
**ONBOARDING AND EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT IN SELECTED
MANUFACTURING FIRMS IN SOUTH-SOUTH NIGERIA**

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the influence of onboarding on employee engagement in selected manufacturing firms in South-South Nigeria. Specifically, the study investigated the effects of clarification and organizational culture on employee engagement. A cross-sectional survey research design was adopted, and primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire administered to employees of five selected manufacturing firms. The study population comprised 319 management staff, from which a sample size of 177 respondents was determined using the Taro Yamane formula. Of the questionnaires distributed, 150 valid responses were retrieved and analyzed, representing an 85% response rate. Descriptive statistics, including frequencies and percentages, were used to summarize the data, while simple linear regression analysis was employed to test the hypotheses with the aid of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The findings revealed that clarification had a significant positive effect on employee engagement ($R^2 = 0.664$, $\beta = 0.766$, $p < 0.05$), indicating that clear communication of job roles, responsibilities, and performance expectations enhances employee commitment and involvement. Similarly, organizational culture was found to have a significant positive influence on employee engagement ($R^2 = 0.611$, $\beta = 0.530$, $p < 0.05$), demonstrating that a supportive work environment and shared organizational values foster stronger employee attachment and motivation. The study concluded that effective onboarding practices are critical drivers of employee engagement in manufacturing firms. It recommended that management should strengthen onboarding programmes by providing comprehensive role clarification, promoting a positive organizational culture, encouraging teamwork, and ensuring continuous communication and

support for newly recruited employees to improve engagement, productivity, and organizational performance.

KEYWORDS: Onboarding, Clarification, Organizational Culture, Employee Engagement, Manufacturing Firms, South-South Nigeria.

1. INTRODUCTION

In Nigeria's manufacturing sector, employee engagement has become a critical driver of productivity, innovation, and workforce retention. Engaged employees are more likely to demonstrate commitment, discretionary effort, and alignment with organizational goals, thereby enhancing operational efficiency and competitive advantage (Amita *te al*, 2021). The onboarding process encompassing the structured orientation, training, and integration of new hires serves as a foundational stage for building this engagement. In manufacturing firms, where operational precision, safety standards, and process efficiency are vital, effective onboarding not only imparts the necessary technical skills but also embeds employees within the organizational culture and work systems (Bauer, 2019).

However, many manufacturing firms in Nigeria face challenges in implementing comprehensive onboarding programs due to resource constraints, inadequate human resource structures, and high employee turnover rates. Poor onboarding experiences can result in disengagement, low morale, and decreased productivity, particularly in labour-intensive manufacturing environments where teamwork and adherence to processes are crucial. Conversely, well-designed onboarding initiatives featuring role clarity, mentorship, skills training, and cultural assimilation can significantly enhance employee engagement by fostering a sense of belonging, building trust, and aligning personal objectives with corporate goals (Saks and Gruman, 2024). As the Nigerian manufacturing sector navigates increasing competition, economic fluctuations, and workforce diversity, strategic onboarding has become indispensable for sustaining engagement and improving organizational performance. Employee onboarding, the structured process of integrating new hires into an organization, has emerged as a pivotal factor in shaping employee engagement, particularly within the manufacturing sector (Bell, 2021; Perpétua *et al.*, 2023).

According to Bauer (2010) onboarding is built on four distinct levels, which are called the Four C's. The Four C's are referred to be the building blocks of successful onboarding, as describe; Compliance is the lowest level in onboarding, and it involves learning the basic policies, rules, and regulations of the company. Compliance refers to the process of ensuring

that an organization and its members adhere to established laws, regulations, standards, and internal policies that govern their operations. In the context of human resource management and organizational practice, compliance serves as the foundational component of workplace governance, aimed at mitigating legal risks, fostering ethical conduct, and maintaining operational integrity. It involves creating systems, procedures, and training programs that help employees understand and follow applicable rules ranging from labour laws and safety standards to data protection policies and industry-specific regulations. Successful organizations are the ones with specific time-table for the use of its resources and processes required by a business to provide services (Akpaetor & Akpan, 2022)

Clarification ensures that a new employee understands their role and related responsibilities. It can, for example, help to describe the projects in detail they are about to start to work with. Clarification in organizational settings refers to the process of ensuring that employees clearly understand their job roles, responsibilities, performance expectations, and the scope of their authority. It is a critical element in onboarding and talent management, as ambiguity in job functions can lead to reduced productivity, role conflict, and employee dissatisfaction. Clarification involves communicating specific goals, work processes, reporting lines, and performance standards so that employees can perform effectively and align their efforts with organizational objectives.

