OFFICE OF THE HEAD OF THE CIVIL SERVICE

2020 GRADUATE ONBOARDING SURVEY REPORT- FOCUS: INTEGRATION AND CROSS DEPARTMENT NETWORK

DECEMBER, 2021

Contents

Executive Summary

The quality of a workforce of an organization largely determines the extent to which it can achieve its goals and objectives. 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 Cohort's ability to integrate (Socialize) into the Ministry/Department, built their cross-department network, understand cohort's on-the-job performance and identify any early performance management issues, manager-employee fit issues, implementation of the flexi working schedule amidst the Covid-19 Pandemic and structures put in place and understand the job satisfaction of cohorts.

The survey used the quantitative design to describe single variables (in percentages) and also assess the statistical relationships between variables. A total of 115 Cohorts completed the third Phase of the survey from across 16 regions in the Civil Service.

The survey showed that 83.62% of cohorts agreed their target on Staff Performance Appraisal was relevant to their job schedule and 84.48% agreed they were confident to achieve their targets.

The study showed Ministries and Departments (MDs) are not adhering to the implementation of the flexible working arrangement. Cohorts further agree that there is limited availability of digital infrastructure to facilitate remote work.

At the entry level, cohorts agreed they are dissatisfied with their salaries and other conditions of service and the public service is not very attractive compared to the private sector.

The study recommended the following;

- Ministries and Departments must create a diverse and inclusive environment where employees will feel a sense of belonging and be more connected to each other.
- MDs must put in place strategies to ensure the implementation of workplace safety and emergency health response document.
- Establish partnerships with academia to accommodate training request from officers in fields that will make them relevant to the Service.
- The management of OHCS must put in place efforts to attract and retain talented officers into the Service

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 a 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 been undertaken using Officers undergoing probation in the Civil Service. The study was implemented in three phases, however, this report covers third and final phase of the Onboarding process with focus on Integration/Network/Socialization, on the job performance/performance management issues/manage-employee fit issues, and flexible working hours/home based work and Job satisfaction.

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 cohort's ability to integrate (Socialize) into the Ministry/Department, built their cross-department network.
- Understand cohort's on-the-job performance and identify any early performance management issues, manager-employee fit issues

- Understand how Ministries and Departments are implementing the flexi working schedule amidst the Covid-19 Pandemic and structures put in place.
- To understand the job satisfaction of cohorts.

1.3. Methodology

The survey was quantitative in its design to describe single variables (percentages) and 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. 115 Cohorts completed the third phase of the survey from across 16 regions of the Civil Service.

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

2.0. Presentation of Findings

The findings from the study are presented with graphical descriptions of the data aggregation from the survey. It focuses on the demography of the respondents, their integration/Network/Socialization, on the job performance/performance management issues/manage-employee fit issues, flexible working hours/home based work and Job satisfaction.

