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A Study on Time to Proficiency of New Hires During Onboarding with Reference to Consultancy Service Companies

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ABSTRACT
The time-to-proficiency of new hires is examined in this study, with an emphasis on how onboarding procedures affect worker productivity and adaptability. The study examines data from particular client organizations using statistical tools and descriptive research. Results indicate that mentorship, role clarity, structured onboarding, and prompt support all contribute to a shorter time to proficiency for new hires. Obstacles in remote onboarding and uneven follow-up were among the difficulties identified. To enhance results, the study suggests using digital training resources, standardized onboarding checklists, and frequent feedback. By improving workforce performance and onboarding tactics, these insights hope to help organizations increase employee retention and foster organizational expansion.

Keyword: Time to proficiency, new hires, Onboarding procedures, Worker's productivity, Mentorship

1. INTRODUCTION

In today's fast-paced workplace, time-to-proficiency is an essential metric that shows how quickly new hires meet performance standards. Junior positions in fields like IT could take three to six months, while specialized positions could take up to twelve months. This timeline is greatly impacted by elements like mentorship, structured onboarding, role clarity, and access to training resources. Through early engagement, digital onboarding, and clear role alignment, evolving HR practices seek to lower this learning curve. This study investigates how businesses can improve long-term organizational effectiveness and employee proficiency by combining inclusive work practices, innovation, and high-quality education

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To know the various factors that influences time to proficiency at work of new hires.
2. To study the influence of training and development programs on speeding up new hires time to proficiency during onboarding.
3. To identify how work place practices during onboarding improve new hires performance and adaption. To analyze the impact of advanced technologies on faster skill development of new employees.

3. SCOPE FOR THE STUDY

Provides a better understanding of time-to-proficiency trends among new hires, which can be used for benchmarking in future onboarding projects. Understand the existing onboarding processes followed by

the company. Analyze how quickly new employees adapt to their roles and responsibilities.
Encourages continuous improvement through feedback mechanisms, which can be refined and reused in future HR development initiatives. Contributes to academic and professional literature, serving as a reference for future research in onboarding and employee integration.

4. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Cheikh-Ammar & Roy (2024): Employee competency during onboarding improves with strong knowledge-sharing channels and culture, supported by structural equation modelling on 3,652 public employees.

Patel & García (2024): SDG-based onboarding using microlearning and peer coaching reduced proficiency time by 25% and improved retention in service sector new hires.

Smith & Lee (2023): AI and gamified onboarding in IT firms cut proficiency time by 30%, showing tech boosts efficiency when paired with personalized mentoring.

5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Meaning:

According to Clifford Woody, research involves defining problems, forming hypotheses, collecting and analyzing data, drawing conclusions, and testing them.

Research Design:

A structured plan guiding how a study is conducted to ensure valid results; it includes methodology, sampling, and analysis.

Source of Data:

Primary data was collected via a structured questionnaire; secondary data came from company records and online sources.

Sampling Technique:

Non-probability sampling was used, specifically convenience sampling for easy access to participants.

Method of Sampling:

Convenience sampling was applied, selecting participants who were easily reachable.

Sampling Unit:

Descriptive research design was used to examine system characteristics and effectiveness.

Sample Size:

The study surveyed 151 respondents.

Structured Questionnaire:

Consisted of 24 questions—5 demographic and others using Likert scale, ranking, and yes/no formats.

6. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Table 1: Demographic profile of investors

Categories	Sub Categories	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Age	<25	31	21
	26 - 30	57	38
	31 - 35	41	27
	36 - 40	14	9
	>40	8	5

Gender	Male	100	66
	Female	51	34
Experience	0 – 2 Years	33	22
	3 – 5 Years	78	52
	>5 Years	40	26
Level of Salary	Below 20000	33	22
	20000 - 40000	77	51
	Above 40000	41	27
Educational Qualification	UG	77	51
	PG	74	49
TOTAL		151	100

