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DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS STUDIES

**IDENTIFYING TRAINING NEEDS OF OPERATING
CORE STAFF: A CASE OF THE GAMBIA PORTS
AUTHORITY AND THE PERSONNEL
MANAGEMENT OFFICE**

**A Thesis Submitted to the Department of Development Studies, in
Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Award of
a Master of Science (M.Sc.) Degree in
Strategic Human Resource Management**

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BUEA, NOVEMBER 2015

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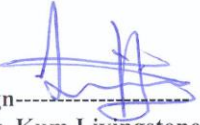
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DEDICATION

To my late father **Mr. Ebrima Barrow** may his soul rest in peace.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AS:	Assistant Secretary
CAO:	Cadet Administrative Officer
DPS:	Deputy Permanent Secretary
ERG:	Economic Recovery Program
GPA:	Gambia Ports Authority
HRM:	Human Resource Management
HRO:	Human Resource Officer
JIT:	Job Instructional Training
OCS:	Operating Core Staff
OEM:	Organizational Element Model
PAS:	Principal Assistance Secretary
PMO:	Personnel Management Office
PO:	Personnel Officer
PPO:	Principal Personnel Officer
PS:	Permanent Secretary
SAS:	Senior Assistance Secretary
SOCS:	Supervisors of Operating Core Staff
SPO:	Senior Personnel Officer
TD:	Training and Development
TNA:	Training Needs Assessment

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ABSTRACT

This study sets out to scientifically measure skill needs in two organizations in the Gambia: the Personnel Management Office and the Gambia Port Authority.

The study applies qualitative and quantitative tools, as well as adopts a case study design, using the case of Operating Core Staff in both organizations. 80 questionnaires were administered to Operating Core Staff in both organizations, selected using the random sampling technique and 17 structured interviews were administered to supervisors of Operating Core Staff, selected purposively. Data collected is presented on tables, charts, and diagrams, interpreted using basic statistical calculations (Percentages, mean, and X^2) and analyzed based on the specific objectives or research questions raised in the study.

The study found that while human resource functions are perceived to be the most important roles and responsibilities of Operating Core Staff, their most frequently performed task are secretarial in nature. It was equally observed that in order to perform the most frequently performed activities, Operating Core Staff currently possess communication, leadership and team-building skills, but are largely deficient in report writing, logical reasoning, monitoring and evaluation, proposal writing, customer service and negotiation. Consequently, the study recommends training on analytical and logical reasoning, proposal writing, effective planning, and monitoring and evaluation to Personnel Management Office, and proposes training on effective reporting, customer service, strategic planning, and monitoring and evaluation to Gambia Ports Authority. This study recommends that further research should be conducted across other public service institutions in the Gambia to provide a nationwide inventory of training needs in the Gambian civil service.

Keywords: *Training and development, training needs, competency gaps, public services.*

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Rising globalization and spread of Information Communication Technology has rendered the international business environment extremely competitive (Pucik et al, 2002). This accompanied by a broad array of technological and environmental challenges is prompting a change in organizations as many seek means of adjusting and gaining competitive advantage. Most organizations have resorted to updating the skills of their personnel as a means of coping with the changing paradigm. However, whether training and development can be used as a means of boosting the competitiveness of an organization remains unclear. This blur picture is prompted by the fact that while training and development is visibly successful in enhancing productivity in some organizations, its contribution to performance in others is beyond the eye's view. Investigating the factors that accounts for this difference is not only urgent for training and development experts but important for human resource management practitioners as a whole.

The adoption of training and development as a means of gaining competitive advantage is necessitated by the general move towards development of organizational human resources. In fact, the human relations approach to organizational effectiveness emerged in the early 1960's as one of the most important approaches to contemporary management. During this time, it was quickly realized that the personnel department and training functions both undertook work around the human element of the business and that putting these together formed a synergy. Thus by the early 1990s, the role of people skills and knowledge in planning business change, and organizational restructuring was largely recognized (Harley, 1991).

This notwithstanding, training and development has been around for ages. Its earliest root can be traced all the way back to the middle ages in the form of apprenticeship (Shane, 2012) which evolved into vocational schools in the early 1880's (Desimone, et al , 2002). The advent of the mass production and factories during the period of industrial revolutions further transformed training. Apprenticeship programs were shortened and what is now known as a job instructional training (JIT) was developed around the First World War (Desimone, et al, 2002). It wasn't until the twentieth

century that training and developed as a profession and formal training became the norm (Shane, 2012, Desimone, et al 2002). By the 1970s, events affecting the international business environment, such as the great depression and the Second World War, had greatly transformed training to what we know today. By this period, the workplace was filled with many different types of people: war veterans, Great Depression survivors, and young baby boomers. This forced employers to move from the hitherto one fit-for-all type of training to a more focused training approach.

It is widely observed that human resource is the intellectual property of the firm, and that employees prove to be a good source of gaining competitive advantage (Houger, 2006). Equally, training is widely recognized as the most essential way of developing organizational intellectual property through building employees competencies. Organization therefore, needs to design its human resource management in ways that fit into the organization's structure through assistance in building the skills necessary for increased performance.

Thus, training and development remains a crucial issue for many organizations particularly those in business or industrial sectors. It plays an important role in the effectiveness of an organization and improves the performance of people at work. All organizations hiring people needs to train and develop them. This is necessitated by the degree of change in the business environment, manufacturing process, technical advancement and rapid growth in the demand for products and services.

While the adoption of training and development is gaining ground in the private sector only recently, the practice of training and development in the public sector has a much longer history. However, the degree of relevance attached to its contribution to performance varies across the two sectors (Public and private). Hence, the seriousness given to training regarding planning, methodology, content and evaluation in public and private organizations may be divergent. Governments all over the world spend millions of dollars on training and development of staff. But whether training and development has contributed to effective public service delivery is also a bowl of mixed results and conducting more empirical measurement of the relationship between staff training and service provision will clarify this mixed feeling. However, for purpose of simplicity, we do not intend to get into correlating training and performance but to approach the same issue from a different perspective. The approach is simply to understand the forces within the training process that influences success or failure in training.

With the degree of change in the business environment, organizations have realized that training and development of their staff is the only alternative for long-term survival and enhancement of their organizational performance. In today's business climate, the need for training and development has become more prominent than ever before, but at the same time, organizations have also become cautious about how training budget are spent (Gupta,1998). Despite this, the initiation and subsequent implementation of training and development programs fails to meet expectations. Apart from the huge amount of money spent on training and development programs, effort, and time may be wasted if training fails to impact change in the organization.

Training and development is a direct investment in an organization. Skill level assessment of the people within the organization, development implementation of successful maintenance training programs helps organizations function at optimal levels. In order to generate true skills level improvement, utilizing a systematic approach in the development implementation of training programs is crucial. Since training is such a substantial investment in any organization, its people and the organization future. Each organization must devote significant time, funds and resources to that commitment as a goal.

It is therefore, worthwhile for training and development practitioners to understand the complex forces that account for success or failure in training. However, these forces may be too general and trying to examine them on a macro scale will only complicate understanding. It is within this framework that this study focuses on the micro forces that influence result of training and development activities, with particular emphasis on Training Needs Assessment, considered as stage one of the training cycle.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Every year, the government of The Gambia spends millions of dollars sending staff abroad for training and development. But the impact of this, though hardly measured is visibly blurred. In fact, the performance of trained personnel upon their return to the country seems not to be making any significant differences. Hence, the method adopted in identifying needs and selecting participants for training is questionable. This is because, for training and development to influence reforms, it must be guided by the desire to fill clearly defined skills gaps and objectives. A requirement that is hardly noticed in the manner in which training and development is conducted in the Gambian civil service. Thus, very little effort is made to identify training needs of staff in very

important sectors of the country, including the Ports Authority and the Personnel management office.

The practice of needs assessment is marginally understood and often given less attention. Consequently, the type of training received by trainees is not usually tied to strategic objectives of organizations since the choice of training subject rest on the prerogative of the trainee rather than management.

This situation is not only peculiar to the public sector as most private sector organizations in the Gambia conduct training and development in an ad-hoc manner, without any clear identification of needs and objectives. The result is that performance in both the public and private sector remains below expectations and many public enterprises sector organizations in the country find it difficult to compete with foreign-based or external organizations.

The major challenge therefore is how to assess training needs of Operating Core Staff of low and middle line staff of selected public sector bodies in The Gambia: The Personnel Management Office and the Gambia Ports Authority.

No real evaluation has been done to identify training needs for these two organizations in the Gambia. This study therefore investigates the capacity strength and weaknesses of operating core staff in the Personnel Management Office and the Gambian Ports Authority. The essence is to identify the knowledge gaps required to boost performance in both organizations.

1.3 Research Objectives

Generally, the aim of this study is to investigate training effectiveness in the Gambia Ports Authority and the Personnel Management Office by conducting a training needs analysis of low and middle line (operating core) staff of the organizations that will serve as a basis for training.

Specifically, this research seeks:

1. To assess the perceptions of operating core staff regarding the most important role and responsibilities required of them
2. To identify the perceptions of operating core staff regarding the most frequently performed activities.

3. To examine the competencies that operating core staff currently possess and competencies deem lacking by their supervisors of personnel management office and the Gambia Ports Authority.

1.4. Research Questions

This study is guided by the following research questions:

1. What are the perceptions of operating core staff and their supervisors regarding the roles and responsibilities required of them?
2. What are the perceptions of operating core staff on the most frequently performed activities?
3. What competencies do operating core staff currently possess and what competencies do they and their supervisors deem lacking to effectively perform in the Personnel Management Office and the Gambia Ports Authority?

1.5. Significance of the Study

The relevance of this study is situated at three levels: to the researcher, to academics and the organizations under study. On the part of the researcher, the study will enable the researcher to assess training needs techniques used in various organizations of the public and private sectors. Also, it will enable the researcher to come up with valid recommendations that will help address the problems encountered in conducting training needs assessment so that the best practice can be instituted in the various organizations under study in the Gambia.

It is hoped that this study will help other researchers on training needs assessment to come up with different dimensions and methods of conducting training needs assessment to select appropriate training for organizations.

Concerning the organizations under study, the research will stimulate discussion and reforms on the manner in which training and development is initiated and conducted. The study will conduct training needs assessment that will be used by the organizations to select trainees and identify priority areas for training of personnel. The study will equally establish precedents for continuous and detail evaluation of training needs prior to any training exercise. By adequately identifying training needs, training in the two organizations will be channeled towards meeting organizational needs.

The evaluation of training needs of these organizations will equally provide a focus and direction for investments in employees' professional development. The study will equally go a long way to assist both organizations to use appropriate techniques in identifying skill gaps of operating core staff.

On a general note, this study will improve understanding of the causes of low performance of trained personnel of these organizations by tailoring training to their needs.

1.6 Scope of the Study

The study focuses on identifying training needs in two organizations in the Gambia: The Gambia Ports Authority and the Personnel Management Office. The study relies on data collected from the headquarters and deconcentrated services of the two organizations. This is because most decisions as to the training of staff are taken at the headquarters of these organizations. In each organization, all the heads of department were highly involved in the study.

The study spans through a period of 5 years from 2010 to 2015. The period is selected to enable the researcher to know how both organizations have been conducting training and development of their staff and the impact it has on the performance of trained staff of both organization during this period.

1.7. Description of the Study Area

This study focuses on two organizations in the Gambia: the Personnel Management Office and the Gambia Ports Authority.

The Gambia lies on the West Coast of Continental Africa, and Senegal borders it on all three sides except the West. It is a tiny, but very significant country with a land area of 10,689km² and has a population of 1.8million(Gambia Bureau of Statistics,2013 Population Census).The economy is largely agrarian, and agriculture provides employment for three- quarters of the working population and contributes more than a quarter to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP).Groundnut, rice, millet, maize, and cotton provides the bulk of crops cultivated each year with the country's main export earnings rely heavily on groundnut cultivation. The country is a unitary centralized government headed by a president who heads the executive and controlled by a bicameral parliament and a judiciary.

Following a decade -long trend of economic decline, the government of the Gambia in 1995 decided to design a comprehensive set of adjustment measures aimed at rehabilitating the economy and laying the basis for stabilization and growth. To this end the Economic Recovery Program (ERP) was launched in September of 1995 with two broad objectives:

- To reform the public sector with particular emphasis on reversing the over-extension of government employment and rationalizing parastatal activities.
- To create favorable conditions for greater productivity especially in critical sectors of the economy

It was observed from the past decades that, the uncontrolled intake of unskilled and unproductive personnel, have constituted a serious burden on the government's wage bill and is seriously affecting the quality of civil services delivery. The 1995 ERP was therefore introduced to improve the quality of public service and to strengthen national and economic management. One of the offshoots of the ERP was the creation of the Personnel Management Office (PMO) with the mission to strengthen the civil service through appropriate reforms. The office is expected to cooperate with ministries and departments to ensure the efficient recruitment, development, and deployment of personnel in the civil service. Primarily, the PMO has to develop and implement policies for personnel and training, monitor personnel and training decision made in ministries, review, and control staff complement and procedures and prepares training plans for the civil service (PMO, Annual Report 1995).

The PMO is headed by a permanent secretary who is charged with coordinating and directing all activities of the institution through the formulation and interpretation of policies on civil service matters in the Gambia. He/she is assisted by a deputy permanent secretary, directors of the divisions, principal personnel officers, senior personnel officers, personnel officers, cadet administrative officers and support staff. The office is divided into four divisions: the Personnel Management Division (PMD) charged with matters related to appointments, promotions, termination, dismissals, and transfers, the management service division (MSD) in charge of enforcing staff inspection and control measures such as vacancy review, job evaluation and grading, etc., the Human Resource Development Division (HRDD) charged with advising the government on the HR capacity of the civil service, analyze training proposals or applications, and develop training procedures and policies, as well as the Human Resource Information System (HRIS) responsible for computerization of civil service

information and personnel records. The PMO currently has a staff strength of approximately ninety-five (95) number of employees spread across the four divisions (PMO. Strategic Plan, 2010).

However, for the government of the Gambia to fulfil its first objective of reversing over-extension of employment it must prioritize training, considered by human resource management practitioners as the best alternative to recruitment (employees may be trained to make job enlargement and rotation possible). Unfortunately, training effort is currently fragmented and no mechanism exists for the systematic assessment for training needs. In addition to this, the manpower budget capacity in the civil service is weak and the roles of institutions involved in the personnel management function are not clearly defined.

While the PMO is a recently created institution, The Gambia Ports Authority (GPA) has a much longer history. It was established by the Ports Act of 1972 to take over the assets and operations of the erstwhile Marine Department. The port is responsible for the management, operation and development of marine and cargo handling services at the port of Banjul. It is a strategic entity in the sense that it facilitates international trade and serves as a focal point in the trade gateway project.

The GPA's main port is located in Banjul. It is mainly used for discharging and loading shipment for container carriers, Tankers and general cargo vessels. It also provides a navy base for the Gambia Navy and provides a ferry-crossing Terminal for Banjul/Barra crossing. The other part is located in Kaur, though non-functional as of the moment of this research. The Port Authority (PA) is divided into two main divisions: the ports division and the ferry division. The ports division is headed by a managing director who is responsible for the overall management and coordination of the activities of the ports and ferry services. The ports division is further broken down into different lines of authority including the Human Resource and Administration Department, the finance department, harbours and marine department, and traffic operations department.

On the other hand, the ferry division is headed by a director of ferries who is responsible for the management of the activities of the ferry services. The division is equally divided into the revenue generation and marketing department, the operations department, and the technical department. The GPA has a total of approximately one thousand nine hundred number of staff among which three hundred (300) can be

considered as operating core, four hundred and fifty –six (456) as the strategic apex, five hundred and sixty-two (562) as techno-structure and six hundred and eighty-two as support staff. Those considered as operating core staff are Directors, Managing Directors, Human Resource Personnel, Accountants, confidential secretaries, and Records Officers, etc. (GPA Annual Report, 2014).

There is a consensus that the Gambia’s civil service has some key capacity weakness, particularly, the pay is too low to hire, motivate and retain key technical professional staff. Acknowledging these shortcomings, the president announced at the swearing-in of the new Public Service Commission that he wanted to “reintroduce civil service reform” and “ create a civil service based on merit” that would be “ leaner and better remunerated”. This would require a comprehensive civil service reform strategy.(Public Service Reform Sector Strategy Papers 2013).

