OFFICE OF THE HEAD OF THE CIVIL SERVICE

ONBOARDING SURVEY REPORT

FOCUS-COHORT KNOWLEDGE, TRAINING, SKILLS AND PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

NOVEMBER 2021

Contents

Executive Sumamry

The efficiency and effectiveness of any workplace (whether private or public) largely depends on the quality of its workforce. One of the surest and structured ways to understand employee long-term engagement or attrition rate is to conduct an employee onboarding survey. Onboarding is the process of introducing a newly hired employee into an organization. The survey measured the effectiveness of cohort knowledge, training, skills and personal characteristics and task required for their roles. The survey used the quantitative design to describe single variables (in percentages) and also assess the statistical relationships between variables. The Likert scale was used to rank in order of importance opinions about statements that pertain to Cohort knowledge, training, skills personal characteristics and tasked required for their roles. A total of 316 Cohorts completed the second phase of the survey from across 16 regions of in the Civil Service.

The study established the importance of clerical knowledge to the assigned roles of cohorts and the need for newly recruited officers to undergo training in those areas to position them effectively for their roles. Findings further revealed a significant percentage of the respondents' viewed Administration and Management knowledge and its training important to their assigned roles.

The study revealed 79.11% of respondents were of the view computer and electronic knowledge are important to their assigned roles. It therefore established the need to ensure training modules to focus on tools which facilities working remotely.

On the need for professionalism and integrity as a core competency of staff, the study revealed as significant percentage of Cohort (89% and 91% respectively) of staff viewed them important to their roles. This makes it relevant for MDs to imbibe in staff the culture of professionalism and integrity as a core value in achieving the goals of their organisation.

Results from the study revealed 86.71% of respondents viewed leadership as an important value to their assigned role and proposed a nurturing of young talents as a basis for effective succession planning as they progress through their career.

On the commitment to assigned task, 56.64% of Cohorts agreed that task are assigned directly to them. While a degree of variation in workload is to be expected, Ministries and Departments should ensure a clear and deliberate decision-level work plan is developed to ensure the distribution of work in a strategic and effective manner.

The study recommended the following;

- Sensitisation for all staff, especially HR managers, on the need for empirical data to inform sound policy formulation which the Bureaucracy Lab seeks to achieve.
- Incorporate personnel and human and clerical training as part of the modules of the scheme of service training for entry staff.
- Ministries and Department should nurture entry level staff in leadership to serve as a basis for effective succession planning as they progress in their career.

1.0. Introduction

The Ghana Civil Service is the main administrative and bureaucratic machinery of the state, mandated to assist the Government in the formulation and implementation of Government policies for the development of the country. It achieves this mainly through the prudent management of its human resources. The Office of the Head of the Civil Service (OHCS) is a Central Management Agency responsible for ensuring that the Ghana Civil Service is adequately staffed, well equipped and functional towards the achievement of government goals.

The efficiency and effectiveness of any workplace (whether private or public) largely depends on the quality of its workforce. Recruiting competent employees with the right attitude and skills mix are few of the goals of every organization towards the attainment of its objectives. It is therefore important for organizations to assess the attitudes, expectations and integration of recruited staff to ascertain their career objectives in line with the organizational goals.

1.1. Background

One of the surest and structured ways to understand employee long-term engagement or attrition rate is to conduct an employee onboarding survey. Onboarding is the process of introducing a newly hired employee into an organization. It is an important part of helping employees understand their new position and job requirements as well as integrate seamlessly within the organization. An onboarding survey is a tool that will measure the experience and expectations of recruits in an attempt to identify the areas that need improvement in the recruitment and onboarding process.

This exercise is being be undertaken using Officers undergoing probation in the Civil Service. The study was implemented in three phases, however this report covers phase two of the Onboarding process which focuses on the effectiveness of Cohorts knowledge, training, skills, personal characteristics and task required for their assigned roles.

1.2. Objectives of the Survey

Generally, the survey was intended to ascertain the effectiveness of the onboarding processes for recruits in the Civil Service. The specific objectives were to:

- Ascertain the effectiveness of cohort knowledge, training and skills for their roles

- Ascertain the effectiveness of personal characteristics and task required for their roles

1.3. Methodology

The survey was more quantitative in its design to describe single variables (percentages) and also assess the statistical relationships between variables. The Likert scale was used to rank in order of importance opinions about statements that pertain to Cohort knowledge, training, skills personal characteristics and tasked required for their roles.

The survey was launched online via google forms and broadcasted via text messages to all the Cohort population. A total of 316 Cohorts completed the second phase of the survey from across 16 regions of in the Civil Service.

The data was analyzed using excel pivot charts as a graphical representation of the data presentation in percentages of opinions/perceptions from respondents.

2.0. Presentation of Findings

The findings from the analysis are presented based on the aggregation of data received from the survey. The structure of the section provides in-depth analysis on **demography of cohorts**, **knowledge and trainings**, **skills, personal characteristics** and **tasked required**.

