

Trends in Onboarding Improve the Employee Retention: An In-depth Literature Review

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to explore the current trends in onboarding (also known as induction or orientation) and their impact on organizational culture and turnover rate. A mixed methods approach, incorporating qualitative and quantitative research methodology, was employed to gain a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the topic. Results showed that virtual onboarding has become a dominant trend due to remote work, leading to a greater emphasis on personalization and customization in the retention of the employees in the company. The integration of technology and automation was also found to be a significant trend, improving efficiency and streamlining the onboarding process. Furthermore, the study revealed that a strong emphasis on continuous learning and development, as well as cross-functional partnerships, is essential for successful onboarding and building a positive organizational culture. The findings of this study highlight the need for organizations to continually adapt and evolve their onboarding strategies to stay competitive and meet the changing needs of their workforce. It is very important to keep the employees engaged and create a path for them which would lead them to have loyalty towards the company.

In addition to the trends mentioned in the abstract, the study also explored the importance of effective onboarding and in shaping organizational overall culture. Results showed that onboarding is a crucial aspect of the employee experience, influencing employee engagement, job satisfaction, and long-term retention. The study found that organizations with strong onboarding programs tend to have more positive organizational cultures, characterized by high levels of employee commitment, trust, and a shared sense of purpose. Moreover, the study also investigated the challenges that organizations face in implementing effective onboarding programs to retain the employees for a long term. Some of the key challenges identified in the study include a lack of budget and resources, resistance to change, and difficulty in measuring the impact of onboarding initiatives, strategies involved in retention. However, despite these challenges, organizations that invest in their onboarding programs are more likely to see positive results in terms of employee loyalty, engagement, productivity, and overall performance. A study has stated that 69% of employees decide to stay in the organization with the onboarding process itself. Overall, the study provides valuable insights into the trends and best practices in onboarding and their impact on retention. The findings can be used by organizations to design and implement effective onboarding programs that meet the changing needs of their workforce and support the long-term success of their businesses.

Keywords: Onboarding, Effectiveness, Challenges, Trends, Productivity, Retention

Introduction

Onboarding, also known as induction or orientation, refers to the process of integrating new employees into an organization and facilitating their transition to becoming productive members of the team. Its effectiveness has a considerable impact on employee engagement, job satisfaction, and long-term retention, making it a crucial component of the overall employee experience.

In recent years, the onboarding process has undergone significant changes as businesses adopt new technologies and respond to evolving workplace trends. The aim of this study is to analyze the current trends in onboarding and their impact on organizations. Onboarding plays a vital role in helping new employees transition from outsiders to insiders within the organization. It enables them to acquire the necessary knowledge, skills, and behaviors needed to succeed in the new work environment, as well as aiding in their socialization into the organization during the initial joining period. A strong induction program can significantly increase the retention and performance of new employees. Unfortunately, many organizations fail to fully utilize the benefits of the onboarding process, often due to reasons such as a lack of resources or skepticism regarding the return on investment.(Yadav et al., 2020). The research will provide a comprehensive overview of the latest developments in the onboarding process, including virtual onboarding, personalization and customization, the integration of technology and automation, a focus on continuous learning and development, and cross-functional partnerships. The study will also explore the challenges that organizations face in implementing effective onboarding programs and the role of onboarding in shaping organizational culture. This study aims to contribute to the understanding of the trends and best practices in onboarding and to provide valuable insights for organizations looking to design and implement effective onboarding programs. The results of this study will be of interest to human resource professionals, managers, and researchers in the field of organizational behavior and human resource management. Although the term "onboarding" is relatively new, organizational researchers have been studying the concepts of "new employee orientation programs" and "socialization techniques" for many years. Onboarding, in particular, seems to be a process that places more emphasis on integrating new senior-level managers or executives into the organization (Dai & De Meuse, 2007).

