therefore fear to discuss their thoughts and feelings about boredom and meaninglessness in their organisational life. By developing a better understanding of the meaning of boredom in organisations, organisation members can learn to confront their boredom constructively, thereby expanding their awareness and unblocking repressed feelings (Gemmil & Oakley, 1992). The net effect of exploring such deeper meanings is the infusion of a new personal meaning into the experience of work (Thomas, 1999).

#### **2.4.5. The increasing role of meaning in the work environment**

There is a widespread belief that attitudes to work are changing, particularly in industrialised societies. Most organisations have been designed and managed using a paradigm based largely on a logical and mechanistic, machine era paradigm (Biberman & Whitty, 1997). This has given rise to practices such as scientific management as proposed by Henry Fayol (1949), and Max Weber's (1984) bureaucracies. Unfortunately, these organisational forms tend to view workers as inert instruments performing the tasks assigned to them (Blau, 1970; Dessler, 1986; Rogers & McIntire, 1983). People perceive this impersonality as creating distance between them and their work (Wieland & Ullrich, 1976). High specialisation further reinforces feelings of being irrelevant (Jackson & Morgan, 1982).

Extended education has brought with it rising expectations that personal needs will be met, and that one is entitled to have his expectations met in the workplace (Davis, 1980). Young people are beginning to claim the right to an interesting, meaningful and self-fulfilling centred job (Davis, 1980). Increased educational opportunities and higher standards of living create a disparity for many people between their

aspirations and realisations (Shimmin, 1980; Terkel, 1985). These aspirations can also be translated as a search for meaning in work.

According to Renesch (1995) people increasingly are seeking more "intrinsically valued" lifestyles. Fairholm (1996) concludes that people are hungry for meaning in their lives, they are trying to integrate their spiritual selves with their work lives. However, this concept seems to be timeless. A recent survey of UK and US employees (Doerr, 1998) found that what the well-educated new entries to the workforce wanted more than anything else was meaningful employment - with time to pursue other interests besides work. Welch (1998) agrees that many people are looking for more meaning in their work and finding it less. Growing numbers of people are starting to look for personal meaning in their work and to give their lives a better balance.

The nature of work is undergoing a transformation. In response to economic pressures, organisations are reshaping themselves into totally new forms (Guevare & Ord, 1996). The boundaries which have traditionally existed between organisations, family, home life and community disappear as work increasingly becomes situation-independent and sentenced in the home through advances in information technology (Guevare & Ord, 1996). Contingency work is increasingly being seen as a way of life for many professional, technical, and managerial people (Allen & Sienko, 1998). People's traditional understanding of work becomes increasingly obsolete and therefore forces individuals to search for new meanings of work in their lives.

Cavanagh (1999) reports that business people often feel a separation from other people, alienation from their work, and a lack of meaning in their lives. They experience their work, family life and their faith to be in separate compartments. This separation leaves them feeling dry, unfulfilled and unhappy, and is often experienced as a profound void or absence in their lives (Cavanagh, 1999), or an existential vacuum as Frankl postulated. The increasing demand that work should have some meaning beyond material needs is part of a new social revolution. In the post-modern future, humankind's eternal search for meaning will require not only reinventing work and the workplace, but also a renewed sense of the deepest

intentions behind human activity, and in spirituality (Biberman & Whitty, 1997). Persons operating from a spiritual paradigm perspective would be more open to change (Biberman & Whitty, 1997). Organisations are therefore beginning to show an interest in spirituality and spiritual values (Biberman & Whitty, 1997).

#### **2.4.6. Meaning as spirituality in the workplace**

Frankl (1969, 1970, 1975, 1984a) describes meaning essentially as being part of man's spiritual dimension. Spiritual growth, as described by Jung (1933), allows individuals to find meaning and purpose in their work. Spirituality can be seen as a building block, and a part of the search and will to meaning (Neck & Milliman, 1994). Questions which employees might ask themselves in this regard include the following (Neck & Milliman, 1994):

- What is my purpose here at work?
- Where is this job leading me?
- What is it that I have to offer? What do I want to leave behind here?

Spirituality does not equate to religion (Frankl, 1984a; Howard & Howard, 1997). Spirituality stresses the person's subjective experience of something or someone greater than himself. Religion, on other hand, refers to the more formalised aspects of spirituality, such as belief, dogma, and ritual (Howard & Howard, 1997). Spirituality has traditionally been an individual concern, and the same could be said about spirituality in business. However, people as individuals find meaning in their work. Organisations are therefore slowly evolving from arenas of purely economic and social activity into places of spiritual development (Konz & Ryan, 1999).

Spirituality is becoming a major issue in workplaces (Vogl, 1997). At the 1998 annual meeting of the Academy of Management, at least seven sessions explicitly discussed spirituality and its relation to leadership and work (Cavanagh, 1999). Although this represents a small percentage of the total session, it is significant that the number of sessions on spirituality has grown from zero from five years before (Cavanagh, 1999). A bibliography distributed on spirituality in the organisation lists

no fewer than 72 books on the subject of spirituality and business, 54 of these books have been published since 1992 (Cavanagh, 1999).

Spirituality provides people with meaning and gives them motivation (Howard & Howard, 1997). Workers are looking to business to answer questions about meaning. This trend is driven by people's desire to bring meaning to their lives and gain control over their lives (Vogl, 1997). However, for the individual's efforts toward self-awareness to be fully actualised, it is necessary for the organisation to be structured to support the individual's spiritual growth (King & Nicol, 1999; Neal, Lichtenstein & Banner, 1999). The organisation's spirituality would be the foundation of the organisation's culture (Konz & Ryan, 1999). Leaders' basic assumptions about the appropriate way for humans to act in turn reflect the organisation culture (Neal, Lichtenstein & Banner, 1999; Schein, 1992). Therefore, leadership and spirituality is closely related. Konz and Ryan (1999) note that as the concern for finding meaning in work became greater, managers and leaders moved into the role as aids to the search for meaning in the workplace.

It is obvious that there is a soul-searching epidemic afoot in the workplace (Caudron, 2000). Employees are no longer content with just a paycheque and good benefits; they want meaning and passion. They search for something greater than themselves to believe in, they cannot help but to extend that search to their work lives (Caudron, 2000).

## **2.5. WORK COMMITMENT AND ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH MEANING**

*Creating the work one loves challenges someone to be his true, authentic self, and to resolutely believe in his unique gifts.*

*Giesbrecht (1998).*

The construct of work commitment is well researched. However, most of the research has been directed to clarify the characteristics, the antecedents, and the outcomes of the specific facets of commitment. Little attention was given to investigate the reasons for becoming work committed holistically. In other words,

what stimulates the facets of work commitment such as work values, job involvement, career commitment and organisational commitment simultaneously? It is postulated that purpose in life, having found meaning in life, can be a major source for people becoming committed to what they do in the workplace. This study focuses specifically on three facets of work commitment, namely work values, job involvement and career commitment. The selection of these three facets of work commitment is motivated in the next section.

### **2.5.1. The work commitment construct**

Steers and Porter (1979) posit that people tend to evaluate themselves according to what they have been able to accomplish. If they see their job as hampering the achievement of their full potential, it often becomes difficult for them to maintain a sense of purpose at work (Steers & Porter, 1979). Hence, the nature of the job and the meaning it has for the employee can have a profound impact on employee attitudes and work behaviour (Steers & Porter, 1979). Levels of work commitment could have serious implications for an organisation's productivity.

Extensive studies have been undertaken on the different facets of work commitment. However, there is still not uniform agreement or clarity on what the construct of work commitment consists of. For instance, Morrow (1983) suggests that work commitment comprises of five different facets: organisational commitment, career commitment (career salience), job involvement (Morrow (1983) includes work centrality in job involvement), work values (PWE), and union commitment. Morrow (1983) suggests that a degree of redundancy exists among these constructs, but sees it as a problem of instrumentation rather than of conceptual overlap.

In another study, Morrow, Eastman and McElroy (1991) investigated the validity of five work commitment constructs (PWE, career salience, job involvement, work as a central life interest and organisational commitment). They found that some degree of concept redundancy existed among job involvement, career salience and work as a central life interest. Organisational commitment and PWE scales demonstrated the least redundancy; i.e. they appeared to be clearly separate concepts (Morrow et al.,

1991). Blau, Paul and St John (1993) tested for redundancy among four work commitment facets i.e. career commitment, job involvement, work values and organisational commitment. Blau et al. (1993) conclude that their results indicate that occupational commitment, job involvement, work values and organisational commitment are distinct work commitment facets.

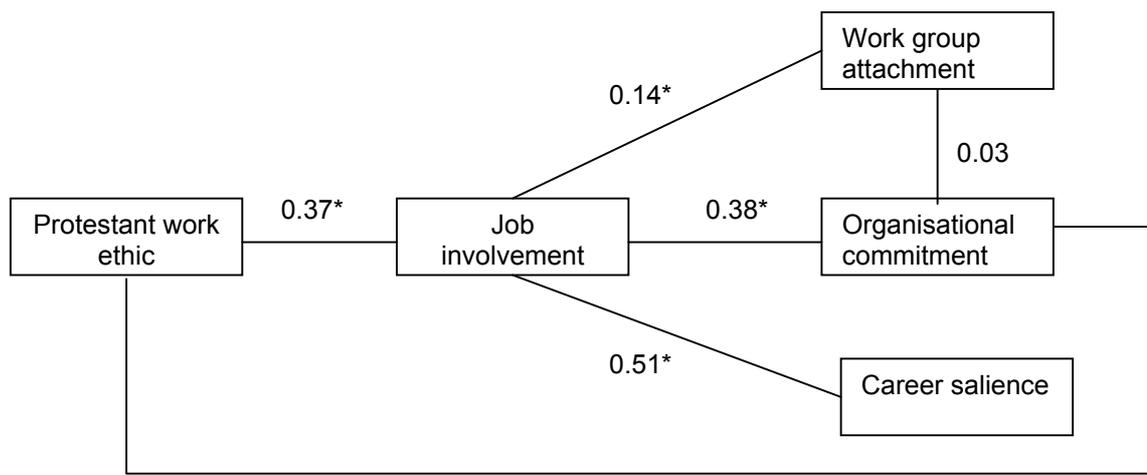
### **2.5.2. The interrelationships between work commitment facets**

The antecedents and consequences of a variety of work commitment constructs have been widely investigated (Morrow, 1983). However, most of these studies treated the facets of work commitment in isolation. Furthermore, the theoretical linkages among the major facets of work commitment have not been the focus of much comparative study, and are not fully understood (Randall & Cote, 1991). Studies that did focus on the interrelationships and linkages between the facets of work commitment include those of Randall and Cote (1991), Cohen (1999), and Cohen (2000). As these studies are fundamental to the research design, they will be discussed in more detail.

Randall and Cote (1991) tested the relationships between the different constructs in their hypothesised work commitment model with data from a sample of 455 university employees. The hypothesised model, a relationship model, not a causal model, was developed through a process that conceptually integrated previous studies. Their survey instrument used five specific scales, tapping different facets of work commitment, namely: PWE, job involvement, organisational commitment, career salience, and work group attachment. Randall and Cote (1991) found that the strongest relationships were found for the effects of job involvement on organisational commitment and career salience. Job involvement explained 25.5% of the variance in career salience and 14.8% of the variance in organisational commitment. In addition, job involvement was significantly influenced by the PWE (explaining 13.6% of the variance in job involvement) and work group attachment (explaining 2% of the variance in job involvement). Contrary to their expectation, work group attachment had no significant effect on organisational commitment; it appeared to influence organisational commitment only through job involvement.

Consistent with their expectations, Randall and Cote (1991) found that work group attachment had no direct effect on either PWE or career salience.

The results of Randall and Cote (1991) study can be graphically illustrated as indicated in Figure 5. The relationships indicated are the standardised estimates derived from the factor loadings. Randall and Cote (1991) did not indicate the significance of the path between PWE and organisational commitment.



\* Significant at 0.01 level,  
(no \* = not significant)

**Figure 5.** Randall and Cote's (1991) model of relationships between work commitment constructs

Randall and Cote (1991) comment that the findings point to the pivotal role that job involvement plays in a unified theory of work commitments constructs. Job involvement appears to directly and strongly influence organisational commitment and career salience. Further, individuals holding a strong PWE, appear to be highly involved in their jobs (Randall & Cote, 1991). Randall and Cote (1991) observed that it appears that individuals highly committed to the value of work may develop a strong loyalty to the organisation. Thus, higher levels of the PWE may lead to greater organisational commitment (Randall & Cote, 1991).