2.1. Demography of respondents
2.1.1. Sex/Age Distribution

Sex Distribution

Female 46.20% Male 53.80%
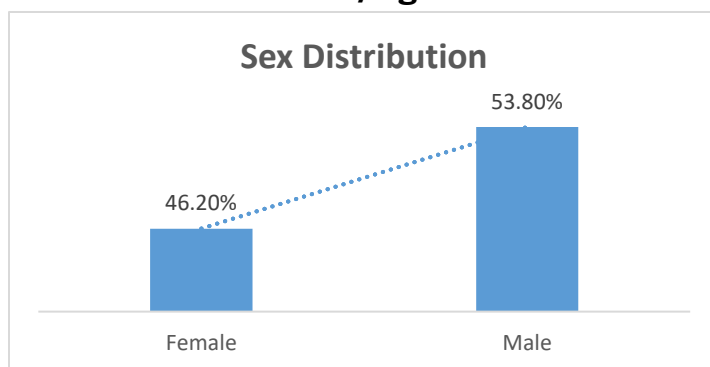
A total of 316 compared to 423 officers completed the second phase of the Cohort study. This constitute a decrease of 25.3% in the response rate in the Second phase. The sex disaggregation of the cohort revealed a 7.6% increase in male population over the female population. This shows a marginal increase of 1.6% in the response rate of male population over the female population for the second phase of the study.

The decrease in the response rate from Phase one to Phase two may be as a result of survey fatigue. As a mitigating strategy, the OHCS need to embark on a continuous sensitisation for all staff, especially HR managers, on the need for empirical data to inform sound policy formulation which the Bureaucracy Lab seeks to achieve.

The age distribution of cohorts revealed 41.46% were within the age bracket of 26-30 years. The data further showed 28.48% of cohorts fall within the age bracket of 31-35 years while 12.97% of Cohorts were within the age bracket of 36-40 years.

Age Distribution

This confirms findings of previous surveys (Graduate Recruitment Study, 2020) conducted which reveals the age group of entry staff to be between the ranges of 20 to 35 years.
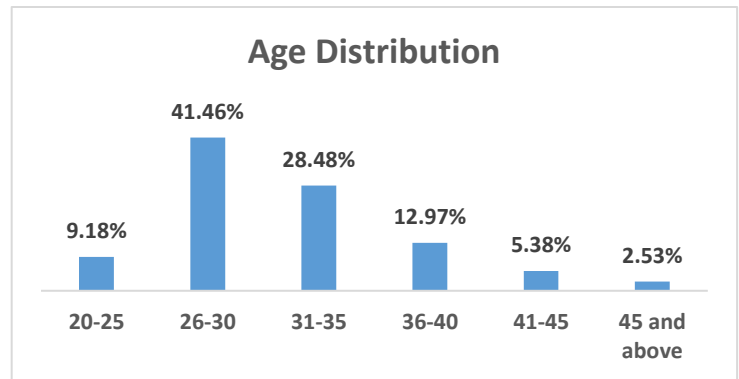
2.1.2. Distribution by Ministry/Extra-Ministerial and Departments
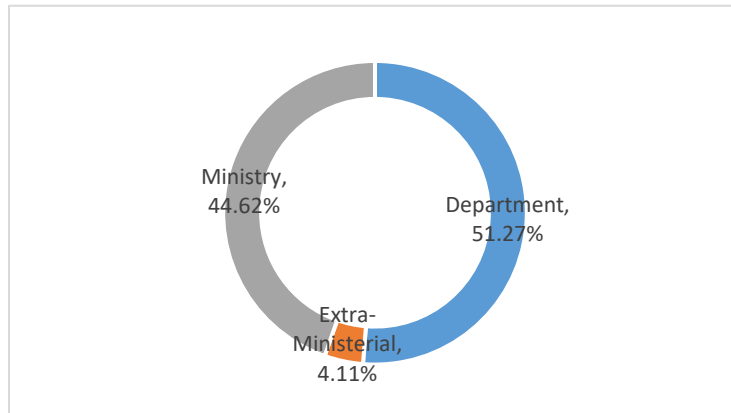
A comparison of the data in phase one and two shows an increase of 7.27% respondents from the Departments while there was a decrease of 5.38% respondents from Ministry. The data further revealed a marginal decrease of 1.89% respondents from the Extra-Ministerial Organisations.

Majority of respondents who completed Phase two of the survey were from Departments against Phase One which had majority of respondents from the Ministries. Reasons attributed to the low response rate could be further investigated.

### 2.2. Employee Knowledge and Training for Role

Training is normally viewed as a way to impart specific skills to individual trainees (Baser and Morgan 2008). In this sense it can be understood as a way to improve the human capital of bureaucrats who already make up part of a government organization. The knowledge areas are clerical, personnel and human resource, administration and management, and Computing.

Respondents ranked in order of importance, one (1) being most important and five (5) being least important to the undersigned roles of Cohorts.

The findings are presented below:

2.2.1. Clerical Knowledge/Trainings

The definition of Clerical knowledge comprises Knowledge of administrative and clerical procedures and systems such as word processing, managing files and records, stenography and transcription, designing forms, and other office procedures and terminology.