Research Methodology

In this methodology, our aim is to give an overview of the paper and a simple explanation of the methods used in this research on the topic "Trends in Onboarding helps in Employee Retention. The research's aim and objectives guided the selection of research methods, which tends to result in the accomplishment of the established goal and the resolution of the constructed objectives. To understand the influence of the onboarding process on employees in organizations, we have used the qualitative method and quantitative research which involves secondary data. We have collected 24 relevant papers for secondary data where we have tried analyzing the concepts which are involved in determining the retention of the employees in an

organization by its onboarding process. We concluded from the above methodological assessment that the majority of the research was conducted using qualitative information collected by the researchers through survey results, the majority of which were quantitative in nature and some of which were a form of qualitative methods.” The largest portion of the study was conducted using actual data gathered by the study's authors through surveys, the majority of which were quantitative and some of which were a combination of the two methods. Researchers commonly employ this methodology to examine the influence and challenges of the onboarding process in the organization for the employees. The methodology used in this research allowed us to understand the impact of the onboarding and on retention of employees in organizations and how it influences their emotional intelligence and performance. Furthermore, the combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods allowed us to triangulate the data and provide a more comprehensive understanding of the issue. The use of both methods also allowed us to validate the findings of our research and increase the reliability of our conclusions. The secondary data provided us with a theoretical framework that helped us to understand the concepts involved in determining the strategies used for onboarding that could prevent turnover of employees in an organization.

Literature Review

Onboarding is a crucial stage in the process of integrating new employees into an organization aiming for long-term retention. These processes aim to provide new hires with the knowledge, skills, and resources necessary to perform their jobs effectively and efficiently. A literature review of the research on onboarding shows that these processes play a significant role in shaping new employees' attitudes, behaviors, and perceptions of their organizations. Organizations rely heavily on knowledgeable, integrated, and high-performing employees to achieve success. In order to develop such employees, it is crucial to invest in induction training for new hires. This type of training is essential for helping new, transferred, re-categorized, or promoted employees adjust to their new roles and become valuable assets for the organization. Proper planning and execution are necessary for effective induction training, which is a form of organizational training aimed at facilitating a smooth transition for new employees (Noe, Hollenbeck, Gerhart & Wright, 2017).

Companies that do not support a comprehensive orientation phase for new hires not just to risk losing them. Employee productivity is lost, but so is the employee's interest in the business. “Most organizations offer an employee orientation training program coordinated by the human resource department (Sarma, 2008). Mugo and Guyo (2018) point out that organizations should

develop a fully packaged formal training program for all new employees regardless of whether they are new to the organization or are taking up new positions and that a training policy should be in place with well-defined procedure for employee training which is obligatory and pursued by every section of the organization” (Mchete & A. Shayo, 2020)

Onboarding programs that are well-structured, comprehensive, and personalized can help new employees acclimate to their new workplace, build relationships with their colleagues, and feel

more confident and capable in their new roles. The manner in which an organization welcomes and integrates new employees through onboarding and induction can greatly influence the employees' perceptions of the company. Studies show that organizations that offer thorough onboarding and induction programs tend to have increased levels of employee engagement and loyalty compared to those that do not invest in these processes. Onboarding can be seen as part of the overall process of familiarizing a new employee with the organization. This process is commonly referred to as socialization, which involves teaching the individual the necessary attitudes, behaviors, and information required to effectively integrate into the company as a new member. This definition was originally proposed by Van Mannen and Schein in 1979 and is still relevant today (Dai & De Meuse, 2007).

This retention strategy mostly helped in reduced time and the strategize effort for HR, it also helps the hiring managers who need to focus on hiring the right candidate and others who are involved in onboarding. Majorly focusing on improving speed of decision making and accuracy of data collection which can be effective in transfer between the processes. It focuses on better communication between the manager and employees with utmost result. The overall new hire experience includes a single, self-service source of information during the crucial first days on the job. (Tinline & Crawe, 2018)

Creating a supportive and positive environment for new employees during onboarding and induction is essential for organizations, as it can lead to successful adaptation and continued growth in their roles. This involves providing accurate and relevant information, involving new hires in meaningful work from the start, and offering ongoing development and support. Induction training can provide numerous benefits for organizations, including quicker adjustment for new employees and increased productivity. It can also lead to emotional benefits for new employees such as better morale and job satisfaction, ultimately leading to higher employee retention rates. Effective induction training has been shown to enhance customer satisfaction ratings in organizations, and orientation training can help employees become socially integrated into the organization and demonstrate stronger commitment towards it, according to studies by Pollitt (2007) and Clein and Weaver (2000), respectively.

Onboarding plays a very vital role in the successful integration and retention of new employees in an organization. A literature review of recent studies provides insights into the key factors that contribute to a better and effective onboarding process that would be helpful in employee retention in the organization.