2.1. Demography

Percentage distribution of respondent by sex
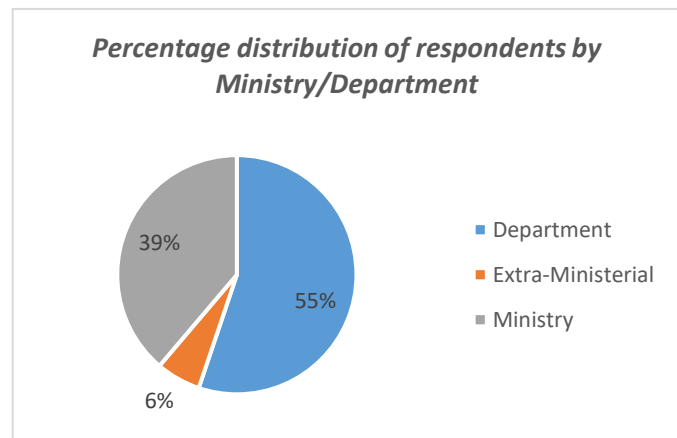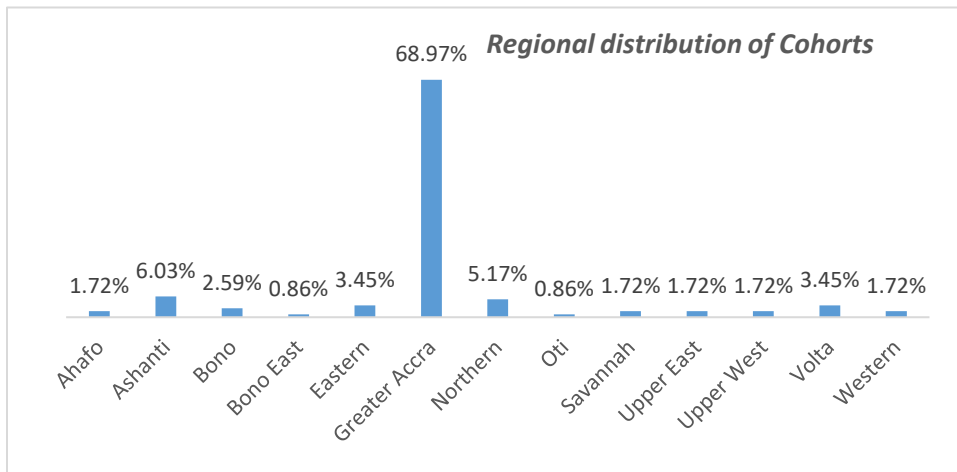
Female 40%

Male 60%
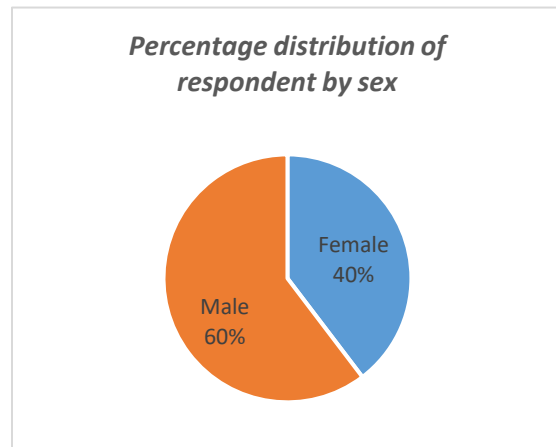
115 compared to 316 officers completed the third phase of the Cohort study. This constitutes a significant decrease of 63% in the response rate from the second phase and a further 73% decrease from the first phase of the study. The data further reveals a 20% increase in the female respondents compared to the male respondents in the third phase of the study. A decrease in the response rate by 73% from phase one to three may be as a result of survey fatigue and inadequate sensitization on the phase 3 survey.

As a mitigating strategy, there is a need for the OHCS to continually, sensitize HR Officers on the relevance of undertaking evidence-based research to inform policy decisions.

The data reveals that 55% of the respondents were from the Departments with 39% and 6% from the Ministries and Extra-Ministerial organisations respectively.

It will be interesting to understand the survey hesitancy from the Ministries particularly on the completion of the phase two and three of the Cohort study.

Percentage distribution of respondents by Ministry/Department

39%

55%

6%

- Department
- Extra-Ministerial
- Ministry

Regional distribution of Cohorts

Ahafo 1.72%, Ashanti 6.03%, Bono 2.59%, Bono East 0.86%, Eastern 3.45%, Greater Accra 68.97%, Northern 5.17%, Oti 0.86%, Savannah 1.72%, Upper East 1.72%, Upper West 1.72%, Volta 3.45%, Western 1.72%

Findings further suggest that majority of respondents (68.97%) are from the Greater Accra Region with the others sparsely distributed across the other regions. Relatively there was a drop in the response rate of respondents from the Ashanti, Eastern and Volta regions.

The age distribution of Cohort reveals that approximately 39% fall within the age range of 26-30 years while 34% are within the range of 31-35 years. Across the age range distribution, the male respondents dominate compared to the female distribution.