Clerical Knowledge

46.20% 29.43% 17.09% 3.48% 3.80%

1   2   3   4   5
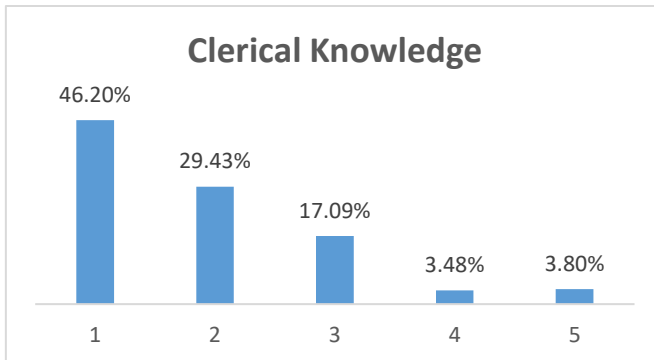
75.63% of respondents indicated that clerical knowledge is important to their assigned role whiles 69.63% of respondents indicating clerical training is important to undertake their assigned role. However, 7.28% are of the view that clerical knowledge is less important for their assigned role with 10.44% indicating that clerical training is less important to their assigned role.

The findings establishes the importance of clerical knowledge to the assigned roles of cohorts and the need for newly recruited officers to undergo training in those areas to position them effectively for their roles.

The difference in the response for clerical knowledge and its training presents a gap

Clerical Trainings

5   3.16%
4   7.28%
3   19.94%
2   27.22%
1   42.41%

which suggests that 6% of the cohorts already have clerical knowledge for their job roles.
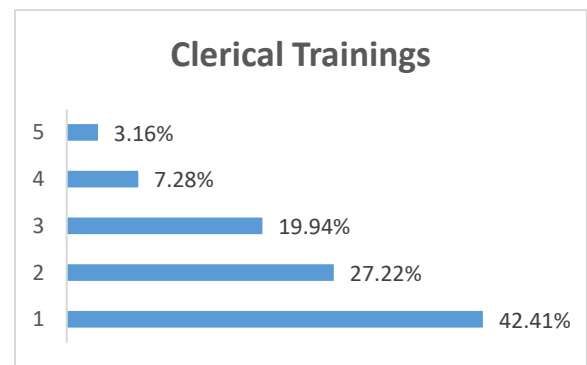
2.2.2. Personnel and Human Resource Knowledge/Training

Personnel and Human Resources knowledge can be defined as the knowledge of principles and procedures for personnel recruitment, selection, training, compensation and benefits, labour relations and negotiation, and personnel information systems.

Personnel and Human Resource Knowledge

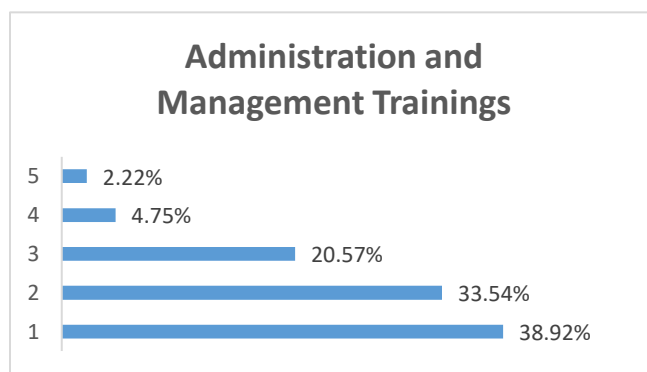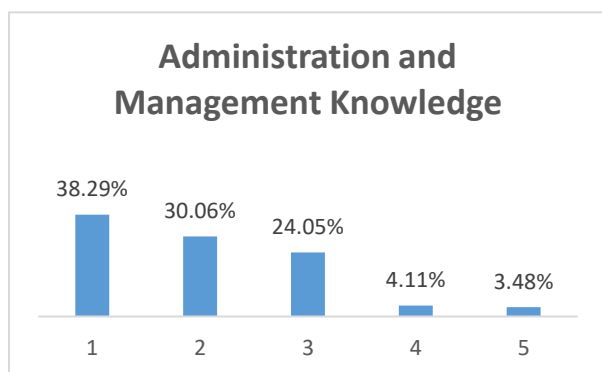29.11% 31.01% 25.95% 10.44% 3.48%

1   2   3   4   5
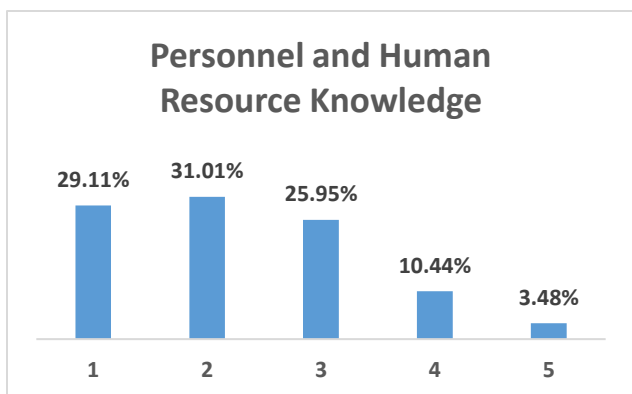
60.11% of Cohorts are of the view that personnel and human resource knowledge is important to their assigned role with 66.13% indicating that they need the training to

Personnel and Human Resources Trainings

5   2.22%
4   7.59%
3   24.05%
2   33.54%
1   32.59%

undertake their assigned roles. Contrary to the above response, 13.92% and 9.81% of the respondents indicated that personnel and human resource knowledge and trainings is less important for their assigned roles respectively.