Source: Author generated

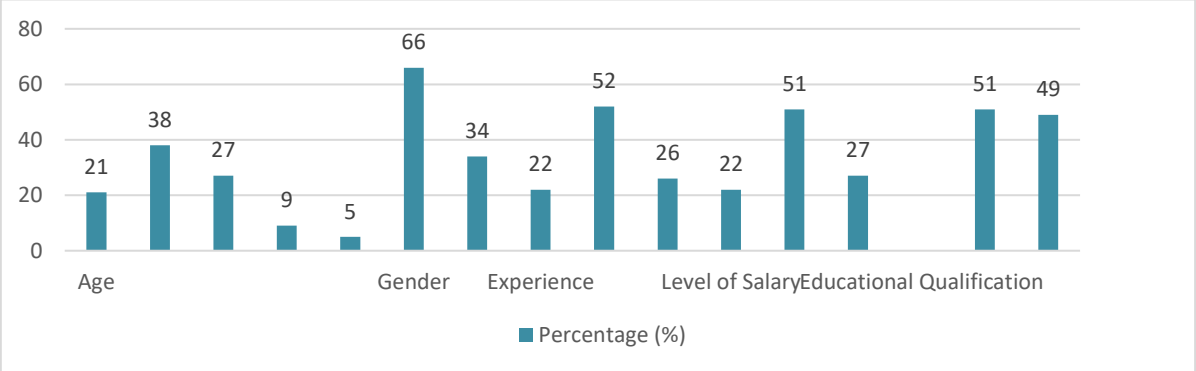
7. FINDINGS

From the age category, it is found that 21% of the respondents come under the age of below 25, 65% of the respondents come under the age group of 26 – 35, 9% of the respondents come under the age group of 36 – 40, and 5% of the respondents come under the age group above 40. From the gender category, it is found that 66% of the respondents are male and 34% of the respondents are female. From the educational qualification, it is found that 51% of the respondents have completed UG and 49% of the respondents have completed PG. From the level of experience, it is found that 22% of the respondents have 0 – 2 years of experience, 52% have 3 – 5 years of experience, and 26% have more than 5 years of experience. From the level of salary, it is found that 22% of the respondents earn below ₹20,000, 51% earn between ₹20,000 – ₹40,000, and 27% earn above ₹40,000.

INFERENCE:

- The majority of the respondents are in the age group of 26 – 30 (38%). The majority of the respondents are Male (66%).
- The majority of the respondents have completed UG (51%).
- The majority of the respondents have 3 – 5 years of experience (52%).
- The majority of the respondents earn a salary between ₹20,000 – ₹40,000 (51%).

Figure 1: Demographic profile of respondents



Source: Author generated

8. KRUSKAL WALLIS H TEST

Null Hypothesis (H_0): There is no statistically significant difference in the perceived effectiveness of cutting-edge tools and resources to support the learning process during onboarding across different salary groups.

Alternative Hypothesis (H_1): There is a statistically significant difference in the perceived effectiveness of cutting-edge tools and resources to support the learning process during onboarding across different salary groups.

Table 2. KRUSKAL WALLIS H TEST

Test Statistics	
	2.Cutting-edge tools and resources to support learning process during onboarding.
Kruskal-Wallis H	.108
df	2
Asymp. Sig.	.947
a. Kruskal Wallis Test	
b. Grouping Variable: SALARY (IN RUPEES)	

Source: Author generated

INTERPRETATION:

The Kruskal-Wallis test results (H=.108, p=.947) indicate no statistically significant difference in perceived effectiveness of cutting-edge onboarding tools across salary groups (below ₹20k, ₹20k-40k, above ₹40k). The similar mean ranks (74.59–77.62) suggest that salary levels do not influence employees' ratings of onboarding resources

ONE-SAMPLE KOLMOGOROV-SMIRNOV (K-S) TEST:

Null Hypothesis (H_0):

The structured curriculum follows the specified distribution. **Alternative Hypothesis (H_1):**

The structured curriculum does not follow the specified distribution.

Table 3. K S test

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test				
			The structured curriculum during Onboarding process supported faster skill Acquisition and enhance proficiency in roles.	AGE (IN YEARS)
N			630	630
Normal Parameters	Mean		4.35	2.42
	Std. Deviation		.639	1.087
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute		.279	.228
	Positive		.274	.228
	Negative		-.279	-.144
Test Statistic			.279	.228
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)[c]			.000	.000
Monte Carlo Sig. (2-tailed) d	Sig.		.000	.000
	99% Confidence Interval	Lower Bound	.000	.000
		Upper Bound	.000	.000
a. Test distribution is Normal.				
b. Calculated from data.				
c. Lilliefors Significance Correction.				
d. Lilliefors' method based on 10000 Monte Carlo samples with starting seed 2000000.				

