

On-Boarding Practices and Employee Experience Outcomes in Selected Oil and Gas Companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

The study examined the relationship between onboarding practices and employee experience outcomes in oil and gas companies in Rivers State, Nigeria an extant review of literature relevant to onboarding practices and employee experience outcomes was ascertained. The study adopts a survey research design. The population of this study comprise of 440 employees from the four major oil and gas firms operating in River state, Nigeria. The Taro Yamen's formula (1973) was adopted to determine the sample size from the population which was two hundred and ten. After data cleaning, 195 questionnaires were finally used for data analysis. Descriptive statistics was used for the primary analysis using mean scores and standard deviation, at the tertiary stage, the bivariate analysis was carried out to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between the onboarding practices and the measures of employee experience outcomes with the use of linear regression in other to test the stated hypotheses formulated for the study with the aid of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 25. The empirical findings revealed that there was a strong and positive relationship between onboarding practices and the measures of employee experience outcomes in oil and gas companies in Rivers State, Nigeria. The study concludes that, considering the acclaimed relevance of onboarding practices, with respect to employee experience outcomes, employers should wholeheartedly embrace onboarding practices in terms of job training, team introduction and facility tour in order to create awareness among new hire on the running of the organization. The study recommends that management of oil and gas companies in Rivers State, Nigeria under studied should make sure new hires are given the opportunity to move round the facility of the companies as a process of on boarding that will encourage the employees to be more productive on their job in the workplace.

Keywords: *Onboarding Practices, Employee Experience Outcomes, Employee Commitment, Employee Engagement, Employee Confidence*

I. INTRODUCTION

In the new millennium, organizations are moving towards a more open and collaborative environment. In this era, managers, especially those related to Human Resource planning are focusing more on their employee experience outcomes. Focusing on employee experience outcomes is thought to improve numerous things such as employee engagement, decision making quality and even performance (Itan & Ghosh, 2020) Employee experience can be perceived as a long-term effort by an organization to redesign the organization in order to achieve its objectives.

According to Gallup (2002), employee experience outcomes can be described as the journey in which an employee in an organization takes. The journey includes all the activities and interactions an employee made starting from the first day they came to the organization, up until their post-tenure. These interactions are very important aspect for the employee because it shape their perceptions of the organization, from their point of view. Moreover, it would impact their performance directly and the employer branding (Gallup, 2018). Similarly, Maylett and Wride (2017) also described employee experience outcomes as the overall sum of perceptions from employees regarding their interactions with the organization in which they are working for. Employee experience can lead to an overall positive outcome for the employees.

Due to the importance of employee experience, a number of researchers has sought to link his concept to several important organizational and individual outcome factors in the organization. For example, studies have a shown a relationship between organizational climate (Stone, Du &Gershon, 2007), Job satisfaction (Lavigna 2009) engagement (Cable, Gino &Staats, 2013) retention policy (Aarons & Sawitzky, 2006) , rewards (Khan, Shahid &Nawab, 2013), recognition and appreciation (Ajila & Abiloa , 2004) and employee performance. Yet, the issues of low employee performance are still a thing of concern to managers of all organizations including that of the oil and gas companies.

Thus , Ruchi & Surinder (2014) expressed that further understanding is needed on the variables that affect employee performance in the organization. However, onboarding practices issues have not been included among the observed influencing factors. Though employee experience is one of the most researched topic in the field of management, it has rarely been approached from on-boarding based perspective especially in the oil and gas companies in Port Harcourt, Rivers State Nigeria. To bridge this gap in literature, this paper examines how onboarding practices work to influence the experience the employees get in the oil and gas companies in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study captures the relationship between two major variables: Onboarding practices (predictor variable) and employee experience outcomes (criterion variable). Onboarding practices is operationalized as a unidimensional construct while employee experience outcomes is operationalized herein as comprising of three measures namely: employee commitment, employee engagement and employee confidence. The relationship is presented as a unidirectional one as it depicts onboarding practices as impacting employee experience outcomes in selected oil and gas firms in Port Harcourt, Nigeria. The

arrows depicted in the figure 1 indicate the flow and direction of effect while the connecting lines indicate corresponding measures.