Employee engagement, characterized by an employee's emotional and cognitive commitment to their work and organization, directly impacts productivity, retention, and overall organizational success (Othman *et al.*, 2021). Onboarding is viewed as a purposeful interaction between the organization and the new employee, aimed at integrating the new team member into the existing work environment and ensuring their productive performance in a short period (Gura *et al.*, 2022). Organizations are channeling efforts towards onboarding programs to welcome new employees and introduce them to the organizational values and culture, but these programs can be costly to develop, execute, and maintain (Blount, 2022). A comprehensive onboarding program goes beyond mere paperwork and orientation; it strategically equips new employees with the knowledge, skills, and social connections necessary to thrive in their roles and contribute to the company's objectives (Subedi and Karkee, 2020). In dynamic industries such as manufacturing, where technological advancements, intricate processes, and safety protocols are paramount, the significance of effective onboarding cannot be overstated (Santos *et al.*, 2024).

The manufacturing landscape in Nigeria presents a unique context for studying the onboarding-engagement nexus. Nigerian manufacturing firms often grapple with a complex

interplay of factors, including infrastructural deficits, skills gaps, and economic uncertainties, which can influence the effectiveness of onboarding initiatives and their subsequent impact on employee engagement (Garba, 2020). Traditional organisation structures are usually characterised by complicated layers and lines of responsibility with certain details of information reporting procedures. Nowadays, most managers realise the disadvantages of bureaucratic structures in slowing the processes and raising constraints on information flow (Akpan, Akpetor and Uwa, 2013). As strategic change is certain to occur, management in most banks ignore affected employees by not communicating to them in honest and timely manner (Akpaetor and Madubuike, 2022).

1.2 Statement of the Problems

Employee engagement has emerged as a critical driver of organizational performance, innovation, and retention. However, many organizations struggle to sustain high engagement levels, particularly among newly hired employees. One of the key factors influencing early engagement is the onboarding process, which serves as the first structured interaction between the employee and the organization. While onboarding is intended to provide new hires with role clarity, cultural integration, and relationship-building opportunities, in many cases it is poorly designed, overly administrative, or too short-term in scope. This results in employees feeling disconnected, unclear about expectations, and underprepared for their roles.

Inadequate onboarding can lead to reduced motivation, slower productivity ramp-up, and higher turnover rates, especially within the first year of employment. Studies have shown that ineffective onboarding experiences negatively affect engagement by failing to establish emotional commitment, trust, and a sense of belonging. Consequently, organizations that neglect to design comprehensive and employee-centered onboarding programs risk losing talent, incurring higher recruitment costs, and diminishing overall workforce morale. This underscores the need to investigate the influence of onboarding practices on employee engagement, and to identify strategies for optimizing onboarding as a catalyst for sustained employee commitment and performance.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study was to ascertain the influence of onboarding and employee engagement in selected manufacturing firms in South-South Nigeria; The specific objectives include to;

1. ascertain the influence of clarification on employee engagement in selected manufacturing firms in South-South Nigeria;
2. examine the influence of culture on employee engagement in selected manufacturing firms in South-South Nigeria;

1.4 Research Questions

- 1 What is the effect of clarification on employee engagement in selected manufacturing firms in South-South Nigeria?
- 2 To what extent do culture influence employee engagement in selected manufacturing firms in South-South Nigeria?

1.5 Research Hypotheses

H₀₁: Clarification has no significant effect on employee engagement in selected manufacturing firms in South-South Nigeria.

H₀₂: Culture has no significant influence on employee engagement in selected manufacturing firms in South-South Nigeria.

