ONBOARDING IN RECRUITMENT OF THE MODERN WORKPLACE: A LITERATURE REVIEW

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Abstract

This research investigates the strategic role of onboarding as part of modern recruitment and employee integration practices. Utilizing a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach, the research examines between 50 and 15 peer-reviewed publications selected and released between 2020 and 2025 in order to pinpoint innovations, advantages, and alignment with current HR trends about onboarding. As described in most of the analyzed research, the results confirm a five-stage theoretical framework of onboarding, preboarding, orientation, integration, execution, and delivering results. Furthermore, the study backs up the growing idea that onboarding is a strategy for human resources as well as a tool for sustainability and digital transformation, especially when it comes to the usage of remote onboarding technologies and paperless systems. Quantitatively, the results show that 86.7% (13 of 15) of the journals directly address onboarding in the context of the modern work environment. Improved role clarity, early-stage confidence, social integration, a quicker time to productivity, and support for Green HRM are among the fundamental advantages that are highlighted across the literature. The study solely looks at onboarding in the early phases of recruitment and is restricted for new hires than about employee's long-term retention. Future studies could investigate empirical findings from surveys or interviews, look at onboarding procedures in certain sectors, and assess how they affect long-term results like job satisfaction and retention. All things considered, onboarding is a game-changing procedure for creating inclusive and long-lasting workforces.

Keywords: Onboarding, Recruitment, Human Resources.

I. Introduction

In the fast-paced workplace, HRM plays a crucial role in recruiting, conserving, and nurturing talent. The expectations and experiences of new employees have been dramatically changed by the rise of generational diversity, hybrid work arrangements, and the quick pace of technological progress. Hence, modern HR practices must consider inclusivity, sustainability, and employee well-being principles alongside efficiency and productivity demands (De Stefano et al., 2023; Soekotjo et al., 2025).

Recruitment, which is the process by which companies locate and hire human capital, is one of the most important entry points in HRM. Recruitment has long been seen as a strategic role, but its scope is shifting beyond hiring to include making sure that chosen applicants are successfully integrated into the organization's culture and operations. This shift emphasizes the necessity of viewing onboarding as a crucial component of the extended recruitment pipeline (Burhanuddin, 2025a). In this sense, onboarding is not just orientation but rather a planned and strategic procedure to promote employee engagement, performance, and role clarity right from the start.

However, this shift raises a number of research concerns that have not been adequately addressed: How is onboarding designed to aid new employees' early- stage adaptation in the modern work environment? What innovations in onboarding are being implemented to meet the needs of new hires, particularly in hybrid, remote, or digital-first organizations? Existing studies tend to generalize onboarding as a tool for long-term retention, while ignoring its immediate role in facilitating the first days, weeks, and months of employee integration (Didion et al., 2024a; Rahmah & Ginting, 2025a). Additionally, there is a lack of discussion about how onboarding responds to today's technological, social, and environmental changes.

Considering these gaps, the current study seeks to undertake a systematic literature review (SLR) on onboarding practices and their particular application to new employee integration in the context of contemporary recruiting. The goals are to synthesize best practices, examine how onboarding contributes to early adjustment, and pinpoint creative approaches that foster workplace adaptation in digitally changing environments. In contrast to earlier research that prioritized long-term retention or engagement, this study specifically looks at the onboarding experience of new hires and the way that onboarding strategies have changed to keep up with the demands of the contemporary workplace.

II. Literature Review

2.1. Recruitment

Recruitment is an important process in human resource management (HRM) that aims to attract and select the right individuals for a job position. According to Werther & Davis (1996), recruitment is "the process of finding and attracting capable applicants for employment." Meanwhile, Mathis & Jackson (2006) define recruitment as the process of obtaining a number of qualified candidates from which the best applicants can be selected.