To a larger extend the management of training funded directly by the Government is highly centralized under the PMO. Many ministries and departments have their own training budget, but these tend to be small. For example, Education ministry, which is the largest ministry, has an annual training budget funded by Government of only five million dalasis, roughly equivalent to US\$200.000.By contrast, the central civil service training budget manage by the PMO is 20million dalasis in, of which 87.5% is allocated to overseas training and the rest for local training. However, a significant amount of training is funded directly by international organizations and through donor projects. Because PMO’s training budget is disproportionately allocated to post- graduate training overseas, it benefits very few civil servants. Candidates, who must have a minimum of three years of service, are nominated by their ministries and department for overseas scholarship in the chosen field. PMO’s training committee, which is chaired by the permanent secretary, decides which candidates will be funded. (PMO, Annual Training Budget, 2014).

By comparism, there is relatively little local training being funded by the PMO and most of it is for bachelor degree programs, which is conducted at the University of the Gambia, Management Development Institute (MDI) and the Gambia Technical Training Institute (GTTI)

1.8 Organization of the Study

The study is divided into five (5) chapters: Chapter one is the general introduction to the study. It indicates the problem to be investigated, the objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, scope of the study, background of the study area and definition of terms.

Chapter two on its part reviews related literature on the subject matter. It starts by reviewing conceptual discussion on the major concepts in the topic before examining the main theoretical framework for the study. Latter the chapter attempt's to understand training needs assessment from the perspective of different scholars with particular focus on its importance, method, source of data and the process. Based on this literature, a framework is developed for evaluating training needs assessment in the organizations under study.

Chapter three discusses the methods and procedures used in conducting the study. The chapter describes the research approach adopted in the study, the research design, participants of the study, the instruments and tools used in data collection, source of data, summary of procedure followed to conduct the research and an explanation of the procedure for analysis used in the research.

Chapter four of the research work reports on the presentation, interpretation and analysis of response from the questionnaires and interviews conducted for the research using percentages, tables and charts.

Chapter five of this research provides the recommendation and conclusion of this study through the results that have emanated from the collection of data from this research work.

1.9. Definition of Terms

Training: Is a type of activity which is planned, systematically and it result in an enhanced level of skill, knowledge and competency that are necessary to perform work effectively.

Development: Is a broad on-going multi-faceted set of activities aimed at bringing someone or an organization up to another threshold of performance, often to perform some job or a new role in the future

Human Resource Development: Is the integration of individual career and organization roles to achieve maximum productivity.

Human Resource Management: Is the way organizations manage their staff and help them to develop in order to be able to execute organizations' mission and goal successfully.

Needs: Is the gap on the discrepancy between current performance and desired.

Task: A discreet action taken by a worker to produce a service or product.

Needs Assessment: The process of identifying and prioritizing performance needs.

Competency: Knowledge, skills, attitudes, or behaviours that result in performance of a function to standard.

Performace: What people must do or the job and results of that work.

Skills: A present observable competence to perform a learned psychomotor act.

Support Staff: Compose of specialized a unit that exists to provide support to the organization outside the operating workflow.

Operating Core Staff: Those who perform the basic work related directly to the production of products and services.

Middle-Line Manager: Form a chain joining the strategic apex to the operating core by the use of delegated formal authority.

Strategic Apex: Charged with ensuring that the organization serve it mission an effective way, and also that it serve the need of those people who control or otherwise have powers over the organization.

Technostructure: The analysts who serve the organization by affecting the work of others.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter attempts to situate this work within the context of on-going discussions on the subject matter. The essence is to enable the researcher and the audience to understand the major trends, patterns and themes in contemporary training and development discourse. The chapter therefore, examines conceptual literature, empirical findings and explains the main theory adopted as the tool of analysis for the study.

2.1 Conceptual Literature

2.1.1 Defining Training

Although the main concept being addressed in this research is training needs analysis, it is vital to note that a proper discussion of Training Needs Assessment cannot be effective without a perfect clarification of the concept of training. This is because the concept of training has been used interchangeable with many other concepts: learning, development, and education by many scholars. Harrison (2005) supports this claim by positing that training and development has been known by several names, including employee development, human resource development, and learning and development.

Training has traditionally been defined as the process by which individuals change their skills, knowledge, attitudes, and behaviour (Robbins and DeCenzo, 1998). In this context, training involves designing and supporting learning activities that result in a desired level of performance. In contrast, development typically refers to long-term growth and learning, directing attention more on what an individual may need to know or do at some future time. While training focuses more on current job duties or responsibilities, development points to future job responsibilities. However, sometimes these terms have been used interchangeably or have been denoted by the single term performance consulting, which emphasizes either the product of training and development or how individuals perform as a result of what they have learned (Robinson and Robinson, 1995).

On his part, Chaenov (2000) observed that Training is an educational process in which people can learn new information, re-learn and reinforce existing knowledge and skills, and most importantly have time to think and consider what new options can help them improve their effectiveness and performance at work. Effective training conveys relevant and useful information that inform employees and develop skills and behaviours that can be transferred back to the workplace. The author argued that the goal of training is to create an impact that lasts beyond the end time of the training itself. The focus is on creating specific action steps and commitments that focus people's attention on incorporating their new skills and ideas back at work.

Kim (1997) contents that; Training and development are often closely connected. Training can be used as a proactive means for developing skills and expertise to prevent problems from arising and can also be an effective tool in addressing any skills or performance gaps among staff. While development can be used to create solutions to workplace issues, before they become a concern or after they become identifiable problem. Meanwhile Gravan et al (1995) is of the opinion that Development is a process that “strives to build the capacity to achieve and sustain a new desired state that benefits the organization or community and the world around them” and that development perspective examines the current environment, the present state, and helps people on a team, in a department as part of an institution identifying effective strategies for improving performance. In some situations, there may not be anything wrong at the present time, the group or management may simply be seeking ways to continue to develop and enhance existing relationships and jobs performance. In other situations, there may be an identifiable issue or problem that needs to be addressed; the development process aims to find ideas and solutions that can effectively return the group to a state of high performance.

Marmer (1999) equally attempts distinguishing training from development. The author argued that development implies creating and sustaining changes. However, putting the two together, the author states that training and development describes the formal ongoing efforts that are made within organizations to improve the performance and self-fulfillment of their employees through a variety of educational methods and programmes. In the modern workplace, these efforts have taken on a broad range of applications, from institutions in highly specific job skills to long-term professional development. In recent years, training and development has emerged as a formal

business function, an integral element of strategy, and a recognized profession with distinct theories and methodologies.

For the most part, the terms "training" and "development" are used together to describe the overall improvement and education of an organization's employees. However, while closely related, there are important differences between the terms that centre on the scope of the application. In general, training programmes have very specific and quantifiable goals, like operating a particular piece of machinery, understanding a specific process, or performing certain procedures with great precision. Developmental programmes, on the other hand, concentrate on broader skills that apply to a wider variety of situations, such as decision making, leadership skills, and goal setting. (Jacob and Ronald L, 2003)

Stemetz et al (1969; p.68), define training as a short-term process utilizing a systematic and organized procedure by which non-managerial personnel learn technical knowledge skilled for a definite period. Thus, training is technically oriented and designed to improve the technical and mechanical skill of personnel. Training therefore is usually designed for both non-managerial and managerial staff.

Chiaburu and Teklab (2005) are of the opinion that, training is the planned intervention that is designed to enhance the determinations of individual job performance. To them, training is related to the skills an employee must acquire to improve the probability of achieving the organization's overall business and academic goals and objectives.

2.1.2 The Meaning of Training Needs

While there may be diverse views of what training is, there seem to be particular features that can be used to define training. It is observed from all the definitions that training is a planned activity; it is needs oriented and objective oriented. In this study therefore we define training as a planned learning activity designed to fill carefully identified skill gaps towards meeting organizational objectives. Defining training in this manner indicates that training is a means to an end rather than an end in its self. As a means, it passes through a series of stages which must be carefully observed for the end to be achieved. It is widely accepted that the first of these stages is a thorough identification of skill gaps and training needs. Despite this universal view, the meaning of training needs assessment is viewed from diverse perspectives.

Erasmus et al. (2000) for instance defines need assessment as an investigation, undertaken to determine the nature of performance problem in order to establish the underlying causes and the way in which training can be addressed. Goldstein (1993) on his part describes needs assessment as the phase of the instructional process that provides the information necessary to design the entire programme.

Al-Khayyat & Elgamal (1997) contends that training gap is defined as the different between the required standard of the job and incumbent's performance. Needs identification is the starting point in any training and development activity. Need identification or assessment is not a routine function, because it should be conducted carefully and in a diagnostic manner.

Miller et al, (2002) posit that the assessment begins with a "need" which can be identified in several ways but is generally described as a gap between what is currently in place and what is needed, now and in the future. The purpose of a training needs assessment is to identify performance requirements or needs within an organization in order to help direct resources to the areas of greatest need, those that closely relate to fulfilling the organizational goals and objectives, improving productivity and providing quality products and services.

Hill (2004) states that there are various reasons why needs assessment is not conducted as it is described as being a difficult process, time- consuming and lack of resources in carrying out the tasks. On the other hand, Desimone et al, (2000) on their part argued that incorrect assumptions are usually made about needs analysis being unnecessary because the available information already specifies what an organization's needs are. Further, it was contested that there is a lack of support for needs assessment as HRD professional are unable to convince top management of its necessity (Reid and Barrington, 1994).

According to Miller et al, (2002) needs assessment is the first step in the establishment of a training and development. It is used as the foundation for determining instructional objectives, the selection and design of instructional programs, the implementation of the programs and the evaluation of the training provide. These processes form a continuous cycle which always begins with a needs assessment.

Kaufman et al, (2001) contents that assessment perspective (applied in conducting a need assessment) attends to harvesting of data and identifying the gaps between current results and required/desired result and placing those needs in priority order on the basis of the cost to meet the need compared to the cost.

2.1.3 Operating Core Staff: A Conceptual Overview

The concept of operating core staff originates from Henri Mintzberg's study of organizational structures in 1983. Mintzberg studied the process of designing organizational structures by identifying roles that each member in the organization plays. The outcome of Mintzberg's study was his Five Level Model of Organizational Structures. In this model, Mintzberg (1983) distinguished five parts that are basic to any organization. The five basic parts are operating core, strategic apex, middle line, techno- structure, and support staff as shown in figure 1 below.

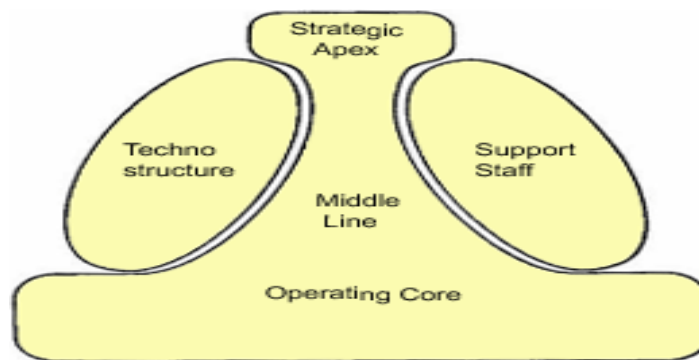


Figure 2.1: Mintzberg's Five Level Model.

Source:(Lindsay Sherwin,2007)

Mintzberg observed that the strategic apex grouped those at top management level charge with decision making in the organization. The middle line staff are middle managers responsible for implementing top management decisions and transmitting information from the strategic apex to the operating core. On the other hand, Mintzberg argued that the techno- structure are the analyst, or experts who provide technical advice to management, while support staff provides direct support services to all the different units.

The operating core as identified by Mintzberg includes employees who execute the task that produce the organization's product and service. At the operating core level, the staff must be specialized and has the requisite expertise to produce the goods or

services, and there must be internalized rules and regulations that ensure compliance with standards (Mintzberg, 1983). Thus, Mintzberg identified the operating core as those staff that are directly responsible for the production of goods or services. Within this framework, the operating core in this study is seen as the most valuable level of staff for organizational success. The activities, skills, competencies and behaviour of the operating core will determine if production targets will be met or not. Despite separating operating core from middle line managers, this study has the view that most middle line managers play operating core roles. Hence, operating core is defined in the study as a grouping of low and middle line staff responsible for daily production of the goods or services of an organization.

2.2. Empirical Literature

2.2.1. Importance of Training and Development

There is a considerable amount of literature on the value of training to organizational effectiveness. However, some scholars have observed that the importance of training and development is difficult to ascertain. Marmer (1999) argues that more and more companies of all sizes have embraced continual learning and other aspects of training and development as a means of promoting employee growth. Acquiring a highly skilled workforce and productivity through training are now widely recognized as a vital factor in ensuring the long-term success and profitability of small businesses.

McNamara (1999) posits that training in the most simplistic definition, is an activity that changes people's behaviour and that increase productivity is often said to be the most important reason for training. The author contends that training is essential not only to increase productivity but also to motivate and inspire workers by letting them know how important their jobs are, and given them all the information they need to perform those jobs. To McNamara (1999) training increase job satisfaction and morale, increase motivation, increase efficiencies in process, resulting in financial gain, increase capacity to adopt new technologies and methods as well as increase innovation in strategies and products.

Choo (2007) posits that training is one element many corporations consider when looking to advance people and offer promotions, and that training and development

offers more than just increased knowledge. It offers the added advantage of networking and drawing from others' experiences.

Adeniyi, (1995) is of the opinion that for every employee to perform well there is the need for constant training and development. The right employee training, development, and education provide big payoffs for the employer in increased productivity, knowledge, loyalty, and contribution to general growth of the firm. The author contends that training is conducted when needs arise as a result of findings from the outcome of performance appraisal, as part of professional development plan, as part of succession planning to help an employee be eligible for a planned change in role in the organization, to imbibe and inculcate a new technology in the system and to cope with the fluctuations and dynamics of the international business environment.

Cole (2001) studies the benefit of training to organization and concludes that training provides short- term and long-term benefits. The author argued that training provides organization with high morale employees with increased confidence and motivation, low cost of production, reduced employee turnover, ability to management change effectively, recognition and high- quality staff.

The above arguments are supported by Buckley and Caple (1990) who observed that although the benefit of training and development are difficult to quantify, training analyst generally agrees on the potential long-and short- term benefits of an effectively planned and executed training and development systems both for individual employees and for the organization. For individuals. Buckley and Caple (1990) contends that the potential short-term benefits of successful training and development activities include being able to perform current tasks well, acquiring new knowledge and skills to use on the job immediately, increasing motivation and stimulation, commanding a higher salary and enjoying other incentives such as greater promotion opportunities.

On the other hand, Westgaard (1995) observed that the potential short-term organizational benefits that derive from employees' learning of new skill include improved employee performance, greater productivity, lower turnover, less absenteeism and great client satisfaction.

Lynch and Black (1996) coronate this by citing two studies showing that employers who provided training increased worker productivity by about 16 percent.

Training and development programs have “traditionally have a short- term change strategy” (Rothwell and Kazanas, 1994). Yet long -term benefits are increasingly being viewed as a more important achievement of training and development system, as organization “throughout the world are realizing that the development of their human resources is the key not only to business survival, but also to business success” (Johnston and McClellad, 1994). Several long-term organizational benefits can be realized through an effective training and development system. One is the achievement of organizational objectives, which in turn enables the organization to be more competitive. In a world of growing global competition, these benefits becoming increasingly more important (Hale and Westgaard, 1995).

Buckley and Caple (1990) states that, the organization also benefits when training and development content moves away from the immediacy of individual skills building and includes training and development activities that enable employees to solve organizational problems. Cascio (1994) contends that, training and development with a long-term perspective can “improve the individual’s ability to identify, plan, implement, and monitor changes the organization needs to make”

According to Rothwell and Kazanas (1994), training and development can also equip individuals with the knowledge; skills and attitude they need to think strategically and implement long-term organizational strategy. Another major benefit of effective training and development, they argue, is that it can provide the organization with a pool of talent for future promotion within the organization.

A number of scholars study the role of training and development in managing organizational change. Gilliam (1994) describe some of the major changes organization are facing now and into future to include skill obsolescence, technologically sophisticated systems, shift from manufacturing to service- based economy, and increase influence from international markets. As Cascio (1994) explains, training and development can be a major component in dealing with these and other changes.

Buckley and Caple (1990) describe the role of the training and development system as a change agent in two fold. One way is directly, by offering training content that help people manage innovation and change. The other is more indirect; training can be managed in a way that affects culture. An example is cascade training in which a group at one level is trained and in turn trains other at lower levels. Such training, the authors content, can have an impact on individual and ultimately on organizational values and attitudes. Buckley and Caple concluded that the most important long-term impact of learning on organization culture is the influence on attitude towards learning itself by creating a learning organization that is more adaptable to internal and external demands.

Fricker (1994) contends that training can help organizations cope with and manage change by aligning training with organizational objectives and by investing in human resource development so that other business investment can pay off.

