



A Study On Recruitment, Onboarding, And Employee Engagement In Private Educational Institutions: An Internship- Based Empirical Study

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Abstract

Human Resource Management (HRM) plays a pivotal role in enhancing organizational effectiveness, particularly in knowledge-driven sectors such as education. This study examines recruitment, onboarding, and employee engagement practices in a private educational institution through an internship-based empirical approach. Using a descriptive research design and quantitative methodology, primary data were collected from 30 teaching and non-teaching employees through structured questionnaires. The findings reveal that while recruitment processes are moderately structured, the lack of digital tools affects efficiency. Onboarding practices are inconsistent, especially for non-teaching staff, and employee engagement initiatives lack continuity and strategic planning. The study highlights the need for digital HR integration, standardized onboarding procedures, and continuous engagement strategies. The research contributes to HRM literature in the education sector and offers practical recommendations for improving workforce management and institutional performance.

Keywords: Recruitment, Onboarding, Employee Engagement, HR Practices, Educational Institutions, Employee Satisfaction

1. Introduction

In the contemporary organizational landscape, human resources are increasingly recognized as a critical strategic asset that substantially contributes to organizational effectiveness and long-term sustainability. Within the context of educational institutions, the quality, competence, and commitment of human capital play a decisive role in determining academic excellence, institutional credibility, and competitive positioning.

Recruitment, onboarding, and employee engagement constitute three interdependent dimensions of human resource management that collectively influence employee experience and organizational performance. Recruitment focuses on the systematic identification and selection of suitably qualified individuals, onboarding facilitates their effective integration into the organizational culture and operational framework, while employee engagement fosters psychological attachment, motivation, and enhanced productivity among employees.

In recent years, the proliferation of digital technologies has significantly transformed HR practices, enabling greater efficiency, transparency, and data-driven decision-making. Despite these advancements, many private educational institutions continue to rely on conventional and manual HR systems, resulting in operational inefficiencies and inconsistencies in implementation. Against this backdrop, the present study seeks to critically examine recruitment, onboarding, and employee engagement practices through an internship-based empirical perspective, thereby contributing to bridging the gap between theoretical constructs and their practical application in organizational settings.

2. Literature Review

Human Resource Management (HRM) has increasingly evolved into a strategic function that contributes significantly to organizational effectiveness. Contemporary research emphasizes that practices such as recruitment, onboarding, and employee engagement are critical components of an integrated HR system that influences employee performance, satisfaction, and retention (Armstrong, 2020).

1. Recruitment Practices

Recruitment is widely regarded as the initial and most crucial stage of the employee lifecycle, as it determines the quality of human capital entering the organization. According to Dessler (2020), effective recruitment ensures the selection of candidates whose skills, competencies, and values align with organizational requirements, thereby enhancing productivity and reducing turnover.

With the advancement of technology, recruitment practices have shifted from traditional methods to digital platforms such as job portals, social media, and Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS). Parry and Tyson (2011) argue that e-recruitment improves efficiency, reduces hiring costs, and expands the talent pool. However, studies indicate that many organizations, particularly in the education sector, continue to rely on manual recruitment processes, resulting in delays and inefficiencies (Kumar & Bhatia, 2019).

Furthermore, recruitment effectiveness is closely associated with organizational outcomes, as poor hiring decisions can lead to increased employee turnover and reduced performance (Breugh, 2013). Thus, adopting structured and technology-driven recruitment systems is essential for organizational success.

2. Onboarding and Organizational Socialization

Onboarding, also referred to as organizational socialization, is a systematic process through which new employees acquire the knowledge, skills, and behaviors required to function effectively within an organization (Bauer, 2010). It plays a vital role in shaping employees' initial experiences and long-term commitment.

Research by Saks and Gruman (2011) highlights that structured onboarding programs enhance employee engagement, job satisfaction, and retention. Similarly, Bauer (2010) identifies four key elements of effective onboarding—compliance, clarification, culture, and connection—which collectively facilitate smooth employee integration.

Empirical studies further indicate that employees who undergo formal onboarding programs demonstrate higher levels of role clarity, confidence, and organizational commitment compared to those who experience informal induction (Frögéli et al., 2023). Conversely, the absence of structured onboarding can lead to confusion, stress, and early turnover (Ashforth et al., 2007).

Despite its importance, onboarding practices in many educational institutions remain informal and inconsistent, particularly for non-teaching staff, thereby affecting employee adjustment and performance (Sharma & Kaur, 2021).

3. Employee Engagement

Employee engagement has emerged as a key concept in HRM, reflecting the degree of emotional, cognitive, and behavioral involvement of employees in their work (Kahn, 1990). Engaged employees are more productive, innovative, and committed to organizational goals.

According to Saks (2006), employee engagement is influenced by factors such as job characteristics, organizational support, rewards, and leadership. Similarly, Bakker and Demerouti (2008), through the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) model, explain that engagement is driven by the availability of job resources such as support, autonomy, and development opportunities.

A systematic review by Kossyva et al. (2022) identifies leadership, organizational culture, and communication as key antecedents of employee engagement. Additionally, person–organization fit has been found to significantly influence engagement levels, as alignment between employee values and organizational culture enhances commitment and satisfaction (Keane et al., 2024).