Cohen (2000) comments that in the Randall and Cote (1991) model, Protestant work ethic and workgroup commitment are the exogenous variables that affect job involvement. People with a strong work ethic may be motivated to apply more effort, to continue to do so even when bored or tired, and to take responsibility for their work. They may feel a moral obligation to perform the task to the best of their ability. Thus, they are more likely to be job involved than people with lower levels of PWE (Cohen, 2000).

Morrow (1993) also proposed a conceptualised model to reflect the relationships between the various facets of work commitment. Her model suggests that of all forms of commitment the job is the closest, and most immediate, tangible and concrete focus. Job involvement was postulated to be affected by work situation variables (Morrow, 1993). Therefore, changes in the work setting will have an immediate effect on job involvement. The placement of group commitment as the second moderator is based on a similar rationale as job involvement. Group commitment, like job involvement, can also be perceived in Morrow's (1993) terms as a close, immediate, tangible and concrete focus. According to Morrow's (1993) model, job involvement and group commitment should mediate the relationship between the other commitment foci and work outcomes. Figure 6 illustrates Morrow's model of work commitment relationships.

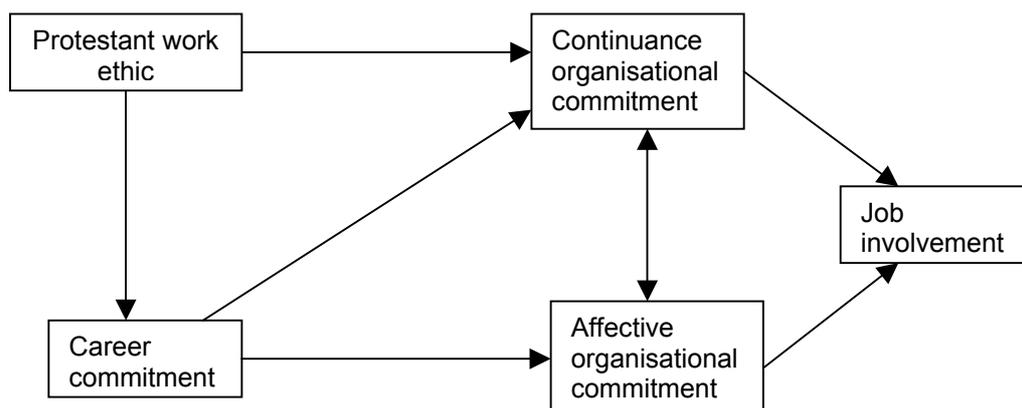


Figure 6. Morrow's (1993) model of work commitment relationships

Cohen (1999) tested Morrow's (1993) conceptualisation in comparison with the empirical alternative by Randall and Cote (1991). Cohen (1999) reports that results

of Confirmatory Factor Analysis (N = 238) and correlation analysis showed an acceptable discriminant validity among the five commitment foci (career commitment, job involvement, PWE, continuance organisational commitment, and affective organisational commitment). However, he reports that the results of path analysis showed a poor fit with Morrow's (1993) model and a better fit with Randall and Cote's (1991) model. Revised versions of both models, based on modification suggestions that became apparent from the fit indices were also investigated by Cohen (1999). Again the fit indices supported the Randall and Cote (1991) approach better than Morrow's model (Cohen, 1999).

The correlations among the work commitment facets in Cohen (1999) study showed that the PWE has a nonsignificant relationship with the two forms of organisational commitment ( $r = 0.062$ , and  $r = 0.070$ ), and significant but weak correlations with career commitment ( $r = 0.112$ ) and job involvement ( $r = 0.272$ ). The correlations indicate a pattern where strong intercorrelations exist among affective organisational commitment with job involvement ( $r = 0.53$ ) and career commitment ( $r = 0.48$ ) (Cohen, 1999).

Figure 7 illustrates Cohen's assessment of Randall and Cote's (1991) model. This model fitted the data better than Morrow's (1993) model. The strengths of the various path coefficients as found by Cohen (1999) are indicated in the model.

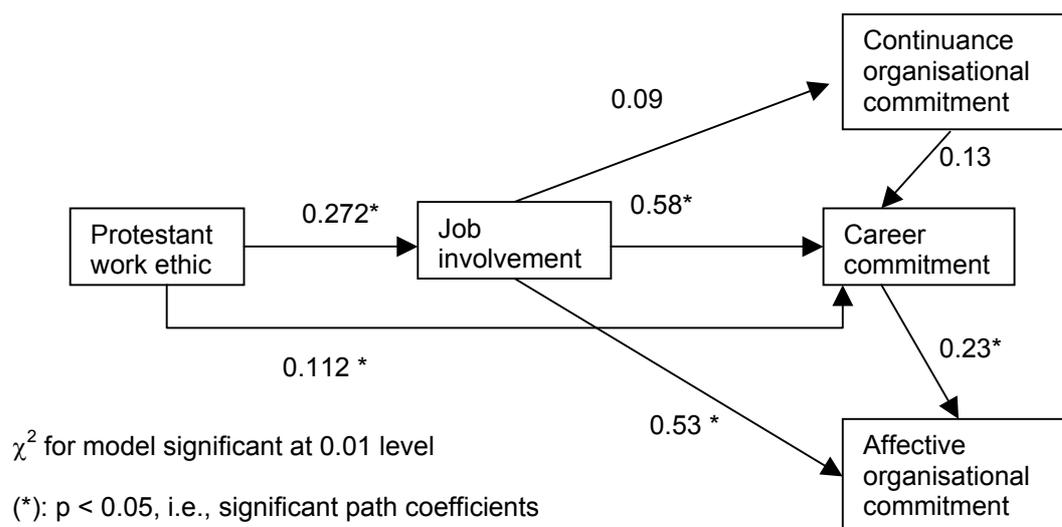
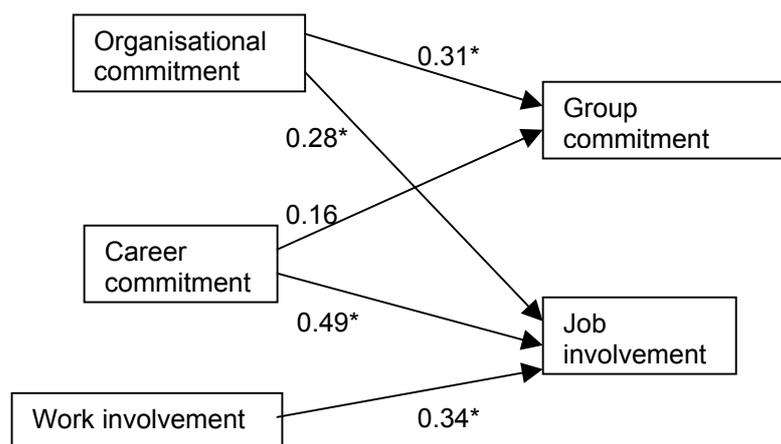


Figure 7. Cohen's (1999) analysis of the Randall and Cote (1991) model.

After his 1999 study, Cohen (2000) examined the relationships between work commitment foci and work outcomes. Again he based his analysis on Morrow's (1993) conceptualisation, and Randall and Cote's (1991) model. Cohen (2000) applied path analysis to both models with a sample of 283 nurses from hospitals in Israel. Cohen (2000) reports that the result of analysis again showed a better fit to the data of the Randall and Cote (1991) model than that of Morrow (1993).

Morrow's (1993) model was only partially supported by the path coefficients. The findings showed the job involvement mediated the relationship as expected (Cohen, 2000). It was related to the three exogenous variables, work involvement (0.34), organisational commitment (0.28), and occupational commitment (0.49). Only one exogenous variable, organisational commitment (0.31) was related to group commitment. Moreover, group commitment was not related to any of the outcome variables (Cohen, 2000). The model and the various relationships are illustrated in Figure 8.

The other work outcomes measured by Cohen (2000) namely absenteeism, turnover intentions and turnover are not indicated in Figure 8 or discussed further as they were deemed to be outside the scope of this study. The various path coefficients as found by Cohen (2000) are indicated in the model.



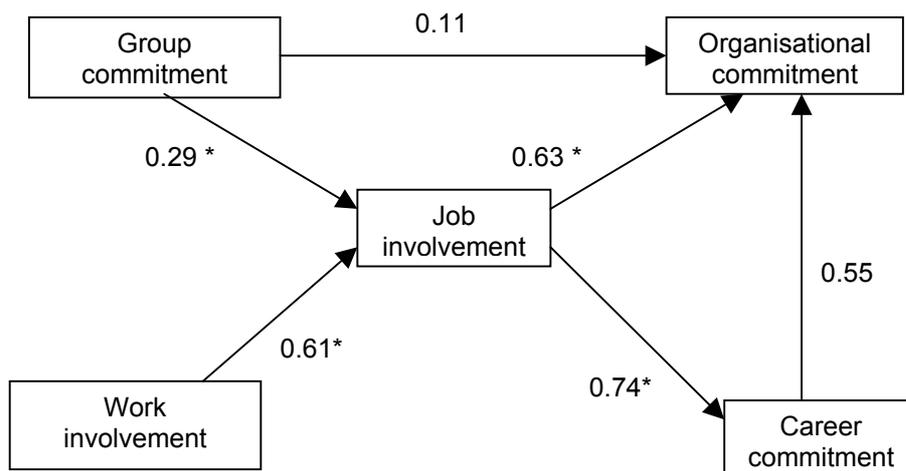
$\chi^2$  for model significant at 0.01 level

(\*):  $p < 0.05$ , i.e., significant path coefficients

Figure 8. Cohen's (2000) analysis of the Morrow (1993) model.

In contrast to Marrow's (1993) model, Cohen (2000) comments that the strength of the Randall and Cote (1991) model is the strong support that its anticipated path coefficients received from the data. All three mediation processes suggested by the model were supported: job involvement mediated the interrelationships among commitment foci; occupational commitment and organisational commitment mediated the relationship between commitment foci and turnover intentions; and turnover intentions mediated the relationship of organisational commitment and occupational commitment actual turnover (Cohen, 2000).

The findings showed that job involvement mediated the relationships as expected. It was related to the three exogenous variables, work involvement (0.34), organisational commitment (0.08) and occupational commitment (0.49) (Cohen, 2000). According to the Randall and Cote (1991) model, job involvement mediated the relationship of group commitment and work involvement to occupational commitment and organisational commitment. All four path coefficients were significant: from group commitment to job involvement (0.29); from work involvement to job involvement (0.61); from job involvement to occupational commitment (0.63); and to organisational commitment (0.63) (Randall & Cote, 1991). These relationships are graphically illustrated in Figure 9.



$\chi^2$  for model significant at 0.01 level

(\*):  $p < 0.05$ , i.e., significant path coefficients

Figure 9. Cohen's (2000) analysis of the Randall and Cote (1991) model.

Again, as in the case with Morrow's (1993) model, the other work outcomes measured by Cohen (2000) namely absenteeism, turnover intentions and turnover are not indicated in Figure 9 or discussed further.

Cohen (2000) concludes that the findings support Randall and Cote's (1991) argument that job involvement seems to be a key moderating variable in the interrelationships among work commitment constructs (Cohen, 2000). It affects organisational commitment because situational factors have been identified as potentially the most important set of antecedents to organisational commitment. Job involvement was also found to predict career salience because it fosters job challenge, which in turn leads to career identification (Cohen, 2000). Job involvement itself is strongly affected by work involvement, which has a key role in influencing an employee's affective responses in the workplace (Cohen, 2000).

Cohen (2000) questions the usefulness of group commitment as one of the commitment foci in terms of the relationship with work outcomes based on his findings. He argues that this view was initiated by the very few significant paths of this focus with any other commitment foci and by the nonsignificant relationship of this focus with any of the work outcomes. This finding was quite consistent across all the models tested (Cohen, 2000). Based on this argument of Cohen (2000), group commitment was not used in this research study.

The work commitment models of Randall and Cote (1991), Cohen (1999) and Cohen (2000) suggest that prevailing facets of work commitment are work values, job involvement, and career commitment. These three constructs are discussed in more detail in the following sections.

### **2.5.3. Work values**

Frankl (1967) posits that values aid one's search for meaning, and that values furnish the meaning in the typical situations that occur in life. Rokeach (1973) differentiates between two types of values namely terminal values (desirable end-

states of existence such as exciting life and self-respect) and instrumental values (preferred modes of behaviour such as logical, responsible and broad-minded). The framework against which most research on work values has been conducted is Max Weber's PWE (Hoole, 1997). Weber's writings have been so influential that most studies of the PWE tend to assume, rather than test its existence. The PWE refers to the extent to which a person feels that personal worth results from self-sacrificing work or occupational achievement (Blood, 1969).