In a more recent context, Burhanuddin (2025) defines recruitment as a strategic process in HR management that not only aims to meet workforce needs, but also integrates the principles of sustainability and digitalization to create efficiency and positive social impact in the recruitment process. This definition expands the classic view to include dimensions of social responsibility and environmental efficiency.

In general, the stages of recruitment include:

1.   Labor needs planning (job analysis and manpower planning),

2.   Posting job advertisements or utilizing internal and external networks,

3.   File screening (CV screening),

4.   Initial interview by HRD,

5.   Psychological and personality tests,

6.   User or direct supervisor interview,

7.   Medical check-up,

8.   Provision of a job offer letter (offering letter) (Nelson et al., 2022).

The recruitment stage ends with the onboarding process, which is now seen as an integral and strategic part of the talent acquisition process.

2.2. Onboarding

Onboarding itself is the process of integration and adaptation for new employees so that they can effectively carry out their roles and responsibilities in the organization. Historically, the term onboarding became popular in the 1970s as attention to employee retention and adjustment increased. Bauer et al. (2021) stated onboarding as "a mechanism through which new employees acquire the necessary knowledge, skills, and behaviors to become effective organizational members."

Dickson & Isaiah (2024) define onboarding as a social and structural process that helps new individuals adjust thoroughly to the job and organizational culture. According to Rahmah & Ginting (2025), onboarding is a systematic and progressive process in five main stages:

1.   Preboarding (preparation before the first day),

2.   Orientation (introduction to the company and work system),

3.   Integration (team engagement and social adjustment),

4.   Execution (reinforcement through training and real tasks),

5.   Delivering Results (initial assessment of employee contribution).

An important addition comes from Burhanuddin (2025), who states that onboarding in the modern era has evolved into a sustainability strategy through digitization. This practice

includes the use of digital documents, online-based training, and the reduction of energy
and paper consumption-all in support of green HRM (Green Human Resource
Management) initiatives.

Onboarding provides significant strategic benefits to both the new employee and the
organization. Individually, onboarding serves as an initial adjustment process that helps
employees understand their roles, responsibilities, organizational culture and work
expectations from day one. This process directly increases role clarity, strengthens self-
efficacy, and encourages confidence and readiness to carry out tasks (Rahmah & Ginting,
2025).

In addition, well-designed onboarding can strengthen social integration, encourage healthy
team interactions, and create emotional attachments between employees and the
organization. This is important for establishing a sense of belonging and increasing work
motivation from the beginning of the adaptation period (Dickson & Isaiah, 2024; Jeske &
Olson, 2022).

2.3. Conceptual Framework

The problem's background, prior research, and associated theories can be used to explain the
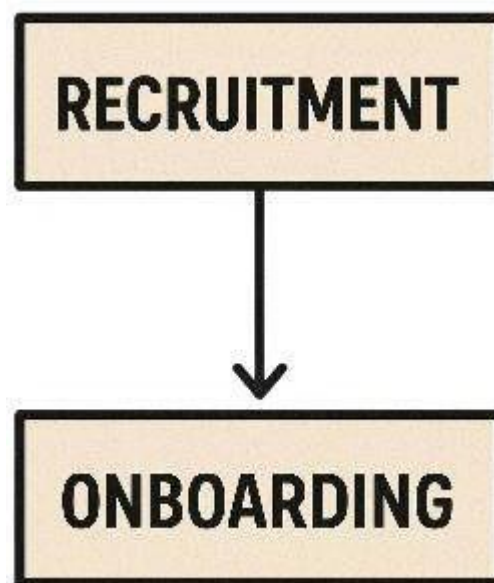research's frame of mind in the picture below:

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

III. Methodology

This research is a qualitative study that uses the Systematic Literature Review (SLR)
approach. SLR methodology was used because the approach has the ability to synthesize,
appraise, and interpret all research concerning a specified question or topic in a methodical
and transparent manner (Kitchenham & Charters, 2007). The approach is appropriate for

literature research for identifying trends, best practices, and research gaps in available research (Snyder, 2019).