Source: Author generated

INTERPRETATION:

Significant Deviation from Normality (p = 0.000): Both variables (structured curriculum support and age) show $p < 0.05$, rejecting the null hypothesis. Test Statistic (D = 0.279 & 0.228): The large extreme differences (0.279 and 0.228) indicate substantial divergence from normality, especially for the structured curriculum variable.

REGRESSION:

Null Hypothesis (H_0): There is no significant relationship between the onboarding practices (independent variables) and the time-to-proficiency (dependent variable).

Alternative Hypothesis (H_1): There is a significant relationship between the onboarding practices and time to proficiency, indicating that onboarding practices influence time-to- proficiency.

Table 4. REGRESSION

Model Summary									
ɔde l	R	R Square	djusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.052[a]	.003	.000	.474	.003	.862	2	627	.423

a. Predictors: (Constant), 3. The organization demonstrated a commitment to adopt new practices to streamline the onboarding process., 2. Cutting-edge tools and resources to support learning process during onboarding.

Source: Author generated

ANOVA[a]						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	.388	2	.194	.862	.423[b]
	Residual	140.920	627	.225		
	Total	141.308	629			

a. Dependent Variable: GENDER

b. Predictors: (Constant), 3. The organization demonstrated a commitment to adopt new practices to streamline the onboarding process., 2. Cutting-edge tools and resources to support learning process during onboarding.

Source: Author generated

9. INTERPRETATION

The regression model is not statistically significant (F=0.862, p=.423), with predictors (cutting-edge tools and organizational commitment) explaining near-zero variance (R^2=.003) in gender differences. Neither tool adoption (β=.060, p=.191) nor organizational practices (β=-.034, p=.458) showed meaningful influence on the dependent variable.

10. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- The majority of the respondents are in the age group of 26 – 30 (38%).
- The majority of the respondents are Male (66%).
- The majority of the respondents have completed UG (51%).
- The majority of the respondents have 3 – 5 years of experience (52%).

- The majority of the respondents earn a salary between ₹20,000 – ₹40,000 (51%).
- The Kruskal-Wallis test results (H=.108, p=.947) indicate no statistically significant difference in perceived effectiveness of cutting-edge onboarding tools across salary groups (below ₹20k, ₹20k-40k, above ₹40k). The similar mean ranks (74.59–77.62) suggest that salary levels do not influence employees' ratings of onboarding resources.
- Significant Deviation from Normality (p = 0.000): Both variables (structured curriculum support and age) show p < 0.05, rejecting the null hypothesis. Test Statistic (D = 0.279 & 0.228): The large extreme differences (0.279 and 0.228) indicate substantial divergence from normality, especially for the structured curriculum variable.
- The regression model is not statistically significant (F=0.862, p=.423), with predictors (cutting- edge tools and organizational commitment) explaining near-zero variance (R^2=.003) in gender differences. Neither tool adoption (β=.060, p=.191) nor organizational practices (β=-.034, p=.458) showed meaningful influence on the dependent variable.

11. SUGGESTIONS

- Implement a standardized onboarding process across all salary groups, as salary does not impact perceived effectiveness.
- Design flexible onboarding curricula to suit different age groups, especially the dominant 26–30 age range.
- Adopt a universal approach rather than gender-specific onboarding, as gender differences show no significant influence.
- Include skill-bridging modules for UG-qualified employees to support diverse educational backgrounds.
- Focus on experiential onboarding for mid-experienced (3–5 years) employees to enhance engagement and retention.

12. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the study reveals that while salary and gender do not significantly influence perceptions of onboarding effectiveness, organizations should still tailor their onboarding strategies to meet the needs of diverse employee groups. The variation in perceptions across age and education levels suggests the importance of a flexible and engaging onboarding curriculum. With most respondents aged 26–30 and possessing 3–5 years of experience, onboarding programs should focus on career development, role clarity, and integration into the organizational culture. For undergraduate-level employees, incorporating basic skill-building modules can enhance readiness and performance.

Although predictive models showed limited influence, real-time feedback and adaptive practices can improve onboarding outcomes. A standardized yet inclusive approach will ensure better engagement, satisfaction, and retention among employees across all segments.

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