Blood (1969) found correlations between the PWE and satisfaction, whereas non-PWE is inversely related to satisfaction. This implies that the stronger a worker's work values, the more he will be satisfied in his work and with life in general. Blood (1969) concludes that the way a person evaluates work is related to his attitudes toward his particular job, thereby suggesting a relationship between work values and job involvement. He argues that someone who thinks that work is to be undertaken only when all other strategies fail, will likely be unhappy even in the most pleasant work situation. On the other hand, a person who feels that personal worth results from self-sacrificing work or occupational achievement would derive some satisfaction, even in a menial position (Blood, 1969).

Furnham (1990b) identified eight different scales commonly used for measuring work values. He administered all eight questionnaires to large groups of subjects from different nationalities (over 1000 subjects) and factor analysed all the items from all the questionnaires. Furnham (1990b) found that the different scales of work values showed dramatically different sets of correlations with other variables. He also found that the different questionnaires focus unevenly on different aspects of the work values. Furnham (1990b) concludes that as each of the scales focus on different aspects, different results will occur depending on the scale that is used. Furnham (1990b) concludes that psychometricians concerned with devising PWE measures have been more concerned with reliability of the scales, than validating whether it is measuring the PWE as conceived by Weber.

In a related observation, Niles (1999) comments that there are few clear statements about what constitutes the work values. It has been linked to many different constructs such as achievement motivation, authoritarianism, and postponement of

gratification. It has also been linked to several attitudinal correlates such as attitude to leisure, money, time, and success. Niles (1999) concludes that the way work values are operationalised in contemporary literature, seems to be different from Weber's proposal. The scales that attempt to measure work values seem to be tapping largely into one primary dimension, which is a commitment to hard work (Niles, 1999).

Although Weber linked this work ethic to Protestants, research results are not conclusive in this regard. In support of this association, Giorgi and Marsh's (1990) results confirmed that Protestants were more likely than Catholics to have high scores on the work ethic factor. They found that both individual religious denomination and national religious culture produced significant effects. On the other hand, there can be a stronger commitment to a "Protestant" work ethic among non-Protestant cultures. Niles (1999) conducted a study of Sri Lankans (assumed to be non-Protestant) and Australians (generally Protestant), using the Australian Work Ethic scale (Ho & Lloyd, 1984) as a measure of PWE. The Sri Lankans scored significantly higher than the Australians did, suggesting that Sri Lankans endorse a commitment to hard work more strongly. However, Niles (1999) found that the two groups emphasised different work-related values. He concluded that hard work appeared to be universally seen as an end in itself and even as morally right.

Work values are a particularly important work commitment construct as it plays a key role in influencing an employee's affective responses in the workplace. For instance, Morrow (1983) views work values as a personality variable and note that it is assumed to be a relatively fixed attribute over an individual's life course. Randall and Cote (1991) found that individuals holding strong work values were more involved with their jobs. Some researchers report that individuals were more committed to the organisation when their values were congruent with those of their managers (Sagie et al., 1996).

#### 2.5.4. Job involvement

If a person has a clear purpose in life, his job can be one of the ways that fulfils this purpose, or through which he fulfils his purpose. If this holds true, he should also identify psychologically with his job, which in turn will influence his behaviour. The psychological identification with one's job, or job involvement, has received substantial attention in commitment and motivation literature (Paterson & O'Driscoll, 1990).

Kanungo (1979) describes job involvement as the opposite pole of work alienation and argues that a distinction should be made between what he calls (a) involvement in a particular job context and (b) involvement in work generally. He regards job involvement as a term descriptive of an individual's belief about one's present job, a function of the satisfaction of the individual's present needs. He goes on to argue that job involvement is a specific belief resulting from the relationship with one's present job. Kanungo (1979, 1982) relates job involvement to the importance of a person's intrinsic and extrinsic needs. On the other hand he sees work involvement as the result of socialisation, which he warns must not be confused with intrinsic motivation. Work involvement is however also seen as satisfaction with work in general, and the perceptions a person has about the need-satisfying potential of his/her work.

A major determinant of job involvement is a value orientation learned early in the socialisation process (Blau, 1985a). An individual who has internalised the work ethic will probably be job involved, regardless of the context within which he or she might be employed. Indirect empirical support suggests a direct relationship between the PWE and job involvement (Randall & Cote, 1991). Blau (1985a) found that the psychological identification of job involvement conceptualisation was empirically independent and can operationally be distinguished from other related constructs such as intrinsic motivation.

Although job involvement has not been related previously to the construct of meaning, the degree of a person's job involvement has been found to be related to several personal and situational characteristics. For instance, Lorence (1987) found

a curvilinear relationship between age and job involvement. Paterson and O'Driscoll (1990) report that positive relationships between job involvement and the number of regular hours worked, amount of unpaid overtime and effort put into the job suggest that the concept of job involvement may be a potential predictor of performance-related behaviours. Paterson and O'Driscoll (1990) comment that job satisfaction was positively related to well-being and negatively associated with turnover intentions.

Randall and Cote (1991) describe job involvement as a moderating variable in work commitment. In their study, job involvement strongly influences both organisational commitment and career commitment. Further, individuals holding strong PWE and, to a lesser extent, those with strong work group attachments appear to be highly involved in their jobs (Randall & Cote, 1991). Job involvement has been positively linked with PWE (Blau, 1987), and job satisfaction (Brown, 1996b).

Furnham, Brewin and O'Kelly (1994) examined (N = 100) the relationship between work-specific cognitive style, and measures of organisational commitment, job satisfaction, and involvement. Perception of personal control over positive outcomes were positively correlated with job commitment ( $r = 0.48$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), job involvement ( $r = 0.61$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) and job satisfaction ( $r = 0.54$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), a finding that appears to generalise across different occupational groups. Furnham, Brewin and O'Kelly's (1994) study indicated strong correlations between locus of control and some of the facets of work commitment. These findings have specific implications for this study which investigates the relationship between work commitment and meaning as it has been shown in other studies that meaning also correlates strongly with internal locus of control (Crumbaugh, 1971; Battista & Almond, 1973; Furnham, Brewin & O'Kelly, 1994; Hardcastle, 1985; Reker, 1977; Phillips, 1980; Yarnell, 1972).

Riipenen (1997) found that job involvement was significantly positively correlated with positive life affects (e.g. happiness, satisfaction, self-esteem), and negatively correlated with negative life affects (e.g. anxiety, depression, hopelessness). However, Riipenen (1997) concludes that the relationship depends on the basis of the involvement. Job involvement was positively related to well-being with the level of well-being was higher in the cases where the persons experienced need fulfilment

in the job. Correspondingly, job involvement that was not based on need fulfilment was independent from, or negatively related to well-being. These findings of Riiipenen (1997) provide support for a hypothesis that job involvement will be related to meaning.

#### **2.5.5. Career commitment**

A person's commitment to his career field or role is to be distinguished from commitment to his daily job (i.e. job involvement), or to his organisation (i.e. organisational commitment). Career commitment refers to the importance of an individual's career in his life. Carson and Bedeian (1994) defined career commitment as one's motivation to work in a chosen vocation or in a chosen career role.

One can speculate that if a person experiences life as meaningful and his career is one of the ways of exercising his meaning, then he can be expected to be committed to that career. Greenhaus (1973) found significant relationships between career commitment (career salience) and congruence between the individual's self-perception and his occupation. They also found significant relationships between career commitment and the tendency to choose an ideal occupation, and between career commitment and self-esteem. Based upon their review of the literature on professionalism, Kerr, Von Glinow, and Schriesheim (1977) outlined six characteristics of "ideal" professions: expertise, autonomy, commitment to work and the profession, identification with the profession, ethics, and collegial maintenance of standards. The term profession as described by Kerr et al. (1977) is very similar to Gouldner's (1957) description of cosmopolitans.

Blau (1988a) confirmed that career commitment is distinct from other forms of commitment such as job involvement and organisational commitment. However, he comments that professions are a special type of vocation. Blau (1988a) suggests that the term "profession" should only be applied to people who are consistently high on all six characteristics discussed by Kerr et al. (1977). Based upon this discussion, Blau (1988a) suggests the change in definition of career commitment, as noted

earlier, to "one's attitude towards one's vocation, *including* a profession" (Blau, 1988a).

Boshoff, Bennet and Kellerman (1994) argue that a career develops through different stages during a person's life with a resulting change in career anchors, with these anchors then influencing a person's career commitment differently. Konz and Ryan (1999) comment that an individual's business career is a path of spiritual growth. A career becomes a path to personal enlightenment, leading through the mastery of material skills to spiritual growth and self-knowledge. They posit that organisations which provide their employees with opportunities for spiritual development perform better than those that do not provide such developmental opportunities (Konz & Ryan, 1999).

Carson and Bedeian (1994) report concerns with Blau's (1985b) measure of career commitment. They argue that career commitment has more dimensions, these components are career identity, career resilience, and career planning. Career resilience is the persistence component of commitment; commitment to a career in the face of adversity (Carson & Bedeian, 1994). Career identity is the directional component of commitment embodying one's emotions; career identity taps into professional or occupational commitment. The career planning dimension is relevant to several career dimensions; it has been utilised to tap career salience (Carson & Bedeian, 1994). Carson and Bedeian (1994) developed a career commitment measure in an attempt to provide a psychometrically sound instrument in terms of their conceptualisation of career commitment.

Carson and Bedeian's (1994) measure of career commitment is used in this study due to its ability to measure three different dimensions of career commitment. The psychometric properties of Carson and Bedeian's (1994) career commitment measure are discussed in this dissertation in section 3.2.5.

### **2.5.6. Personal meaning and work commitment**

Battista and Almond (1973) suggest that an individual's ability to perceive himself as fulfilling the criteria of his life-framework belief system will depend upon finding a realistic fit between the values, goals, needs, and roles of the individual, as well as the values, goals, needs and roles of the social structure within which he works. This description of Battista and Almond (1973) comes very close to the facets of work commitment and work motivation, suggesting that meaning is related to work motivation and commitment.

Baumeister (1991) comments that meanings and values also play a significant role in defining one's sense of self and identity. Lack of meaning and value result in an amorphous or a fragile sense of self as is often found in borderline personality disorders (Baumeister, 1991). On the other hand, surplus meaning and an excess of value placed on the self may strain its resources to the limits and lead to various forms of escape behaviours, both benign (e.g., preoccupation with physical fitness and spiritual practices) and self-destructive (e.g., excessive use of alcohol and other mind-altering drugs and thrill-seeking) (Baumeister, 1991).

## **2.6. WORK MOTIVATION AND ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH MEANING**

To Frankl (1970), a person's primary source of motivation is his "will to meaning". This section investigates other theories of work motivation in order to evaluate Frankl's view of motivation. There is so much research in motivation that any attempt to be comprehensive would have stretched this dissertation into several long volumes. The discussion rather provides an overview of the current state of theories of work motivation and brings these theories in relation to Frankl's theory of motivation.

### 2.6.1. The current state of work motivation theories

*At some level and in some way, work must make sense to an individual before he will perform it.*

*Victor Vroom (1964)*

Interest in work motivation peaked in the 1970s and early 1980s, with the last 15 years seeing little empirical or theoretical research on work motivation (Ambrose & Kulik, 1999). Over the years, numerous theories have been proposed, attempting to capture the various sources of motivation energising individual behaviour as indicated in the previous discussion. These theories all propose a limited set of motivational sources, differing with respect to the degree to which they theorise a dominant source of motivation.

Porter (1968) as well as Steers and Porter (1979) describe the basic building blocks of a generalised model of most theories of work motivation as: (1) needs or expectations; (2) behaviour modification; (3) goals; and (4) some form of feedback. Motivation theories posit that individuals possess a multitude of needs, desires and expectations. The emergence of such a need, desire, or expectation generally creates a state of disequilibrium within the individuals which they will try to reduce (Steers & Porter, 1979). Information feeds back to the individuals concerning the impact of their behaviour. Such cues may lead them to modify their present behaviour or may reassure them that their present course of action is correct (Steers & Porter 1979).

Eight main theories of work motivation are described in OB literature. Table 6 summarises the main theories of motivation, and was constructed through analysis of the writings of the main theorists, as well as by authors such as Lawler (1969), Steers and Porter (1979), Naylor, Pritchard and Ilgen (1980), Leonard, Beauvais and Scholl (1995a, 1995b), Muchinsky (1987), Carlisle and Manning (1994), Pinder (1984, 1998), Carver (1997), Van Eerde and Thierry (1996), Stajkovic and Luthans (1997), Luthans and Stajkovic (1999), and Ambrose and Kulik (1999). These models differ with respect to the degree to which they theorise a dominant source of motivation.