Another group of scholars focus on the role of training and development on employee performance and organization of competitiveness. Wright & Geroy (2001) note that employee competencies change through effective training and development programs. And that training not only improves the overall performance of the employee to effectively perform their current jobs but also enhance the knowledge, skills, attitudes of the workers necessary for the future job, thus contributing to superior organizational performance.

Guest et al. (2005) elaborate on training and development as a means of dealing with skill deficit and performance gaps and as a way of improving employee performance. According to Swart et al.(2005), bridging the performance gap refers to implementing a relevant training and development intervention for the sake of developing particular skills and abilities of the employee and enhancing employee performance. He further elaborated on the concept by stating that training and development help organizations to recognize that workers are not performing well and as thus their knowledge, skills and attitudes need to be molded according to the organization needs. However, it is important to note that this is not enough and employees need to constantly adapt to new requirements of job performance. In other words, organizations need to have continuous policies of training and development and retaining employees rather than waiting for occurrences of skill or performance gaps.

Audu et al, (2014) carried out a study on the impact of training and development on productivity in the Nigerian hospitality industry and found that the hospitality industry in Nigeria could be improved through training and development of human resources. The author therefore recommended increased investment of funds in the training of staff by companies of the hospitality sector.

On his part, Leicester, (1988) studied the impact of training and development on organizational performance in the Oil and Gas sector of Pakistan. The author found that on –the- job training and design methods have positive and significant effect on organizational performance indicators.

In his study on the effects of training and manpower development on employee's productivity and organizational performance in First Bank of Nigeria, Malaolu (2013) observed that majority employees supports the claim that training and manpower development has greatly enhanced not only their own efficiency and job productivity, but improved organizational performance as a whole. The author prescribes effective training needs assessment to ensure that the right training is given as well as regular design and provision of training in order to motivate and inspire employees.

Azara et al, (2013) corroborate Malaolu's (2013) studies by investigating the impact of teacher training on school performance. The author found a positive correlation between teacher training and school performance.

Rather than following the general trend observed in the literature, training as an aid to productivity, Richard (2001) turned the tables by observing the relationship between training and productivity from an opposite dimension. The author investigated productivity as a driving force for investment in training and management development in the Banking Industry in Nigeria. The study found positive association between productivity and investment in training and management development.

Rastogi (2000) examined the role of training and development on workers' productivity in both public and private organizations in Nigeria. The study concluded that training and development is a long-term and very sensitive function of an organization. The paper therefore argued that proper implementation of training enhances individual performance and productivity.

Sanusi (2002) carried out study on the impact of capacity building on employee productivity in commercial banks in Kenya. The study argued that 37 failed banks in Kenya in 1998 would have been averted if some of the problems like weak supervision and equipping employees with expertise, necessary skills and knowledge were addressed through employee training to improve performance of the banks. Their findings from the study reported a significant positive effect of training and development on employee productivity and organizational performance.

Other studies also explored if there is a relationship between skills and other organizational outcomes. Haskel (2003) found that higher skill (qualification) levels support innovation and more sophisticated production processes and were associated with the production of higher quality products

Harel et al, (1999) attempts to find out whether staff training has any implication in job performance, behaviour, attitudes, skills, knowledge and achievement of the goals of a business organization in Nigeria .The author shows that effective training leads to acquisition of skill and knowledge required for employee to perform effectively on the job. His result reveals that training has a high positive impact on employees and reduces the nature of hazards on the job in the accomplishment of corporate objectives.

Anyanwu (2002) studied the effects of training on employee productivity. The paper provides a review of the current evidence of such a relationship and offers suggestions for further investigation. They reviewed extensive the literature in terms of research findings from studies that had attempted measuring and understood the impact that training have on employee productivity across various sectors. The focal point of their review was on training practices and employee productivity and their relationship. The outcome of their findings varied. While some studies reported a positive association between training and employee productivity, some reported negative and some no association. Among the scholars who observed negative association between training and development is Harbison (1973) who identified some negative impacts of training on firm performance, and the possible reasons. The author posits that financial difficulties due to reduction in training budget, inadequate preparation, needs identification, delivery and evaluation has led to failures of training in many organizations.

Thus despite the seemingly general agreement on the overwhelming benefits of training and development, some authors argue that T&D have had very limited success and that training and development is not always the answer to performance problems. Gupta (1999) for example argues that training and development is indeed a waste of money when the desire does not occur. Gupta acknowledges that not all performance problems can be addressed by training and development.

The above review of empirical findings on the relevance of training and development informs this study of the extent to which T&D is viewed as a fundamental means of achieving organizational objectives. The skepticism raised by some authors on the relevance of training and development equally lends justification of this study as it provokes reflection on the main reasons why T&D may not achieve the desired results. While authors who overwhelmingly support the view that the impact of training is very positive are too general in their conclusions (failed to identify areas where training can have the most positive results), those who identified failed experiences of training activities did not elaborate the reasons for the observed negative impact of training. This study posits that the success or failure of training depends on the extent to which skill gaps or training needs were properly identified.

2.2.2 Stages of the Training Process

Most of the benefits derived from training and development are easily attained when training and development is planned. This means that the organization's trainers and trainees are prepared for the training well in advance. A number of authors have identified the stages of a planned training process. According to Kenney & Reid (1986) planned training is the deliberate intervention aimed at achieving the learning necessary for improved job performance. Planned training and development according to the authors include identifying and defining training needs, defining the learning required in terms of what skills and knowledge have to be learnt and what attitudes need to change, defining the objectives of the training, planning training programs to meet the needs and objectives by using the right combination for training and development techniques and locations, deciding who provides the training, evaluating training, and extending training as necessary.

While Kenney and Reid (1986) identified five stages in the training process, Simone (1996) identifies four stages. These include training needs analysis, training design, training implementation and training result evaluation. The author contends that there is always a tendency for practitioners to focus on training design and implementation and ignores TNA and training evaluation. Simone (1996) observed that when suitable training courses are provided according to needs, demand and supply are balanced, and training thus become effective and that though it is necessary for trainers to have skills in training design, learning theory and teaching skills, they need to have the capacity to identify gaps, and measure acquisition of new knowledge.

On his part, Gary Dessler (1998) is of the opinion that training consists of the five steps that begin with the identification of training needs, instructional design, validation, implementation and evaluation. The stages identified by the author are however not different from those identified by Kenney and Reid (1986).

Literature on the training process is very relevant for this study as it situates the place of TNA within the general activity of training and development. From the literature, it is observed that TNA is the first stage in the training process and the success of any training activity rely essentially on how best the TNA exercise was conducted. Training staff in an organization without properly defining strategic skill needs may therefore not yield any positive results. While all the authors agree on the relevance of training needs assessment, it is observed that few authors actually detail the procedure for conducting TNA.

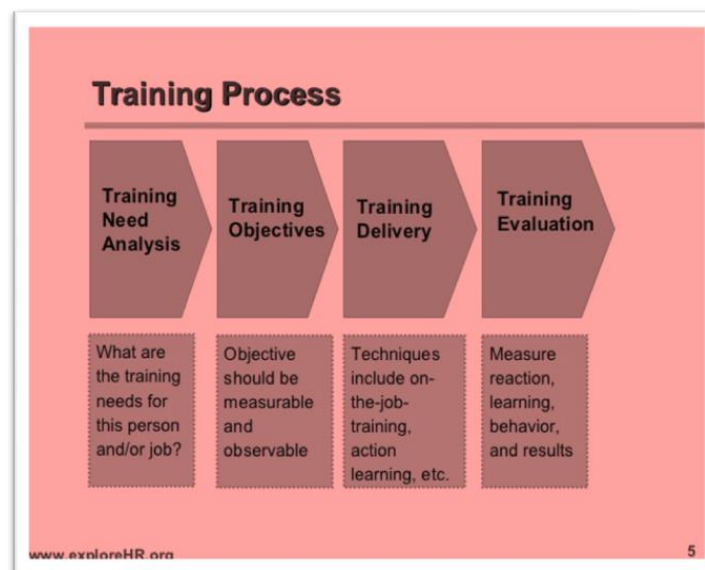


Figure 2.2 Steps in the Training Process

Source : (Gari: E.H.McArdle, 2007)

2.2.3 Importance of Training Needs Assessment:

Many scholars have identified TNA as the first stage in the training process. This alone defines the absolute importance of TNA for any training exercise. These notwithstanding, many authors have investigated the value of TNA in the training process. Sales and Cannon-Bowers (2003) for example posit that training can be expensive; therefore it is critical that training is tailored to meet the specialized needs of the organization and the individual trainees. They observed that Training Needs Assessment can provide important data on the training needs of an organization. Brown (2001) on his part felt that needs assessment is the most important step in deciding who and what should be trained. In addition to justifying the cost of training and providing important data for the organization, taking part in a needs assessment can improve employers (Participants) satisfaction with training.

According to Lee and Nelson (2006), the needs assessment period is the most critical time for establishing links between training and result. It is important to define the role of the needs assessment before conducting it. By defining the role of the needs assessment early in the process, the expectations of the key players are more likely to be met. The authors argue that the role of needs assessment is defined by the fact that it gathers data on perceive needs, Identifies knowledge, skills, and behaviour discrepancies, assists trainers, human resource development (HRD) personnel, administrators, and instructors in developing relevant curriculum materials, gathers information that brings beneficial change to an organization or community, and promotes buy-in by participants.

Bowman (1987) contends that training needs assessment allows an organization to justify their methods and solution to a problem with data. Watkins and Leigh, (2003) on their part agreed that by defining the role of the needs assessment early in the process, the expectations of the key players are more likely to be met.

Judith (2002) posits that, if training needs assessments are not applied to the training of an organization, there will be overtraining, insufficient training and incomplete training in the organization. According to the author, the reasons for conducting TNA are to confirm the real problem in the organization, obtain the support of top management, develop evaluation data and, and to decide training cost benefits.

Cekada (2010) contends that a needs assessment is the first step to establish and effective training course. It can be used to decide learning goals, design training course, and evaluate if training is effectively implemented. Meanwhile, it also provides managers and learners an opportunity to talk to each other and participate in organizational activities.

2.2.4 Training Needs Assessment Methods

Reviewing literature on the methods of conducting TNA certainly provides relevant guidelines for conducting this study. Gupta (1999) posits that data gathering is the cornerstone of any training needs assessment project. The author observes further that the fundamental premise of needs assessment is data gathering and that there are many ways to collect data. These may include interviews, focus group, surveys and questionnaires and observation. The author equally discusses other methods such as the nominal group techniques.

In trying to analyse the relevance of each method, Gupta (1999) argues that interviews are one of the easiest tools for gathering information. Interviews can be conducted face-to-face or over the phone. One-to-one interaction, according to the author is best, since it facilitates the acquisition of insight information from the employee. According to Gupta (1999) the main drawback to the training needs assessment approach is that it lacks the rigor of a strategic needs assessment, competency assessment, or job task analysis.

2.2.5 Types and Levels of Skill Analysis

Available literature indicates that information for TNA can be gathered at different levels within an organization. Harrison (2008) for instance identified three levels in conducting TNA. These include individual level analysis, job level analysis and organizational level analysis. The author contends that individual level analysis requires the expert to study behavioural aspects and performance level of the worker by reviewing performance appraisal documents, interviewing peers and supervisors, and observing the individual. On the other hand, job level analysis warrants an in-depth study of the job to identify the requirements and specifications.

On the other hand, scholars like Watkins and Kaufman (1996) are of the opinion that TNA can be conducted by performing different levels of analysis including performance analysis, task analysis, as well as job/process analysis.

Swanson (1994) describes performance analysis as the analysis of performance variables to determine actual versus desired organizational, process and individual performance. This definition is not very different from the definition of needs analysis. In trying to analyze performance, the author opines that it is necessary to focus on the expertise necessary for the desired performance. Hence focusing on the desired skill needs. Nolan (1996) adds to this by arguing that performance analysis can be based on three interrelated elements: individuals, processes and the organization. This is corroborated by studies conducted by Castle, (2000), as well as Rummler and Branche (1995). Clark (2003) supports this model of analysis by claiming that it identifies the criteria to meet organizational level performance needs via individual and process level performance.

On the other hand, scholars like Robins et al (1996) focused on analysing task to be performed. Task analyses, according to the author narrows the focus of TNA to specific task and examine the detail expertise required to perform the task. Rossett (1987) considers task analysis to be a type of assessment, but Jonassen et al, (1999) disagrees and states that task analysis and needs assessment frequently use the same tools and produce similar results, but the purpose are different. Needs assessment identifies needs for analysis, but task analysis solves an instrumental problem, meaning that training has already been identified as the solution.

According to Rothwell and Kazanar (2004), task analysis is useful for determining component performance determining what a worker must know and do, clarifying conditions for performance and establishing standards for performance. Practitioners often use task analysis to determine performance objectives for use in developing instruction, since task analysis produces goals and objectives, tasks to teach, importance of task, task sequence, design, media, assessment and evaluation (Jonassen et al.1999).

Rossett (1999) defines task analysis to include not only what a performer does, but also what the performer knows and thinks about during performance. Swanson (1994) on his part separates task analysis procedure and titles them by the type of task: procedural task analysis, knowledge task analysis and system task analysis. No matter what type of

task is analyzed, it follows that task analysis is most often used to document expertise in order to develop instruction.

The next level or type of analysis identified by scholars is job or process analysis. Gupta, (2007) posits that, the purpose of job analysis is to provide an objective description of the job, not of the person performing it. Just like task analysis once a performance problem is identified, a job or process analysis determines the cause of the performance problem, which then informs the solution. Bemis et al.,(1983) on his part states that a job analysis gathers information on the scope, responsibilities, and task of a job while a task analysis gathers information on the knowledge, skills, tools, condition, and requirement to perform a task. Both task and job analysis focus on expertise, but at a different level of detail with task analysis developing into the minute detail of performance.

According to Gupta (2007) Job analysis is best used to develop or revise job descriptions, to redesign task for jobs, and to develop a consistent set for training requirements, especially for highly technical or specialized job functions. Nolan (1996) describes job analysis as the second step when analyzing a training problem. This description assumes that training is the solution. In this case, job or process analysis considers the learner, the organization, and the job in order to create training. As described by Rummler and Branche (1995) job analysis includes a task analysis, organizational analysis and skills and knowledge analysis. The inclusion of organizational analysis is rare in description of job analysis, but is also included in analysis for improving performance.

While most authors have focused on the above three level analysis, Rummler and Branche (1995) take a system approach to analysis. The system view provides an understanding of the variable that influences performance. Therefore, to understand the cause of a performance problem a practitioner must understand and analyze all three levels of performance. The highest of all the level of performance for analysis is the organizational level (Rummler & Branche, 1995) which includes an analysis of variables that affect performance such as strategies, goals, measures, organizational structure, and the use of organizational resources to determine the solution(s) to solve the performance problem under investigation.

It is within the framework of the above literature on levels of TNA that some authors like Gupta (2007), Swanson & Houlton (1998) have identified three types of needs assessment. These include competency-based needs assessment relating to the underlying characteristics of employees that enable them to perform their task, strategic needs assessment which examines the differences between the current and desired conditions of the organization, as well as knowledge and skill assessment which identifies the knowledge and skills that workers need in order to perform effectively on their jobs. According to Gupta (2007), knowledge and skill assessment is best for new business opportunities, the implementation of a new system or technology to revise or update an existing training program, to add new job responsibilities to a position, to reorganize when an organization downsizes, and to support rapid organizational growth.

The literature on levels of analysis for TNA is very relevant for this study because that it provides the researcher with ample information on the available level options that can be considered in TNA. While it may be most plausible to adopt all the three levels of analysis: individual, job and organization levels, for a perfect understanding of performance problems, this study is of the view that performance on the job is largely influenced by what individual workers and their supervisors perceive to be their strength and weaknesses in terms of knowledge and skills. Consequently, the current research focuses on individual -level analysis and is aimed at identifying knowledge and skill gaps of the low and middle- level workers as perceived by them and their supervisors.

2.2.6 Trainability Analysis

Many authors have argued that not all performance gaps are addressed by training (Nolan, 1996). This therefore means that a trainability analysis must be conducted to determine whether training can address a particular performance problem. Nolan (1996) states that, once a practitioner identifies a need, he or she determines if the need has enough priority or impact to allocate resources for any analysis that will determine the root cause of the performance problem. Based on the root cause, the practitioner designs a solution to close the performance gap. Once the cause of a performance gap is determined, the solution may or may not include training or instruction. If the solution

is training, the institutional objectives derive from the organizational, operational and individual needs identified in the assessment is described as needs assessment.