Human resource orientation is important for entry staff to facilitate their integration to fit within the work culture and perform their roles effectively. It is therefore important to incorporate this as part of the modules of the Scheme of Service training for entry level staff (Assistant Director IIB and Analogous grades) in the Civil Service.
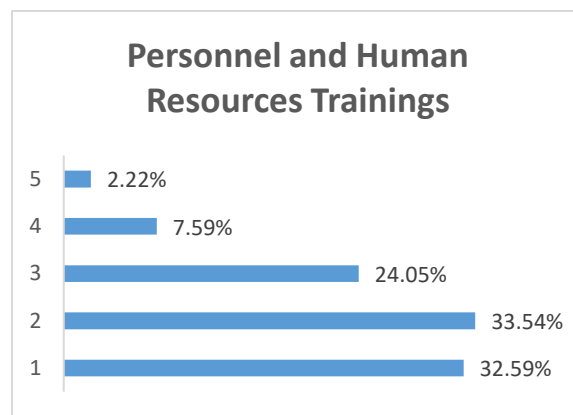
2.2.3.Administration & Management Knowledge/Trainings

Administration and Management Knowledge

38.29% 30.06% 24.05% 4.11% 3.48%

1   2   3   4   5

Administration and Management Trainings

5   2.22%
4   4.75%
3   20.57%
2   33.54%
1   38.92%

Administration and Management knowledge and training highlights knowledge of business and management principles involved in strategic planning, resource allocation, human resources modelling, leadership techniques, production methods, and coordination of people and resources.

The data revealed a significant percentage of the respondents view Administration and management knowledge and its training as important to their assigned roles.

Similar to the Personnel and Human Resource knowledge and training, the Civil Service need to incorporate this as part of the modules of the Scheme of Service training for entry level staff (Assistant Director IIB and Analogous grades).

2.2.4. Computer Electronic Knowledge/Trainings
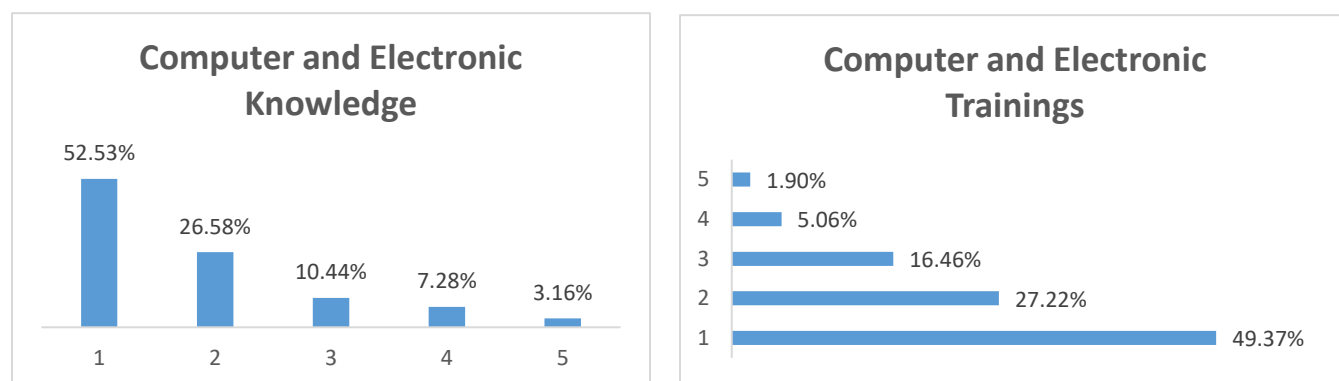
Computer and Electronic knowledge and training is having the technical know-how of computer software, including basic software applications e.g. Microsoft Office suite and internet usage.

The study found that, 79.11% and 76.59% of respondents are of the view computer and electronic knowledge and training are of importance to their assigned roles sequentially while 10.44% and 6.96% of respondents indicated computer and electronic knowledge and training are less important to their roles respectively. However, 16.46% of cohorts are uncertain of the importance of computer and electronic trainings to their assigned roles.

In a changing world of public administration, the CSTC should ensure its training modules should focus on tools which facilitates working from remote areas.


2.3. Competency Requirements

The employee competencies help identify the visible behaviors that successful performers demonstrate while working on any given job. These behaviors are the result of various skills, motivations, abilities, traits and knowledge an employee may possess.

In the context of the Civil Service, core competencies represent critical behaviors required by every staff to enable the Service achieve its vision, mandate and objectives/goals.

The study sets out to measure key competencies required in the Civil Service.