Table 6

Main theories of motivation

<b>Theory</b>	<b>Source of motivation</b>	<b>Main theorists</b>
<b>Need theories</b>	People have different needs and desires, which cause individuals to pursue certain courses of action in an effort to regain internal equilibrium	Maslow (1954), Herzberg, Mausner and Snyder (1959), McClelland (1961), Alderfer (1972)
<b>Equity theory</b>	Drive to reduce feelings of tension caused by perceived iniquity. How hard a person is willing to work is a function of a perceptual comparison of efforts and rewards with efforts and rewards of others.	Adams (1963)
<b>Expectancy theory</b>	Relationship among desired outcomes, performance-reward and effort-variables. People are seen to deliberately choose how hard to work based on the gains they expect to receive from their efforts.	Vroom (1964)
<b>Reinforcement theory</b>	Schedule of reinforcement used to reward people for their performance. Behaviour is a function of its consequences.	General, mainly based on the contributions of B.F Skinner.
<b>Goal-setting theory</b>	Behaviour is directed by setting specific target objectives and pursuing of these goals.	Locke (1968), Locke and Latham (1990)
<b>Intrinsic motivation theory</b>	Feelings of competence and self-control are subjective rewards that come from performing tasks well and from enjoyment.	Lawler (1969), Deci (1975), Deci and Ryan (1985)
<b>Self-concept theory</b>	People are motivated to enhance their self-esteem, self-worth and self-consistency.	Carlisle and Manning (1994)

Muchinsky (1987) reports that research on need theories provided mixed support for the theories. It was found that need importance is not related to need deficiency. Yet, positive correlations were found between need fulfilment and life satisfaction

(Muchinsky, 1987). For instance, some of Maslow's (1954) propositions were totally rejected in some research studies, whilst other studies provide some support for the importance of basic needs; the least evidence was for the higher-level needs.

In terms of the equity theory, predictions regarding the effects of under-compensation have proven to be very robust, predicting behaviour in both the laboratory and the field (Ambrose & Kulik, 1999; Muchinsky, 1987). However, there continues to be ambiguity about the effects of overpayment inequity (Ambrose & Kulik, 1999). As a result, the equity theory largely fell out of favour in the organisational behaviour literature (Ambrose & Kulik, 1999).

In terms of intrinsic motivation, Muchinsky (1987) reports that research is dominated by laboratory research and anecdotes, and that it is not tested enough under field conditions. He concludes that the theories of intrinsic motivation have not been of much help in explaining work motivation. One can speculate that this might have been due to intrinsic motivation historically being associated with hedonistic type pleasure, rather than being grounded in an existential base such as meaning.

Expectancy theory is a highly rational and conscious explanation of human motivation. However, research suggests that people differ in the extent to which their behaviour is motivated by rational processes (Muchinsky, 1987). Yet, while not all research on expectancy theory is totally supportive, the results generally have tended to confirm its predictions (Muchinsky, 1987). Muchinsky (1987) notes that research has also shown that there are some personality correlates of expectancy theory. Individuals for whom the theory is most predictive have an internal locus of control. Muchinsky (1987) concludes that while other motivation theories also show promise for explaining selected aspects of behaviour, probably none has received the consistent support or has the generalisability of expectancy theory (Muchinsky, 1987). Ambrose and Kulik (1999) conclude that expectancy theory has become a standard in motivation theories.

Research on expectancy theory also indicated associations with goal attainment theory. For example, difficult goals were associated with higher instrumentality - that is, achieving higher goals was more associated with a series of specific outcomes

(e.g., showing competence, developing ability) (Mento, Locke, & Klein, 1992). Ambrose and Kulik (1999) confirm substantial research support for the principles of goal-setting theory. They confirm that research indicates consistently that specific difficult goals lead to better performance than specific easy goals, general goals, or no goals. They also confirm that goal setting is most effective when there is feedback showing progress towards the goal (Ambrose & Kulik, 1999). However, Ambrose and Kulik (1999) comment that the relationship between goal difficulty and performance assumes that the individual is committed to the goal and possesses the knowledge and skills necessary to achieve it.

The empirical support for the various work motivation theories and the industrial applicability of these theories is summarised in Table 7. This summary is based mainly on the analyses of Muchinsky (1987) and Ambrose and Kulik (1999), but also includes the contributions from authors such as Steers and Porter (1979), Naylor et al. (1980), Leonard et al. (1995a, 1995b), Muchinsky (1987), Carlisle and Manning (1994), Pinder (1984, 1998), Carver (1997), Van Eerde and Thierry (1996), and Stajkovic and Luthans (1997), and Luthans and Stajkovic (1999).

Table 7

Evaluation of support for main work motivation theories and their applicability

<b>Theory</b>	<b>Empirical support</b>	<b>Industrial applicability</b>
<b>Need theory</b>	<b>Weak:</b> Little support for proposed relationships among needs	<b>Very limited:</b> Theory lacks sufficient specificity to guide behaviour
<b>Equity theory</b>	<b>Mixed:</b> Good support for underpayment inequity, weak support for overpayment inequity	<b>Limited:</b> Social comparisons are made but feelings of inequity can be deduced through means other than increased motivation
<b>Expectancy theory</b>	<b>Moderate-strong:</b> More strongly supported in within-subject than a cross-subject experiments	<b>Strong:</b> Theory provides a rational basis for why people expend effort, although not all behaviour is as consciously determined as postulated
<b>Reinforcement theory</b>	<b>Moderate:</b> Ratio reinforcement schedules evoke superior performance compared to interval schedules, but little difference exists among various ratio schedules	<b>Moderate:</b> Contingent payment for performance is possible in some jobs, although ethical problems can be present in an organisation's attempt to shape employee behaviour
<b>Goal-setting theory</b>	<b>Moderate-strong:</b> Performance on the goal-setting conditions usually superior to conditions under which no goals are set	<b>Strong:</b> Ability to set goals is not restricted to certain types of people or jobs
<b>Intrinsic motivation theory</b>	<b>Mixed:</b> Extrinsic and intrinsic rewards do not seem to be additive, but extrinsic rewards do not always decrease intrinsic motivation	<b>Limited:</b> Little evidence that intrinsically motivated tasks remain intrinsically motivating for long periods of time
<b>Self-concept theory</b>	<b>Little:</b> This is a new notion to work motivation and few empirical studies has been conducted	<b>Moderate:</b> Assisting people to change their perceptions of self-worth, and self-esteem is difficult, but should have long lasting effects.

Leonard et al. (1995b) studied the sources of motivation as they have been reflected in themes from the various theories of motivation and research studies over the years (as summarised in Table 6). They conclude that all the motivational theories

add up to five basic sources of motivation as described in their Sources of Motivation model (Table 8).

Table 8

Sources of motivation model (Leonard et al., 1995a)

Sources of Motivation	Description
<b>Intrinsic Process</b>	Individuals primarily motivated by intrinsic process will engage in activities which offer subjective rewards, especially if they can be considered as fun. Feedback will not serve to motivate continued performance.
<b>Instrumental</b>	Instrumental rewards are a motivating source when individuals believe their behaviour will lead to certain outcomes such as pay, praise, etc. Reinforcement, expectancy and equity theories are models of motivation based on exchange relationships.
<b>Self Concept: External</b>	The individual is primarily other-directed, and attempts to meet the expectations of others by behaving in ways that will elicit social feedback consistent with self-perceptions. The individual strives to earn the acceptance and status of reference group members.
<b>Self Concept: Internal</b>	Internal standards become the basis for the ideal self. The individual tends to use fixed standards of self-measurement as he attempts to achieve higher levels of competency. The motivating force for individuals who are inner-driven and motivated by their self-concept is task feedback.
<b>Goal Identification</b>	Behaviour is motivated by goal internalisation when the individual adopts attitudes and behaviours because their content is congruent with their value system. The individual believes in the cause, and as such is willing to work towards the goals of an organisation supporting this cause.

The various theories of work motivation attempt to capture some of these types of sources of motivation affecting organisational members. However, it appears that the proponents of different theories seem to be more obsessed with distinguishing the theory from the others than they are with showing how an organisation can develop a motivating and satisfying total work system (Lawler, 1980). Katzell and Thompson (1990) conclude that although much has been learned about work motivation, there is still a long way to advancing the understanding of its ingredients and in perfecting techniques for applying that understanding.

Goal attainment and intrinsic motivation will be used in measuring work motivation in this study. The reason for selecting these measurements of work motivation is mainly their postulated association with meaning as discussed in more detail in section 3.2.1. The theoretical background of these two theories and their relationships with meaning are discussed in more detail in the following sections.

### **2.6.2. Motivation through the attainment of goals**

Goal setting theory assumes that human action is directed by conscious goals and intentions (Locke & Latham, 1990). The origin of the term *goal* lies within the sporting context. It actually refers to the "posts between which the ball is to be driven in order to score" in games such as soccer (Hornby & Cowie, 1974, p. 371). Goals can therefore be defined as a person's vision, desires, strategies, and plans, expressed as measurable results (French & Bell, 1978), with the intention to direct and align his energy and effort (Mink, Shultz & Mink, 1991). In goal setting literature, goals are usually defined in terms of the performance standards to be attained. Researchers investigate the impact of variables such as goal specificity, goal difficulty, and goal acceptance on goal attainment (Locke & Latham, 1990). The present study focus on the motivational potential of goals and not on performance or the reaching of these goals. The ability of the individual to achieve goals or to perform is therefore not included in this discussion.

According to Locke (1968) who introduced goal attainment theory, goals have two major functions: goals are a basis for motivation, and goals direct behaviour. Locke (1968) stipulates that two conditions must be met before goals can influence performance. First, the individual must be aware of the goal and know what must be accomplished. Second, the individual must accept the goal and intend to engage in the behaviour needed for goal attainment (Locke, 1968). Locke (1968) states that goals that are more difficult lead to higher levels of performance. He believes that the commitment to a goal is proportional to its difficulty. Thus, goals that are more difficult engender more commitment to the attainment. The more specific the goal, the more concentrated the individual's effort in its pursuit and the more directed the behaviour (Locke, 1968). However, Locke (1968) comments that goals can be

rejected because they are seen as too difficult or too easy, or because the person does not know which behaviours are needed for goal attainment.

Goal setting and goal attainment are related to meaning and having a purpose in life. Battista and Almond (1973) indicated relationships between goal attainment and having meaning in life. They found in their study (N = 229) that subjects high on positive life regard (purpose in life) saw themselves as more fulfilled in the ultimate life-goals ( $p < 0.01$ ). Similarly, positive life regard subjects thought that their lives were making significantly greater rate of change for the better ( $p < 0.01$ ). Thirdly, the positive life regard subjects had, relative to the negative life regard subjects, higher goal-positions than in the past ( $p < 0.05$ ). Fourthly, positive life regard subjects perceived themselves as doing better than they had expected to do on their life-goals ( $p < 0.05$ ).

Latham and Locke (1979) comment that goal setting has been found to be one of the most effective motivators. Locke, Shaw, Saari and Latham (1981) reviewed 12 years of goal-setting research studies and found that 90% of the studies showed that specific and challenging goals lead to higher motivation and output than easy goals, general goals, or no goals. They conclude that goal setting improves performance when subjects have sufficient ability, feedback is provided on progress, rewards are given for goal attainment and when individuals accept assigned goals (Locke et al., 1981).

Dweck (1986) proposed that most individuals naturally have goal orientations: dispositions toward developing or demonstrating ability in achievement situations. Goal orientation also influences how individuals respond to task difficulty or task failure (Elliot & Dweck, 1988). Dweck (1991) notes that goal orientation creates the mental framework within which individuals interpret and respond to situations. For instance, goal orientation influences how individuals view effort (Leggett & Dweck, 1986).

Harackiewicz and Sansone (1991) propose a process model of intrinsic motivation that focuses on the types of goals individuals pursue. They identify two levels of goals most relevant to an individual's performance: higher-level purpose goals and

task-specific target goals. Purpose goals suggest the "why" for performing a behaviour and target goals provide the "how" (Harackiewicz & Sansone, 1991). The purpose goals can on a higher level be seen as being related to meaning and purpose in life.