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Conceptual Framework

Independent Variable

Dependent Variable

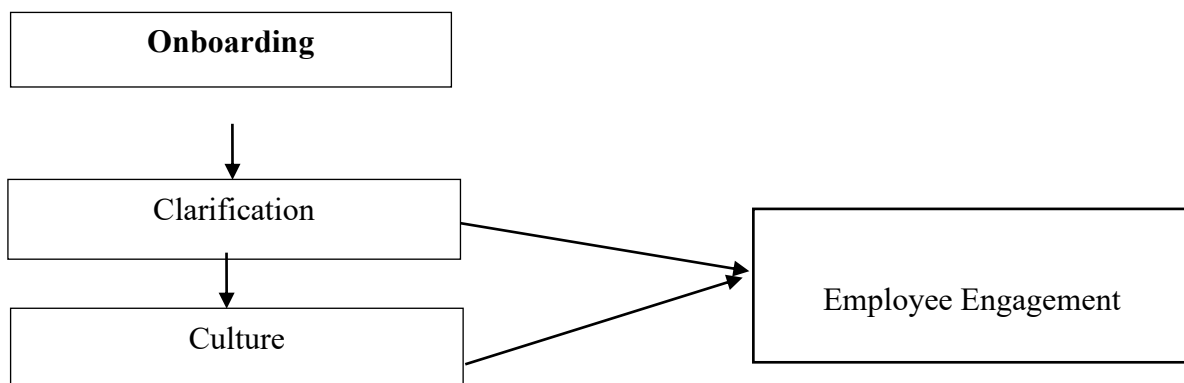


Figure 2.1. Conceptual model of Onboarding and Employee Engagement by the researcher, (2026).

2.1.1 Onboarding

Onboarding can be explained to be the business driver, which is ensuring the company's new or new-to-role employees are the right fit for the position. When employees are hired to the company or employee is allocated into a new role, the critical step to connect employees with

the organizational culture and their new roles is called onboarding (Davila & Pina-Ramirez, 2018). According to Bauer, (2021), onboarding is the process of helping new hires adjust to social and performance aspects of their new jobs quickly and smoothly. The onboarding process is designed to make the movement through the organisational threshold easier for employees to become productive team members in the shortest possible time. Onboarding's influence on employee goes throughout the company, and therefore it is connected to business outcomes (Davila and Pina-Ramirez, 2018).

According to Davila and Pina-Ramirez (2018) onboarding can be divided into two distinct components. Those components are general onboarding and role-specific onboarding. General onboarding is more ruling in the companies than the role specific onboarding. General onboarding is introducing company's culture for the employee. This includes, for example, company's mission, history, vision, values and overall policies and procedures. There are also very practical trainings organised, such as how to fill out a timesheet. General onboarding establishes the basis to engage new employees within the company. Akpaetor and Madubuike, (2023). Posit that strategic response are decisions and actions that firms apply or resort to in the face of business competition or turbulent business landscape. When an organization fail to respond to competition, it unavoidably opens up itself for competitive attack from rival firms

Role-specific onboarding is a unique process tailored for each position in the company. The unique process is for the reason that it is seeking assimilation of the new employee or employee new in the role to fit more easily into the department's culture. Role-specific onboarding is helping employees to obtain needed skills and knowledge to master the role in the most efficient way. Behavioural expectations are also part of this component. Line manager is responsible to lead this process with input from learning and development function. Companies can succeed by going to an uncontested market space without competition. It refers to the undiscovered market area (Uttong, Ekanem & Uwa, 2024)

In general onboarding there is the target to have employees emotionally connected to the company's purpose. It can be obtained by discussing the values, mission and vision of the company and, most importantly, trying to bring them alive for the new employee. Once company's mission is understood and employee can relate into it, the relationship towards the company is more personal. By relating to company's vision, employees can see the future together with it. Once employees can relate to company's values, it brings stability and decreases the motivation to seek opportunities outside the company (Niederkofle, 2021).

2.1.2 Dimensions of Onboarding

According to Bauer (2021) onboarding is built on four distinct levels, which are called the Four C's. The Four C's are referred to be the building blocks of successful onboarding, for the sake of this study we looked at just two to includes;

2.1.2.1 Clarification

Clarification ensures that a new employee understands their role and related responsibilities. It can, for example, help to describe the projects in detail they are about to start to work with. Clarification in organizational settings refers to the process of ensuring that employees clearly understand their job roles, responsibilities, performance expectations, and the scope of their authority. It is a critical element in onboarding and talent management, as ambiguity in job functions can lead to reduced productivity, role conflict, and employee dissatisfaction. Clarification involves communicating specific goals, work processes, reporting lines, and performance standards so that employees can perform effectively and align their efforts with organizational objectives. Within the onboarding process, clarification provides new hires with precise information on what is expected of them, how success will be measured, and the resources available to support their work.