SLR is conducted by following systematic steps, namely: (1) formulating the research question; (2) articulating inclusion and exclusion criteria; (3) conducting literature search in selected databases; (4) screening and quality appraisal of articles; (5) data extraction and synthesis; and (6) reporting findings narratively and thematically (Okoli & Schabram, 2010).

Data sources utilized in this study were gathered from various scientific databases like Google Scholar, Scopus, SINTA, Science Direct, SpringerLink, and ResearchGate. Literature searching was conducted by utilizing the keywords "Recruitment," "Onboarding," "Employee Onboarding," and "Employee Orientation." These keywords were utilized to accommodate the variation in terms used in onboarding studies and new employee integration processes.

From the initial search results, there were more than 50 scientific articles. Through the process of inclusion and exclusion criteria, 15 main articles were chosen that were relevant and met the criteria for further examination.

Inclusion criteria:

1. Journals or articles discussing new employee onboarding practices within the scope of job recruitment.

2. Scientific journals for the period 2020–2025.

3. Research in English or Indonesian.

4. Full-text articles.

a. Focus on onboarding in the modern work environment context (e.g., remote/hybrid onboarding, HR technology, digitalization, new workplace culture).

Exclusion criteria:

1. Articles that deal with recruitment alone without discussing the onboarding process.

2. Opinion pieces, editorials, news, blogs, or non-academic literature.

3. Studies that are not in full-text.

4. Articles taking an educational context (e.g., student onboarding) or non-work onboarding.

5. Duplicates of the same study in different databases.

Through this approach, the study aims to provide a holistic view of onboarding utilization within the recruitment process and onboarding innovations in the contemporary work environment.

5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Result

Fifteen peer-reviewed journal papers published between 2020 and 2025 that expressly address onboarding as a component of the recruiting process particularly aimed at new hires in contemporary organizational settings were examined in this systematic literature review. Using inclusion criteria including full-text availability, publication within the last five years, English or Indonesian content, and relevance to employee onboarding, these articles were chosen through an open and thorough selection procedure. Reputable academic

resources such as Google Scholar, Scopus, SINTA, ScienceDirect, Springer, and ResearchGate were used to source the papers.

According to the analysis, onboarding is no longer viewed as a stand-alone administrative procedure but rather has developed into a strategic tool that is intimately related to hiring, organizational adaption, and digital transformation in the contemporary workplace. This is the whole outcome of the Systematic Literature Review, which chose 15 publications out of over 50 research articles:

Table 1. System Literature Review

Research Title	Authors (Year)	Positive Impact	Suggestions for Future Research	Research Method	Type of Onboarding Innovation
The Impact Of Artificial Intelligence On Recruitment Efficiency And Onboarding Effectiveness	Pooja Hukkeri, Sanjivkumar Pol (2025)	Automation in onboarding: CV parsing, chatbots, personalized training—enhances efficiency and employee experience.	Further exploration of AI integration in onboarding across various sectors and organizational scales.	Qualitative - Case Study	AI-based Automation
Evaluating Employee	Arrizqiya Auliaur	Strong influence	Longitudinal study	Quantitative -	Evaluation Framework

Onboarding Program in a Travel Technology Company	Rahmah, Henndy Ginting (2025)	on role clarity, social integration, and self-efficacy among new hires.	recommended to examine onboarding's long-term impact on retention and performance.	Survey	
Towards a Gamification Solution for Enhancing Employee Onboarding Experience	Ghadi Shaheen, Imen Dakhli, Mohammed Al-Ateeqi, Manar Al-Shammari (2025)	Increases engagement, learning motivation, and social bonding among new employees.	Effectiveness of gamification in various industries and cultural contexts	Qualitative - Design-based Research	Gamification