Comparing this to the age distribution of Cohorts in the second phase of the study, there was a marginal decrease of 3% of respondents in the age category of 26-30 years with an

Age Distribution by Sex

	20-25	26-30	31-35	36-40	41-45	45 and above
Female	0.86%	14.66%	13.79%	6.03%	2.59%	1.72%
Male	3.45%	24.14%	19.83%	6.90%	3.45%	2.59%

increase of 5.14% within the age range of 31-35 years compared to the same age category in the second phase. These changes in age ranges from the second phase and third phase is a result of the low response rate.

Educational Qualification by Sex

Bachelors: 27.59%, 50.86%
Masters: 12.07%, 9.48%
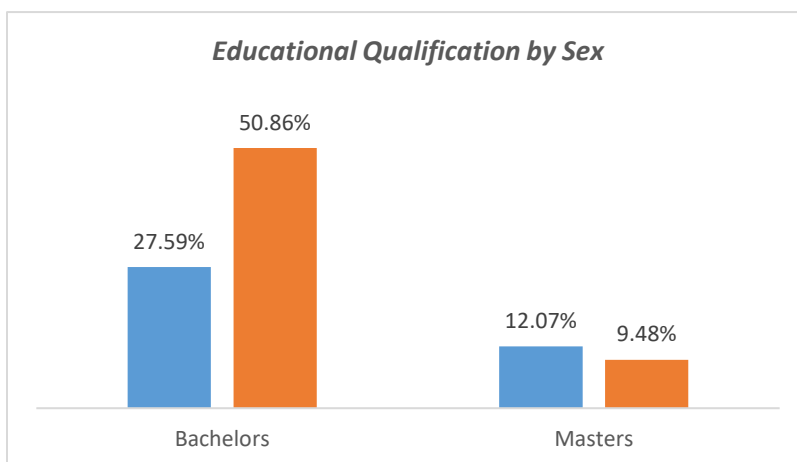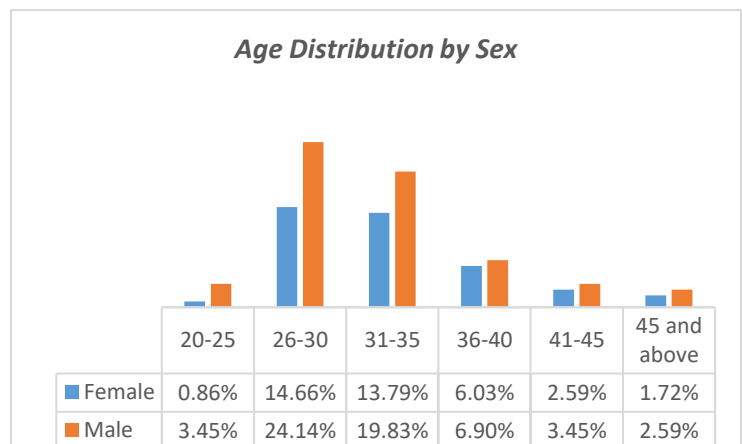
On the educational qualification, 22% of Cohorts have a Master's degree as their highest educational qualification. This feeds into the training and development needs of officers who will require further academic training as they progress to occupy high grades and responsibilities within the Service. It has implications on cost and productivity due to

the number of officers who will likely apply for study leave with or without pay to acquire further academic training and qualification.

2.2. Integration/Networking/Socialization

Organizational socialization is the process through which an individual acquires the attitudes, behavior, and knowledge needed to participate as an organizational member (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979).

The socialization of new employees has important consequences for individuals and organizations. Several studies contend that the quality of socialization affects employee satisfaction, attitudes, stress, performance, commitment, and turnover (Bauer, Morrison & Callister, 1998; Gerstner & Day, 1997). Unsatisfactory socialization can lead to stress, disillusionment, stalled careers, and organizational loss in the form of lowered productivity and turnover (Bauer, et al., 1998). This is not only stressful for employees but also detrimental to organizations. Increasing our understanding of the socialization integration and networking process can help the newly recruited staff adapt to their work and organizations more successfully in the Civil Service.