Salem (1986) observes that trainability means that a problem is subject to a training solution. And that trainability analysis is the process of examining a problem so as to determine whether training intervention can solve it. The author highlighted the steps in conducting trainability analysis beginning with categorizing the problems by level (individual, job, and organization), categorizing the problems by source (skill gap, motivation or the environment), rank situation by time frame, listing and ranking needs, and propose solutions. If the solution is training there is no need to do an assessment or analysis. Renard et al, (1994) states that, without a needs assessment, however, there is no grantee that the training solution will solve the performance problem and thus leads to depletion of resources, time, energy and learner goodwill while the performance problem persists.

2.2.7 Problems in Training Need Assessment

The needs assessment process is perceived to be an essential starting point in virtually all instructional design models (Robinson & Robinson, 1995). Despite the assumed importance of needs assessment, in practice, many training programs are initiated without it. While research on needs assessment practices is not as widespread as research on training evaluation, available evidence suggests that instructional designers do not always take a time to assess needs. This has been attributed to the difficulties involved in conducting TNA. Moeller (1998) for example indicated that professional instructional developers spend, on an average, less than 25% of their time on formal task analysis because there are no research- based guides for selecting the most appropriate needs assessment method given foreknowledge of the performance problem or anticipated learning outcomes.

Salas & Cannon-Bowers (2001) on their part opine that in contrast to other areas of training there is little on-going research or theory development with respect to needs assessment.

Chiang's (2012) study of construction and influential factors of TNA among 193 HRM practitioners observed that four factors affect the assessment of training needs: mastering problems and analyses, mastering organizational development, mastering resource applications and capability for intervention implementation.

Besides the near absence of theories on TNA, some empirical findings have highlighted some of problems in conducting TNA. In his study of the impact of TAN on the Ghanaian judiciary, for instance, Grant (1996) observed that lack of information on training options and limited cooperation of workers often hinder the TNA process.

Despite an apparent lack of interest in needs assessment by both practitioners and researchers, the process remains a fundamental, critical first step in planning training. In fact research evidence on training effectiveness and transfer of training underscore its importance.

2.2.7 Types and Methods of Training

When needs are identified, the next step in the training process is to design and deliver training. The method used in delivering the training will determine if the needs identified will be filled or not. For this reason, it is relevant to examine literature on the types and methods of training. Within this context, scholars have identified two types of methods of training: on-the-job and off-the-job training (Harrison 2006). Armstrong (1995) argued that on-the job training may consist of teaching or coaching by more experienced people or trainers at the desk or at the bench, while off-the-job training refers to formal training organized out of the job environment. The main methods of on-the-job training identified by scholars are: job rotation and transfers (which involves the movement of employees from one official responsibility to another), coaching or mentoring, which involves having more experienced employees coached by less experienced employees, e-learning, and orientation which consist of familiarizing new employees with the organization. Meanwhile off-the-job training methods may take the form of conferences, role play, and formal training courses,

The training method selected by a team will depend on the organization's strategy, goals and resources available, the needs identified at the time, and the target group to be trained which may include among others individual workers, groups, teams, department or the entire organization.

2.2.9 Evaluating Training

The overall essence of training and development activities is to fill identified gaps in skills and knowledge. This therefore, means that any attempt at measuring the impact of training is considered as trying to find out whether the identified skill gaps have been

filled. For this reason, we review literature on training evaluation to understand the main prescriptions on how to measure the extent to which training has addressed training needs. Training evaluation is seen by Howthorne (1987) as the “main methods used to assess whether training is accomplishing desired effects of sufficient value”.

One of the most widely adopted methods of evaluating training is that provided by Kirkpatrick (1976). In his model of training evaluation, the author observes that training evaluation passes through four steps or levels: trainee’s reaction to the training content, amount of knowledge or skill acquisition, behaviour change, and tangible outcome or changes noticed in the organization.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

As mentioned earlier, one of the most fundamental problems with conducting TNA is the paucity of theoretical underpinnings. A variety of theories exists on learning as a whole, but it seems difficult to adopt these theories in discussing TNA. This is because most of the learning theories discuss how people learn rather than what skills people lack. Examples of such learning theories include: the cognitive learning theory, which describes the process by which people gain knowledge and understanding through absorption of principles, concepts and facts, experiential learning, which describes the process by which people learn through experience, (Reynold et al, 2002), and social learning theory, which explains how learning occurs through social interaction. Owing to the void of theories on TNA, this study adopts two models: Roger Kaufmann and Allison Rossett’s models of Training Needs Assessment as its primary analytical frameworks

Roger Kaufman’s Organizational Element Model (OEM) model was proposed in 1996 in which the author identified five elements to needs assessment: inputs, processes, product, output, outcomes. The model indicates that three levels of analysis constitute the scope of TNA. These include Mega, Macro and Micro analysis. To conduct these analyses, the analyst using this model identifies what the organization does produces and delivers through a close study of the five OEM variables: inputs, processes, product, output and outcomes. The basic premise of this model is that performance problem and solutions can be uncovered by asking a systematic set of probing questions. The model was further expanded by Robert Mager in 1997 who identified

five areas with which to probe in TNA: describe the problem, explore fast fixes, check consequences, enhance competencies and develop solution (Robert Mager, 1997)

On the other hand, Allison Rossett's TNA model proposed in 1987 lists five essential components to the Needs Assessment: optimal performance or knowledge, actual or current performance or knowledge, feelings of trainers, causes of the problem and solution to the problem from many perspectives. Rossett's model is based on systematic study of a problem using data and opinions from many sources. It uses a six step approach to planning a need assessment.

This study therefore adopts an integrated model of analysis using Kaufman and Rossett's models. The OEM model provides direction as to what should be assessed in order to have an all-inclusive view of performance at individual or micro level, organization or macro level and the environment or mega level. It equally provides the variables that may be used to assess performance at all levels. It is however observed that the OEM model is largely appropriate in assessing skill needs as a whole. Consequently, we borrow from Rossett's model which seeks to identify the gap between actual knowledge/skills available and the skills/knowledge needed but not available for the achievement of performance. Thus performance (calculated using Kaufman's model) is a function of available skills plus required skills (deduced from Rossett's model).

2.4. Gaps Identified in the Literature and Justification for this Study

The literature on training has focused overwhelmingly on the relationship between training and organizational performance. Very little of the literature have been diagnostic, despite the drop in training budget in so many organizations. Conducting more diagnostic studies will certainly identify those fundamental issues that must be addressed for training to have the results capable of convincing top management. It is observed from the literature that very little emphasis is given to TNA and training evaluation by HRM scholars and training practitioners. Hence, very little evidence of training related to carefully identified needs exist.

Existing literature on training needs assessment is equally very methodical, with a focus on the methods and process of conducting TNA. But evidence of practical TNA reports in government, private and non-profit organizations are difficult to identified.

Organizations in these sectors do conduct training on regular basis. For this reason, the literature on the problems in conducting TNA is scanty. The current research seeks to address this lacuna by adding to the few existing reports on TNA. From this report, the problems can be identified, and more detail analysis of TNA made.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

This chapter describes the tools, techniques, and methods applied in conducting the study. The essence is to give the ready information necessary for assessing the validity and reliability of the research. The chapter therefore, explains the model applied in the study, the research approach, design, sources of data, instruments for data collection, and method/tools for data analysis.

3.1. Model Specification

The major focus of this study is to assess the perceive/actual roles of operating core staff and explore the available/unavailable competencies needed to perform those tasks. Within this context, the model adopted for the study attempts to describe how the research arrived at determining perceived/ actual roles, as well as present/absent skills. Table 1 below shows the model specification designed for the study.

Table 3.1: Model Specification

Research Objectives	Variables	Method of Measurement
1) To assess the Perception of operating core staff on the most important roles and responsibilities required of them	Secretariat duties (55)	0-11/55: Task is not performed 12-22/55: Task is minor part of the job 23-33/55: Task is important part of the job 34-44/55: Task is critical part of the job 45-55/55: Task is extremely critical
	Management duties (55)	0-11/55: Task is not performed 12-22/55: Task is minor part of the job 23-33/55: Task is important part of the job 34-44/55: Task is critical part of the job 45-55/55: Task is extremely critical
	External relation/contacts (30)	0-6/30: Task is not performed 7-12/30: Task is minor part of the job 13-18/30: Task is important part of the job 19-24/30: Task is critical part of the job 25-30/30: Task is extremely critical
	Human resource	0-12/60: Task is not performed

	functions (60)	13-24/60: Task is minor part of the job 25-36/60: Task is important part of the job 37-48/60: Task is critical part of the job 49-60/60: Task is extremely critical
2) To identify the perception of Operating Core Staff on the most frequently performed activities	Secretariat duties	0-11/55: Task is never performed 12-22/55: Performed just ones or twice 23-33/55: Performed several times 34-44/55: Performed many times 45-55/55: Performed always
	Management duties	0-11/55: Task is never performed 12-22/55: Performed just ones or twice 23-33/55: Performed several times 34-44/55: Performed many times 45-55/55: Performed always
	External relation/contacts	0-6/30: Task is never performed 7-12/30: Performed just ones or twice 13-18/30: Performed several times 19-24/30: Performed many times 25-30/30: Performed always
	Human resource functions	0-12/60: Task is never performed 13-24/60: Performed just ones or twice 25-36/60: Performed several times 37-48/60: Performed many times 49-60/60: Performed always
3) To examine the competencies that operating core staff currently possess and competencies deem lacking by supervisors of personnel management office and the Gambia Ports Authority.	Secretariat skills	Present skills # Absent skills
	Managerial skills	Present skills # Absent skills
	Customer service skills	Present skills # Absent skills
	Human relations skills	Present skills # Absent skills

Source: Designed by the researcher as model for the study, 2015

Table 3.1 above represents the model adopted for this study. It indicates the means by which the key research objectives are investigated and tested. As shown on table 3.1, the main skill areas investigated as possible functions of operating core staff are

secretariat, managerial, customer service or human relations skills. A series of activities or task have been grouped under each skill area to investigate all the three research objectives. On the first research objective, the perception of operating core staff about what constitutes their main task or responsibilities is tested based on the four selected functional areas. If a respondent gives a total score of 0-11/55 for the first functional area, secretariat activities, it is interpreted that the activity is perceived not to be part of the staff's job. A score >11 but <22 indicates that the function is regarded to be an important component of the respondent's job. Meanwhile, a score >45 but <55 shows that the function is an extremely important part of the respondent's job (The same measurement applies to all the other selected functional areas). To achieve the second research objective, the model indicates the frequency with which activities in each functional area is performed. A score ≥ 11 for secretariat functions indicate that the respondent never performed the function. On the other hand, if the score is ≤ 45 , but ≥ 55 , the function is deemed as being performed daily or always by the respondent (same applies for managerial, external relations and Human resource management functions). As indicated in the table, research objective three is tested by comparing the number/type of skills available with those not available. The essence is to measure the skills currently utilized in performing the staff's perceived role and most frequently performed activity while observing absent skills needed for improved performance of the perceived role and most often performed activities.

3.2 Description of the Variables in the Model

Four major variables are highlighted in this study: secretarial functions, managerial functions, external relations/contact functions, human resource management functions. Each of these variables constitutes a series of activities or tasks that have been grouped together as shown in table 3 below.

Table 3.2: Description of Variables

Secretarial functions	- Typing and printing - Receiving and sending correspondences - Organization and filing of documents - Organizing staff meetings and Minute taking - Managing database of staff and customers or clients contacts - Managing electronic records - Peer appraisal - Report writing - Scanning/photocopying - Prepare MS PowerPoint for meetings
Management Functions	- Assist in planning and goal setting - Supervises other staff and monitor their performance - Manage petty cash or allocated departmental budget - Supervises the use of equipment and the organization's properties - Communicate top management decisions and follow up implementation - Recruit and select subordinate staff - Day-to-day management of processes and activities of the organization - Participate in progress report writing - Ensure safety and security of personnel and visitors - Manage warehouse/inventory of items/goods received - Liaise with other departments/ministries
External Relations/Contact	- Receive and attend to clients/customers on daily basis - Provide comments and suggestions to Management on how to manage customers - Participate in negotiation meetings with external partners - Advertise and publicize the activities of the organization - Initiate studies and conduct research on customer perception about the services provided by the organization - Provide freight, clearing and other assistance to customers
Human Resource Functions	- Manage files of all employees in the organization - Design jobs, recruits and select qualified candidates for the jobs - Conducts training needs of staff in the organization - Initiate training programs - Design training curricula to match identified needs - Plan, conduct and evaluate training and development activities - Appraise employees, monitor and manage employee performance - Select staff for training and development - Advice management on motivation strategies and design/implement motivation schemes - Manage conflicts among staff - Initiate change and Monitor implementation of change - Participate in making decisions about staff promotions, sanctions and grievance handling

Source: Designed by the researcher to describe key variables, 2015

As can be observed in table 3 above, each variable constitutes a group of activities designed to understand the perceived responsibilities of operating core staff, the frequency of performing each of these activities, and the requisite skills for performing these activities. It is important to note that this study's primary focus is not to test the relationship between variables but to explain how each of these variables are treated independently in each organization. Hence whether a variable is dependent or independent is given little relevance in the study.

3.3. Research Approach and Design

The study adopted a hybrid of qualitative and quantitative approaches with a case study design. There is no doubt that making use of solely qualitative techniques would have yielded the results of this study. However, the researcher decided to adopt a mix of both approaches to capture a wider perspective of the respondents and improve the reliability of the study. It is assumed that such a document is needed to make training decisions in both the PMO and GPA. Hence capturing diverse opinions, using diverse means will render the study trustworthy. Using quantitative tools or techniques limits subjectivity while qualitative tools permit the researcher to prompt the perception of respondents.

A case study design is ideal for this study because it enables the researcher to have a focus on a particular set of staff, rather taking a generalist approach which may not produce the requisite results. The study describes training needs of two organizations: PMO and GPA, but considering the case of Operating Core Staff rather than all the staff of both organizations. The operating core staff are considered to be the backbone of production in every organization. Hence it is assumed in this study that focusing on them will enhance understanding of performance problems in both organizations.

3.4. Study population

The two organizations under study are very large organizations in the Gambia and have large staff strength. However, the focus of this study is on Operating Core Staff. In this light, therefore, the total population of the study is 120, constituting the number of Operating Core Staff (Low-level and middle –line staff) and supervisors of the Gambian Port Authority and the Personnel Management Office.

3.5. Sampling Size and Technique

The sample population for the study is 97 (giving 80.8% representability) drawn from both organizations using a double-stage sampling technique. In the first stage, purposive sampling technique wherein first- line personnel of the above institutions were identified. In the second stage, simple random technique using balloting was employed to select the individual respondent from the list of identified operating core staffs. At the end of the sampling exercise 35 Operating Core Staff (OCS) were selected from the Gambian Port Authority (GPA) and 45 OCS were generated from the Personnel Management Office (PMO) to constitute the sample at the level of OCS. A similar approach was employed to select 17 supervisors of OCS, 7 from of the Gambian Port Authority (GPA) and 10 from the Personnel Management Office (PMO).

3.6. Sources of Data Collection

The study made use of both primary and secondary data. Primary data was collected through in-depth field studies using qualitative and quantitative tools, meanwhile secondary data was gathered from published books, journal articles, and the internet. In collecting primary data, the researcher focused on evidence provided by the operating core staff of both organizations as well as a review of some archival records. The secondary data was used particularly to explore current discussions on the subject matter and was collected mainly from PAID-WA library and the IT Centre.

3.7. Instruments for Data Collection

Two major tools were used in collecting data for this study. These include a questionnaire and an interview, using a well design interview guide. A questionnaire with open and closed- ended questions was developed and administered to the OCS in both organizations. Each questionnaire covers selected activities (as mentioned in table 3) of each variable or function and requires the respondent to score each activity on a five- point scale. The first section of the questionnaire attempts to capture demographic information of the respondents, and the second part generates information on the perception of the respondents on their main roles and responsibilities. Meanwhile, the third part of the questionnaire attempts to measure the respondents' view on the most frequently performed activities of OCS. The final section attempts to size the difficulties encountered in performing these task which can be addressed by training.

The interview guide was designed specifically for supervisors of OCS and was meant to elicit information on the available skills compared to unavailable skills in both organizations. A total of 80 questionnaires were administered to the OCS and 17 interviews were administered to their supervisors.

3.8. Analytical Approach

The study used both descriptive and inferential statistics in analyzing the quantitative data obtained and collated from the structured questionnaire. Descriptive statistics included frequency and percentages. Inferential statistics included chi-square statistics and Pearson's correlations coefficients. The analysis was facilitated by the use of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20. Charts and tables were developed to illustrate and enhance comprehension. These charts and tables were developed using Microsoft Excel 2013. Content analyses techniques were used to analyze the responses from the Key Informant Interviews. During this exercise similarities and differences in the responses were investigated and themes developed.