			should be tested.		
Virtual Onboarding Goes Green	Burhanuddin (2025)	Improves employee engagement, environmental awareness, and operational efficiency.	Development of measurement standards and exploration of onboarding in diverse cultural contexts is needed.	Qualitative - Narrative	Green Virtual Onboarding
The Onboardin	Ory Pinco,	Identifies hybrid	Further exploration	Literature Review	Hybrid Onboarding

g Process: A Review	Irina Iulia Salanta, Ioana Natalia Beleiu, Emil Lucian Crisan (2024)	onboarding (on-site and remote) practices in response to digitalizati on.	of AI, VR, and metaverse application s in onboardin g is recommen ded.		
Mapping the Organizati onal Socializatio n and Onboardin g Literature	Eva Didion, Wendy Green, Haoran Zhang, George K. Georgiou (2024)	Onboardin g contributes to job satisfaction , retention, and organizatio nal identificati on.	Explore AI-based onboardin g and technologic al transforma tion in the post-pandemic work era.	Systemati c Literatur e Review	AI/VR-driven Integration

Social Impact of Recruitmen t and Selection Strategies in Fostering an Inclusive Onboardin g Process	Fernando A. Romana, Carlos G. Gestoso, António M. V. dos Santos (2024)	Strengthen s inclusion, sense of belonging, and equal access to informatio n.	Further study on inclusive onboardin g for gender and disability groups is needed.	Qualitati ve - Case Study	Inclusive Onboarding
Onboardin g Handbook: An Indispensa ble Tool for Onboardin	Teresa Godinho, Isabel Pinto Reis, Rui Carvalho, Filipa	Provides structured learning and job expectation s clearly, reducing	Study comparing traditional vs. AI-based interactive handbooks	Mixed Methods	Handbook as Structured Learning Tool

g Processes	Martinho (2023)	initial anxiety.	is suggested.		
Designing Talent Acquisition and Talent Onboarding in Electronics Companies	Alden Nelson, Yohana Elok Suminar, Mochammad Djatmiko (2022)	Helps talented employees feel comfortable and motivated to grow.	Quantitative studies on the link between talent onboarding and employee loyalty is needed.	Qualitative - Design Approach	Talent-specific Onboarding
Onboarding New Hires: Recognising Mutual Learning Opportunities	Debora Jeske, Deborah Olson (2022)	Encourages mutual learning between new employees and organizations.	Further exploration of knowledge-sharing-based onboarding is suggested.	Qualitative - Literature Review	Mutual Learning Orientation
Onboarding During COVID-19: Create Structure, Connect People, and Continue Adapting	Charles P.R. Scott, Tessly A. Dieguez, Pratibha Deepak, Siqi Gu, Jessica L. Wildman (2022)	Accelerates integration and builds social connectivity in remote onboarding.	Comparison of emergency vs. hybrid onboarding post-pandemic is advised.	Qualitative - Case Study	Remote/Hybrid Adaptation
Onboarding Effect on Employee Creativity: The Moderating Role of Psychological	Kalaa Chenji, Raghavendra Sode (Chenji & Raghavendra, 2021)	Fosters creativity through role clarity and psychological empowerment.	Explore empowerment-based onboarding in creative industries.	Quantitative - Survey	Creativity Empowerment Model

Empowerment					
Remote Recruitment and Onboarding of Public Administration Employees during COVID-19 Pandemic	Miłosz Czopek, Marta Kazusek (2021)	Accelerates cultural integration remotely despite limitations in the public sector.	Comparative studies on remote onboarding effectiveness across countries are needed.	Comparative Case Study	Remote Public Onboarding
Factors Related to the Use and Perception of a Gamified Application for	Izabella Jedel, Adam Palmquist (2021)	Shows potential and challenges of gamified apps in onboarding engagement.	Further study on user experience design for digital onboarding gamificatio	Qualitative - UX Evaluation	Gamified Application