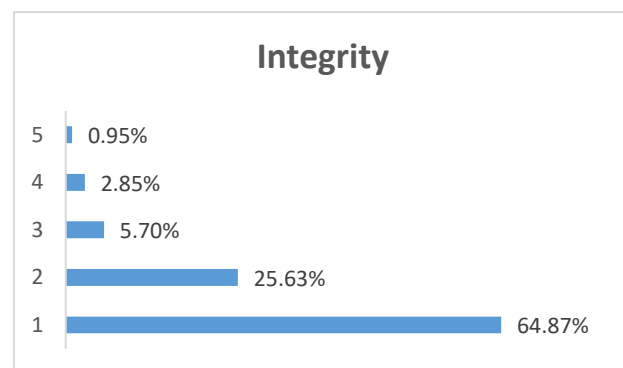### 2.3.1. Professionalism and Integrity

Professionalism

Value	Percentage
1	61.71%
2	27.53%
3	6.65%
4	2.85%
5	1.27%
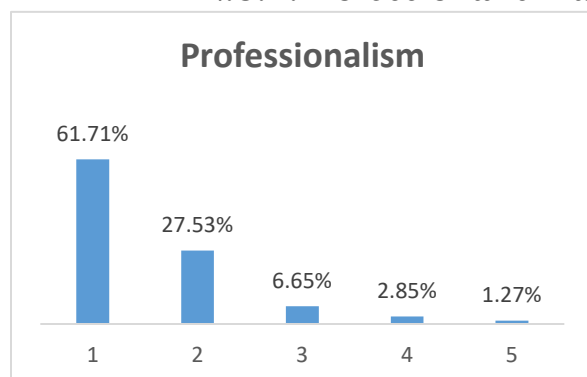
Professionalism demonstrates professional competence and mastery of a subject matter. Employees exhibits persistence when faced with difficult problems or challenges and remains calm in stressful situations.

It further helps staff assume responsibility for successfully completing assignments or tasks.

Results from the study showed that 89.24% of respondents viewed professionalism as important to the success of their job schedules.

Integrity demonstrates the values of the Civil Service in daily activities and behaviours. This is where Staff acts without consideration of personal gain and resists undue pressure in decision-making.

Findings from the survey revealed that 90.5% of Cohorts viewed integrity as important to their roles.

Integrity

| Value	Percentage
5	0.95%
4	2.85%
3	5.70%
2	25.63%
1	64.87%

It is relevant for Ministries and Departments to imbibe in all staff the culture of professionalism and integrity, also as a core value, since it is central to achieving the goals of Ministries and Departments.
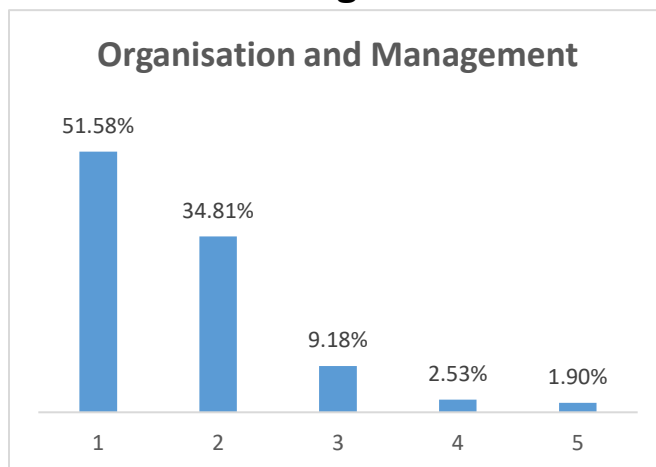
2.3.2. Leadership

Leadership is proactively developing strategies to accomplish objectives. It empowers others to translate vision into results and drives for change and improvement.

Results from the study indicates that, 86.71% of respondents viewed leadership as an important value to their assigned role whereas 10.13% were indifferent. The recognition of the leadership as an important value amongst cohort is indication of drivers of change and innovation in the Civil Service. This should be nurtured and used as a basis for effective succession planning as they progress in their career.

Leadership

1	55.06%
2	31.65%
3	10.13%
4	1.90%
5	1.27%
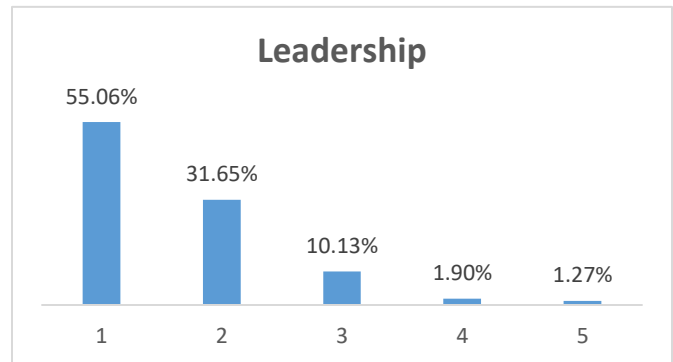
2.3.3. Organisation and Management