3.9. Validity of the Results

The study took the following steps to ensure the validity of the results. The data collection instruments (questionnaires and interview guides) were checked for issues of reliability. The test and re-test method was employed whereby the questionnaire was field tested in the above institutions before their administration. At the end of every test, some questions were added, some rephrased to reduce ambiguity, while others were discarded entirely and retested to ensure reliability. The trustworthiness of the individual's response was also ensured. Cross reference questions were included in the questionnaires, and triangulations were extensively used.

Finally, all statistical procedures were reported at the 95% confidence interval or 0.05 significance level. At this margin of error, the findings of the study can be easily generalized to the entire population.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

This chapter presents and discusses the significant finding of the study. It expresses the results based on the specific objectives raised in chapter one of the research. The chapter begins by presenting the demographic and some occupational characteristics of the respondents and proceeds with a presentation and interpretation of the perception of OCS and their supervisors on the responsibilities of OCS, their perception on the most frequently performed activities, as well as the available/unavailable skills necessary to carry out these roles.

4.1. Socio-Demographic and Professional Characteristics of Respondents (OCS)

4.1.1. Organizational Affiliation of Respondents

The study was focused on OCS in the PMO and the GPA. As shown in figure 4.1 below, 45 (56.25%) of the 80 respondents were from the Personnel Management Office (PMO) and 35 (43.75%) were from the Gambia Port Authority (GPA)

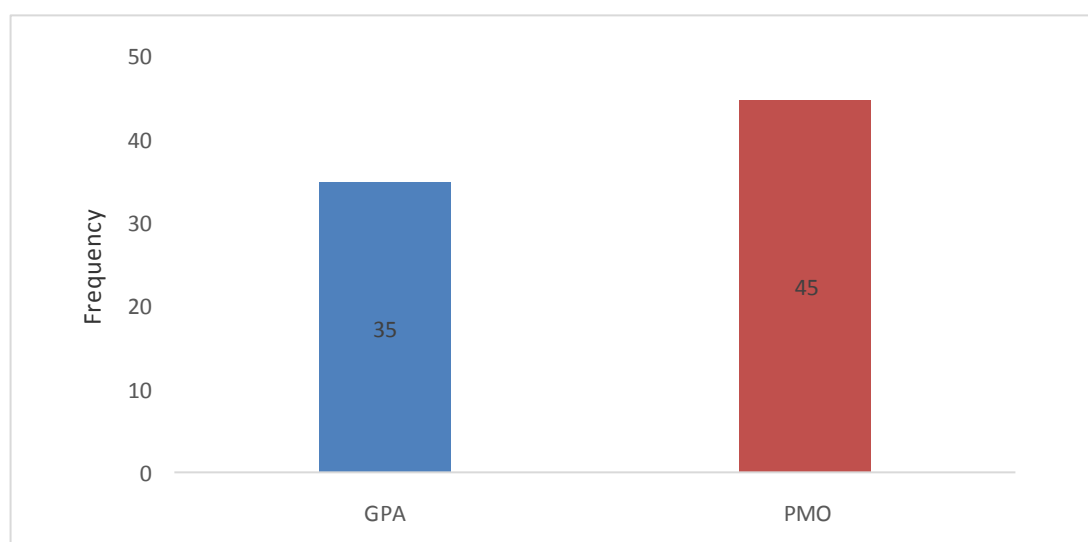


Figure 4.1: *Organizational Affiliation of Respondents in the GPA and PMO, Gambia.*

Source: Research findings,2015

4.1.2. Description of Respondents by Gender

Out of the 80 respondents who constituted the study, 49 (61.3%) were male, and 31 (38.7) were female (Figure 4.1.)

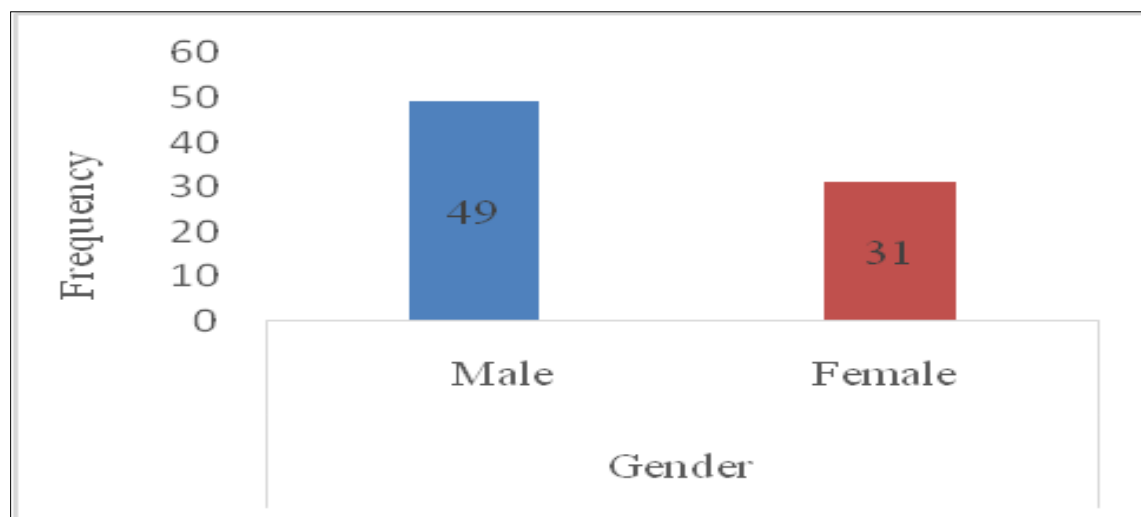


Figure 4.2: Gender of OCS in GPA and PMO, Gambia

Source: Research findings,2015

This gender distribution of the respondents is characteristic of the gender distribution of the workforce in the Gambian civil service where there is higher male than female population. This difference can be explained by the low level of literacy among women and the traditional practices in Muslim -dominant countries where women are not supposed to work. However, the gap is gradually closing due to gender empowerment policies implemented by the government of the Gambia.

4.1.3. Description of Respondents' Age

The majority of the respondents (35%) fall within the age range of 31 and 35 years. Meanwhile 22 of the 80 respondents (27%) were between the ages of 20 and 30 years, 12 (15%) were between the ages of 36 and 40 years, 14 (17.5%) were between the ages of 41 and 45 years and 4 (5%) were between the ages of 46 and 50 years. Figure 5 below represents the description of respondents by age.

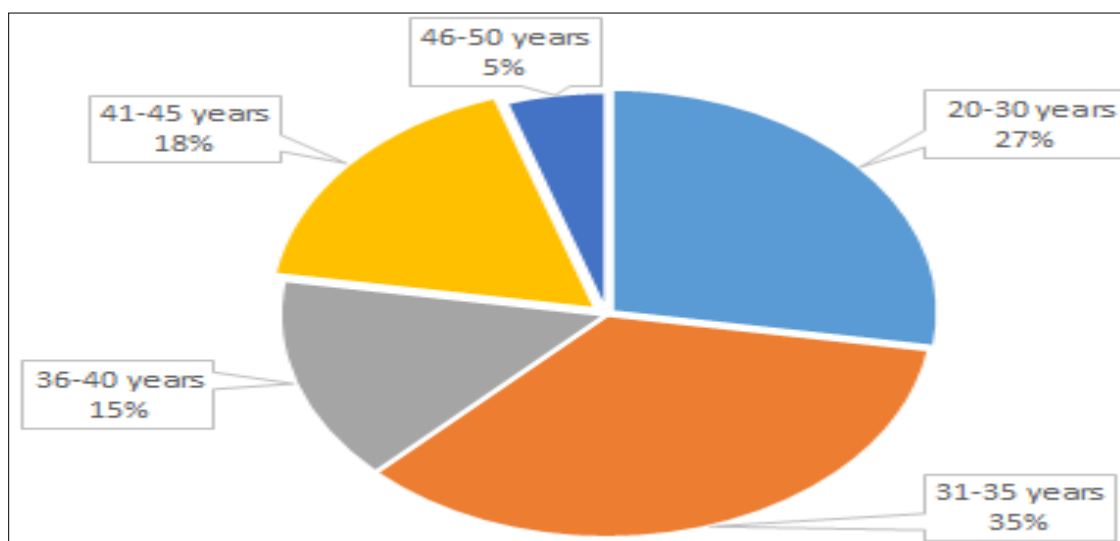


Figure 4.3: Age group of OCS in GPA and PMO, Gambia

Source: Research findings, 2015

Figure 3 above shows that most of the respondents are below the age of 40 years. This age group distribution is indicative of a youthful and productive workforce. The predominantly youthful workforce in both organizations lays the framework for skill improvement using diverse methods.

4.4. Description of Respondents by their Level in the Organizations

Out of the 75 respondents who reported their management level, 24 (32%) were first line-supervisors, 32 (42.7%) were middle- level managers and 19 (25.2%) were non-managerial staffs as indicated in Figure 4.4 below.

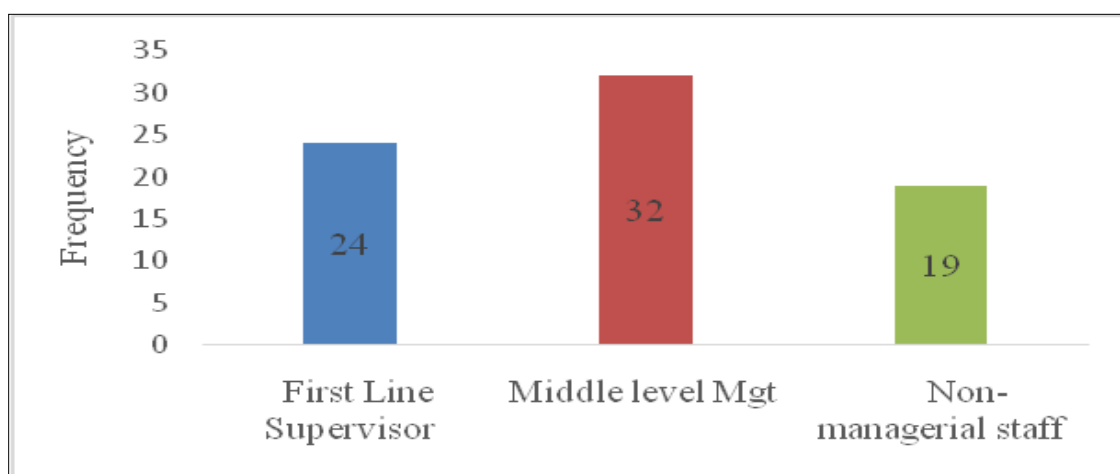


Figure 4.4: Management level of OCS in GPA and PMO, Gambia

Source: Research findings, 2015

4.1.1.4 Respondents' Grade Level

Twenty-five (25) or 31.2% of the respondents were at the 1-3 grade level, 19 (23.8%) were in the 4-6 grade level, 32 (40%) were in the 7-9 grade level and 4 (5%) were at the 10-12 grade level. From this, most (55%) of the respondents were below grade level 7 (Figure 4.5).

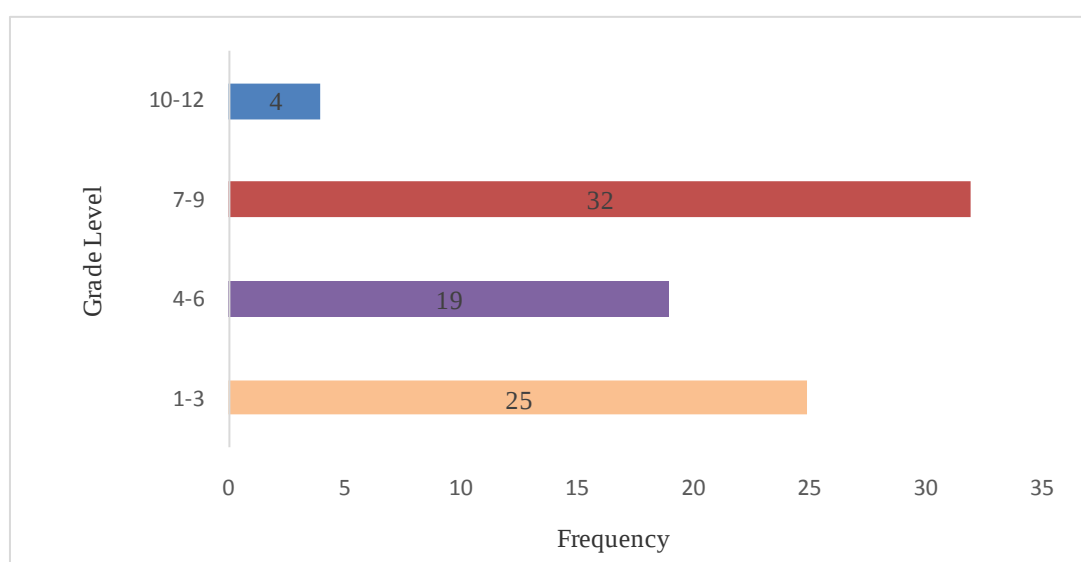


Figure 4.5: Grade level of OCS in GPA and PMO, Gambia

Source: Research findings, 2015

4.1.4.2. Respondents' Level of experience

Forty-eight (60%) of the respondents had 1-5 years' experience, 12 (21.3%) had 6-10 years' experience, 3 (3.8%) had 11-15 years' experience and 2 (2.5%) had 16-20 years' work experience (Figure 4.6)

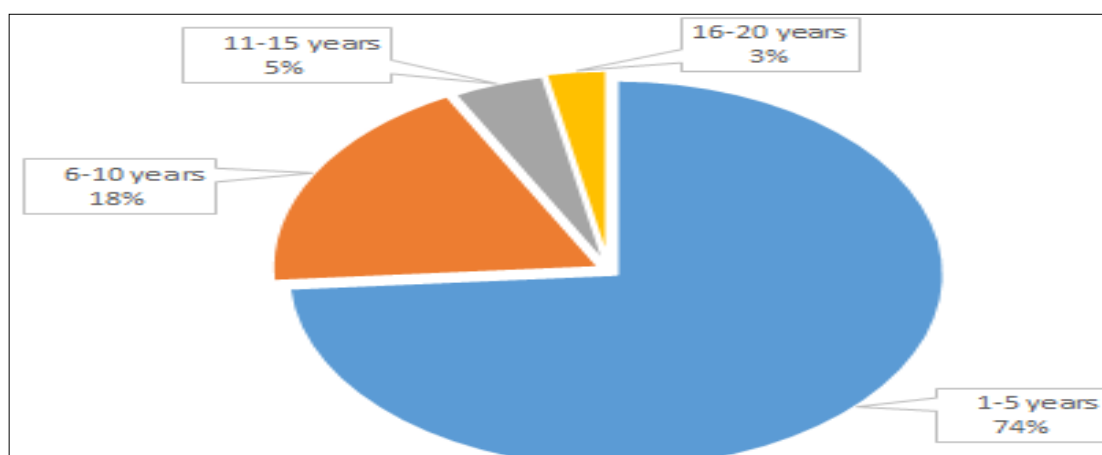


Figure 4.6: Level of experience of OCS in the GPA and PMO, Gambia

Source: Research findings, 2015

As indicated in figure 8 above, a greater majority of the respondents are less than five years old in both institutions. This indicates that most of the staff in both organizations have not accumulated much experience in their different responsibilities. Skills building through training can therefore improve effectiveness.

4.1.5. Description of Respondents by Level of Education

The results indicate that most of the respondents (28.75%) are holders of a Bachelors' degree. Meanwhile, 19 (23.75%) hold certificate in different areas, 16 (20%) are holders of Master's degree, 12 (15%) are holders of higher diploma, and 10 (12.5%) hold at least a diploma. Figure 4.7 below represents the level of education of the respondents.