Employee Onboarding			n is encouraging d.		
Exploring Digital Onboarding for Organizations: A Concept Paper	Azidah Abu Ziden, Ong Chin Joo (2020)	Improves acceptance of onboarding systems through personalization and blended learning.	Experimental comparison of TAM-based vs. non-TAM digital onboarding is recommended.	Conceptual Paper	Blended Digital Onboarding

According to the results 13 journals, or roughly 86.7%, specifically support onboarding procedures in the context of the contemporary workplace, whether through the use of green

onboarding, hybrid/remote models, inclusive approaches, or technology (AI, gamification, digital handbooks). In contrast, two publications, or 13.3%, do not specifically cover the modern workplace. On the other hand, both concentrate on conventional or theoretical onboarding strategies that haven't yet been specifically modified to meet the needs of digital transformation, remote work, or technology. The rise of technology-driven onboarding is a recurring theme in the literature. Examples of this include: gamified onboarding applications to improve employee engagement and knowledge retention (Jedel & Palmquist, 2021; Shaheen et al., 2025); hybrid onboarding models that combine virtual and in-person elements to suit post- pandemic remote workforces (Pinco et al., 2024; Scott et al., 2022); artificial intelligence (AI) to automate aspects of onboarding, such as chatbots for orientation and adaptive content delivery (Pol & Hukkeri, 2025); and green onboarding that prioritize sustainability through paperless, cloud-based, and energy-efficient onboarding strategies (Burhanuddin, 2025). These improvements show how onboarding has changed to meet the evolving needs of new workers, particularly those moving into tech-focused, remote, or hybrid roles.
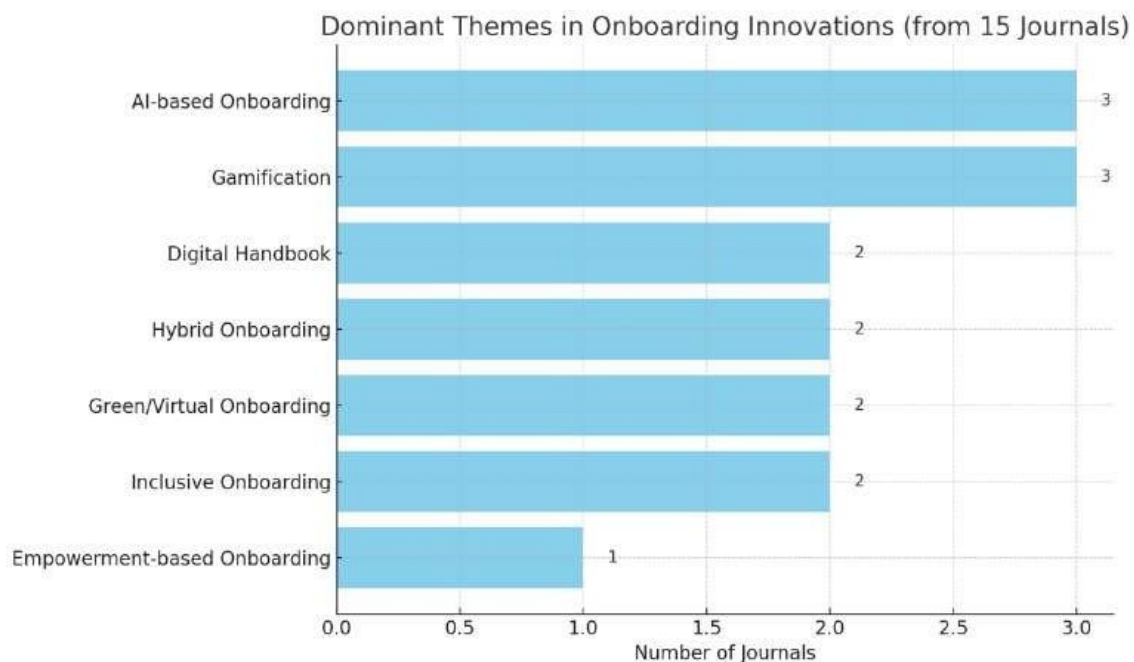

Figure 2. Dominant Theme of Onboarding Chart

4.3. Discussion

A review of fifteen journal publications about onboarding shows that different industries and organizational contexts use distinct frameworks and structures when onboarding new hires. Most of the evaluated studies partially or completely align with this methodical and progressive onboarding technique when compared to Rahmah and Ginting's (2025) five-stage model. The stages include Preboarding, Orientation, Integration, Execution, and Delivering Results.