2.1.2.3 Culture

Culture explains the company's norms, both formal and informal. Culture in an organizational context refers to the shared values, beliefs, norms, and practices that shape how employees think, behave, and interact within the workplace. It represents the organization's "personality" and influences decision-making, communication styles, and the overall work environment. Organizational culture is often communicated both explicitly through mission statements, codes of conduct, and formal policies and implicitly, through traditions, rituals, leadership behaviour, and everyday social interactions. In the onboarding process, culture plays a vital role in helping new employees understand the organization's identity, work ethos, and social expectations. Introducing culture early enables newcomers to align their attitudes and behaviours with the organization's values, which fosters a sense of belonging and cohesion.

2.1.3 Employee Engagement

Employee engagement has become a popular research topic among researchers working on human resource- and management topics. Despite extensive studies lately, employee engagement is still lacking consistency in how it is defined and measured (Sun *et al*, 2019). Sugandha, (2022) noted in the research different definitions by different researchers: According to Kahn (1990) employees are able to engage in one dimension but not in the

other. The higher the level of employee engagement is, it affects positively engagement level in other dimensions as well. In the same research, it was noted that if employee is to be emotionally involved, it requires purposeful connections with colleagues. Schaufeli *et al.* (2024) defined employee engagement to be as a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption. Vigor is characterized by one having a high level of energy and mental resilience when at work and persistence to face difficulties. Dedication is understood by being enthusiastic, inspired and take pride of the work. Vigor and dedication are understood as a positive opposite of exhaustion. Absorption is characterized by being fully focused on work where time goes quickly. Proper dissemination of information via technology empowers governments, institutions and individuals who sufficiently integrate it into their organizational structure. (Imagha et al., 2023). The growth of management not only involves the acquisition of knowledge, competence and experience, but also the development of resilience (Imagha, Ugwuwananyi & Akpaetor, 2021). The word performance is derived from job performance or actual performance, which refers to an individual's actual accomplishment at work (Ekanem *et al.* 2026)

Employee Engagement has taken important place in management, but still relatively little thought has been given to work engagement in the socialisation literature on employees just starting in the company. It has been argued that socialisation within the organisation has the potential to effect positively on newcomer's work engagement (Saks and Gruman, , 2018). Saks and Gruman (2018) tried to find if there are direct relationships between newly hired employees and socialisation tactics. They failed to find one, but instead they found that indirectly the socialisation tactics were related to a newly hired employee's engagement via positive emotions, self-efficacy and perceptions of person job fit. Cooper-Thomas *et al.*, (2014) found in their study that if a newcomer proactively seeks feedback (proactive behaviours) and receives feedback (proactive outcomes) it has a positive relation to work engagement. It can be argued that the proactive outcomes, in this case feedback, were the main reason for proactive behaviours to have positive effect on newcomer's work engagement. Performance is a fundamental measure of an organization's ability to achieve its strategic objectives effectively and efficiently (Ekanem & Efi, 2025)

2.1.4 Clarification and Employee Engagement

Clarification in the workplace refers to the process of ensuring that employees fully understand their roles, responsibilities, performance expectations, and the scope of their authority. It eliminates ambiguity and provides a clear roadmap for how employees can succeed in their positions. This clarity is essential for fostering employee engagement, as

uncertainty in job roles often leads to frustration, reduced motivation, and disengagement. When organizations invest in clear job descriptions, performance metrics, feedback systems, and role-specific training, employees gain confidence in their ability to meet expectations and contribute meaningfully to organizational goals (Bakker and Demerouti, 2018).

From an engagement perspective, clarification aligns with the psychological condition of meaningfulness described by Due (2021), where employees are more engaged when they understand how their work fits into the broader organizational mission. Clear communication of expectations also supports psychological safety, allowing employees to take initiative without fear of making avoidable mistakes due to lack of guidance. Conversely, role ambiguity can cause stress, lower morale, and hinder collaboration. Therefore, clarification is not merely an operational necessity but a strategic driver of employee engagement, enabling employees to perform with confidence, commitment, and enthusiasm. If the operating system is at the expected level of productivity, then the system must be deployed to all functions (Akpaetor, Emerole & Okebaram, 2024). Nigerian employees may prioritize other factors, such as organizational justice, job satisfaction, and career development opportunities, over identity-related concerns when considering their longevity within the organization (Akpan et al., 2023).