This section sought to understand Cohorts' ability to integrate (Socialize) into the Ministry/Department, built their cross-Department network using a scale of 1 to 5 to indicate the extent to which they agreed to some statements.

Trust in the workplace means employees enjoy a culture of honesty, psychological safety, and mutual respect. They're proud of where they work and are more willing to go above and beyond for your organization. Trust in the workplace also helps employees feel secure in their jobs and, in turn, reduces turnover.
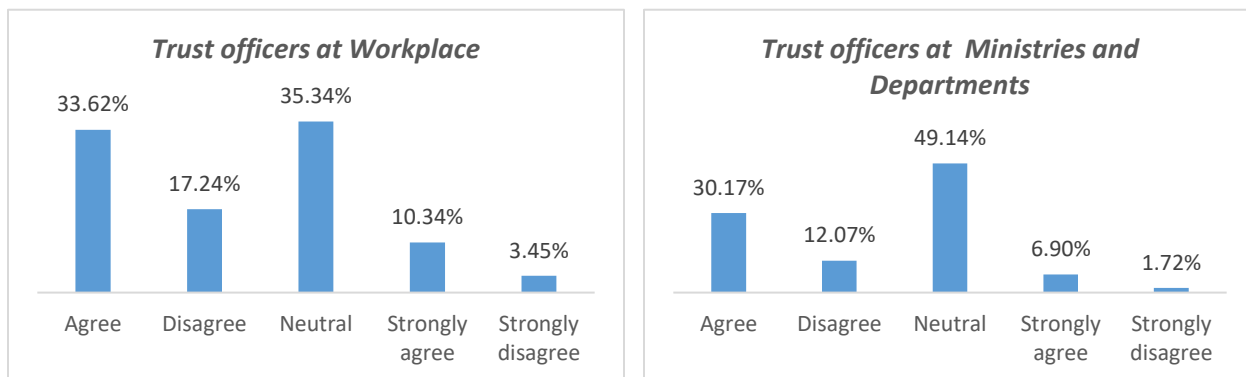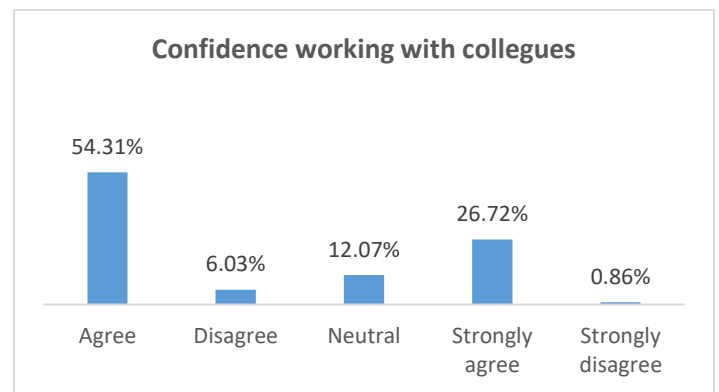

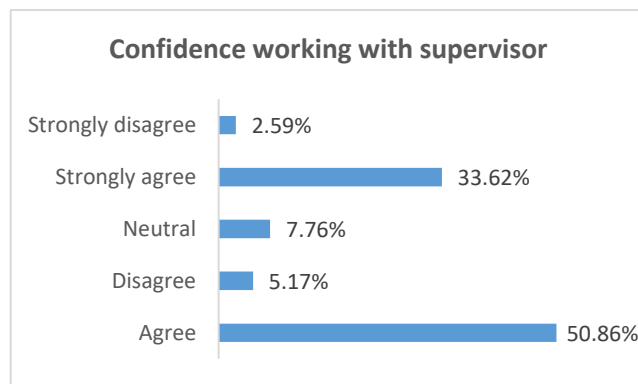43.96% of Officers agree that they trust most people at their work whereas 35.34% were uncertain. However, 20.69% respondents indicated that they do not trust people at their workplace. Further to this, 49.14% of cohorts were indifferent about trusting officers from other Ministries and Departments. The findings suggest that newly recruited officers have trust issues when it comes to people at the workplace and other institutions.