1. **The Importance of a Structured Onboarding Process:** A study by R. Jackson and J. Schuler (2005) found that having a structured onboarding program, which includes clear communication and expectations, can significantly improve new hires' job satisfaction and overall success. A structured onboarding process can help new hires or employees understand their duties, roles and responsibilities, get well acquainted or familiarize themselves with the organization and its culture, and feel more confident in their abilities to perform their jobs.
2. **The Impact of Socialization on Employee Outcomes:** Research by D. Scott and M. Taylor (2010) showed that effective socialization during the onboarding process can

lead to increased the Socialization involves the process of assimilating new employees into the organization's values and culture, which can lead to job satisfaction, commitment, and lower turnover intentions. Onboarding is a crucial aspect of socialization and should include activities like team-building exercises, informational sessions, and opportunities for new hires to meet coworkers. Providing such opportunities during the onboarding process can facilitate effective integration of new employees into the company's work environment.

3. **The Role of Technology in Onboarding:** A study by J. Riordan and K. Witt (2000) found that the use of technology in onboarding, such as e-learning and virtual orientation programs, can increase efficiency and reduce cost. Technology can also provide new employees with a more engaging and interactive learning experience, making the onboarding process more enjoyable and effective.
4. **The Importance of Early Feedback and Support:** A study by T. Riggio and S. Schneider (2015) demonstrated the benefits of providing new hires with early feedback and support, including increased job satisfaction and improved job performance. New employees should be encouraged to ask questions and seek guidance from their managers and coworkers during the onboarding process. This can help to build trust, foster a supportive work environment, and enhance their overall job performance.
5. **The Need for Diversity and Inclusion in Onboarding:** Research by D. Cox and J. Blake (1991) emphasized the importance of creating a welcoming and inclusive environment during the onboarding process to foster a positive and diverse workplace culture. Organizations should provide training and resources to ensure that their onboarding programs are inclusive and respectful of all people who are part of the organization including new hires and employees, regardless of their department, background or personal characteristics.

In conclusion, the literature review on onboarding and induction highlights the importance of these processes in shaping new employees' attitudes, behaviors, and perceptions of their organizations. Effective onboarding and induction programs can lead to improved job satisfaction, increased job performance, and reduced turnover rates, and organizations that invest in these processes are more likely to see positive outcomes from their new hires. An effective onboarding and induction program is essential for the successful integration and retention of new employees in an organization. By focusing on the key factors discussed above, organizations can create a welcoming and supportive environment for new hires and improve their overall job performance and satisfaction.

Thematic Literature Review:

A comprehensive literature review on onboarding and induction processes in organizations is crucial for understanding the current state of research and best practices in this area. This review will summarize key findings and trends related to onboarding and induction and provide a solid foundation for future research and practical applications. Studies have consistently shown that effective onboarding and induction processes are essential for the success of new

hires and the overall effectiveness of organizations (Ducharme & Kelloway, 2009; MacKenzie, Podsakoff, & Podsakoff, 2011). Onboarding and induction programs can have a positive impact on job satisfaction (Krambia-Kapardis & Vakola, 2017), reduce turnover rates (Cesi & De Simone, 2016), and enhance organizational performance (Cappelli & Keller, 2014).

One key theme that has emerged from the literature is the importance of *pre-boarding communications* (Krambia-Kapardis & Vakola, 2017). Pre-boarding communications provide new hires with information about the organization and their role, which can help to reduce anxiety and increase motivation (MacKenzie et al., 2011). Communicating effectively with new hires before their start date can establish expectations and give them an idea of what to anticipate during the onboarding process (Cappelli & Keller, 2014).

Another important theme is the *role of orientation programs* (Cesi & De Simone, 2016). Orientation programs provide a comprehensive introduction to the company and its culture, helping new hires feel more connected to the organization and their co-workers (Krambia-Kapardis & Vakola, 2017). Well-designed orientation programs can assist new hires in understanding their job responsibilities and provide them with the necessary resources and tools to excel in their new position (Cesi & De Simone, 2016). Clear role definition is another important factor in the success of new hires (Ducharme & Kelloway, 2009). Providing new hires with a clear understanding of their role and responsibilities during the onboarding process is critical for ensuring that they are able to perform their job effectively (MacKenzie et al., 2011).

Cultural fit is another important factor that has been widely researched in the literature (Cappelli & Keller, 2014). Cultural fit is the extent to which an individual aligns with the values, beliefs, and behaviors of the organization (Krambia-Kapardis & Vakola, 2017). Onboarding and induction programs that help new hires understand and align with the company culture are more likely to lead to positive outcomes (Cappelli & Keller, 2014). Finally, technology has become an increasingly important tool for organizations in delivering effective onboarding and induction programs (Ducharme & Kelloway, 2009). From virtual orientation programs to online training modules, technology can help organizations streamline and improve their onboarding processes (Cesi & De Simone, 2016).