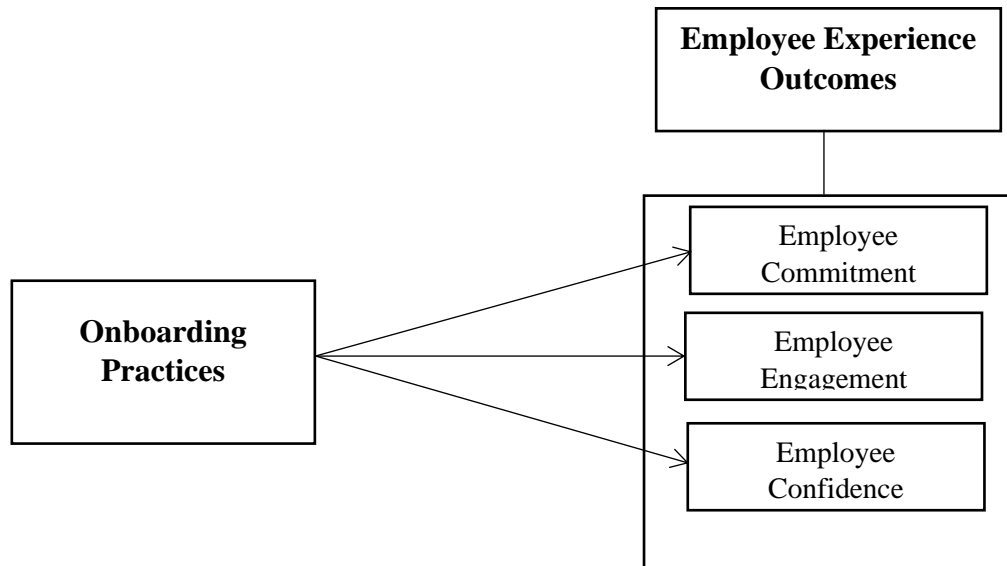


Figure 1: Conceptual framework for the relationship between Onboarding practices and employee experience outcomes.

Source: Researcher desk, (2023)

Purpose of the paper

The purpose of the paper is to investigate:

1. The relationship between onboarding practices and employee commitment in selected oil and gas firms in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria.
2. The relationship between onboarding practices and employee engagement in selected oil and gas firms in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria.
3. The relationship between onboarding practices and employee confidence in selected oil and gas firms in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria.

Research Question

1. What is the relationship between onboarding practices and employee commitment in selected oil and gas firms in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria?
2. What is the relationship between onboarding practices and employee engagement in selected oil and gas firms in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria?
3. What is the relationship between onboarding practices and employee confidence in selected oil and gas firms in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria?

II. LITERATURE VIEW

Theoretical foundation

Social Exchange Theory (SET)

This paper is premised on the social exchange theory. Social exchange theory was developed by Homans (1961) and later improved upon by Pfeffer (1982). The theory holds that human behaviour is social interactions that are hinged on the exchange of both tangible and intangible activities that occurs between individuals. The theory further posits that behaviour compliance of individuals is part of the exchange for something which is perceived to be contingent on the individual's behaviour or activities within them. The theory posits that the exchange of ideas and opinions between individuals in the organization creates the opportunity for the share of knowledge on issues relating to the work environment. Nunkoo (2016) opined that social exchange theory presents a stronger logical base to explain the concept of employee experience outcomes such as employee commitment, employee engagement, employee confidence etc.

Concept of On-Boarding

Onboarding which is also known as organizational socialization is the process of successfully integrating and acculturating new employees into the organization (Bauer, 2010). Begel and Simon (2008) also defined onboarding as the orientation process by which new hires adjust to and become effective within the organization. According to the Society for Human Resource Management, onboarding is the process by which new hires get acclimatized to all aspects of their jobs rapidly and easily and learn the knowledge, skill, attitude and behaviours required to function effectively within the organization. It is used to refer to the administrative work involved within setting an employee up in a new job or role.

It is the integration of new employee to become a highly productive member of the organization. Onboarding offers new employees with the basic background information they require to perform their jobs satisfactorily which is one element of the employer's new socialization process.

Concept of Employee Experience Outcomes

Abhari (2008) defined employee experience as what employees receive during their interactions with careers' elements (e.g. firms, supervisors, coworkers, customer, environment etc) that affect their cognition (rational acquisition) and affection (Internal and personal acquisition) and leads to a particular behaviour. Globoforce (2016) sees employee experience as a set of perceptions that employees have about their experiences at work in response to their interactions with the organization. Bersin et al (2017) views employee experience as the sum of perceptions employees have about their interactions with the organization in which they work.