Management of Ministries and Departments must facilitate the building of a diverse and inclusive culture where employees will feel a sense of belonging and be more connected to their team.

2.2.1. Confidence at the Work-Place

Confident employees, tend to feel positive about their work and motivated to get things done. Confidence is something that can be built over time for instance gaining relevant work experience, earning co-workers' respect, and receiving positive feedback are all things that can make one feel confident about their skills and abilities.

85% of cohorts feel confident working with their supervisors and 81% of cohorts feel confident working with their colleagues. This indicates that a significant percentage of officers feel confident working with their supervisors and colleagues and this is positive for the Civil Service.

Confidence working with supervisor

Strongly disagree 2.59%
Strongly agree 33.62%
Neutral 7.76%
Disagree 5.17%
Agree 50.86%

Confidence working with collegues

Agree 54.31%
Disagree 6.03%
Neutral 12.07%
Strongly agree 26.72%
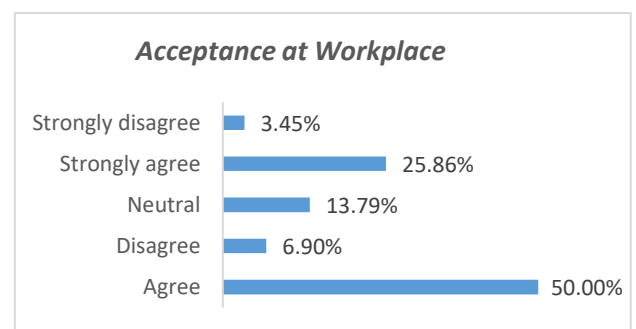Strongly disagree 0.86%

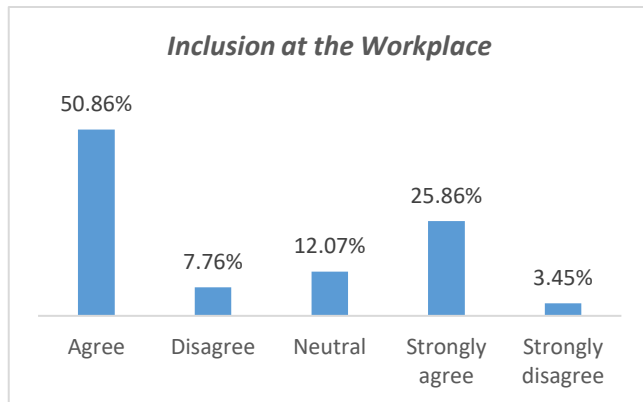### 2.2.2. Inclusion and acceptance at the workplace

The survey explored the extent to which respondents feel a sense of belonging at the work place.

Inclusion refers to the degree to which diverse individuals are able to:

- Use their voice
- Participate in the decision-making processes within a group
- Increase the amount of power they have within the group
- Feel like one actually belongs

Inclusion and acceptance creates employee engagement and a sense of belonging. In order for organizations to have successful talent, they must embrace and encourage engagement. Along with employee engagement, organizations need to make sure that they are diverse and have an inclusive environment. Employees should feel a sense of belonging

Acceptance at Workplace

Strongly disagree 3.45%
Strongly agree 25.86%
Neutral 13.79%
Disagree 6.90%
Agree 50.00%

Inclusion at the Workplace

50.86%

25.86%

12.07%

7.76%

3.45%

Agree   Disagree   Neutral   Strongly   Strongly
                                 agree   disagree