Vandewalle (1997) confirms that higher level, more super-ordinate classes of goals influence the longer-term orientations and attitudes of individuals. Harackiewicz and Elliot (1998) emphasise that congruence between individuals' purpose and target goals is a key determinant of intrinsic motivation. Specifically, when target goals are congruent with higher order purpose goals, then can guide behaviour and foster task involvement, goal attainment and satisfaction.

Given all these contributions that seem to support goal attainment theory, goal setting seems to be generalisable as a theory of work motivation. It is not limited in applicability to highly rational people, though it does assume that people cognitively follow through with their intentions. Furthermore, goal orientation seems to be related to work intrinsic motivation. Vandewalle's (1997) goal orientation measure will be used in this study as a measure of work motivation.

### **2.6.3. Intrinsic motivation**

The distinction between internal and external work motivation originated with Herzberg, Mausner and Snyderman's (1958) study of determinants of job satisfaction. Lawler (1969) formally introduced the concept of intrinsic motivation, conceptualised as the degree to which a jobholder is motivated to perform well because of some subjective reward or internal feelings that he expects to receive or experience as a result of performing well. Later on, Warr et al. (1979) referred to intrinsic job motivation as the degree to which a person's work performance affects his self-esteem.

In support of Lawler's (1969) conceptualisation of intrinsic motivation, Lawler and Hall (1970) report that the results from their study indicated that job-involvement, higher order need-satisfaction and intrinsic motivation are separate and distinct kinds

of attitudes toward a job. These three types of attitudes were found to be related differentially to job design factors and to job behaviour (Lawler & Hall, 1970). Intrinsic motivation was less strongly related to the job characteristics measures, but was strongly related to both effort and performance. Intrinsic motivation was the strongest related to creativity, autonomy, relevance and effort.

Different theorists argue for various approaches to intrinsic motivation. For instance, Etzioni (1975) argues for three types of motivation based on member involvement: alienative, calculative, or moral. Alienative and calculative involvement are explained by exchange processes. Moral involvement is more complex and involves two types: pure and social. Katz and Khan (1978) characterised internalised motivation as self-expression, derived directly from role performance and internalised values. This result when group or organisational goals become incorporated into the value system of the individual.

One of the most influential theories invoked in the study of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation is the Cognitive Evaluation Theory (CET), originally put forward by Deci (1975) and further developed by Deci and Ryan (1985). Deci's (1975) CET suggests that there are two motivational subsystems: an extrinsic subsystem and an intrinsic subsystem. Intrinsic motivation (IM) refers to the fact of doing an activity for itself, and the pleasure and satisfaction derived from participation (Deci, 1975; Deci & Ryan, 1985, 1987, 1991). The rewards are inherent in the activity. Deci and Ryan (1985) posit that IM stems from the innate psychological needs of competence and self-determination. Thus, activities that allow individuals to experience such feelings will be engaged in freely out of IM (Vallerand & Pelletier, 1992). People are said to be more intrinsically motivated when they perceive themselves to be the source of their behaviour. People will be intrinsically motivated in work environments which maximise feelings of competence and self-determination (Wiersma, 1992).

Deci (1975) proposes that people expend effort due to IM as well as extrinsic motivation (EM). Contrary to IM, EM pertains to a wide variety of behaviours which are engaged in as a means to an end and not for their own sake (Deci, 1975). Leonard et al. (1995a) conclude that the dichotomy of IM versus EM characterises their different loci of causality. Intrinsically motivated behaviours are said to

represent internal causality, whereas behaviours that are induced by external forces are said to represent external causality.

Muchinsky (1987) confirms that research supports the fact that intrinsic motivation is not additive. He observes that if people perform a task for sheer pleasure, paying them will not necessarily add to their motivation to perform it. On the contrary, it appears to have the reverse effect. In further support, Kristjansson (1993) notes that intrinsically motivated activity diminishes after the subject had been rewarded for it and the rewards are subsequently terminated. Bumpus and Olbeter (1998) also confirm the detrimental effects of external rewards on intrinsic motivation.

Intrinsic motivation received mixed support. Kristjansson (1993) argues that CET can be shown to consist of common-sense psychology, hence empirical research aimed at testing the validity of its propositions is pointless and should be abandoned. Yet, Lu (1999) reports that his research results indicate that work motivation has substantial influence on well-being. Intrinsic motivations contribute positively to overall job satisfaction, whereas extrinsic motivations contribute positively to depression. It therefore warrants further research (Lu, 1999)

From an existential perspective, one can criticise the CET on its emphasis on a hedonistic type of pleasure as the source of intrinsic motivation. If Frankl's (1984a) postulation holds true that man's primary motivation is his search and will for meaning, then one should be able to derive intrinsic motivation from his efforts in striving to a higher cause. This cause is not pleasure related, nor satisfaction oriented. It is therefore postulated that intrinsic motivation can be associated with meaning in life.

#### **2.6.4. Meaning and meaningful work**

It was illustrated that work is central to many people's lives. It follows that the nature of the work, specifically a person's job, could have a significant influence on a person's psychological state. Lawler (1969) concludes that when a job is structured in a way that makes intrinsic rewards appear, then the job itself can be an effective

motivator. He suggested that in order for a job to be a source of motivation, jobs must be enlarged on both the vertical and horizontal dimensions. Pinder (1984) defines this as job enrichment. Job enrichment entails that higher levels of challenge and responsibility, task variety and task significance should result in higher job satisfaction. Although job enrichment appears to have been and still is a major job design strategy (Pinder, 1984; Pollock, Whitbred, & Contractor, 2000), there is not agreement on the desirability of job enrichment. Steers and Porter (1979) note that neither everyone wants to the same degree to have an enriched job, nor does everyone necessarily perform better when assigned one. Lawler (1980) comments that the focus on job enrichment has had a negative effect in the sense that it has suggested that it can be dealt with in isolation.

There is not clarity or agreement on the characteristics of a job that will be meaningful to the jobholder. Numerous studies attempted to discover the desired contents for jobs. Typical factors mentioned include advancement, autonomy, type of work, pay, benefits, scope of work and working conditions (Campion & McClelland, 1991; Hirschfeld, 2000; Jurgensen, 1978; Kanungo, 1981; Kelly, 1992; Locke, 1976). These factors seem to be related to both the environment and the personality of the individual. The concept of meaningful work is also often addressed in literature (Guion & Landy, 1972; Hackman & Oldham, 1980; Kanungo, 1981; Pinder, 1984; Pollock et al., 2000). However, meaningful work as described by these authors is vastly different to the definition of meaningfulness as proposed by Frankl. These studies and conclusions are therefore rather about work design theories than about meaning in life. However, no study could be found that investigated meaning, or purpose in life, as a variable that can potentially contribute to the experience of a job as being worthwhile.

Battista and Almond (1973) emphasise the importance of Person-Environment fit (or P-E fit) in the development of purpose in life. The concept of an ideal or congruent fit between individuals and their work environments has been expressed in various areas of psychology and forms the basis of Holland's (1973, 1985) theory. Holland (1973, 1985) describes that the lack of P-E fit results in stress disorders, low job satisfaction, dissatisfaction and burnout. On the other hand, functional P-E fit responses include a higher job involvement, higher organisational commitment and

less stress (Furnham & Walsh, 1991; Muchinsky, 1987). However, Pool (1997) reports that his research indicated that the most powerful predictor of job satisfaction was work motivation and not the other way around. For most people, it is unlikely that a satisfying job can compensate for a meaningless life (Ingeborg, 2000).

The concept of meaning as defined by Frankl does not appear in theories of meaningful work. Although many theorists on work design attest to the importance of giving people meaningful work, they use a more superficial definition of meaning. Meaningful work is generally equated with job enrichment, which is vastly different from having found meaning in life, or having a purpose in life. This distinction is significant and essential. Giving meaningful work, or doing meaningful work as defined by these authors, is based on an outside-in approach and thereby reactive. Having a purpose in life and finding work meaningful because of having a purpose implies an inside-out approach and is pro-active. Frankl's will to meaning is postulated to have a significant effect on people finding their work meaningful, even if their job designs do not per se offer job satisfaction. If someone found meaning in life, and his job is aligned with this meaning, he should be motivated notwithstanding the nature of the job.

#### **2.6.5. Work motivation as a manifestation of meaning**

*All men have purposes, and these purposes affect the way they work*

*Gellerman (1963)*

Saari (1991) posits that motivation and the intention to exert effort belongs to the realm of meaning. Victor Vroom suggested already in 1964 that at some level and in some way, work must make sense to an individual before he will perform it. He also suggested that the choice to work should be the principal focus of work motivation research (Vroom, 1964). Leonard et al. (1995a) emphasise the need to explain non-calculative-based work behaviour. Most currently popular theories of work motivation assume that individuals are either driven through needs, or are rational maximisers of personal utility. These theories of work motivation seek to explain why people behave by assuming that something drives the person. However, Frankl's existential

approach towards meaning posits that a higher cause “pulls” the person to exert certain behaviour.

Maddi (1970) describes the understanding of how man searches for, and finds meaning as the ultimate problem of motivational psychology. He reasons that a person cannot live fully without having considered what is worthwhile, what is true, or what is worth doing. Whatever a person does is because of activities that somehow achieve meaning for him (Maddi, 1970). Sargent (1973) suggests that people are increasingly looking for more meaning in their work and finding it less. He reasons that this phenomenon serves to underline the importance of the role of meaning in work commitment and work motivation (Sargent, 1973). Frankl (1975) sees the midlife crisis from which managers often suffer as a crisis of meaning. He mentions Rolf von Eckartsberg who surveyed Harvard graduates 20 years after their graduation and found that a significant percentage, most with successful careers and orderly and outwardly happy lives, complained about a deep-seated feeling of meaninglessness (Frankl, 1975).

Notwithstanding these postulations, meaning received virtually no empirical attention in OB literature. Sargent (1973) was one of the very few (if not the only) researchers that examined the relationship between meaning and work motivation. He investigated whether work motivation can be seen as a manifestation of man's "will to meaning" as defined in Victor Frankl's (1969) logotherapy. Sargent's (1973) sample was composed of 153 subjects from eight different groups: white-collar graduate students, white-collar undergraduate students, navy personnel, employees of a New York brokerage house, advanced cardiac nurses, nursing educators, emergency room nurses, industrial nurses. Sargent (1973) applied the Work Motivation Questionnaire (Meltzer & Ludwig, 1969), PIL Questionnaire (Crumbaugh & Maholic, 1964), and a Semantic Differential indicator of attitude towards work.

Sargent (1973) used several three-way analyses of variance designs to test the hypotheses of the study. He reports his major results as follows:

- The mean PIL scores for work-motivated individuals were 117.1, and for non-work motivated individuals were 116.0, indicating a tendency for work motivated individuals to have higher PIL scores than non work-motivated individuals. This is not a significant difference (F-ratio 0.276, significant at 0.05 level, degrees of freedom (df) equal 1 and 92).
- The mean PIL score for higher organisational levels were 118.4, and for lower organisational levels were 115.1, indicating a tendency for higher organisational levels to have higher PIL scores. It is not a significant difference according to the F-ratio (2.59, significant at 0.05 level, df 1 and 92).
- The mean attitude scores of the motivated and non-motivated subjects toward the concept of work were 37.6 and 36.70 respectively, indicating a tendency for work motivated individuals to evaluate the concept of work more favourably than individuals that were not work motivated. It is not a significant difference according to the F-ratio.
- The mean attitude scores of individuals high and low on PIL, toward major life concepts were 37.9 and 35.9 respectively. The F-ratio (37.82, significant at 0.05 level, df 1 and 639) indicated a significant difference between the scores of the two groups. Sargent (1973) concludes that there is a significant tendency for the major life concepts (work, employing organisation, purpose, family, leisure, and life) to be more favourably evaluated by individuals with high PIL scores.

Sargent (1973) comments that the interactions between the PIL scores and work motivation were in the expected directions, but not as strong as expected. Likewise, the interactions between the meaning of work and the motivation to work were in the expected directions, but less than expected. Sargent (1973) notes that the differences could not be attributed to sex differences since these were controlled for in the study.

Sargent (1973) highlights a number of flaws and problems in the methodology of his study. First, all the variables were measured with attitudinal measures. He argues that the extent to which attitude measures are not the best indicators of the

motivation to work, the will to meaning, or the meaning of work, the study suffered. Sargent (1973) argues that the instruments did not tap deeply enough into the level of meaning as described in Frankl's theories. He argues that using the evaluative scale on the semantic differential as the total definition of "meaning of work" did not provide enough dimensions of meaning to discriminate groups in the sample from each other. Moreover, Sargent (1973) comments that salary is not a good indicator of organisational level across such a varied sample. Meltzer and Ludwig's (1968) Work Motivation Questionnaire actually only measures the extent of a person's positive attitude towards work, which is hardly a good measure of work motivation as defined by Muchinsky (1987).