2.1.5 Culture and Employee Engagement

The business environment in this 21st century is characterized with global ideal, dynamic and complex business philosophy with different organizational culture (Akpaetor, Emerole & Okebaram, 2024). Organizational culture refers to the shared values, beliefs, norms, and practices that guide how employees interact, make decisions, and approach their work. It serves as the social and psychological environment within which employees operate. Culture has a direct and profound impact on employee engagement because it shapes the extent to which employees feel connected to the organization's mission, valued by leadership, and supported in their professional growth (Schein, 2020). A positive, inclusive, and values-driven culture fosters trust, collaboration, and a sense of belonging key drivers of engagement (Kahn, 1990).

When organizational culture aligns with employees' personal values and work preferences, it enhances person organization fit, leading to higher motivation, commitment, and discretionary effort (Kristof-Brown *et al.*, 2022). Conversely, a toxic or misaligned culture can erode morale, increase disengagement, and contribute to turnover. By embedding cultural orientation into onboarding, recognizing and rewarding behaviours consistent with organizational values, and promoting open communication, leaders can sustain a culture that

nurtures long-term engagement. Ultimately, culture is not only a backdrop to employee engagement it is a central determinant of whether engagement flourishes or declines. Other issues that hospitality businesses confront include the incapacity of some managers to possess technological skills and managerial qualities, as well as irregular power supplies (Uwa & Akpaetor, 2018).

2.2 Theoretical Framework

2.2.1 Four C's Model of Onboarding by Bauer (2010),

The Four C's Model of Onboarding, developed by Bauer (2010), provides a structured framework for integrating new employees into an organization by addressing four key dimensions: Compliance, Clarification, Culture, and Connection. This model emphasizes that effective onboarding extends beyond administrative formalities to encompass role clarity, cultural alignment, and relationship building. Compliance involves ensuring that new hires are familiar with legal requirements, organizational policies, and basic workplace procedures. Clarification focuses on providing employees with a clear understanding of their roles, responsibilities, and performance expectations. Culture introduces newcomers to the organization's values, norms, and work environment, enabling them to align with institutional ethos. Connection fosters interpersonal relationships and networks that support collaboration, engagement, and belonging. The model highlights that successful onboarding should be comprehensive, systematically addressing all four dimensions to enhance employee engagement, accelerate productivity, and reduce turnover. In practice, organizations that adopt the Four C's framework are better positioned to integrate new hires effectively, thereby strengthening both individual and organizational performance.

The manufacturing sector is characterized by its emphasis on operational efficiency, strict adherence to safety standards, and the need for cohesive teamwork to meet production targets. In this context, the Four C's Model of Onboarding Compliance, Clarification, Culture, and Connection as proposed by Bauer (2010), offers a structured and comprehensive framework for integrating new employees effectively. Compliance ensures that employees are well-informed about workplace safety regulations, industry-specific standards, and organizational policies, which is critical in preventing accidents and avoiding costly legal issues. Clarification provides role-specific guidance, enabling employees to understand their job responsibilities, performance metrics, and operational procedures, thereby reducing errors and accelerating productivity. Consequently, the Four C's Model serves as both a strategic and practical tool for talent integration in the manufacturing industry.

2.3 Empirical Review

Pilar & Maria (2025) examined Onboarding: a key to employee retention and workplace well-being. This study aims to fill this gap by considering three dimensions of onboarding: Corporate Welcome, Managers' Welcome, and Coworkers' Welcome. A total of 114 complete responses were collected through an online survey shared on social networks during May/June, 2023. Most participants work in the private sector, in small/medium-sized companies operating in Portugal. Structural Equations Modelling with Partial Least Squares was used to test the hypothesis under study. The results evidence a positive effect of onboarding on employees' well-being and on organizational identification. Workplace well-being mediates the relationship between onboarding and turnover intention. Additionally, the findings show that there are significant differences for gender, since the effect of Managers' Welcome on Turnover Intention is stronger for males and the effect of Workplace Well-being on Turnover Intention is stronger for females. The model explains 65.4% of turnover intention variance.

Bauer *et al.*, (2024), in their study "Newcomer adjustment during organizational socialization: A meta-analytic review of antecedents, outcomes, *and methods*", the objective was to examine the effects of socialization tactics on newcomer adjustment. Using a survey of 84 new employees, it was found that structured socialization tactics, including compliance training and communication about organizational expectations, significantly improved employee adjustment and retention. It was concluded that onboarding has been widely recognized as a critical factor influencing employee adjustment, engagement, and retention, with compliance and communication being key dimensions of successful programs.