76.72% of officers agree they feel included at their work place while 75.86% of cohorts feel accepted at the workplace. However, 11.21% disagreed they feel included at the work place while 10.35% also do not feel accepted at their organisations. It important for institutions to build a positive inclusive organisation culture that embraces diversity, engagement, and belonging. This should be done through staff durbar and cross-departmental social networks amongst others.
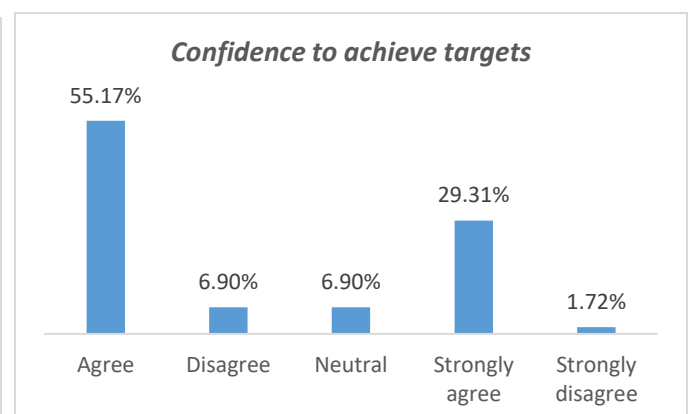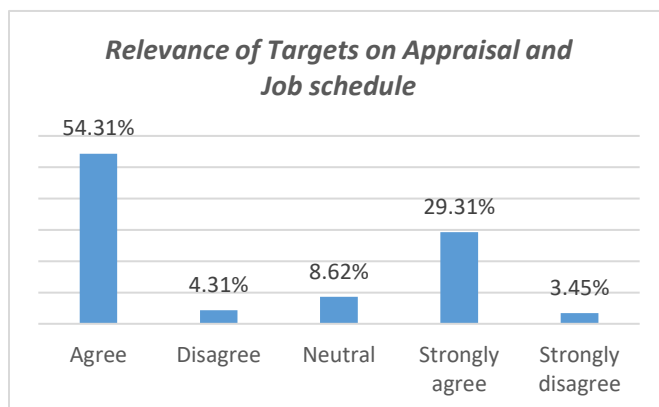
2.3. Job Performance and Job Management Issues

On a general level, job performance describes the contribution of an individual to the overall success of an organization. According to Borman & Motowidlo (1993), job performance consists of two main factors:

Task performance-describes the core job responsibilities of an employee. It is also called "in-role prescribed behavior" (Koopmans et al. 2011) and is reflected in specific work outcomes and deliverables as well as their quality and quantity.

Contextual performance- this goes beyond formal job responsibilities. Also referred to as "discretionary extra-role behavior" (Koopmans et al. 2011) contextual performance is reflected in activities such as coaching co-workers, strengthening social networks within an organization and going the extra mile for the organization.

When asked on the relevance of targets on staff performance appraisal to Cohorts job schedule, 83.62% agreed their targets on Staff Performance Appraisal (SPA) was relevant to their job schedule. In addition, 84.48% agreed they were confident to achieve their targets.

Relevance of Targets on Appraisal and Job schedule

54.31%

29.31%

4.31%   8.62%   3.45%

Agree   Disagree   Neutral   Strongly   Strongly
                                 agree   disagree

Confidence to achieve targets

55.17%

29.31%

6.90%   6.90%   1.72%

Agree   Disagree   Neutral   Strongly   Strongly
   agree   disagree

2.4. Flexible Working Arrangement

Flexible working is an alternative working arrangement that that suits an employee's needs whiles not compromising on the delivery of work outputs e.g. having flexible start and finish times, or working from home.

As part of measures to curb the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Office of the Head of Service directed Ministries and Departments to implement a flexible working schedule.

This section was designed to understand how Civil Service Institutions are implementing the flexible working schedule and the structures that have been put in place during the Covid-19 crises.

53.45% Cohorts indicated that Ministries and Departments have instituted flexible working arrangement for staff to manage the in-person contact as a result of Covid-19 while 29.31% disagreed. However, 17.24% of Cohorts were indifferent on their institution's implementation of flexible working arrangement.