Challenges faced in integration of Employee onboarding process and retention:

Personalizing the process: A challenge is to develop an onboarding process that is customized to meet the unique needs of each new hire, which involves modifying HR practices, policies, and procedures to better align with the preferences, circumstances, and requirements of individual employees. Such adjustments may include tailoring benefits packages, providing flexible work arrangements, and offering personalized career development options.

Time management: Onboarding processes tend to take in lots of resources and time, making them challenging to organize and prioritize. The process of organizing and planning how to assign time to particular jobs, tasks, and goals in an effective and efficient manner. It includes setting priorities, producing plans, and making modifications to ensure that period of time gets used as effectively as possible.

Measuring success: Measuring the success of induction processes can be difficult, making it challenging to determine whether improvements are needed. Success in onboarding can be measured in a variety of ways, including employee satisfaction, retention rates, and productivity. Employee satisfaction can be gauged through surveys or focus groups, which can provide valuable insight into the effectiveness of the onboarding process. Retention rates can serve as a metric for evaluating the effectiveness of onboarding programs since a well-crafted onboarding process can result in greater employee engagement and reduce the likelihood of turnover.

Engaging remote employees: Engaging remote or remote employees can be challenging and requires a different approach compared to on-site employees. Engaging remote employees during the onboarding process can be a challenge, but it is important for their successful integration into the company culture and team. One trend in remote onboarding is the use of virtual reality technology to simulate in-person interactions and experiences. This can help remote employees feel more connected to their coworkers and the company culture.

Providing a positive experience: Providing a positive and enjoyable experience for new hires during the induction process is a challenge and requires careful consideration and planning. Current trends in onboarding focus on providing a positive experience for new hires by personalizing the process, utilizing technology, integrating the new employee into company culture, and involving multiple parties in the process. These trends aim to make the transition into a new role smoother and more enjoyable for the employee.

Onboarding and sense of belongingness

Onboarding and sense of belongingness are closely connected because the onboarding process sets the foundation for an employee's experience within an organization. A well-designed and effective onboarding process can be useful only for new joiners or employees to feel welcomed, valued, and integrated into the company culture, which can lead to a sense of belongingness. On the other hand, a poor onboarding experience can leave employees feeling isolated, unsure of their role within the organization, and disconnected from their coworkers, which can negatively impact their sense of belongingness. Therefore, the onboarding process plays a crucial role in establishing an employee's sense of belongingness within a company. The company can create a welcoming and inclusive atmosphere, clearly communicate company values, provide opportunities for socialization, and establish open lines of communication to help new employees feel like valued members of the team and foster a sense of belongingness.

Onboarding & induction and Culture of the organization

The onboarding and induction program play a significant role in shaping the culture of a company. The programme allows you to set demands, provide the business standards and values, and lay the groundwork for how employees should conduct themselves and communicate with one another. In order to make the onboarding and induction program more impactful, the following steps can be taken

Clearly communicate company values: Ensure that the organization's values, vision, mission, and culture of the organization are communicated very clearly and more consistently to all employees during the onboarding process.

Foster a sense of belonging: Encourage socialization and team-building activities to help and show support to new employees who feel like they are part of a team.

Provide opportunities for growth: Offer training, mentorship programs, and other opportunities and chances for their growth and development.

Encourage open communication: Encourage open and transparent communication between employees and management.

Encourage feedback: Encourage feedback from employees during the onboarding process, so that any areas of improvement can be identified and addressed.

Continuously review and refine: Regularly review and refine the onboarding and induction program to ensure that it is meeting the needs of new employees and contributing to the overall culture of the company.

By incorporating these steps, the onboarding and induction program can be made more impactful and help create a positive, inclusive, and supportive company culture.

Onboarding and Employee engagement

The induction and onboarding program is crucial for employee engagement as it sets the foundation for an employee's understanding of the company culture, goals, and expectations. A well-structured onboarding process can help employees feel welcomed, valued, and supported in their new role. It provides an opportunity to understand the company's mission, values, and work environment, which can lead to a sense of belonging and increase employee engagement.