Based on direct correspondence with Victor Frankl about his research results, Sargent (1973) reasons that the PIL test is less of a measure of the strength of the will to meaning, than it is a measure of the degree to which that will to meaning has been frustrated or fulfilled. Thus, the person who scores low on the PIL may be high in job involvement and work motivation as a compensation (Sargent, 1973). Conversely, a person scoring high on the PIL but low on work motivation and job involvement may simply be finding his meaning in other areas of life. This is where the limitation of the definition of the term work as paid work, or a job, may affect the generalisation. Sargent (1973) reports that Frankl noted in their correspondence that many people find meaning in of-the-job work, in their play, or with family and friends. Sargent (1973) argues that while it would not be the general expectation that these reversals between PIL and work motivation scores would occur, they are certainly possible (Sargent, 1973).

In spite of the problems of Sargent's (1973) study, his findings have practical implications. Sargent (1973) found that people with higher PIL scores, those who see a clearer meaning and purpose in life, have more positive attitudes toward work, the organisations they work for, purpose in life, family, leisure and life.

Terez (1999) suggests a difference between job satisfaction and workplace meaning. Satisfaction includes conformance to standards and when needs and expectations are being met. Meaning goes deeper: in a meaningful workplace it is less about needs and expectations and more about mission, possibilities and fulfilment. Terez

(1999) notes that people define a meaningful workplace in different ways, each person has a unique set of top priorities. He reports that his research indicate that purpose stands out as the most-cited source of work related meaningfulness. Terez (1999) argues that virtually all people have a desire to make a difference. He found an almost desperate eagerness to talk about meaning in the workplace.

Ingeborg (2000) argues that the technical and material changes which take place in the workplace are no longer connected with socially accepted ultimate goals. This means that individuals have to produce their own meaning and have to motivate themselves. They have to choose which goals to pursue, which type of happiness they want to strive for. Ingeborg (2000) emphasises that meaning and the belief in the future of man are not abstract intellectual notions. They deeply influence man's attitude towards life as a whole. She argues that the belief in the meaningfulness of life leads to a joy of life which finds its expression in a joy of acting - an element practically disregarded in the modern analysis of work.

It appears that the construct of meaning can assist in explaining how and why a worker behaves. If his life makes some sense to him personally, if he has found some way of structuring his view of life, then he will work as though his life made a difference. He simply acts with meaning. High internal work motivation is then the result of experienced meaningfulness of the work and experienced purpose for outcomes of the work. People with higher purpose in life, those who see a clearer meaning, also have more positive attitudes toward work, the organisation, family, leisure, and life in general.

However, neither the five sources of motivation defined by Leonard et al. (1995b) (Table 8), nor the eight main motivation theories indicated in Table 6 make allowance for an existential approach such as Frankl's (1984a, 1984b) postulation that man's primary motivational source is the will to meaning. If the propositions postulated in this research study are true, there should be at least one other source of motivation, namely an existential source. This existential source of motivation can be defined somewhat as indicated to Table 9, which could serve as an addition of Table 8.

Table 9

An existential source of motivation

Sources of Motivation	Description
<b>Existential</b>	The will to meaning is the primary motivation for man. Meaning indicates a striving for a higher purpose in life that results in a perceived existence of significance. If his life and work make some sense to him personally, if he has found some purpose to fulfil, i.e., when he has found meaning, then he will work as though life makes a difference.

**2.6.6. Developments in work motivation theories**

Over the years, numerous theories have been proposed, attempting to capture the various sources of motivation energising individual behaviour. These theories, some content theories and some process theories, all propose a limited set of motivational sources. There is a growing realisation that traditional models of motivation do not explain the diversity of behaviour found in organisational settings. Most of these traditional models on work motivation are built on the premise that individuals act in ways to maximise the value of exchange with the organisation. Nevertheless, a task may be motivating due to its meaning for the individual (Carlisle & Manning, 1994) without bringing with it reward from the individual. Reker, Peacock and Wong mentioned already in 1987 that the whole issue regarding the effect of meaningfulness (or meaninglessness) on work outcomes remains uncharted territory awaiting exploration (Reker, Peacock & Wong, 1987). Yet having meaning in life, having a higher purpose for living and working, did not receive attention in OB since this idea was expressed.

Ambrose and Kulik (1999) argue that running through almost all of the approaches of work motivation are a series of implicit, but erroneous assumptions. These assumptions are that all employees are alike, all situations are alike, and that there is one best way to motivate people. Although research has provided strong support for calculative models, they cannot account for the full range of motivated behaviour (Leonard, Beauvais & Scholl, 1999). The motivational drives from within every

individual worker, originating from his spiritual dimension, and from having a purpose and meaning in life, has been completely neglected in work motivation theories.

Ambrose and Kulik (1999) analysed over 200 studies of work motivation published between January 1990 and December 1997. Ambrose and Kulik (1999) report that organisational behaviour research has largely abandoned the broad concept of work motivation. Researchers have replaced this broad concept with more specific measures of employee behaviour such as achievement motivation, self-efficacy, self-concept, PWE, and organisational citizenship behaviours (Ambrose & Kulik, 1999; Locke & Latham, 1990).

An existential approach to work motivation would not discard the conclusions from the other theories. However, it theorises that not all behaviour is rational or for personal gain. The main premises of Frankl include that people exercise effort because of their "will to meaning". In other words, being significant and striving to fulfil a higher purpose. Being significant and fulfilling a higher purpose is not necessarily rational, and mostly not for personal gain. As Frankl (1984a) said, meaning can only be achieved in a cause greater than yourself, or outside yourself. This will to meaning is so strong that people are willing to die for it. It is uncertain whether the effect of the other eight main theories of work motivation can be as strong.

## **2.7. THE NEED FOR THIS RESEARCH**

Research on work motivation and work commitment and their various constructs such as job involvement has widespread implications within organisations. Studies suggest that it may be useful in predicting organisational benefits such as greater productivity, the opportunities of changes in experienced satisfaction and motivation, and job-related attitudes. As for work commitment, most of the traditional motivation theories have received considerable empirical support. However, research selectively continues to refine the models and to suggest moderators and boundary conditions. The basic tenets of goal setting, equity theory, expectancy theory and CET remain unchallenged. Ambrose and Kulik (1999) do not foresee any major

paradigm shifts in the understanding of employee motivation. As a result, they see little need for organisational behaviour research to continue conducting simple empirical tests of the existing basic theories. Similarly, most of the research on work commitment rather attempts to analyse the factor structures of work commitment or the facets of work commitment than bringing new wisdom to the understanding of work commitment.

Not much new contributions or insights were added in the field of OB over the last decade. This observation becomes obvious if one compares the contents of the older versions of well-known textbooks on OB, e.g., Callahan, Fleenor and Knudson (1986), or Luthans (1989), versus the contents of the more recent well known OB textbooks, e.g. Kreitner and Kinicki (1999), or Luthans (1999). The contents of the textbooks have remained virtually the same over a decade or more. This is especially true for the areas of work commitment and work motivation. Most of the changes appear to be improved descriptions, based on marginally improved understanding of the same constructs. Few new constructs or relationships are discussed. It appears that the field of OB has become stagnant.

Crumbaugh and Maholick commented already in 1964 that the fact that existentialism accept intuitive as well as irrational and empirical knowledge in arriving at values and meanings has been anathema to North American behavioural scientists. Scientists have tended to write it off as a conglomeration of widely diverging speculations without consistency for operational use. It is obvious from this review of work motivation theories that the existential approach has not been included in any of these theories. All of the main theories of work motivation expect people to be rational and to behave only for personal gain, whether material or intrinsic.

Thus, the construct of meaning in life has been ignored in the field of OB. Although it received marginal attention in the fields of clinical psychology and psychiatry, it also tended to be ignored in mainline empirical work. This is perhaps because of difficulty in conceptualisation, and because questions relating to the meaning of life are regarded by many as more philosophical than scientific psychology (Chamberlain & Zika, 1988). Problems also arise when concepts as broad as the 'search for

meaning' or 'finding meaning in an event' has to be operationalised for research purposes (Thompson & Janigian, 1988). Hoeller (1990) defines extraordinary science as the revolutionary stage in a field of science which marks out the transition from one paradigm to another. It is a philosophical period that offers competing paradigms to explain a significant anomaly that normal science can neither explain nor do away with. Being virtually stagnant over more than a decade as indicated, the field of Organisational Behaviour desperately needs such a revolutionary period, initiating a completely new paradigm of understanding through the introduction of a new philosophy.

Yalom (1980) identifies four ultimate human existential concerns: fear of death, freedom and responsibility, isolation and purposefulness and meaning in life. Against these existential fears, man will only have a future if he can find a universal framework of meaning. In today's world of heightened change, many individuals are suffering from a perceived loss of meaning and purpose in their lives, engendering a sense of spiritual desolation and impelling a spiritual quest (King & Nicol, 1999). The work environment, so central to their existence, often contributes to the sense of desperation and thwarts individual growth. However, if management recognises the potential for mutual benefit between the individual's spiritual odyssey and the structure of the organisation, the organisation's contribution can be truly positive. With such perspective, management enhances the organisation's capacity to foster heightened initiative and productivity from its members (King & Nicol, 1999).

The organisation has the capacity to support the spiritual growth of its members and, as consequence, unleash its potential (King & Nicol, 1999). The organisation can maximise the energy present in the dreams, skills and aspirations of those that make up its reality. If the organisation encourages spiritual development and thus enables individuals to achieve their individual wholeness, people are far more likely to make a truly valuable contribution to the organisation (King & Nicol, 1999). This requires a new integral vision of man which encompasses all dimensions of the human being, particularly the spiritual one (Ingeborg, 2000).

There are four main reasons why there is a need to research meaning-based motivation and work commitment theory: (1) to explain non-calculative-based work

behaviour; (2) to better account for internal sources of motivation and commitment; (3) to integrate dispositional and situational explanations of behaviour; and (4) to understand the sources of commitment in order to be able to improve it. What happened to Frankl - being interned in the concentration camps of World War II - can happen to anyone in a metaphorical sense. Metaphorically speaking, potentially many people land in a concentration camp; existentially many people experience work situations resembling a concentration camp. There is thus a desperate need for extraordinary science to be able to quantify this phenomenon, to understand these people's situation and to be able to assist them in gaining their "freedom."

## **2.8. RESEARCH PROBLEM**

*All humans have purposes, and these purposes affect the way they work.*

*Gellerman (1963)*

### **2.8.1. The research argument**

The problem investigated in this study is whether relationships exist between man's "will to meaning" as defined by Victor Frankl (1969, 1975, 1984a, 1984b, 1992) and work commitment and work motivation. Victor Frankl (1984a) views the "will to meaning" as the primary motivational force in man. Therefore, if this will to meaning is the primary motivational force, and if this will to meaning is being fulfilled whilst working, and meaning is congruent with a person's career, with working being central to a person's life, then people with a high sense of personal meaning is postulated to be more work committed and motivated.

Deductive logic was used to initiate the research question, inspired by an intense interest in the work and contribution of Victor Frankl. Deductive reasoning begins with a preconceived idea that seems to be true. It starts the quest for knowledge from a dogmatic premise and pursues it to a logical conclusion (Leedy, 1993). However, inductive reasoning was used to arrive at the final research question and the final research proposition. Inductive reasoning relies on the observation of facts

which are then translated into a meaningful conclusion (Cook & Campbell, 1979). This section takes the reader of this dissertation through this inductive reasoning.

A theoretically derived model of how meaning manifests in work motivation and work commitment was developed by integrating four different, empirically developed, models together. These are the models of Sargent (1973) which indicates a relationship between meaning and work motivation, Randall and Cote's (1991) conceptualisation of work commitment, Cohen's (1999) evaluation of Randall and Cote's (1991) model, and Cohen's (2000) evaluation of Randall and Cote's (1991) conceptualisation of work commitment.

Much attention has been devoted to work commitment and motivation to work, but no systematic attempt has been made to analyse it through Frankl's theoretical framework except for the study by Sargent (1973). The main outcome of Sargent's (1973) research is illustrated graphically in Figure 10.