Flexible work Arrangement
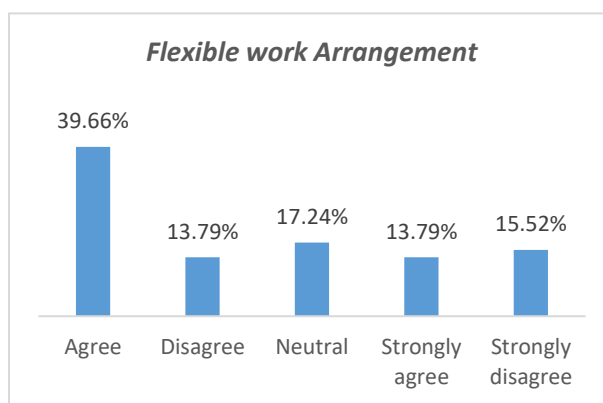
Findings reveal that Ministries and Departments are not adhering to the implementation of the flexible working arrangement for their staff. Officers spend more time at the office in their numbers without adopting alternative working arrangements.

OHCS has launched a Workplace Safety and Health Response Strategy to ensure that disease outbreaks do not interfere unduly with service delivery to the general public in circumstances similar to COVID-19 and strategies must be put in place to ensure its implementation.
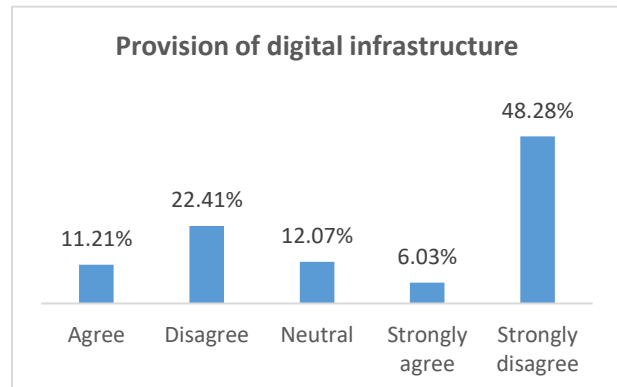
2.5. Digital Infrastructure

Digital infrastructure refers to the digital technologies that provide the foundation for an organization's information technology and operations. Examples of digital infrastructure include:

- Computers/Laptops
- Accessible Internet connectivity
- Mobile telecom and digital communication suites, including apps
- Data centres and networks
- Enterprise portals, platforms, systems, and software
- Cloud services and software

- Operational security, user identity and data encryption
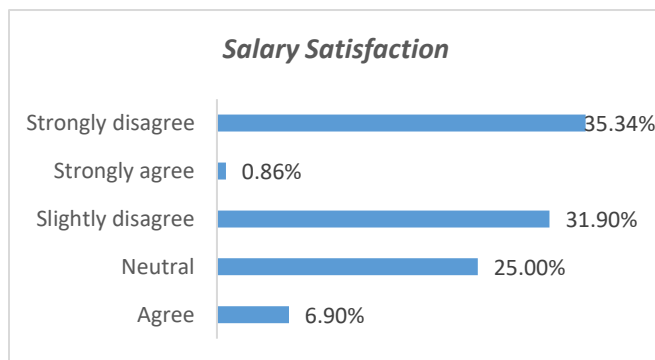- Application Programming Interface (APIs) and integrations

70.69% of Cohorts disagreed that digital infrastructure (Laptops, moderns, smart workplace) to work from home was provided. This is a huge disincentive for the implementation of the flexible working schedule for remote work.

It is important for Ministries and Departments to budget for and acquire the required digital infrastructure to encourage remote work for officers.