Organisation and Management

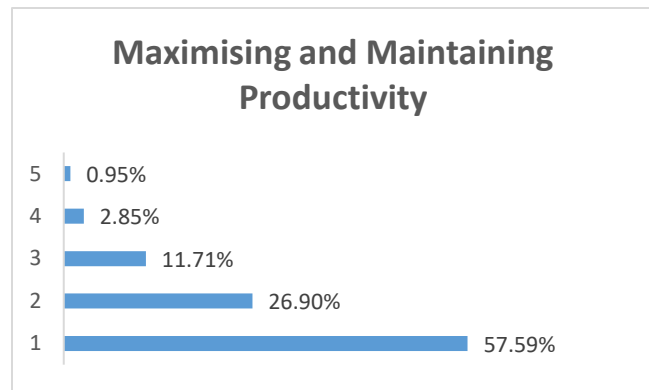|	
1	51.58%
2	34.81%
3	9.18%
4	2.53%
5	1.90%

Organisation and Management competencies help develop clear goals that are consistent with agreed strategies and uses time efficiently. It demonstrates the professional, administrative, supervisory, and/or technical knowledge required to perform the job successfully. This competency ensures follow-up on the outcome of work efforts to ensure desired results.

The survey findings revealed 86.39% of respondents viewed organisation and management competencies as important to their assigned roles. It very important for OHCS to review the Scheme of Service and competency based trainings for more practical approaches in training staff in organisation and management competencies.
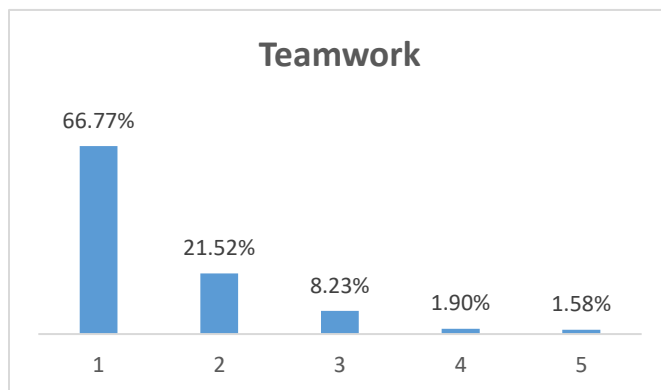
2.3.4.Maximising & Maintaining Productivity

Maximising and maintaining productivity demonstrates the ability to complete assignments with the desired level of quality, with the available resources and on time. It further demonstrates capacity for sustained effort and persistence in the face of difficulties. It also encourages and models outside-the-box thinking and innovative problem solving and identifies and drives continuous improvement initiatives that create value.

The results from the study showed 84.49% of Cohorts viewed this competency as important to their assigned role. It is positive to know that majority of Cohort appreciate the importance of maximizing and maintaining productivity as it enhances workplace productivity.

Maximising and Maintaining Productivity

5	0.95%
4	2.85%
3	11.71%
2	26.90%
1	57.59%

2.3.5.Teamwork

Teamwork

1	66.77%
2	21.52%
3	8.23%
4	1.90%
5	1.58%

Teamwork is demonstrated by working collaboratively with colleagues to achieve organizational goals. It solicits inputs by genuinely valuing others' ideas and expertise. Teamwork shares credit for team accomplishments and accepts joint responsibility for team shortcomings.

88.29% of respondents shared the view that teamwork is important to their assigned role. Cohorts acknowledges the importance of working in teams to share ideas and responsibilities which enables equal distribution of work load and completion of task to meet timelines.

2.3.6.Communication

Communication

68.35%

22.78%

6.33%

1.58%

0.95%

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
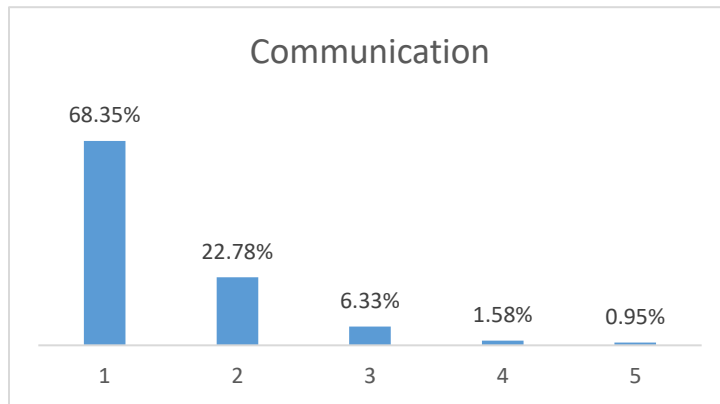
Communication establishes the ability to speak and write clearly, listen to others, ask questions for clarify, correctly interprets messages from others and respond appropriately. It demonstrates openness in sharing information, exhibit interest in having two-way communication and keeping people informed.

91.13% of cohort viewed effective communication as an important aspect of their assigned role. Civil Service Institutions must ensure that barriers to effective communication mechanisms especially the bottom-top approach, which ensures that concerns and challenges are communicated upwards for necessary actions, are mainstreamed effectively.

2.4.   Personal Characteristics and Commitment to assigned Task

The study further measured the importance of some personal characteristics of employees to their assigned roles. The undersigned personal characteristics to the roles of the employees are Attention to Detail, Adaptability/Flexibility and Innovation, Commitment to assigned task and Discretion to take decision.