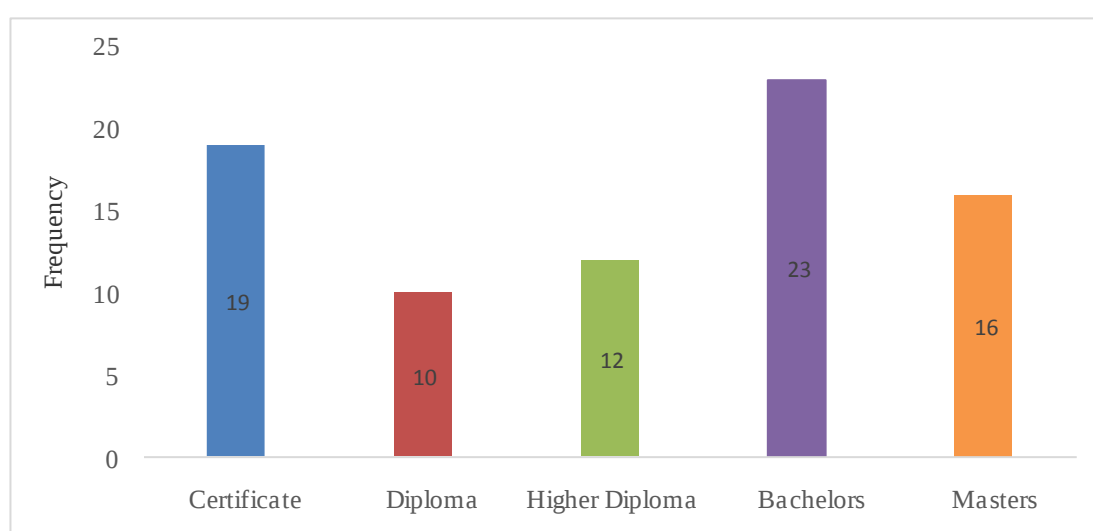


Figure 4.7: Highest qualification of OCS of the GPA and PMO, Gambia

Source: Research findings, 2015

4.1.6. Characteristics of Supervisors of Operating core staff (SOCS)

As shown in Figure 4.8, out of the 17 supervisors of operating core staff that constitute the study, 10 (58.8%) is from the Personnel Management Office (PMO), and 7 (41.2%) is from the Gambia Port Authority (GPA). Of these total, 11 (64.7%) are male, and 6 (36.3%) are female. Regarding of the highest degree, 1 (5.9%) had a diploma, 5 (29.4%) had bachelor's degree and 11 (64.7%) had a master's degree. Concerning the years of experience, 3 (17.6%) of the respondents have been working with the organization for less than four years, 11 (64.7%) have experience of between 7 and 10 years, 2 (11.8%) have 11 to 15 years work experience, and 1 (5.9%) have work

experience of above 5 years. With regards to their grades, 5.9% of the respondents are in grade 1-4, 41.2% are in grade 7-9, 23.5% are in grade 10-11 and, 5 (29.4%) are in grade 12. The respondents were chosen from all the different sectors of both organizations. However, a majority (58.8%) were drawn from the human resource department, 5.9% from the marketing department, 17.6% from the technical department, 5.9% from the Accounting and Finance department, 5.9% from the public relations department and 5.9% from the corporate service and business development departments.

Figure 4.8 below summarizes the demographic and some professional characteristics of the supervisors of OCS who responded to the study.

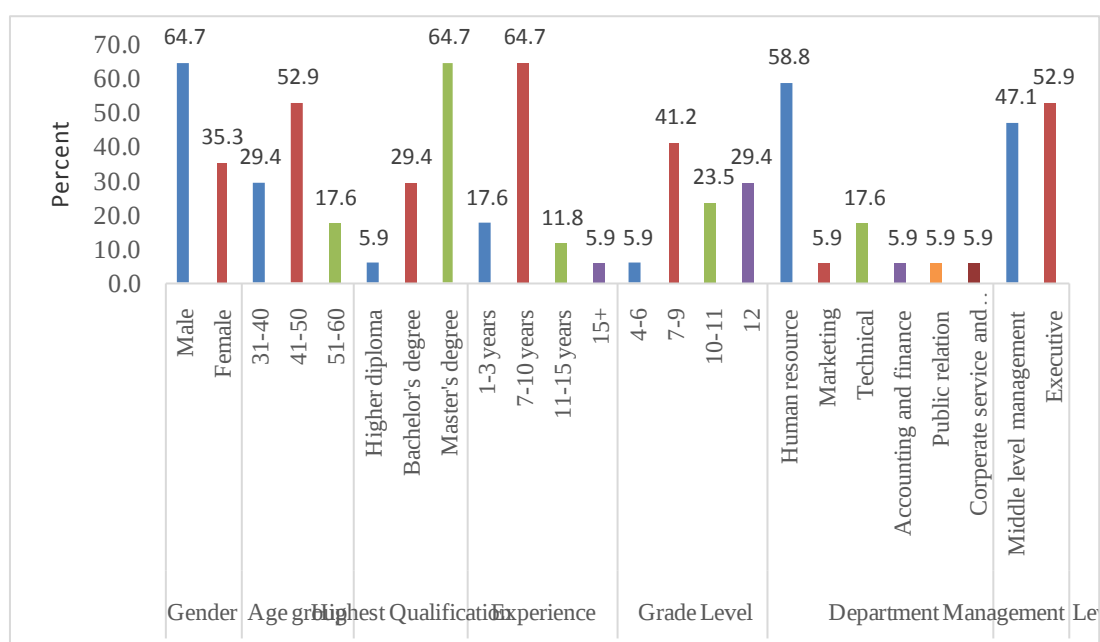


Figure 4.8: Socio-professional characteristics of supervisors of Operating Core Staff (OCS) of GPA and PMO

Source: Research findings, 2015

4.2 Perceptions of OCS and their Supervisors on the most Important Roles and Responsibilities of Low and Middle Line Staff

In the study, most of the respondents (33.75%) considered human resource function as the most important roles and responsibilities required of low and middle line staffs of the PMO and GPA. Meanwhile, 28.75% of the respondents regard secretariat, and office duties as the most important, 27.5% see management duties as the most important, while 10% reported external relations/contacts duties as the most important roles and responsibilities of OCS as shown in Figure 4.9 below. The findings corroborates Nurmi's (2015) studies which emphasized human resource functions as the most important role and responsibility of middle line staff in organizations.

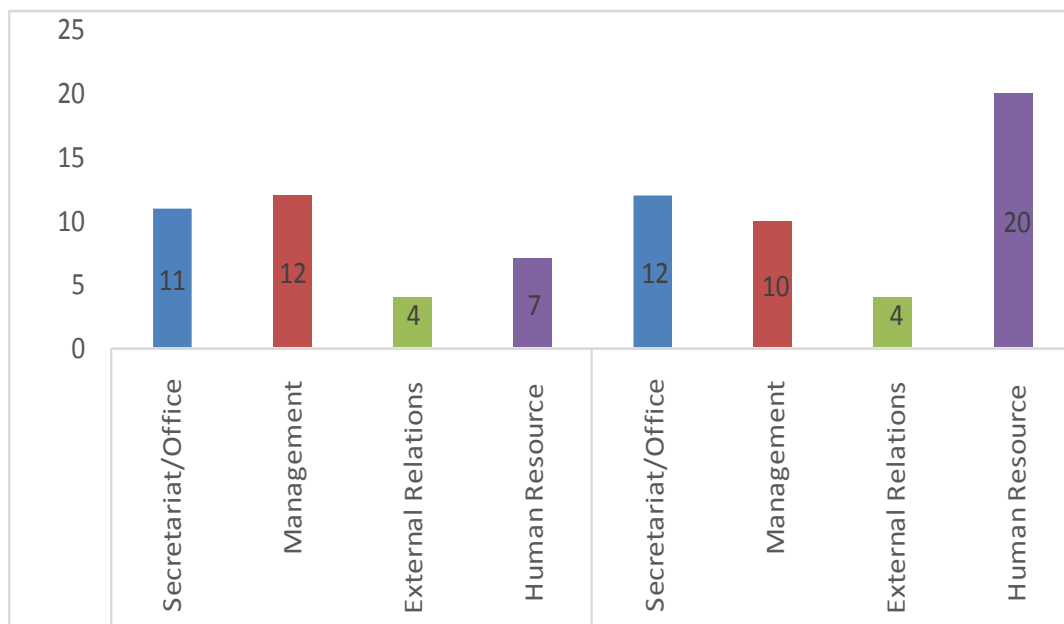


Figure 4.9: Variations in the perceptions of the most important roles and responsibilities required of low and middle line staff of GPA and PMO, Gambia

Source: Research findings, 2015

Figure 4.9 above shows that 20 (44.4%) respondents in PMO perceive HRM functions as the most important roles and responsibilities of OCS, while in GPA management functions are perceived to be the most important roles and responsibilities of OCS. However, respondents of both organizations perceive secretariat duties as an equally

important responsibility of OCS. The least function of OCS as perceived by staff and supervisors of both organizations is external relations/contact duties.

Thus statistically significant variations ($p < 0.05$) in the perception of the most important roles and duties required of low and middle line staffs were observed across the two organizations. More (62.9%) of those who regarded human resource functions as the most important roles and responsibilities were from the Personnel Management Office (PMO) than those from the Gambia Ports Authority (GPA) as shown in Figure 4.9 above. This difference can be explained by the fact that the PMO is charge of recruitment and allocation of human resources to other government ministries and departments.

4.3. Most frequently performed activities of low and middle line workers

Results of the study show that while a majority of the respondents perceive human resource management functions as the most important roles and responsibilities of OCS, the most frequently performed set of activities by OCS in both organizations are secretariat in nature. Majority of the staff in both organizations identify a series of secretariat activities as the most frequently performed activities of OCS. This notwithstanding, the results indicate that OCS staff of both organizations frequently perform activities that cut across different areas as discussed below

4.3.1. Most Frequently Performed Secretariat/Office duties

The most frequently performed secretariat duties were reported as typing and printing (47.5%), organizing and filing documents (18.75%), managing electronic records (16.25%), evaluating performance of peers (11.25%) and report writing (6.25%) in that order. A similar study conducted by Allen (2000) has shown typing and printing to be the most performed secretariat and office duty.

Though the perceptions of the most performed secretariat duties differed across the two organizations, these variations were not statistically significant ($p > 0.05$). Figure 4.10 below represents the most frequently performed activities of OCS in both the PMO and GPA.

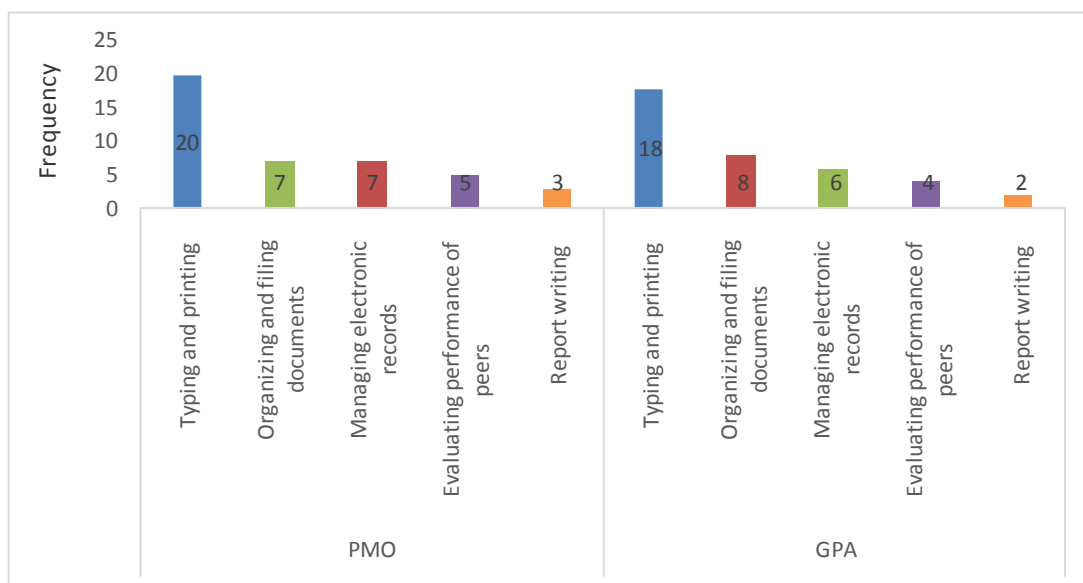


Figure 4.10: Variations in the most performed secretariat/office duties of PMO and GPA, Gambia

Source: Research findings, 2015

However, statistically significant variations were observed within grade levels ($p=0.005$; $\chi^2=28.56$; $df=12$) and highest academic qualification ($p=0.00$; $\chi^2=66.908$; $df=16$) among those who said report writing was the most frequently performed secretariat/office duties. Those at the lower grade levels (1-6) with lower certificated (certificate, diplomas and higher diplomas) regarded typing and printing as an often performed secretariat duties than those at higher grade levels (7-12) with high academic qualifications (bachelors and master's degree)

This variation can be explained by the fact that those who are at the lower grade levels and have lower qualifications are involved in secretariat/office duties particularly typing and printing of documents than those at the higher grade and academic qualification levels.

Most of the respondents (27.5%) reported, with no statistically significant variations ($p>0.05$) within and across the selected socio-demographic and professional characteristics, that training in preparing presentations using Microsoft PowerPoint for board or departmental meetings was the most important area to receive training.

4.3.2. Most Frequently Performed Management duties by OCS

The most frequently performed management duties were reported as supervision of staff(35%), progress report writing (25%), planning and goal setting (17.5%), communication (15%) and follow-up of implementation (7.5%) in that order. This finding supports studies conducted by Atok (2013) which identified supervision as the most important management duties.

Statistically significant variations ($p < 0.05$) were observed in the most important management duties between the two organizations. Most (57.16%) of those who reported supervision of staffs as the most important management duties were from the PMO (as shown in Figure 4.11 below).

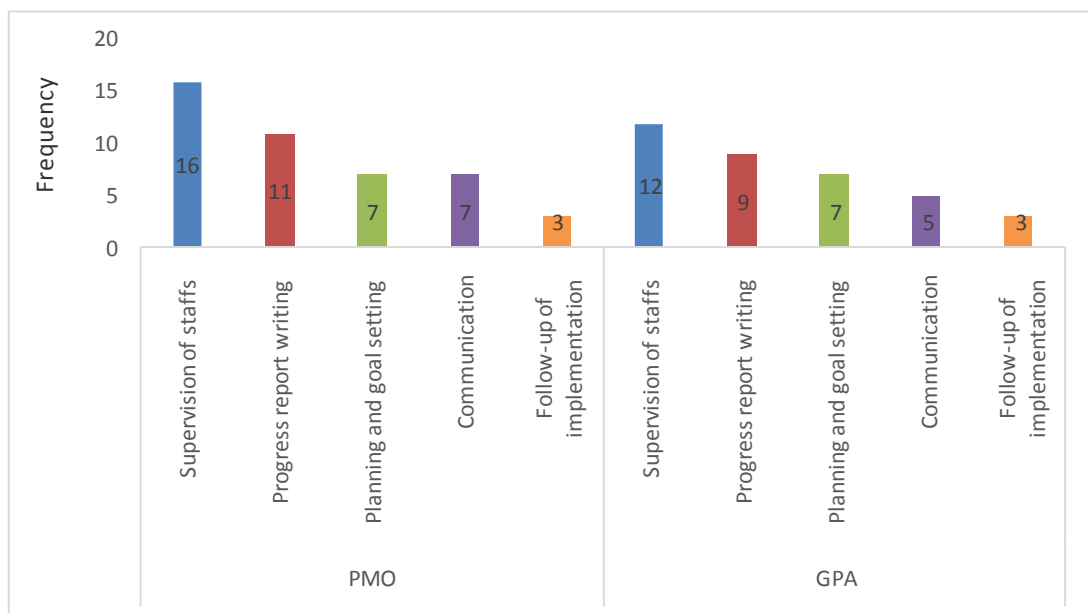


Figure 4.11: Most frequently performed management duties of PMO and GPA, Gambia

Source: Research findings, 2015

Statistically significant variations were equally observed within age group ($p = 0.015$; $\chi^2 = 30.65$; $df = 16$), management level ($p = 0.04$; $\chi^2 = 22.56$; $df = 8$), grade level ($p = 0.003$; $\chi^2 = 30.07$; $df = 12$) and highest qualification ($p = 0.005$; $\chi^2 = 34.11$; $df = 16$) among those who reported supervision of other staff as the most performed management duties.

Those who were above 30 years who were first line supervisors and middle -level managers regarded supervision at the highest grade level and academic qualification

considered supervision of other staffs as the most performed management duties than those below 30 years, who were non-management staff at the lowest grade level and academic qualification.

Most of the respondents (15 or 18.8%) reported, with no statistically significant variations ($p>0.05$) within and across the selected socio-demographic and professional characteristics, that recruitment and selection of staff was the most important area to receive training.

4.3.3. Most Frequently Performed External Relations/Contacts Duties

The most frequently performed external relations/contacts duties were reported as reception and attendance to clients/customers (22.4%), participation in negotiation meetings (16.8%), provides comments and suggestions to management on change management (12%), advertise and publicizing activities of the organization (8%) and initiating studies/conducting research (4.8%) in that order (see Figure 4.12).