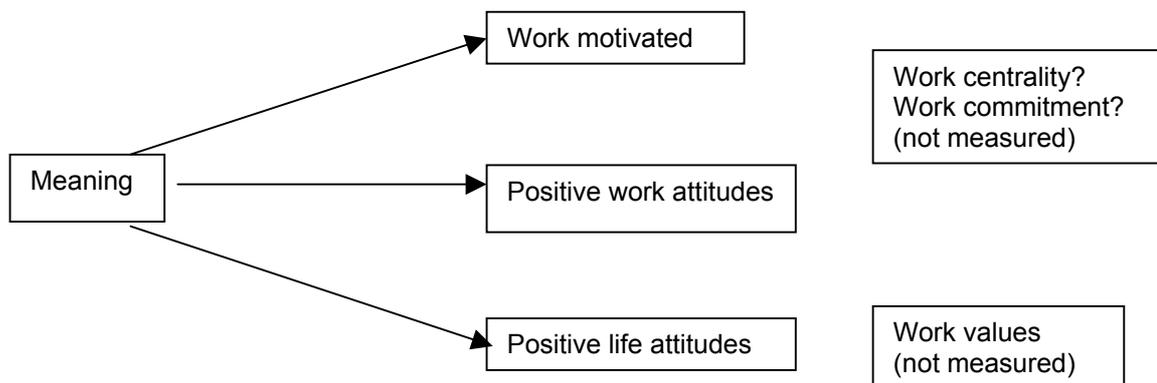


Figure 10. Sargent's (1973) primary findings.

However, Sargent's (1973) study was subject to some flaws as discussed earlier. Furthermore, Sargent (1973) did not measure whether work was central to these people's lives, or whether there was congruence between the sense of meaning and the careers they were following. From the literature study it follows that one could also investigate the relationship of meaning with work commitment facets such as work values, job involvement and career commitment in addition to Sargent's (1973) study.

This research study therefore builds on the work of Victor Frankl and on the study of Sargent (1973). Additionally, this study investigates both work commitment and work motivation as manifestations of a will to meaning. If one integrates the research of Sargent (1973) (Figure 10) with the research on work commitment as integrated by Randall and Cote (1991) (Figure 5, page 70) and by Cohen (1999, 2000) (Figure 7, page 72, and Figure 9, page 74) into one diagram, the result is as illustrated in Figure 11.

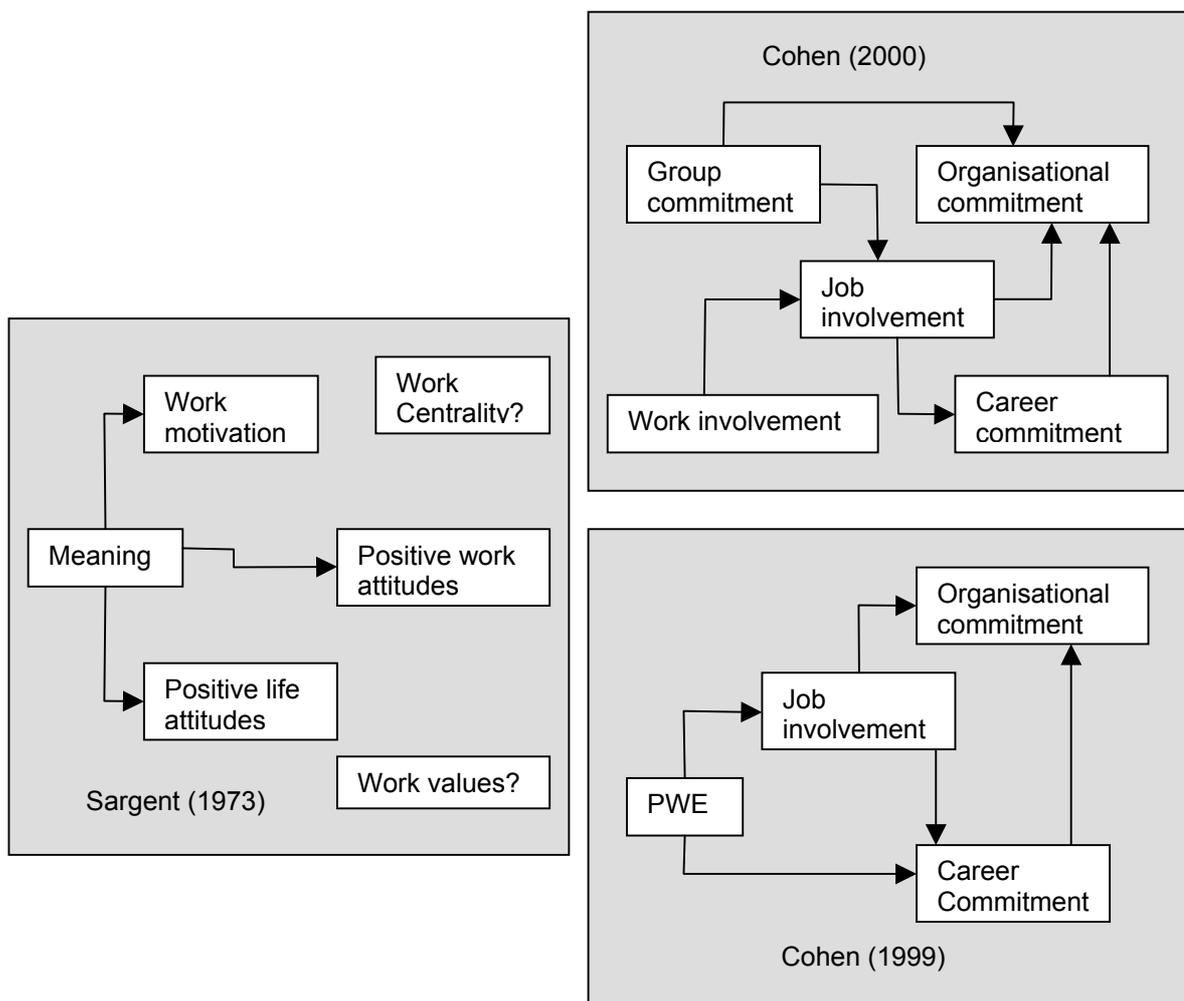


Figure 11. Integration of work motivation and work commitment models (Cohen, 1999, 2000; Sargent, 1973).

Cohen (1999) reports that the relationships between job involvement and continuance organisational commitment as well as between continuance

organisational commitment and career commitment is statistically insignificant. Furthermore, Cohen (2000) reports that the relationships between group commitment and organisational commitment, and between career commitment and organisational commitment are statistically insignificant.

If one now removes the relationships that were found to be insignificant by Cohen (1999) and Cohen (2000), the result is the relationships as indicated in the model in Figure 12. The relationships between job involvement and affective organisational commitment, as well as between career commitment and continuance organisational commitment were found to be significant by Cohen (1999). However, the models in Figure 12 do not make any distinction between the different forms of organisational commitment. These relationships were therefore maintained.

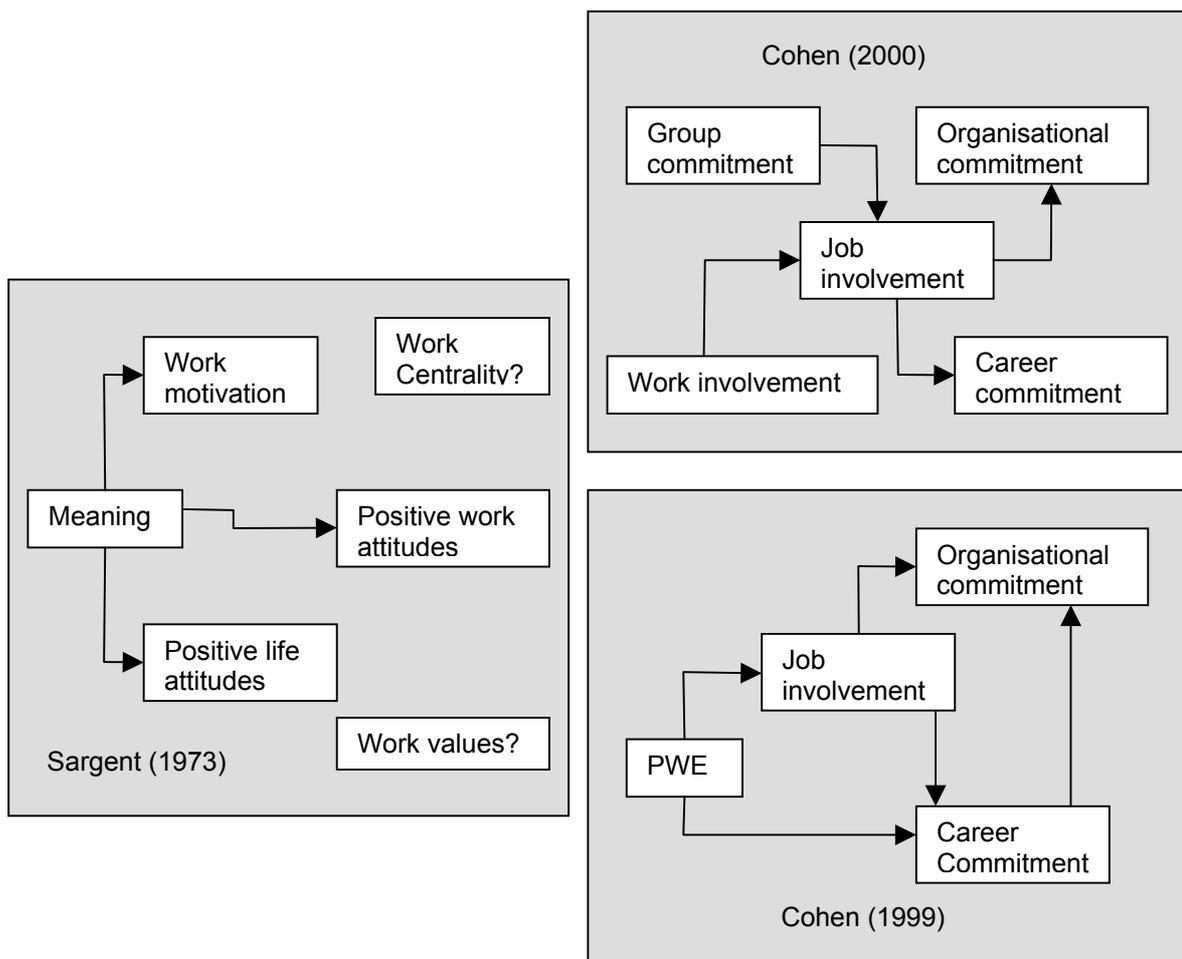


Figure 12. Integration model with "irrelevant" or "insignificant" relationships removed.

It is clear from the findings of both studies of Cohen (1999, 2000) that organisational commitment is an outcome of the other facets of work commitment. Cohen (2000) also questions the usefulness of group commitment as one of the commitment foci. This is because of the very few significant paths of this focus with any of the other commitment foci (consistent across all the models tested), and because of the non-significant relationship of this focus with any of the work outcomes. Organisational commitment is regarded as an outcome rather than as an antecedent of work commitment and is therefore omitted from the rest of this study

Now, if one removes organisational commitment, as well as group commitment and merges the three different models, the result would be as illustrated in Figure 13. Work centrality, also called work involvement, was not measured by Sargent (1973). However, one can argue that positive attitudes towards work are related to work involvement; these three constructs are therefore put together. It was shown that PWE is often defined as one of the forms of work motivation (Ambrose & Kulik, 1999; Buchholz, 1977; Cassidy & Lynn, 1989; Furnham, 1990b; Holland, 1985; McClelland, 1961; Ros et al., 1999; Super & Sverko, 1995) and a theorised link between these two constructs has therefore been added.