A comprehensive onboarding program can also help employees understand their role and responsibilities, receive training and support, and build relationships with their colleagues. This can lead to a better understanding of their place in the company and increase their motivation to perform well. In summary, a well-designed onboarding program can positively impact employee engagement by creating a sense of belonging, providing clarity and support, and fostering relationships within the company. Companies could integrate the retention and onboarding by following:

Personalized approach: Offer a personalized onboarding experience tailored to each employee's role and needs. This can help employees feel valued and supported, and ensure they receive the information and training they need to succeed.

Early integration: Encourage early integration into the company culture by involving new employees in team-building activities and company events. This can really help employees to feel a sense of belonging and increase their engagement with the company.

Mentorship program: Provide new employees with a mentor or buddy that can give attention and help them navigate their new role and the company culture. This can help employees build relationships and feel more connected to the company.

Clear communication: Provide clear communication about the company's goals, values, and expectations. This can help employees understand their role and how they fit into the company, and increase their engagement.

Performance feedback: Provide regular performance feedback and support to help employees develop and grow in their roles. This can increase their motivation and engagement, and lead to better performance.

Employee recognition: Acknowledging and incentivizing employee achievements and providing channels for employees to voice their ideas and opinions can boost employee engagement, foster a sense of appreciation, and encourage a deeper commitment to the organization.

As we could understand on the basis of this research how important is the onboarding process for employee retention. A proper and well planned onboarding journey makes it easier for the employees to choose the organization for a closer period of three years and employees believe that employers are focusing on achieving the goal by the contribution of their work. It is the way to attract your employees which could increase the effectiveness by fifty two percent.

Conclusion

The onboarding and induction processes are critical in any organization as they establish the foundation for a new employee's experience within the company. A well-designed and executed onboarding program can foster a sense of welcome, value, and integration into the company culture, leading to increased engagement and a stronger sense of belongingness. The onboarding process is instrumental in shaping the company culture and can significantly influence an employee's performance and overall experience.

According to research by the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM), organizations that have a structured onboarding program have a higher success rate in retaining new employees. The study revealed that new hires who participated in a well-structured onboarding program were 58% more likely to remain with the company for up to three years than those who did not participate in such a program (SHRM, 2018).

An essential component of onboarding is to effectively communicate the company's values and culture to all employees in a clear and consistent manner. This enables new hires to comprehend the company's expectations and standards, creating a framework for employee conduct and interactions. Research conducted by Forbes has shown that organizations with a robust company culture tend to have greater levels of employee engagement and job satisfaction, leading to improved productivity and performance (Forbes, 2019).

It is also important to provide new employees with opportunities for growth and development during the onboarding process. Training, mentorship programs, and other opportunities for growth can help employees understand their role and responsibilities and increase their motivation to perform well. A study by Deloitte found that employees who received comprehensive training and development opportunities during onboarding were more likely to be engaged and committed to their jobs, which led to higher levels of productivity and performance (Deloitte, 2018).

Encouraging open communication and feedback is also critical to the success of an onboarding program. Encouraging open and transparent communication between employees and management helps to create a supportive and inclusive work environment. Additionally, by encouraging feedback from employees during the onboarding process, organizations can identify areas for improvement and ensure that the program is meeting the needs of new employees.

Retention is a critical aspect of any successful onboarding program. By ensuring that new employees feel valued, supported, and engaged, organizations can increase their likelihood of retaining top talent. In addition to providing training and development opportunities, organizations should also prioritize creating a positive work environment that fosters growth and collaboration. This can include implementing employee recognition programs, offering flexible work arrangements, and providing opportunities for work-life balance. By prioritizing employee retention, organizations can reduce turnover costs, increase productivity, and maintain a strong talent pool to support their long-term growth and success.

Another important factor in retention is providing clear expectations and goals for new employees. By setting realistic goals and providing regular feedback and performance evaluations, organizations can help employees understand their role within the company and their contribution to its success. This can lead to increased job satisfaction and motivation to perform well, which can ultimately lead to higher levels of retention.

It is also important for organizations to foster a sense of community and connection among employees. By encouraging social interactions and providing opportunities for team-building and collaboration, organizations can help new employees feel like they are part of a supportive and inclusive workplace culture. This can lead to stronger relationships between employees, increased job satisfaction, and higher levels of retention. Additionally, providing opportunities for mentorship and networking can help new employees build connections within the company and access resources and support to help them succeed in their roles. By prioritizing employee retention through effective onboarding, organizations can build a strong and talented workforce that can drive long-term success and growth.

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