1. Preboarding (Preparation Before the First Day)

Numerous studies, especially those that incorporate digital onboarding systems, specifically acknowledge this stage. For example, preboarding has emerged as a crucial

step in lowering first-day apprehension and improving early familiarity, as seen by the usage of automated emails, chatbot greets, and online welcome kits (Pol & Hukkeri, 2025). In line with this stage, Godinho et al. (2023) also highlighted the importance of digital handbooks being sent out prior to employee start.

2. Orientation (Introduction to Company and Work System)

Orientation is mentioned in some capacity in all fifteen papers, demonstrating how commonplace it is in onboarding procedures. The purpose of orientation is to explain the company's values, policies, workflow processes, and cultural expectations, whether it is done in person (Nelson et al., 2022) or digitally (Burhanuddin, 2025; Scott et al., 2022).

 3. Integration (Team Engagement and Social Adjustment)

Multiple research investigations emphasize how crucial social integration is to the onboarding process. For instance, Scott et al. (2022) emphasize the capacity of remote onboarding to sustain connectivity through organized virtual check- ins, while Jeske & Olson (2022) talk about two-way learning between teams and new recruits. Gamification was employed by Shaheen et al. (2025) to promote early involvement and bonding.

4. Execution (Reinforcement Through Training and Real Tasks)

Onboarding initiatives that combine educational modules with real-world job tasks demonstrate execution. Rahmah and Ginting (2025) explain how responsibilities are introduced gradually. Similar to this, Chenji & Raghavendra (2021) describe empowerment-based onboarding, which combines instruction with on-the-spot application to promote early productivity.

5. Delivering Results (Initial Assessment of Employee Contribution)

A number of studies discuss performance feedback and early success indicators, but fewer specifically reference formal early-stage evaluation. As part of onboarding efficacy measures, Didion et al. (2024) and Romana et al. (2024) recommend follow-up evaluations and adjustment tactics during the initial months.

A few studies offer alternate or modified onboarding frameworks that depart from this methodical sequence, but the bulk of the fifteen evaluated journal papers adhere to or mirror Rahmah and Ginting's (2025) five-stage onboarding paradigm. These distinctions provide information about variations according to study focus, industry practices, and organizational demands.

1. Jeske & Olson (2022)

Bypassing formal preboarding or execution phases, their onboarding approach places a strong emphasis on knowledge exchange and mutual learning. Their method is dialogic and adaptive rather than linear, depending on ongoing communication between the company and the new hire. The study places more emphasis on developing relationships than on assigning tasks and conducting official evaluations.

2. Jedel & Palmquist (2021)

A gamified application serves as the focal point of the onboarding process, as new hires participate in interactive modules. There is no clear reference to a distinct "Execution" or "Delivering Results" step by the writers. Instead, the gaming experience incorporates evaluation and integration. Instead of conventional, sequential onboarding stages, the emphasis is on incentive and engagement.

3. Abu Ziden & Chin Joo (2020)

The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) serves as the framework for their onboarding approach. The onboarding content itself is less important to the framework than how staff members embrace and utilize onboarding tools. As a result, the study concentrates on system usability, accessibility, and blended learning techniques rather than going into detail on the five stages. It focuses on the user experience and deviates from the conventional onboarding framework.