Dimensions of Employee experience

Employee commitment

Employee commitment is one of the most commonly researched areas in industrial relations and organizational behaviour (Mowday, Steers, & Porter, 1979). Employee commitment is seen to be a key determining factor of organizational effectiveness and performance. It has been revealed by the studies that Employee commitment has the ability to envisage various organizational outcomes, such as improved job performance, lower turnover and withdrawal intentions, lower absenteeism rate, and better organizational citizenship behaviour (Brown,

Hillman, & Okun, 2012). In similar vein, Gutierrez et al (2012) pointed out that committed employees that are extremely motivated to give their time and energy to the achievement of organizational goals are gradually seen as the primary asset available to an organization.

The concept of employee commitment has been defined by Numerous Scholars (Meyer & Allen, 1991), but the common notion of all the definitions is that the Employee commitment is the emotional bond or attachment between the employees and their organizations. It is the strength of an individual's recognition with, and involvement in a certain organization which can be described by three factors: a strong belief and acceptance to the goals and values of the organization which is known as affective commitment, a readiness to exert significant effort on behalf of the organization, which is commonly known as normative commitment and finally a strong desire to remain employed in the organization, represented as continuance commitment.

Employee engagement

According to Bakker (2001) Employee engagement is a positive cum fulfilling work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigour, dedication and absorption. The concept of employee engagement is often defined as the willingness to go the extra miles. Engagement is an individual's purpose and focused energy, evident to others in the display of personal Initiative, adaptability, effort and persistence directed towards organizational goals. Guest (2009) explained the benefits of employee engagement as follows: Employees will be manifested in positive attitudes (for example job satisfaction, organizational commitment and identification with the organization) and behaviour (low labour turnover and absence and high citizenship behaviour) on the part of employees; and evidence of perception of trust.

Relationship between Onboarding and Employee experience outcomes

On-boarding is the process of learning, networking, resource allocating, goal setting and strategizing that ends with new hires quickly reaching maximum productivity (Bauer & Erdogan, 2011) Onboarding is a facilitator of employee experience. That is, through the process of onboarding employee acquire better and improve experience to function more effectively and more efficiently.

Employees who have been onboarded effectively are more likely to be productive sooner, as they understand their role, responsibilities and the organisation's culture and values. This can help reduce the learning curve and increase the employee's commitment, engagement and confidence. However, poor onboarding processes can have a negative effect on bottom line of the organization. Employees who have had a negative experience going through the onboarding process are very likely to leave the company's employment after a very short period of time.

We infer from the foregoing discussion that:

H01: There is no relationship between onboarding practices and employee commitment in selected oil and gas firms in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria.

H02: There is no relationship between onboarding practices and employee engagement in selected oil and gas firms in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria

H03: There is no relationship between onboarding practices and employee confidence in selected oil and gas firms in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria

III. METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a cross-sectional survey research design which is explanatory in nature to obtained responses from the selected oil and gas firms in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria. The investigation focused on a population of 440 employees from the four major oil and gas firms operating in River state, Nigeria. the Taro Yamane sample size derivation formula was used to determine the sample size of 210 staff in the oil and gas firms in Port Harcourt, Nigeria. Data for the study was generated using the structured questionnaire while the five (5) point Likert scale was used to measure the responses from the respondents. After data cleaning, 195 questionnaires were finally used for data analysis. The Reliability for the study was determines using the Cronbach alpha coefficient. Data was analyzed using mean and standard deviations for the descriptive statistics, while inferential statistics was carried out using the linear regression to determine the probability value and the t-statistic to test all the stated hypotheses at (0.05%) level of significance with the aid of Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS 25.0). Presented in table 1 is the result for the reliability test for the instruments adapted in the measurement of the variables.

Table 1: Cronbach alpha reliability test

Variables	Measures	No. of Items	Alpha Coefficients
Onboarding Practices		3	0.804
Employee experience outcomes	Employee Commitment	3	0.851
	Employee Engagement	3	0.849
	Employee Confidence	3	0.862

Source: Research Data, 2023

IV. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Univariate Result: The summary distribution for the data on the variables - onboarding practices and employee experience outcomes (employee commitment, employee engagement and employee confidence), presented in table 2-5.

Table 2: Univariate Analysis for Workplace Friendship

Constructs	Items	Mean	S.D
Onboarding Practices	My organization believes in conducting regular training for employees.	4.295	.9190
	My organization believes in introducing new hire to management executives in order to create awareness among new hire on the running of the organization.	4.176	.9014
	New hire are given the opportunity to move round the facility of the companies as a process of on boarding.	4.233	.9750

Source: SPSS Output, 2023.