2.4.1.Attention to Detail

Attention to Detail

72.78%

19.94%

3.16%

2.22%

1.90%

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
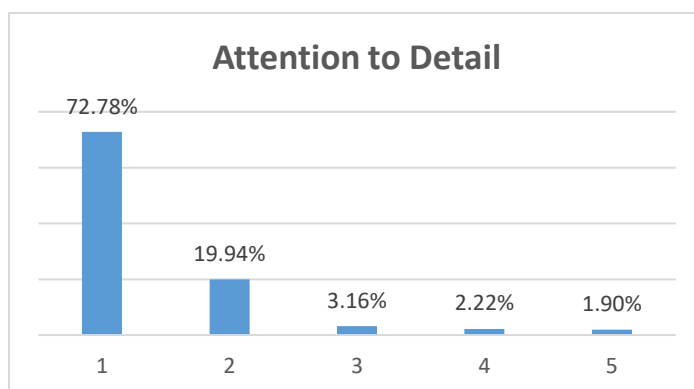
Attention to detail on the job requires being careful and thorough in undertaking and completing work tasks. Findings showed 92.72% of respondents viewed attention to detail as an important characteristic to their assigned roles.

The curriculum for the training should be moduled to include approaches to ensuring task assigned officers are completed with a critical look.

2.4.2.Adaptability/Flexibility & Innovation
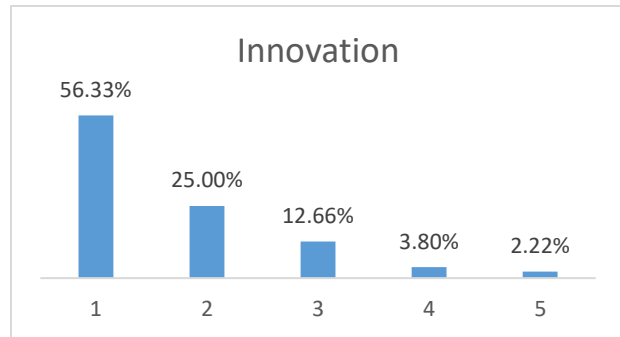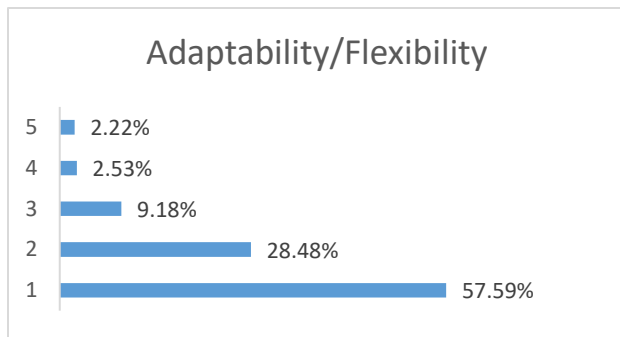
Adaptability/Flexibility requires being open to change in the workplace, while innovation requires creativity and alternative thinking to develop new ideas for and answers to work-related problems.

86.07% of Cohorts viewed Adaptability/Flexibility as important personal characteristic to their role. Further to this 81.33% of respondents viewed innovation as important personal characteristic to their assigned role.

Though the operations of Civil Service institutions are largely bureaucratic, it is also relevant to Ministries and Departments to adopt a guided approach to allow entry level staff to bring on board new ideas and innovative ways of undertaking task in line with values and principles of the Civil Service. Every staff should be given the opportunity to make substantive contribution to the targets of their organisation.

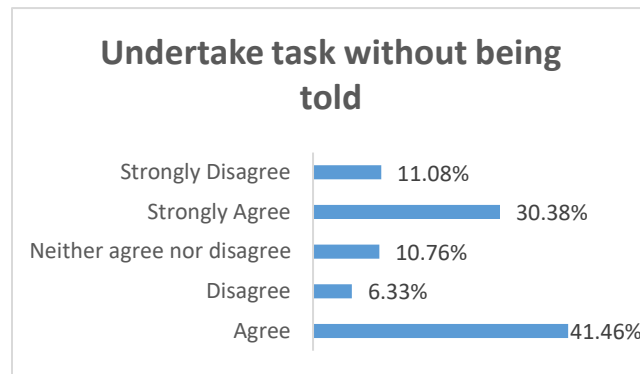## 2.4.3. Commitment to Assigned task
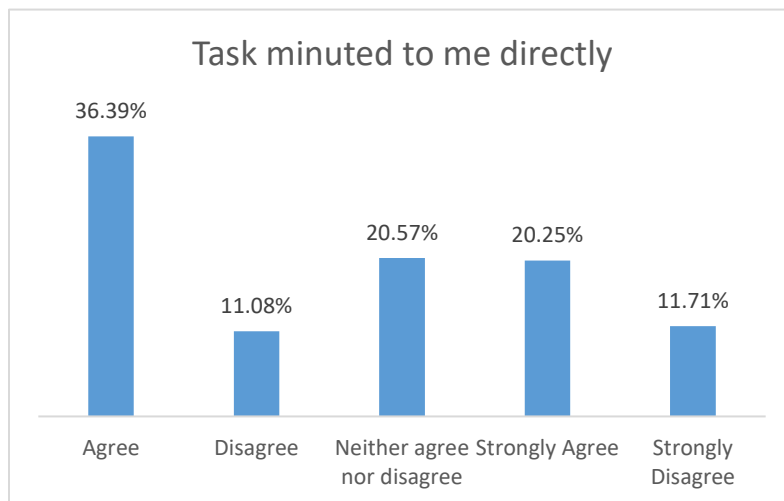
On the performance of task by Cohorts, 56.64% of Cohorts agreed that task are assigned directly to them where as 22.79% disagreed. While a degree of variation in workload is to be expected, Ministries and Departments should ensure a clear and deliberate decision-level work plan is developed to ensure the distribution of work in a strategic and effective manner.