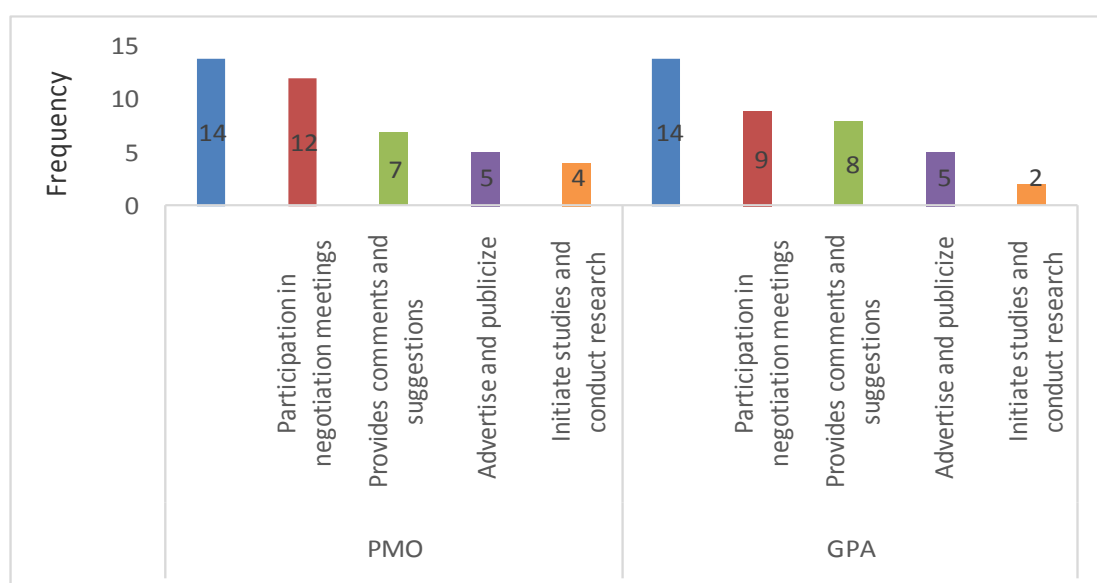


Figure 4.12: Variations in the most performed external relations/contacts duties in PMO and GPA, Gambia

Source: Research findings, 2015

Figure 4.12 above shows that most of the respondents perceive reception of clients as the most frequently performed external relations duties of OCS in both organizations. Thus, there was no statistically significant variation ($p>0.05$) within the socio-demographic and professional characteristics among those who regarded receiving and

attending to clients as the most performed external relations/contact duties. The absence of a statistically significant variation can be explained by the fact that receiving and attending to clients is a duty that is performed at all levels of both organizations.

Most of the respondents (36.35%) reported, with no statistically significant variations ($p < 0.05$) within and across the selected socio-demographic and professional characteristics, that participate in negotiation meetings with external partners was the most important area to receive training.

4.3.4. Most Frequently Performed Human Resource Activities

The most frequently performed human resource functions were reported as facilitation of communication between departments/ministries (36.25%), facilitation of communication between staff/clients (22 or 27.5%), select staff for training (23.75%), participate in decision-making (7 or 8.75%) and manage files of all employees (3 or 3.75%) in that order as shown in Figure 4.13 below.

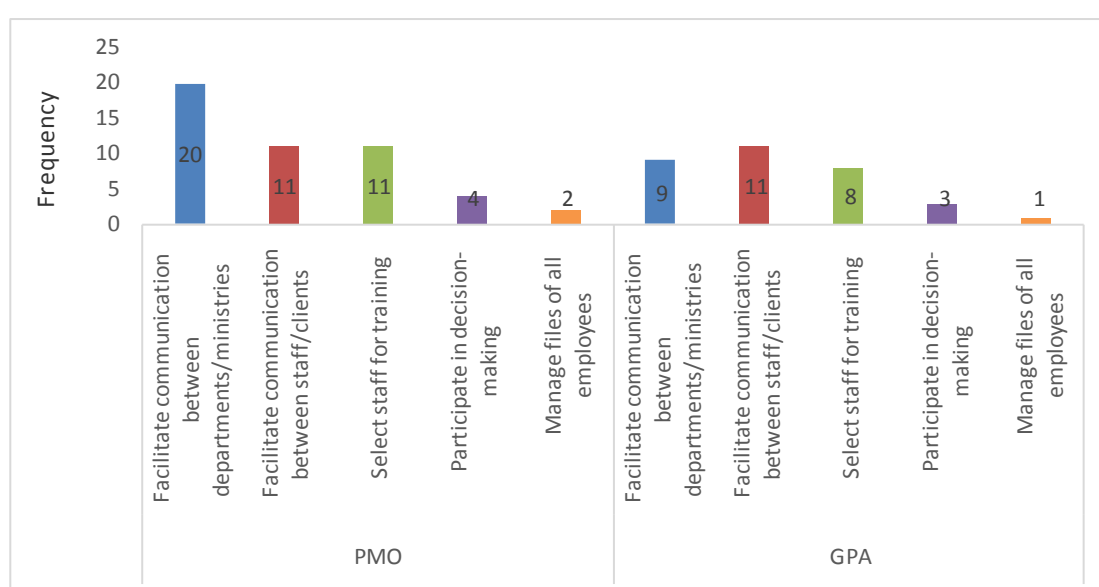


Figure 4.13: Variation in the most frequently performed human resources functions in PMO and GPA, Gambia.

Source: Research findings, 2015

Statistically significant variations were observed between the two institutions ($p < 0.05$). Most (68.9%) of those who reported facilitation of communication between ministries and departments were from the PMO.

Also, statistically significant variations were observed within management level ($p=0.03$; $\chi^2=16.43$; $df=8$), grade level ($p=0.008$; $\chi^2=26.83$; $df=12$) and academic qualifications ($p=0.001$; $\chi^2=40.96$; $df=16$) among those who considered facilitation of communication between departments and ministries as the most performed management duties.

Thus it is observed that majority of staff in the PMO who are first line and middle level managers at the higher grade level and with the highest academic qualifications are of the opinion that facilitation of communication between departments and ministries is the most frequently performed human resource function of OCS, while most staff of the considers facilitation of communication among staff as the most frequently performed HRM activity. This variation is due to the fact that the PMO being the main body responsible for civil service matters; mostly communicate with departments and ministries relating to civil service issues through sending and receiving correspondence.

Most of the respondents (14 or 17.5%) reported, with no statistically significant variations ($p<0.05$) within and across the selected socio-demographic and professional characteristics, that participating in making decisions about staff promotion, sanctions and grievance handling was the most important area to receive training.

Table 4.1 Below Summarize the results of findings on research objective 1 and two.

Perceived Roles and Responsibilities of OCS (in order of importance)	Most Frequently Performed Activities by OCS
Human resource functions	Typing and printing/correspondence
Secretariat Duties	Progress report writing
Management Duties	Facilitation of communication
External Relations	Customer services
	Negotiation
	Assist in proposal writing
	Recruitment and selection

Source: Research findings, 2015

As shown in table 2 above, the most frequently performed activities of OCS in both organizations are related to the four broad functional areas. The major concern of the study was to investigate whether the OCS have the requisite skills to effectively perform the identified most frequently performed activities. Thus the third objective of this study examined existing competencies and skills deemed lacking by supervisors of OCS in both organizations.

4.4. Skills possess and competencies deemed lacking in the PMO and GPA

4.4.1. Present skills

The most available skills of operating core staff (OCS) reported by the 17 supervisors of operating core staff (SOCS) in the PMO and GPA range from communication (23.5%) to team building (11.8%) and good service delivery (Table 4.2).

Though some variations were found among the two institutions, this differences were not statistically significant ($p>0.05$). Results of the existing skills in both organizations are indicated in table 4.2 below.

Table 4. 2: Present skills in the PMO and GPA

PMO		Skills sets	GPA	
Frequency	Percent		Frequency	Percent
3	37.5	Communication	1	11.1
1	12.5	Managerial	2	22.2
1	12.5	Inter-personal skills	2	22.2
1	12.5	Analytical	1	11.1
1	12.5	Team building	1	11.1
1	12.5	Report writing		0.0
		Engineering/technical skills	1	11.1
		Good service delivery	1	11.1

Source: Research findings, 2015

Table 4.2 above shows that most supervisors of PMO observed communication skills as the most present competencies of OCS staff in the organization. On the other hand,

managerial and inter-personal skills are perceived by supervisors of OCS in GPA as the most present competencies of OCS in the organization.

4.4.2. Competencies Deemed Lacking

The 17 supervisors of operating core staff (SOCS) identified analytical skills (17.6%), team building skills (17.6%) report writing skills (11.8%), monitoring and evaluation skills (5.9%) negotiation skills (5.9%) as the most lacking competences among operating core staff in the PMO and GPA (Table 4.2).

Though some variations were found among the two institutions, this differences were not statistically significant ($p>0.05$). Table 4.2 below shows the competencies that are deemed lacking by supervisors of OCS in PMO and GPA.

Table 4. 3: Skills that are lacking in the PMO and GPA

PMO		Skills sets	GPA	
Frequency	Percent		Frequency	Percent
1	12.5	Analytical skill	2	22.2
2	25	Team building	1	11.1
1	12.5	Report writing	1	11.1
1	12.5	Innovative skills	1	11.1
		Customer care skills	1	11.1
1	12.5	Good communication skills	1	11.1
1	12.5	Monitoring and evaluation skills		
		Proposal development	1	11.1
1	12.5	Management skills		0.0
		Planning skills	1	11.1

Source: Research findings, 2015

4.5. Implications of the Results

The analysis concluded above reveals variations in the perceived roles and responsibilities of OCS and the frequently performed activities of the staff. This variation has significant implications for the OCS who may be building their skills on HRM functions (as they perceive it to be their main roles and responsibilities) while their most frequently performed activity is secretariat in nature. Consequently, it is

relevant for trainers to analyze adequately the most frequently performed activities of staff in order to direct training towards enhancing performance in those activities. Relating training content to what employees do on daily basis renders training more effective.

4.6. Limitations of the Study

The researcher encountered some of challenges which impacted on the major results of the study. The first of such challenges was the refusal of staff of both organizations to make available performance appraisal results of employees for scrutiny. Examining the performance appraisal results of employees would have provided very relevant data for identifying skill and behaviour gaps in both organizations. However, the researcher was able to elicit the information directly from the staff themselves and their supervisors. Relying on this method provided in-depth understanding of the skill deficiencies.

Furthermore, in today's fast- paced environment, training requirement can change so rapidly that data collected during a needs assessment, especially if the evaluation span an extended time, can become outdate fairly quickly (Gupta, 1999).

Another limitation is related to the time allocated for this study which was not enough to support a more detailed study. It did not allow the researcher to explore other information needed to render the study more successful.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary of findings

This study aimed at assessing training needs of operating core staff of the Gambian Ports Authority and Personnel Management Office. The study attempted to investigate three major research questions: what is the perception of OCS and their supervisors on the roles and responsibilities of OCS? What is the perception of OCS and their supervisors on the most frequently performed activities of OCS? What are the skills deemed present and absent in OCS by their supervisors? After investigating these questions, the study arrived at the following findings.

- i. That human resources function was the most important role and responsibility of the Operating Core Staff of the above state institutions. However, variations were found among the two organizations, with more of those who considered this an important role and responsibility in the PMO than the GPA.
- ii. That typing and printing, supervising other staffs, receiving and attending to customers and clients and facilitating communication between ministries and departments were the most frequently performed activities in both organizations. No statistically significant variations were found across the two organizations.
- iii. That operating core staffs possessed skills in communication, leadership and team building among others but lack analytical, report writing and monitoring and evaluation skills among others. No statistically significant variations were found among the two organizations.

5.2. Conclusion

Training and development is essential for the workforce to attain the required knowledge, skills and attitudes to accomplish jobs more efficiently, given that training is the procedure for assisting the workforce to gain further knowledge of their tasks and also to learn or improve the required skills, attitudes and values linked to the competent performance of the workforce (Tulsia et al, 2009).

Furthermore, training and development is an integral part of every organization. Although, its purpose is to improve jobs performance of employees, all organizations need to organize training as often as possible so as to make their employees aware of new trends in the global competitive market.

Therefore, it is very important to conduct a training needs assessment which is considered to be the foundation of all training activities. In order to deliver appropriate, effective training which meets the needs of individual employees and the organization and represents value for money, a training assessment that focused on the perception of employees and their most frequently performed activities is most appropriate.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following suggestions are directed to authorities of PMO and GPA. The recommendations are proposals for enhancing the performance of OCS in the GPA and PMO through training in the identified areas of skill gaps. Table 4.3 and Table 4.4 below present the researcher's recommendations to PMO and GPA respectively.

Table: 5.1: Proposed Training Programmes for OCS of the PMO

Proposed Training Programmes	Objective	Expected outcome
Training in Analytical skills and logical Reasoning	To develop participants skills in analyzing policy documents and other data	Participants can effectively analyze internal/external policy issues through sound logical reasoning.
Effective Planning	To build the capacity of participants to effectively plan, implement, monitor and evaluate activities or programmes	OCS are able to design long term and short term plans using modern planning tools
Proposal development	To equip the participants with skills to initiate, and design project or programme proposals as one of the key management activities of OCS	OCS are able to initiate and write high impact and fundable project/programme proposals
Communication	To enhance the communication skills of OCS staff	Improved written and spoken communication between OCS and their supervisors
Monitoring and Evaluation	To strengthen the capacity of OCS to develop and apply sound monitoring and evaluation tools	Improvement in the monitoring and evaluation of programmes in the organization.

Source: Research findings, 2015

Table 5.2 Propose training for operating core staff of G.P.A

Proposed Training Programmes	Objectives	Expected outcomes
Effective Reporting	To equip participants with skills on effective report writing	Improvement in the quality of reports written by OCS
Customer Service	To strengthen the capacity of OCS to effectively relate with customers	Increase in customer loyalty
Negotiation Skills	To build participants skills in effective negotiations with other partners	Improvement in negotiation skills of OCS
Team building	To create a general sense of teamwork among OCS in GPA.	Increase collaboration among staff
Innovative Skills	To generate a sense of creativity among OCS and enhance their supervisor's skills on leading strategic innovations	Participants have acquired the skills to be innovative
Planning Skills	To build the capacity of participants to effectively plan, implement, monitor and evaluate activities or programmes	OCS are able to design long term and short term plans using modern planning tools

Source: Research findings, 2015

5.4 Suggestion Area for Further Studies

Considering the time limitations to this study, the researcher recommends a detailed study of performance gaps in PMO and GPA that will involve a complete analysis of the organizations, employees, and teams within the two organizations. A study of this nature will throw light on the skill gaps and may result in other proposals that are not related to training, but geared towards building the institutional capacity of PMO and GPA as a whole.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Questionnaire

Questionnaire for operating core staff

Good day Sir. My name is **OusainouBarrow**, a Gambian and student of the Pan African Institute for Development – West Africa (PAID-WA), Buea, Cameroon, conducting research on the topic “Identifying Training Needs of Operating Core Staff of The Gambian Ports Authority and the Personnel Management Office” in partial fulfilment of an MSc degree in Strategic Human Resource Management. I would like you to participate in my research by responding to the under listed questions. I pledged that all information provided by you will be confidential and used solely for academic purposes.

Part 1: Background Information

1. What is your job position? _____
2. What was your previous position? _____
3. Management Level: First-line supervisors ☐ Mid-level management ☐
Executives ☐ No management staff ☐
4. Department: Human Resources ☐ Marketing ☐ Clearing ☐ Information
Technology ☐
Technical ☐ Accounting & Finance ☐ Purchasing ☐ Public relations ☐
Operations ☐
Others (specify) _____
5. In which grade level(s) do you work? _____
6. Years of experience in the organization _____
7. What is the required minimum qualification to your position? -----

8. What is your highest qualification?
Certificate ☐ Diploma ☐ Higher Diploma ☐ Bachelor's Degree ☐
Masters' Degree ☐
Others (please specify) _____
9. What is your age? 20-30 ☐ 30-35 ☐ 35-40 ☐ 40-45 ☐ 45-50 ☐ 50-55 ☐ 55-60 ☐ above ☐

What is your gender? Male ☐ Female ☐

Part 2: Important Roles and Responsibilities

Please rate the following items on a scale from 1 to 5 by circling the appropriate number. Please consider the **IMPORTANCE** of these tasks to your overall job performance.