The Table 2 above illustrates the distribution for the constructs of the study based on summaries obtained from their manifest properties. The distributions for the variable demonstrate evident levels of agreement to the properties and manifestations of the constructs; where mean scores (x) are observed to range mostly between $x = 3.0 - 4.0$, it is evident that workplace friendship being the predictor have a grand mean of ($x = 3.9511$). This shows onboarding practices is substantial and well manifested realities within the context of selected oil and gas firms in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Table 3: Univariate Analysis for Employee Commitment

Constructs	Items	Mean	S.D
Employee Commitment	My employees are affectively committed to their task in order to enhance on boarding practices in the organization.	4.114	.9057
	Employees are committed to their job role base on the gain they will receive from the organization	4.166	.9647
	Employees are committed to their task base on the effect of losing the job.	4.472	.8419

Source: SPSS Output, 2023.

The Table 3 above illustrates the distribution for the constructs of the study based on summaries obtained from their manifest properties. The distributions for the variable demonstrate evident levels of agreement to the properties and manifestations of the constructs; where mean scores (x) are observed to be $x = 4.0$. This shows employee commitment is substantial and well manifested realities as a measure of Employee Experience Outcomes within the context of selected oil and gas firms in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Table 4: Univariate Analysis for Employee Engagement

Constructs	Items	Mean	S.D
Employee Engagement	Employees are absorbed to their task as a result of their belief to the goals and vision of the organization	4.140	.8757
	My organization believes and reward employees who are engaged to their task	4.212	.8729
	Employee engagement is necessary in the actualization of the goals and vision of the organization.	4.000	1.0000

Source: SPSS Output, 2023

The Table 4 above illustrates the distribution for the constructs of the study based on summaries obtained from their manifest properties. The distributions for the variable demonstrate evident levels of agreement to the properties and manifestations of the constructs; where mean scores (x) are observed to be $x = 3.0$. This shows Employee Engagement is substantial and well

manifested realities as a measure of employee experience outcomes in oil and gas companies in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Table 5: Univariate Analysis for Employee Confidence

Constructs	Items	Mean	S.D
Employee Confidence	Employees are absorbed to their task as a result of their belief to the goals and vision of the organization	4.140	.8757
	My organization believes and reward employees who are engaged to their task	4.212	.8729
	Employee engagement is necessary in the actualization of the goals and vision of the organization.	4.000	1.0000

Source: SPSS Output, 2023

The Table 5 above illustrates the distribution for the constructs of the study based on summaries obtained from their manifest properties. The distributions for the variable demonstrate evident levels of agreement to the properties and manifestations of the constructs; where mean scores (x) are observed to be $x = 3.0$. This shows Employee Confidence is substantial and well manifested realities as a measure of employee experience outcomes in oil and gas companies in Rivers State, Nigeria.

Bivariate Analysis

The regression analysis was used to test the hypotheses at 95% level of confidence and a (0.05%) level of significance in order to draw conclusion and make generalization to the study population.

Table 6 Model Summary on Onboarding Practices and Employee Commitment

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.793 ^a	.630	.628	1.84087

a. Predictors: (Constant), Onboarding practices

Source: Survey, 2023

Table 6 above indicates the regression result with (R=0.793) showed that the latent variables (onboarding practices) has a strong influence on the manifest variable (employee commitment). The coefficient of determination (R^2 - 0.630) implies that the predictor variables explain 63.0% variance of employee commitment while the remaining 37.0% could be due to the effect of other factors that is not included in the study.

Table 7 Onboarding Practices and Employee Commitment Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.825	.331		8.541	.000
	Onboarding practices	.818	.037	.793	22.280	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Employee commitment

Source: Survey, 2023

H₀₁: There is no relationship between onboarding practices and employee commitment in oil and gas firms in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria.

Table 7 showed onboarding practices ($\beta=.793$) at significance level of ($P\text{-value } 0.000 < 0.05\%$) has a strong positive and significant relationship with employee commitment. Thus, the null hypothesis is hereby rejected. Therefore, the study concluded that there is a strong positive and significant relationship between onboarding practices and employee commitment in oil and gas firms in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria.

Table 8 Model Summary on Onboarding Practices and Employee Engagement Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.571 ^a	.326	.323	2.58130

a. Predictors: (Constant), Onboarding practices

Source: Survey, 2023

Table 8 above indicates the regression value of ($R=0.571$) showed that the latent variables (onboarding practices) has a moderate influence on the manifest variable (employee engagement). The coefficient of determination ($R^2= .326$) implies that the predictor variables explain 32.6% variance of employee engagement while the remaining 67.4% could be due to the effect of other factors that is not included in the study.