4. Romana et al. (2024)

Accessibility for underrepresented groups is emphasized in this study's discussion of inclusive onboarding. Although it covers orientation and integration, preboarding and execution are not specifically mentioned. Instead of being shown as a methodical process, the onboarding process is framed as a social justice initiative. As a result, onboarding is framed in a societal rather than a procedural way.

These examples demonstrate adaptability and adaptation based on particular situations, such as gamification, inclusivity, or technological uptake, without necessarily rejecting the five-stage paradigm. They draw attention to the expanding trend of creating onboarding models that are customized to meet the needs of employees and organizational objectives, even if doing so means moving away from conventional, linear onboarding frameworks.

From a straightforward administrative orientation, onboarding has developed into a strategic human resource activity that is essential to determining an employee's performance from the start of their job. The advantages of onboarding are becoming more obvious, complex, and well-established, as shown by recent research and a summary of fifteen peer-reviewed articles. Onboarding's capacity to clarify roles is among its most basic advantages. New hires are assisted in comprehending their duties, workflow requirements, and performance standards through organized programs. This clarity facilitates easier transitions into the workplace and boosts new employee confidence and satisfaction by lowering worry and uncertainty (Rahmah & Ginting, 2025; Saks & Gruman, 2018). When face-to-face instruction is scarce in remote and hybrid environments, this effect is especially significant (Scott et al., 2022).

This program promotes self-efficacy and psychological empowerment in addition to clarity. New hires feel more capable and motivated to contribute early in their employment when they receive organized training, mentorship, and technology-enabled learning (Shaheen et al., 2025; Jeske & Olson, 2022). According to Chenji & Raghavendra (2021), empowerment-based onboarding techniques have also been connected to improved early performance results and greater innovation.

Social integration is another important advantage. By facilitating peer involvement, team immersion, and cultural alignment, effective onboarding fosters a sense of community and social connection. Onboarding is a process of organizational socialization that has a direct impact on how successfully a new hire fits into the company's networks and ideals, as

Wanberg (2012) highlight. Early social adjustment has also been successfully promoted by digital strategies including gamification and virtual mentorships (Shaheen et al., 2025).

Furthermore, Onboarding also greatly shortens the time to productivity. Employees meet performance goals more quickly and with fewer mistakes when

they use structured onboarding modules that combine instruction with practical work. According to Nelson et al. (2022), this combination of execution and learning reduces the learning curve and improves operational efficiency. Industry statistics from Zippia (2023) indicate that successful onboarding initiatives can boost new hire productivity by more than 70%.

At the very least, onboarding's contribution to sustainability and digital efficiency is becoming more and more significant. Burhanuddin (2025) demonstrates how digitalizing onboarding through cloud documentation, online training, and paperless processes not only increases administrative efficiency but also advances the environmental, social, and governance (ESG) objectives of the company. This is in line with more general developments in green HRM.

6. CONCLUSION

The strategic function of onboarding in the hiring and early integration of new hires in contemporary firms was investigated in this study. According to a systematic literature review (SLR) of 15 peer-reviewed articles published between 2020 and 2025, onboarding has evolved into a multifaceted, structured process that is in line with inclusive HR policies, digital transformation, and hybrid work patterns. The results confirm that onboarding serves as a sustainability strategy made possible by digital technologies in addition to being an HR tool. They also support the five-stage framework of preboarding, orientation, integration, execution, and delivering results. Role clarity, early confidence, social integration, increased productivity, and alignment with Green HRM are some of the main advantages noted. A larger body of scholarly research that links onboarding to increased engagement, decreased anxiety, and job satisfaction supports these benefits. However, this analysis is based solely on secondary data and is restricted to literature that focuses on early-stage onboarding. Future studies should focus on particular industries, use empirical techniques like surveys and interviews, and investigate long-term effects like job satisfaction and retention. All things considered, onboarding is an essential and revolutionary HR procedure that promotes both employee integration and the growth of inclusive and sustainable businesses.

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