	Task	Do not perform the task	Minor part of the job	Important part of job	Critical part of job	Extremely critical part of job
Secretariat/ Office Duties						
1	Typing and printing of correspondences (internal memoranda, letters, etc)	1	2	3	4	5
2	Receiving and sending correspondences	1	2	3	4	5
3	Organization and filing of documents	1	2	3	4	5
4	Logistics arrangements for general staff meetings and Minute taking	1	2	3	4	5
5	Logistic arrangements for board meetings and minute taking	1	2	3	4	5
6	Managing database of staff and customers or clients contacts	1	2	3	4	5
7	Managing electronic records and provide prompt information to top management when requested	1	2	3	4	5
8	Evaluate the performance of peers through formal appraisal processes	1	2	3	4	5
9	Write regular reports (report of an incident, weekly, monthly or annual report)	1	2	3	4	5
10	Manage office equipment such as scanners/scanning, photocopiers	1	2	3	4	5
11	Prepare presentations using MS Powerpoint for board meetings or departmental meetings	1	2	3	4	5

Others (please specify and rate accordingly)

Which of these areas do you feel is most important to receive training

.....

.....

Management Duties

1	Assist in planning and goal setting	1	2	3	4	5
2	Follow up implementation of top management decision through management control	1	2	3	4	5
3	Supervises other staff and monitor their	1	2	3	4	5

	performance					
4	Manage petty cash or allocated departmental budget	1	2	3	4	5
5	Supervises the use of equipment and the organization's properties	1	2	3	4	5
6	Communicate top management decisions and follow up implementation	1	2	3	4	5
7	Recruit and select subordinate staff	1	2	3	4	5
8	Day-to-day management of processes and activities of the organization	1	2	3	4	5
9	Participate in progress report writing	1	2	3	4	5
10	Ensure safety and security of personnel and visitors	1	2	3	4	5
11	Manage warehouse/inventory of items/goods received	1	2	3	4	5
	Liaise with other departments/ministries	1	2	3	4	5

Others (please specify and rate accordingly)

Which of these areas do you feel is most important to receive training

.....

External Relations/Contacts

1	Receive and attend to clients/customers on daily basis	1	2	3	4	5
2	Provide comments and suggestions to Management on how to manage customers	1	2	3	4	5
3	Participate in negotiation meetings with external partners	1	2	3	4	5
4	Advertise and publicize the activities of the organization	1	2	3	4	5
5	Initiate studies and conduct research on customer perception about the services provided by the organization	1	2	3	4	5
6	Provide freight, clearing and other assistance to customers	1	2	3	4	5

Others (please specify and rate accordingly)

Which of these areas do you feel is most important to receive training

.....

.....

Human Resource Functions

1	Manage files of all employees in the organization	1	2	3	4	5
2	Design jobs, recruits and select qualified candidates for the jobs	1	2	3	4	5
3	Conducts training needs of staff in the organization	1	2	3	4	5
4	Initiate training programmes and seeking funding from management and other partners for training	1	2	3	4	5
5	Design training curricula to match identified needs	1	2	3	4	5
6	Plan, conduct and evaluate training and development activities	1	2	3	4	5
7	Appraise employees, monitor and manage employee performance	1	2	3	4	5
8	Select staff for training and development	1	2	3	4	5
9	Advice management on motivation strategies and design/implement motivation schemes	1	2	3	4	5
10	Manage conflicts among staff	1	2	3	4	5
11	Initiate change and Monitor implementation of change	1	2	3	4	5
12	Participate in making decisions about staff promotions, sanctions and grievance handling	1	2	3	4	5

Others

1	Facilitate communication between staff and clients	1	2	3	4	5
2	Facilitate communication with other departments/ministries	1	2	3	4	5

Which of these areas do you feel is most important to receive training

Part 3: Frequency of Performance

Please rate the following items on a scale from 1 to 5 by circling the appropriate number. Please consider how **Frequently** you perform these job activities.

	Task	Never	Just once or twice	Several times	Many times	Always
Secretariat/ Office Duties						
1	Typing and printing of correspondences (internal memoranda, letters, etc)	1	2	3	4	5

2	Receiving and sending correspondences	1	2	3	4	5
3	Organization and filing of documents	1	2	3	4	5
4	Logistics arrangements for general staff meetings and Minute taking	1	2	3	4	5
5	Logistic arrangements for board meetings and minute taking	1	2	3	4	5
6	Managing database of staff and customers or clients contacts	1	2	3	4	5
7	Managing electronic records and provide prompt information to top management when requested	1	2	3	4	5
8	Evaluate the performance of peers through formal appraisal processes	1	2	3	4	5
9	Write regular reports (report of an incident, weekly, monthly or annual report)	1	2	3	4	5
10	Manage office equipment such as scanners/scanning, photocopiers	1	2	3	4	5
11	Prepare presentations using MS Powerpoint for board meetings or departmental meetings	1	2	3	4	5

Others (please specify and rate accordingly)

Management Duties

1	Assist in planning and goal setting	1	2	3	4	5
2	Follow up implementation of top management decision through management control	1	2	3	4	5
3	Supervises other staff and monitor their performance	1	2	3	4	5
4	Manage petty cash or allocated departmental budget	1	2	3	4	5
5	Supervises the use of equipment and the organization's properties	1	2	3	4	5
6	Communicate top management decisions and follow up implementation	1	2	3	4	5
7	Recruit and select subordinate staff	1	2	3	4	5
8	Day-to-day management of processes and activities of the organization	1	2	3	4	5
9	Participate in progress report writing	1	2	3	4	5
10	Ensure safety and security of personnel and visitors	1	2	3	4	5
11	Manage warehouse/inventory of items/goods received	1	2	3	4	5

Liaise with other departments/ministries	1	2	3	4	5
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Others (please specify and rate accordingly)

External Relations/Contacts

1	Receive and attend to clients/customers on daily basis	1	2	3	4	5
2	Provide comments and suggestions to Management on how to manage customers	1	2	3	4	5
3	Participate in negotiation meetings with external partners	1	2	3	4	5
4	Advertise and publicize the activities of the organization	1	2	3	4	5
5	Initiate studies and conduct research on customer perception about the services provided by the organization	1	2	3	4	5
6	Provide freight, clearing and other assistance to customers	1	2	3	4	5

Others (please specify and rate accordingly)

Human Resource Functions

1	Manage files of all employees in the organization	1	2	3	4	5
2	Design jobs, recruits and select qualified candidates for the jobs	1	2	3	4	5
3	Conducts training needs of staff in the organization	1	2	3	4	5
4	Initiate training programmes and seeking funding from management and other partners for training	1	2	3	4	5
5	Design training curricula to match identified needs	1	2	3	4	5
6	Plan, conduct and evaluate training and development activities	1	2	3	4	5
7	Appraise employees, monitor and manage employee performance	1	2	3	4	5
8	Select staff for training and development	1	2	3	4	5
9	Advise management on motivation strategies and design/implement motivation schemes	1	2	3	4	5
10	Manage conflicts among staff	1	2	3	4	5
11	Initiate change and Monitor	1	2	3	4	5

	implementation of change					
12	Participate in making decisions about staff promotions, sanctions and grievance handling	1	2	3	4	5
Others						
1	Facilitate communication between staff and clients	1	2	3	4	5
2	Facilitate communication with other departments/ministries	1	2	3	4	5

Part 4: Ease of Task Performance

Please rate the following items on a scale from 1 to 5 by circling the appropriate number. Please consider **HOW DIFFICULT** it would be for a newly hired low or middle line staff to learn to perform these tasks in a competent manner.

	Task	Never	Just once or twice	Several times	Many times	Always
Secretariat/ Office Duties						
1	Typing and printing of correspondences (internal memoranda, letters, etc)	1	2	3	4	5
2	Receiving and sending correspondences	1	2	3	4	5
3	Organization and filing of documents	1	2	3	4	5
4	Logistics arrangements for general staff meetings and Minute taking	1	2	3	4	5
5	Logistic arrangements for board meetings and minute taking	1	2	3	4	5
6	Managing database of staff and customers or clients contacts	1	2	3	4	5
7	Managing electronic records and provide prompt information to top management when requested	1	2	3	4	5
8	Evaluate the performance of peers through formal appraisal processes	1	2	3	4	5
9	Write regular reports (report of an incident, weekly, monthly or annual report)	1	2	3	4	5
10	Manage office equipment such as scanners/scanning, photocopiers	1	2	3	4	5
11	Prepare presentations using MS Powerpoint for board meetings or departmental meetings	1	2	3	4	5
Management Duties						
1	Assist in planning and goal setting	1	2	3	4	5
2	Follow up implementation of top management decision through management control	1	2	3	4	5

3	Supervises other staff and monitor their performance	1	2	3	4	5
4	Manage petty cash or allocated departmental budget	1	2	3	4	5
5	Supervises the use of equipment and the organization's properties	1	2	3	4	5
6	Communicate top management decisions and follow up implementation	1	2	3	4	5
7	Recruit and select subordinate staff	1	2	3	4	5
8	Day-to-day management of processes and activities of the organization	1	2	3	4	5
9	Participate in progress report writing	1	2	3	4	5
10	Ensure safety and security of personnel and visitors	1	2	3	4	5
11	Manage warehouse/inventory of items/goods received	1	2	3	4	5
	Liaise with other departments/ministries	1	2	3	4	5

Others (please specify and rate accordingly)

External Relations/Contacts

1	Receive and attend to clients/customers on daily basis	1	2	3	4	5
2	Provide comments and suggestions to Management on how to manage customers	1	2	3	4	5
3	Participate in negotiation meetings with external partners	1	2	3	4	5
4	Advertise and publicize the activities of the organization	1	2	3	4	5
5	Initiate studies and conduct research on customer perception about the services provided by the organization	1	2	3	4	5
6	Provide freight, clearing and other assistance to customers	1	2	3	4	5

Others (please specify and rate accordingly)

Human Resource Functions

1	Manage files of all employees in the organization	1	2	3	4	5
2	Design jobs, recruits and select qualified candidates for the jobs	1	2	3	4	5
3	Conducts training needs of staff in the organization	1	2	3	4	5
4	Initiate training programmes and seeking funding from management and other partners for training	1	2	3	4	5

5	Design training curricula to match identified needs	1	2	3	4	5
6	Plan, conduct and evaluate training and development activities	1	2	3	4	5
7	Appraise employees, monitor and manage employee performance	1	2	3	4	5
8	Select staff for training and development	1	2	3	4	5
9	Advise management on motivation strategies and design/implement motivation schemes	1	2	3	4	5
10	Manage conflicts among staff	1	2	3	4	5
11	Initiate change and Monitor implementation of change	1	2	3	4	5
12	Participate in making decisions about staff promotions, sanctions and grievance handling	1	2	3	4	5
Others						
1	Facilitate communication between staff and client	1	2	3	4	5
2	Facilitate communication with other departments/ministries	1	2	3	4	5

Part 5

We realize that some of you have other responsibilities in addition to performing the above duties. Please answer the following questions to help us better understand your job activities:

- What percentage of your job involves work with customers or the public? (For example, if all of your work responsibilities are involved with the public or customers, write 100% in the blank. If you work with the public or customers about one third of the time, write 33% in the blank.)

- At this time, please look back over all the job activities you just rated on this inventory and answer the following question: What percentage of your job responsibilities are represented by this questionnaire? (For example, if you believe all of your job activities are represented by this questionnaire, write 100% in the blank. If you believe about one fourth of your job tasks are represented by the inventory, write 25% in the blank.)

- Please list the top five skills that low and middle line staff in your organization need in their work (e.g., accounts officers must know how to record transactions (You do not need to rank them.)
 - _____
 - _____
 - _____
 - _____
 - _____
- Please write any comments or suggestions you would like to make regarding the training needs of low and middle line staff of your organization

Thank you for participating as we work together to improve training opportunities for operating core staff in your organization

Appendix 2: Questionnaire for Supervisors of operating core staff

Part 1: Background Information

1. What is your job position? _____
2. What was your previous position? _____
3. Management Level: First-line supervisors ☐ Mid-level management ☐
Executives ☐ Non management staff ☐
4. Department: Human Resources ☐ Marketing ☐ Clearing ☐ Information
Technology ☐
Technical ☐ Accounting & Finance ☐ Purchasing ☐ Public relations
Operations ☐
Others (specify) _____
5. In which grade level(s) do you work? _____
6. Years of experience in the organization _____
7. What is the required minimum qualification to your position? -----

8. What is your highest qualification?
Certificate ☐ Diploma ☐ Higher Diploma ☐ Bachelor's Degree ☐ Masters'
Degree ☐
Others (please specify) _____
9. What is your age? 20-30 ☐ 30-35 ☐ 35-40 ☐ 40-45 ☐ 45-50 ☐ 50-55 ☐ 55-
60 ☐ 60 above ☐
10. What is your gender? Male ☐ Female ☐

After contemplating the various roles and responsibilities that low and middle line staff that you supervise engage in please share the following:

1. What required competencies/skills do you perceive to be the most present?

2. What required competencies/skills do you perceive to be the most lacking?

Thank you for participating as we work together to improve training opportunities for operating core staff in your organization

Appendix 2: Questionnaire for supervisors of operating core staff

For Supervisors of operating core staff

Part 1: Background Information

11. What is your job position? _____
12. What was your previous position? _____
13. Management Level: First-line supervisors ☐ Mid-level management ☐
Executives ☐ Non management staff ☐
14. Department: Human Resources ☐ Marketing ☐ Clearing ☐ Information
Technology ☐
Technical ☐ Accounting & Finance ☐ Purchasing ☐ Public relations
Operations ☐
Others (specify) _____
15. In which grade level(s) do you work? _____

16. Years of experience in the organization _____
17. What is the required minimum qualification to your position? -----

18. What is your highest qualification?
Certificate ☐ Diploma ☐ Higher Diploma ☐ Bachelor's Degree ☐ Masters' Degree ☐
Others (please specify) _____
19. What is your age? 20-30 ☐ 30-35 ☐ 35-40 ☐ 40-45 ☐ 45-50 ☐ 50-55 ☐ 55-60 ☐ 60 above ☐
20. What is your gender? Male ☐ Female ☐

After contemplating the various roles and responsibilities that low and middle line staff that you supervise engage in please share the following:

3. What required competencies/skills do you perceive to be the most present?

4. What required competencies/skills do you perceive to be the most lacking?

Thank you for participating as we work together to improve training opportunities for operating core staff in your organization

Appendix 3: Frequency of performance of secretariat/Office duties

	Frequency of performance				
	Never	Less often	Often	More Often	Always
Typing and printing	13	17	25	7	17
Receiving/Sending of Correspondences	19	23	20	3	15
Organizing/Filing of documents	15	21	22	11	11
Logistics arrangement for general staff Meetings	36	15	14	12	3
Logistics arrangement for board Meetings	42	13	11	11	3
Managing database of staff	24	18	16	17	5
Managing electronic records	21	12	26	8	13
Evaluate performance of peers	19	16	24	13	8
Report writing	8	15	15	23	18
Manage office equipment	48	12	9	5	6
Prepare presentations	47	14	9	6	4

Appendix 4: Frequency of performance of Management Duties

	Frequency of performance				
	Never	Less often	Often	More Often	Always
Assist in planning and goal setting	25	18	13	14	10
Follow implementation	29	17	15	11	8
Supervise other staffs	12	13	25	17	13
Manage petit cash	57	11	4	3	5
Supervise the use of equipment	49	16	3	8	4
Communicate top management decisions	24	19	16	10	11
Recruit and select subordinates	46	12	9	8	5
Day-to-day management of processes/activities	22	25	21	9	3
Participate in progress report writing	10	21	25	14	10
Ensure safety and security of personnel	50	12	14	1	3
Manage warehouse	56	10	7	6	1

Appendix 5: Frequency of performance of External Relations/Contacts

	Frequency of performance				
	Never	Less often	Often	More Often	Always
Receive and attend to clients/Customers	18	23	14	13	12
Provides and suggestions to management	33	23	13	7	4
Participate in negotiation meetings	27	16	10	13	13
Advertise and publicize	48	9	13	4	6
Initiate studies and conduct research	60	7	7	3	3
Provide freight clearing assistance to customers	50	19	4	4	3

Appendix 6: Frequency of performance of External Relations/Contacts

	Frequency of performance				
	Never	Less often	Often	More Often	Always
Manage files of all employees	34	12	12	11	10
Design jobs, recruit and select	41	11	11	7	10
Conduct training needs	45	9	11	8	6
Design training curricular	48	14	7	6	4
Plan, conduct and evaluate T&D	49	15	6	5	5
Appraise employees	46	17	9	4	4
Select staff for training	11	19	19	15	16
Advice management on motivation strategy	45	14	5	14	2
Manage conflict	34	19	8	12	6
Initiate, implement and monitor change	43	16	8	9	4
Participate in decision-making	28	15	17	8	12
Facilitate communication between staffs/clients	6	21	23	20	10
Facilitate communication between department/Ministries	11	9	21	14	25