Table 9 Onboarding Practices and Employee Engagement Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	5.208	.464		11.228	.000
	Onboarding practices	.612	.051	.571	11.877	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Employee engagement

Source: Survey, 2023

H₀₂. There is no relationship between onboarding practices and employee engagement in oil and gas firms in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria

Table 9 showed onboarding practices ($\beta=.571$) at significance level of (P -value $0.000 < 0.05\%$) has a moderate positive and significant relationship with employee engagement. Thus, the null hypothesis is hereby rejected. Therefore, the study concluded that there is a moderate positive and significant relationship between onboarding practices and employee engagement in oil and gas firms in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria.

Table 10 Model Summary on Onboarding Practices and Employee Confidence
Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.483 ^a	.233	.231	3.19476

a. Predictors: (Constant), Onboarding practices

Source: Survey, 2023

Table 10 above indicates the regression value of ($R=0.483$) showed that the latent variables (onboarding practices) has a moderate influence on the manifest variable (employee confidence). The coefficient of determination (R^2 - .231) implies that the predictor variables explain 23.1% variance of employee confidence while the remaining 76.1% could be due to the effect of other factors that is not included in the study.

Table 11 Onboarding Practices and Employee Confidence
Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	4.676	.574		8.146	.000
	Onboarding practices	.601	.064	.483	9.429	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Employee confidence

Source: Survey, 2023

H₀₃ There is no relationship between onboarding practices and employee confidence in oil and gas firms in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria

Table 11 showed onboarding practices ($\beta=.483$) at significance level of (P -value $0.000 < 0.05\%$) has a moderate positive and significant relationship with employee confidence. Thus, the null hypothesis is hereby rejected. Therefore, the study concluded that there is a moderate positive and significant relationship between onboarding practices and employee confidence in oil and gas firms in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria.

V. Discussion of Findings

The relationship between onboarding practices and employee experience outcomes were tested using three hypotheses. The results revealed that there was a significant relationship in both variables. Onboarding practices has a strong influence on employee commitment, onboarding practice has a moderate influence on employee engagement, onboarding practices has a moderate influence on employee confidence in the oil and gas firms in Port Harcourt, Nigeria. The findings in line with Abubakar, Chauhan and Kura (2014) conclusion on perceived organisational socialization, organizational trust, perceived human resource management

practices and employee turnover among Registered Nurses in Nigerian public hospitals. The result indicated that perceived organisational politics was significantly and positively related to turnover intentions. The result also showed that both organizational trust and perceived human resource practices were significantly and negatively related to turnover intentions. Theoretical and practical implications of the results are discussed.

Referring to (LaShawn, 2007) research showed that effective onboarding programs can improve employee retention by 25%. Increasing in retention period means less people to leave the organization. Therefore, it will reduce cost of turnover and time in finding another new employee. However, proper onboarding makes employees feel valued and encourage them to grow knowledge and skills which may assist them to realize their full potential. The findings contradict the conclusions of Therese & Siby (2016) shows that there is no correlation between psychosocial mentoring and affective commitment. It also state that career mentoring and affective commitment is not correlated. In another study Silverthorne (2004) showed that workers identification with organizations was stronger when they experienced or shared in group activities and were members of various informal or formal associations

VI. Conclusion

This study finds that there is a significant relationship between on-boarding practices and employee experience outcomes in oil and gas companies in Rivers State, Nigeria. On-boarding practices was revealed to significantly correlate with the measures of employee experience outcomes. Drawing on the results of the empirical data and assertions of previous studies, as well as the review of literature on the variables; the study conclusively affirms on-boarding practices significantly influence the experience outcomes in the organizations. Its functions are core and imperative to organization's performance, growth and survival. This is as it is noted to drive the organizations builds its interactions with its employees. Therefore, the study concludes that, considering the acclaimed relevance of onboarding practices, with respect to experience outcomes, employers should wholeheartedly embrace onboarding practices in terms of job training, team introduction and facility tour in order to create awareness among new hire on the running of the organization

VII. Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the subsequent pointers were made:

- i. The managers in the oil and gas companies in Rivers State, Nigeria under study should recognize and encourage training as their core parameters to increase employee commitment, because empirical result showed that there is a strong influence in the results from the test of hypotheses in the study.
- ii. That management of oil and gas companies in Rivers State, Nigeria should engage introducing new hire to management executives in order to create awareness among new hire on the running of the organization.
- iii. The management of oil and gas companies in Rivers State, Nigeria under studied should make sure new hires are given the opportunity to move round the facility of the companies as a process of on boarding that will encourage the employees to be more productive on their job in the workplace.

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