2.4.4.Discretion to take Decisions

When cohorts were asked if on their own initiatives they decide on what tasks to undertake and how to do it, 71.84% of Cohorts agreed that they decide on what tasks to do and how to do it where as 17.41% disagreed.

Undertake task without being told

Strongly Disagree	11.08%
Strongly Agree	30.38%
Neither agree nor disagree	10.76%
Disagree	6.33%
Agree	41.46%

This contradicts findings from the Civil Service management and productivity survey (2015-2018) which established that staff were given limited discretion to perform effectively in their area of work.

It is instructive to note that from the findings of the Management and productivity survey, recommendations were made on best practices to allow some level of discretion of staff to improve productivity. The dissemination of best practices in the policy briefs to Ministries and Departments may have created an organisational culture that allows Cohorts to exercise some level of discretion at their workplace.

3.0.   Observations

Observations from the study revealed the following;

- The average age group of entry staff fall be between the ranges of 20 to 35 years.
- A decrease in the response rate from Phase one to Phase two may be as a result of survey fatigue.
- The difference in the response for clerical knowledge and its training presents a gap which suggests that 6% of the cohorts already have clerical knowledge for their job roles.
- The findings establish the importance of clerical knowledge to the assigned roles of cohorts and the need for newly recruited officers to undergo training in those areas to position them effectively for their roles.
- Human resource orientation is important for entry staff to facilitate their integration to fit within the work culture and perform their roles effectively.
- The recognition of the leadership as an important value amongst cohort is indication of drivers of change and innovation in the Civil Service.
- It is positive to know that majority of Cohort appreciate the importance of maximizing and maintaining productivity as it enhances workplace productivity.

- Cohorts acknowledges the importance of working in teams to share ideas and responsibilities which enables equal distribution of work load and completion of task to meet timelines.
- Though the operations of Civil Service institutions are largely bureaucratic, it is also relevant to Ministries and Departments to adopt a guided approach to allow entry level staff to bring on board new ideas and innovative ways of undertaking task in line with values and principles of the Civil Service.
- It is instructive to note that from the findings of the Management and productivity survey (2015-2019), recommendations were made on best practices to allow some level of discretion of staff to improve productivity. The dissemination of best practices in the policy briefs to Ministries and Departments may have created an organisational culture that allows Cohorts to exercise some level of discretion at their workplace.

4.0. Recommendations

The findings from the study revealed some gaps that requires actionable steps to be taken to ensure the effective capacity development of staff within the Service and for which the following is recommended;

- As a mitigating strategy, the OHCS need to embark on a continuous sensitisation for all staff, especially HR managers, on the need for empirical data to inform sound policy formulation which the Bureaucracy Lab seeks to achieve.
- It is important RTDD and CSTC to incorporate the following training as part of the modules of the Scheme of Service training for entry level staff (Assistant Director IIB and Analogous grades) in the Civil Service.
    o Personnel and Human Resource knowledge and training
    o Clerical knowledge and training
- It very important for OHCS to review the Scheme of Service and competency based trainings for more practical approaches in training staff in organisation and management competencies.
- In a changing world of public administration, the CSTC should ensure its training modules should focus on tools which facilitates working from remote areas.
- It is relevant for Ministries and Departments to imbibe in all staff the culture of professionalism and integrity, also as a core value, since it is central to achieving the goals of Ministries and Departments.
- Ministries and Department should nurture entry level staff in leadership to serve as a basis for effective succession planning as they progress in

their career. There also the need for Ministries and Departments to institutionalize strong mentee and mentor relationship to support entry level officers easily intergrate and understand the work culture of each organisation.

- Civil Service Institutions must ensure that barriers to effective communication mechanisms especially the bottom-top approach, which ensures that concerns and challenges are communicated upwards for necessary actions, are mainstreamed effectively.
- The curriculum for the training should be moduled to include approaches to ensuring task assigned officers are completed with a critical look.
- Every staff should be given the opportunity by management of their organisations to make substantive contribution to the targets of their organisation.
- While a degree of variation in workload is to be expected, it is expected that Ministries and Departments to ensure a clear and deliberate decision-level work plan is developed to ensure the distribution of work in a strategic and effective manner.

5.0. Conclusion

Phase two of the on-boarding survey provides useful information on Cohort's knowledge, training, skills, personal characteristics and task required for their assigned role in the Ministries and Departments. The study recommended the incorporation of training modules into the scheme of service to ensure entry level staff are well equipped and integrated into a fast paced work environment and facilitate their acquisition of requisite knowledge and skills to undertake their assigned roles.