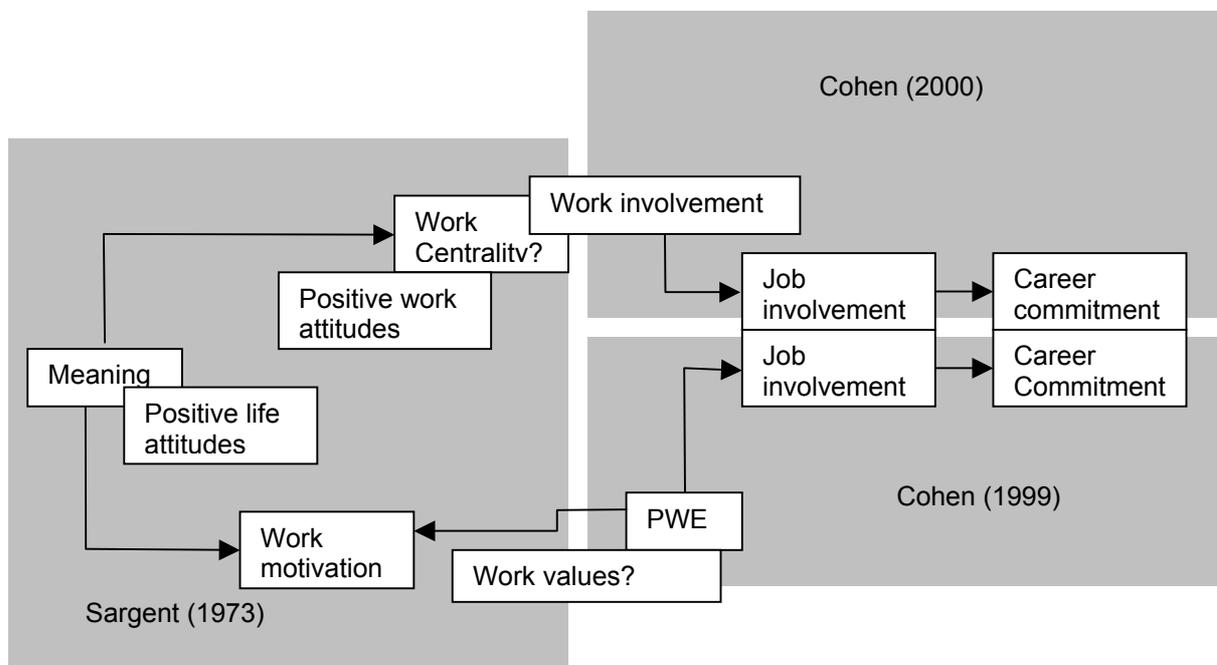


Figure 13. Integration model with "outcomes" removed.

If these three models are now further integrated and merged into one model, and if construct redundancy is removed, the model as illustrated in Figure 14 results.

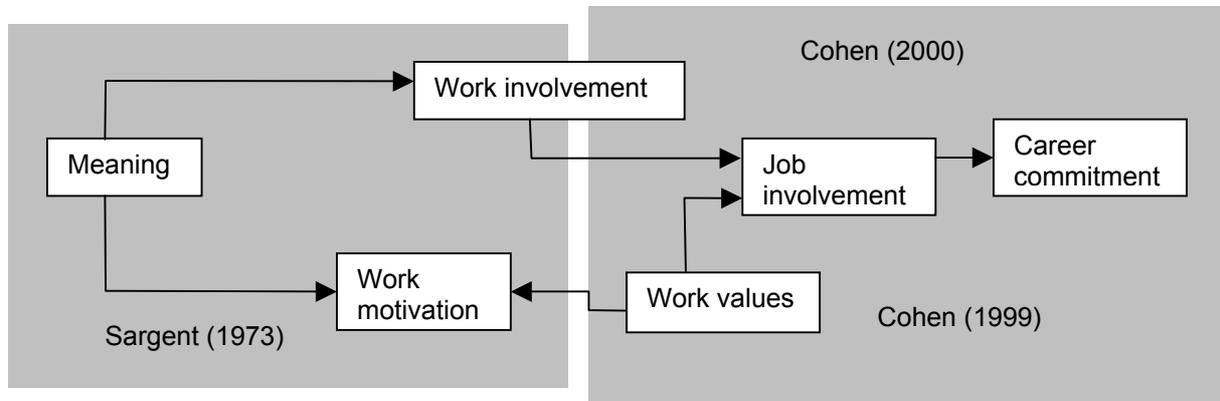


Figure 14. Merging of three sub-models, with construct redundancy removed.

However, according to Frankl's existential theories, values stem not only from socialisation, but higher order values often are the result of a person's sense of meaning and purpose in life. The route to motivation is therefore seen as through values, rather than from motivation to values. If one now adds the existential theory as proposed by Frankl and other theories around work involvement as postulated in the research and discussed in the previous sections, the model ends up as illustrated in Figure 15. This model forms the basis of the research question posted in this research.

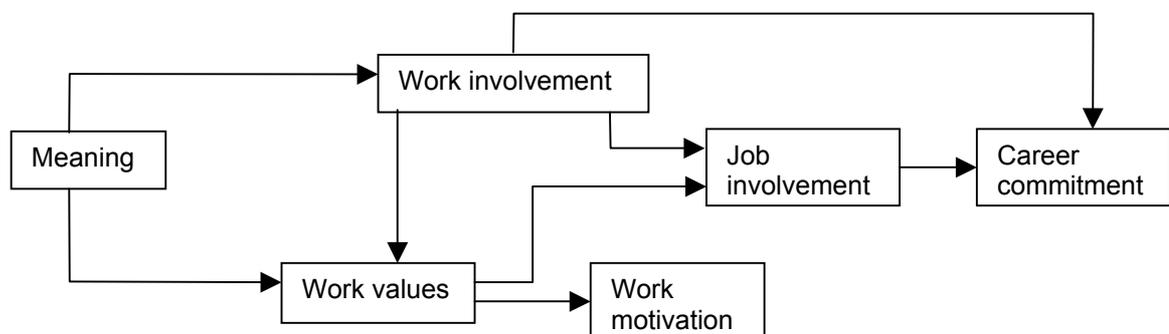


Figure 15. The merged model, enriched with theory.

This proposition, deduced from the empirically derived models of Sargent (1973), Randall and Cote (1991), and Cohen (1999, 2000), enriched with Frankl's existential theories basically states that if a person has found a meaning for his existence, this sense of meaning should positively influence his work values. Furthermore, if work is central to his life (work involvement), his work values should be further influenced positively. This in turn should lead to higher work motivation, higher levels of job involvement and career commitment. Inversely, if the person has not found meaning in life, scores on all the other constructs should be relatively lower. Work involvement is seen here as a moderating variable, i.e., if the person has found meaning in his existence, but work is not central to his existence, the other measurements will not be as high as in the first case. This scenario is seen as very probable by Frankl (Frankl, 1992; Sargent, 1973), as not everyone finds meaning in his work. Work is therefore not necessarily central to a person who experiences his life as meaningful. This proposition is represented in Figure 16 in a slightly different manner to illustrate the research argument.

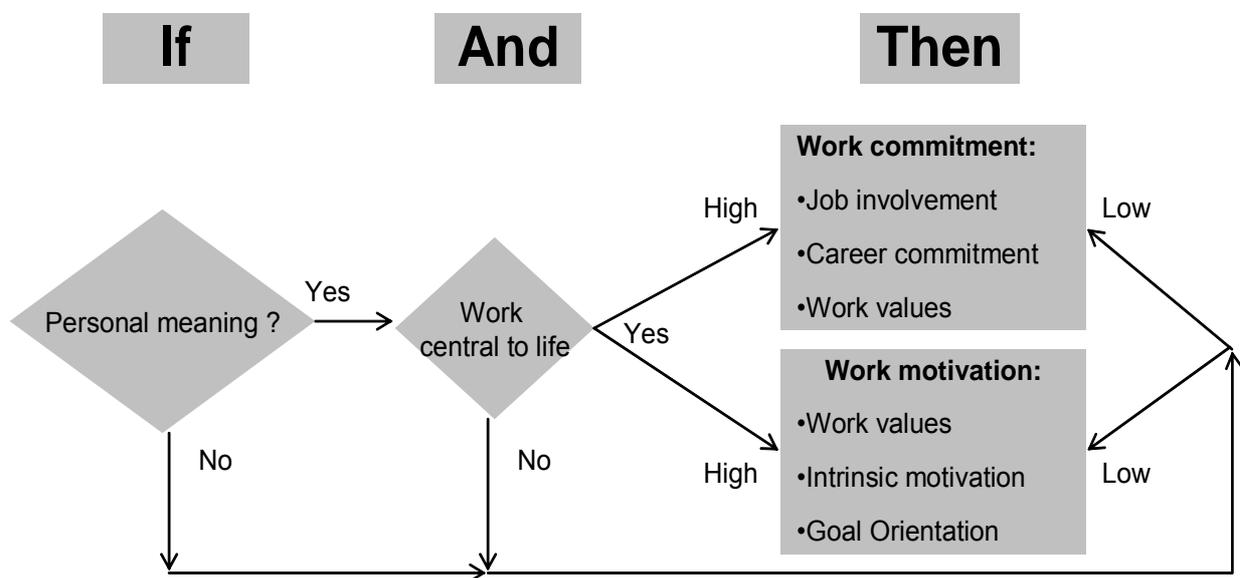


Figure 16. Research proposition.

The argument of this proposition is as follows: Firstly, the sense of personal meaning of the subjects is measured. The ultimate proposition of this research is that meaning is the independent variable, and that all the other variables investigated in this

research are in some way functions of this variable. Secondly, the centrality of work in the subjects' lives will be measured as a moderating variable. The reason is that not everyone finds meaning in work, and unless work is central to their lives, it is unlikely that the person will find meaning in his work.

Thirdly, the level of work commitment will be investigated by measuring work values, job involvement and career commitment. According to Cohen (2000), these measurements are antecedents of organisational commitment, and according to Hoole (1997), together these four measurements result in Work Commitment. Organisational commitment was not tested as it was shown clearly by Randall and Cote (1991), Cohen (1999) and Cohen (2000) to be an outcome of the other facets of work commitment. In an attempt to keep the questionnaire as short as possible, the measurement of organisational commitment was therefore omitted.

Lastly, the level of work motivation will be measured. The measures used for work motivation is intrinsic motivation, goal orientation and work values. This approach supports the definition of work motivation as described by Pinder (1998). This point of view is supported by Ambrose and Kulik (1999) who conclude that organisational behaviour research has largely abandoned the general concept of motivation and has replaced this broad concept with more specific measures of employee behaviour (e.g. task performance, organisational citizenship behaviours). Ambrose and Kulik (1999) argue that a general measurement of work motivation is actually redundant, specific aspects of motivation to work need to be measured in order to draw useful conclusions.

### 2.8.2. Research question and sub-questions

The research question in this study is whether work commitment and work motivation can be seen as manifestations of a person's sense of meaning. In order to be able to answer this question, the following measurable research questions are asked and investigated in this study:

1. Are biographical/demographic variables related to a sense of meaning?
2. Are certain lifestyle variables and a person's orientation towards work and life related to a sense of meaning?
3. Is there a relationship between a sense of meaning and work involvement?
4. Is there a relationship between a sense of meaning and work commitment as measured through:
  - a. Work values?
  - b. Job involvement?
  - c. Career commitment?
5. Is there a relationship between a sense of meaning and work motivation as measured through:
  - a. Intrinsic motivation?
  - b. Goal orientation?
6. Does work involvement play a moderating role in the relationships between meaning and work commitment and work motivation?
7. Is there statistical evidence that the postulated model of relationships amongst meaning, work commitment and work motivation, could be a valid representation of the relationships?

In order to answer the above questions a large sample of managerial employees from six different organisations will be studied.

### 2.8.3. Objectives of the research

The objective of this research is to investigate whether the origins and sources for work commitment and work motivation are more intrinsic and on a deeper personal psychological and spiritual level, than postulated in previous work commitment and

work motivation theories. This was done through investigating the existence of relationships between meaning with these variables. This study also investigates the relationships between meaning with biographic/demographic type variables, and between meaning and work and life orientation variables. This was done to improve the understanding of the role of meaning in work and in a person's work life.

This research postulates that an essential source for work commitment and work motivation originates from the noögenic dimension of a person because of his will to meaning, whereas the existing theories on work commitment and work motivation rely on sources from the psychological and somatic dimensions. The objective is not to discredit any of the established work commitment and work motivation theories, or to imply that the theory of man's will to meaning as a source for work commitment and work motivation is the only valid theory. It is rather postulated that this theory is complementary to the already established theories. However, this theory, and man's will to meaning as such, has been neglected previously in work commitment and work motivation research.

If the proposition that is postulated in this research proves to be valid, it will substantially enhance the current body of knowledge in understanding the sources of work motivation and work commitment. It will simultaneously broaden the understanding of work motivation and work commitment, indicate the need and value for searching deeper and for more fundamental sources of work motivation and work commitment.

Individuals are looking to their organisational leaders to help them in their search for meaning. Organisations are therefore also being challenged to maintain spirituality (Konz & Ryan, 1999). An organisation whose work environment responsively supports the quest for individual unity and direction, and fosters spiritual development, will realise heightened individual and organisational performance (King & Nicol, 1999). Practical value of this model can lie in organisations assisting employees to find their personal meaning and by making the striving of the organisation to be a source of meaning for their employees. This might include activities ranging from personal counselling, up to having a re-evaluation of the vision and mission of the organisation.