However, research also indicates that engagement initiatives in many organizations are often event-based rather than continuous, limiting their long-term effectiveness (Anitha, 2014). In educational institutions, engagement practices are often irregular and lack structured feedback mechanisms, leading to lower engagement among non-teaching staff.

4. Integration of Recruitment, Onboarding, and Engagement

Recent literature emphasizes the interdependence of recruitment, onboarding, and employee engagement as part of a holistic HR framework. According to Armstrong (2020), effective recruitment lays the foundation for employee success, onboarding ensures smooth transition, and engagement sustains employee motivation and performance.

Poor recruitment decisions can negatively impact onboarding effectiveness and employee engagement, while inadequate onboarding can hinder employee adjustment and reduce engagement levels (Saks & Gruman, 2011). Therefore, organizations must adopt an integrated approach to HR practices to ensure consistency and alignment across the employee lifecycle.

Furthermore, the growing role of digital technologies and artificial intelligence in HRM has transformed traditional practices. AI-driven recruitment tools, virtual onboarding platforms, and engagement analytics are increasingly being used to enhance efficiency and employee experience (Upadhyay & Khandelwal, 2018). However, their adoption remains limited in traditional sectors such as education.

5. Research Gap

Despite extensive research on individual HR functions, limited studies have examined the combined impact of recruitment, onboarding, and employee engagement within private educational institutions. Most existing literature focuses on corporate sectors, leaving a gap in understanding HR practices in academic environments.

Additionally, there is a lack of empirical studies that integrate theoretical concepts with practical exposure. This study addresses these gaps by providing an internship-based analysis of HR practices, thereby contributing to both academic literature and practical HR management.

3. Research Methodology

The present study employs a descriptive-analytical research design within a quantitative research framework to systematically examine the recruitment, onboarding, and employee engagement practices in the selected institution. A sample of 30 respondents, comprising both teaching and non-teaching staff, was selected using the convenience sampling technique, considering accessibility and time constraints.

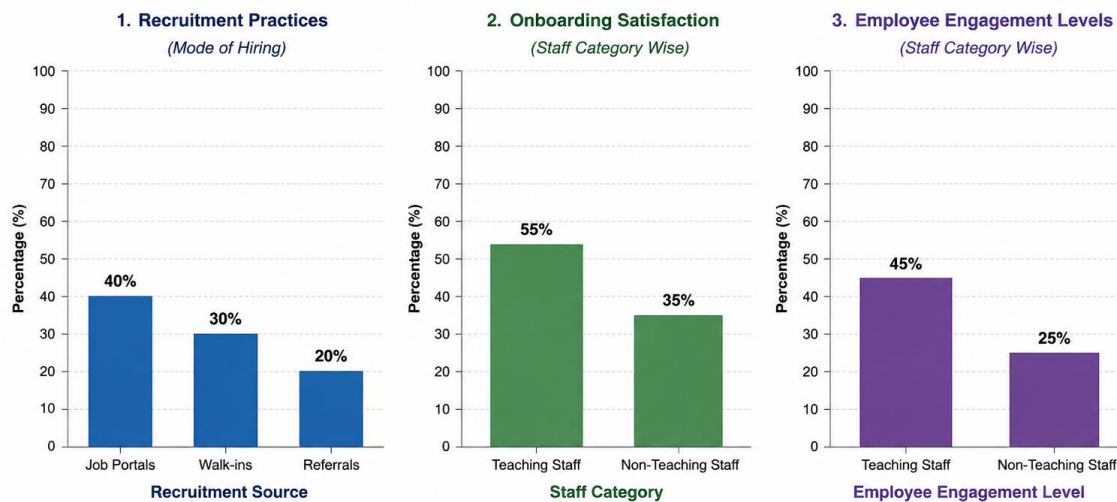
Primary data for the study were collected through structured questionnaires, supplemented by informal interviews and direct observation, to obtain comprehensive insights into employee perceptions and organizational practices. In addition, secondary data were gathered from relevant academic sources, including books, research journals, and scholarly publications, to support and contextualize the findings.

The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques, such as percentage analysis, and were presented through tables and graphical representations to facilitate clarity and interpretation. Throughout the research process, ethical considerations were strictly adhered to, ensuring confidentiality of respondents, voluntary participation, and the use of data solely for academic purposes.

4. Results and Analysis

The analysis of recruitment practices indicates that approximately 40% of hiring is conducted through online job portals, followed by 30% through walk-in interviews and 20% via employee referrals. These findings suggest a continued reliance on conventional recruitment methods, with limited integration of advanced digital recruitment systems.

Analysis of Recruitment, Onboarding, and Employee Engagement



Key Insights

- Recruitment is largely dependent on traditional methods, with the highest hiring through job portals (40%).
- Onboarding satisfaction is higher among teaching staff (55%) compared to non-teaching staff (35%), indicating inconsistency in onboarding practices.
- Employee engagement activities are limited and irregular, with non-teaching staff reporting lower engagement levels (25%).