Provision of digital infrastructure

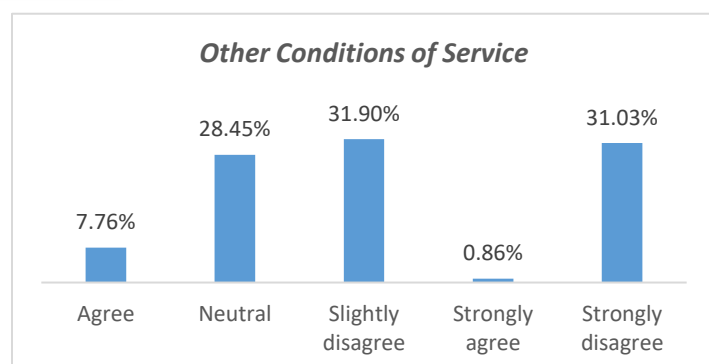| Agree	Disagree	Neutral	Strongly agree	Strongly disagree
11.21%	22.41%	12.07%	6.03%	48.28%

2.6. Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is defined as the level of contentment employees feel with their job. It also has to do with compensation and benefits, work environment, team members and managers and job impact on personal life.

Salary Satisfaction

Strongly disagree	35.34%
Strongly agree	0.86%
Slightly disagree	31.90%
Neutral	25.00%
Agree	6.90%

67.24% of cohorts disagreed their salary is very satisfactory while 62.93% further disagreed other benefits such as pension and health are satisfactory. At the entry level, when officers are dissatisfied with salaries and conditions of service, it may result in a high labour turnover.

It is important for the Civil Service Council to negotiate with government and Fair Wages and Salaries Commission (FWSC) for improved conditions of service for staff.

Other Conditions of Service

Agree	Neutral	Slightly disagree	Strongly agree	Strongly disagree
7.76%	28.45%	31.90%	0.86%	31.03%

3.0. Observations

The observations from the survey findings are as below:

- A decrease in the response rate by 73% from phase one to three may be as a result of survey fatigue and lack of sensitization.
- Majority of the respondent who completed phase three of the study were from the Departments.
- Majority of respondents are from the Greater Accra Region with other the respondents sparsely distributed across the other regions. Relatively there was a drop in the response rate of respondents from the Ashanti, Eastern and Volta regions.
- Across all the age ranges, the male respondents dominate compared to the females.
- 22% of Cohorts have a Master's degree as their highest educational qualification.
- Newly recruited officers have trust issues working with people at their workplace and other institutions.
- Majority of Cohorts agreed their targets on Staff Performance Appraisal (SPA) were relevant to their job schedule and were confident to achieve their targets.
- Majority of officers in the Ministries and Departments are spending more time at the office than working remotely.
- Majority of Cohorts indicated that digital infrastructure (Laptops, moderns, smart workplace) to work from home was provided.
- Issues of low salaries and other benefits were of great concern to the officers.

4.0. Recommendations

The following are recommended for management consideration.

- There is need for OHCS to continually, sensitize HR Officers on the relevance of undertaking evidence-based research to inform policy decisions.
- The OHCS should create partnerships with academia to accommodate training request from officers in fields that will make them relevant to the Service.
- Management of Ministries and Departments must create a diverse and inclusive environment where employees will feel a sense of belonging and be more connected to their team. This should be done through staff durbar and cross-departmental social networks amongst others.
- Strategies must be put in place to ensure the implementation of workplace safety and health response strategy across the Ministries and Departments.
- The Civil Service Council to negotiate with government and Fair Wages and Salaries Commission (FWSC) to raise the salary level of officers and their conditions of service.
- The Civil Service Council must put in place systems to attract and retain talented officers into the Service

5.0. Conclusion

The final Phase of the Cohort study provides Civil Service Institutions useful information to help integrate entry-level staff into its work culture and environment. The study suggested strategies that can be implemented to ensure a safe workplace for its staff and public at large. It is important for OHCS in collaboration with other Ministries and Departments to implement the recommendations to attract and retain talented officers in a fast-paced Civil Service.

References

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2. Bauer, T. N., Morrison, E. W., & Callister, R. R. (1998). Organizational Socialization: A Review and Directions for Future Research. In G. R. Ferris (Ed.) Research in Personnel and Human Resources Management 16, pp. 149- 214. Stamford, CT: JAI Press.
3. Gerstner C. R., & Day, D. V. (1997). Meta-analytic review of leader-member exchange theory: Correlates and construct issues. Journal of Applied Psychology, 82, 827-844.