The results pertaining to onboarding reveal a disparity in employee experiences across categories. Approximately 55% of teaching staff reported satisfaction with the onboarding process, whereas only 35% of non-teaching staff expressed similar levels of satisfaction. This variation highlights a lack of uniformity and standardization in onboarding practices within the institution.

Furthermore, the findings related to employee engagement suggest that engagement initiatives are relatively limited in scope and irregular in implementation. Non-teaching staff, in particular, reported comparatively lower levels of engagement, indicating potential gaps in inclusivity and consistency of engagement strategies.

5. Discussion

The present study provides important insights into the effectiveness of recruitment, onboarding, and employee engagement practices within a private educational institution. The findings suggest that while these HR functions are operational, they lack strategic integration and standardization, thereby limiting their overall effectiveness.

The recruitment analysis indicates a predominant reliance on traditional methods such as job portals, walk-ins, and employee referrals. Although job portals constitute a significant proportion of hiring, the absence of advanced digital recruitment tools such as Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS) reflects limited technological adoption. This finding aligns with existing literature, which highlights that educational institutions often lag behind corporate sectors in adopting digital HR practices. Consequently, inefficiencies such as delays in hiring and manual record management persist.

The onboarding process demonstrates noticeable disparities between teaching and non-teaching staff. Teaching staff reported relatively higher satisfaction levels, whereas non-teaching staff experienced less structured onboarding. This inconsistency suggests the absence of a standardized onboarding framework across employee categories. From a theoretical perspective, this finding reinforces the importance of structured onboarding in enhancing role clarity, organizational socialization, and early employee engagement. The lack of uniformity may contribute to reduced employee confidence and delayed productivity, particularly among non-teaching personnel.

Employee engagement findings reveal that engagement initiatives are limited in frequency and lack strategic continuity. While activities such as meetings and cultural events are conducted, they appear to be sporadic rather than systematically planned. The comparatively lower engagement levels among non-teaching staff further highlight issues related to inclusivity and recognition. These findings are consistent with prior research emphasizing that engagement must be continuous and supported by feedback mechanisms, leadership involvement, and employee recognition systems.

Overall, the study underscores the interdependence of recruitment, onboarding, and employee engagement. Inefficiencies in one function are likely to influence the effectiveness of the others, thereby affecting overall employee satisfaction and organizational performance.

6. Findings

The analysis of the study reveals several key findings related to recruitment, onboarding, and employee engagement practices. The recruitment process is moderately structured, with approximately 40% of hiring conducted through job portals, 30% through walk-in interviews, and 20% through employee referrals; however, it remains largely manual, indicating limited adoption of digital recruitment technologies. In terms of onboarding effectiveness, a significant disparity is observed between employee categories, as around 55% of teaching staff reported satisfaction with the onboarding process compared to only 35% of non-teaching staff, highlighting the absence of standardized onboarding procedures. Furthermore, employee engagement initiatives are present but irregular and limited in scope, with non-teaching staff reporting comparatively lower engagement levels, suggesting gaps in inclusivity and consistency. As a result, teaching staff generally exhibit higher levels of overall satisfaction due to more effective onboarding and engagement practices, whereas non-teaching staff experience challenges related to role clarity and recognition. Overall, the findings underscore a critical need for HR modernization, particularly through the integration of digital recruitment tools, the implementation of structured onboarding frameworks, and the development of continuous and inclusive employee engagement strategies to enhance overall HR effectiveness.

7. Conclusion

In conclusion, the present study highlights the critical role of recruitment, onboarding, and employee engagement in shaping employee experience and organizational effectiveness within private educational institutions. The findings indicate that while these HR practices are in place, they lack standardization, consistency, and technological integration. Recruitment processes, although moderately structured, remain largely manual, thereby limiting efficiency. Onboarding practices show significant variation between teaching and non-teaching staff, leading to disparities in role clarity and early adjustment. Similarly, employee engagement initiatives are found to be irregular and insufficiently inclusive, resulting in lower engagement levels among certain employee groups. Overall, the study underscores the need for a more systematic and strategic approach to HR management, emphasizing digital integration, structured onboarding frameworks, and continuous engagement practices. Implementing these improvements can enhance employee satisfaction, retention, and overall institutional performance, thereby contributing to long-term organizational success.

8. Limitations

The present study is subject to certain limitations that must be considered while interpreting the findings. Firstly, the study is based on a relatively small sample size of 30 respondents, which may limit the generalizability of the results. Secondly, the research is confined to a single private educational institution, and therefore the findings may not be representative of HR practices across other institutions or sectors. Additionally, the study was conducted during a short-term internship period, restricting the scope for in-depth and longitudinal analysis of HR outcomes. The reliance on primary data collected through

questionnaires and interviews may also introduce response bias, as participants might have provided socially desirable answers. Furthermore, limited access to confidential organizational data constrained the depth of analysis, particularly in relation to HR metrics such as attrition rates and performance outcomes. Lastly, the study focuses only on recruitment, onboarding, and employee engagement, excluding other important HR functions such as training, compensation, and performance appraisal, which may also influence employee satisfaction and organizational effectiveness.

9. References

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