Klein and Heuser (2023), in "The learning of socialization content", the aim of the study was to identify which onboarding content impacts employee adjustment. Through a mixed-methods approach involving literature review and survey analysis, the result showed that compliance-related information, such as organizational rules and procedures, and clear communication regarding role expectations are critical to onboarding success. It was concluded that both compliance-related information (rules and procedures) and clear communication about role expectations are critical for successful onboarding outcomes.

Rajeswari and Anantharaman (2023), in "Impact of HR practices on commitment", tested how HR practices, including onboarding communication, affect employee engagement. The survey research method was adopted and a sample size of 153 employees was used to analyse the data with least square regression. The result showed that effective onboarding communication is positively linked to higher organizational commitment. It was concluded

that has effective onboarding communication positively influences employee commitment, demonstrating that communication is a central mechanism in HR practices.

2.4 Gap in Knowledge

Onboarding and employee engagement have increasingly gained attention in organizational research as critical drivers of performance, retention, and long-term competitiveness. Globally, studies suggest that structured onboarding enhances employee role clarity, social integration, and engagement, thereby improving organizational outcomes (Saks and Gruman, 2018). However, the majority of these studies are situated in advanced economies, with limited empirical focus on developing contexts such as Nigeria (Phan & Peridis, 2020, Ukpong, Uwa, & Ekanem, 2022). Within Nigeria, the existing literature on human resource practices has primarily emphasized recruitment, training, and general employee relations, with onboarding often treated as a brief orientation activity rather than a strategic, multidimensional process (Ogunyemi and Laguda, 2016).

In particular, the manufacturing sector in South-South Nigeria presents a unique context where employee engagement is vital due to high demands for productivity, adherence to safety standards, and the prevalence of diverse workforce compositions. Yet, empirical studies examining the direct relationship between onboarding practices and employee engagement in this region remain scarce (Ogunyemi and Laguda, 2016). Where research has been conducted, findings tend to focus on service sectors such as banking, telecommunications, or oil and gas, neglecting the specific challenges faced by manufacturing firms, such as shift work, skill variations, and high employee turnover.

3 METHODOLOGY

Information on the research design, study population, sample and sampling procedures, data collection method, data sources, and data analysis techniques are all included in this chapter.

3.1 Research Design

In order to better understand individual or group perspectives regarding a certain subject or issue of interest, the researcher used a cross-sectional survey research approach in this study. Given that the study's focus is on the experiences of those employed in Nigeria's manufacturing sector, the topic's holistic nature was examined using a quantitative approach. Since the data required for this study will mostly come from sources, a cross-sectional survey research approach was used. The influence of the study's factors is ascertained using these answers.

3.2 Population of the Study

The population of the study comprised of five (5) manufacturing firms in South- South Nigeria. Therefore, out of 35 manufacturing industries duly registered on Stock Exchange Group, five (5) firms were purposively selected based on proximity. A total of 319 Management Staff of the selected manufacturing firms in South- South Nigeria were adopted as the target population for the study. These firms were selected based on proximity and are quoted by the Nigerian Exchange Group. The distribution of the population is shown below:

Population Distribution Table

Manufacturing firms	No of staff
Nestle Nigeria Plc	65
Cadbury Nigeria Plc	68
Nigeria Breweries Plc,	54
Guinness Nigeria Plc	73
Floor Mill Nigeria Plc	63
Total	319

Source: Human Resource Department of Organizations under study, (2026).

3.3 Determination of Sample Size

A Taro Yamani formula was used to determine a sample size of 177 respondent from the staff of selected Manufacturing firms in South-South Nigeria.

$$\text{Formula } n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$$

N = population

n = sample size

e = error term

From the formula above, the sample size is given as:

$$n = 319 / 1 + 319 (0.05)^2$$

$$n = 319 / 1 + 319 (0.0025)$$

$$n = 319 / 1 + 0.7975$$

$$n = 319 / 1.7975 = 177$$

$$n = 177$$

A sample size of 177 respondents was used for this study.

3.4 Sampling Technique

Stratified sampling technique was adopted for the study. For copies of questionnaire to be proportionally allotted to different cadre of employees in the study organization, Bowley's formular for proportionate representation was used which as follows:

$$n_h = \frac{nNH}{N}$$

Where: n = sample size

NH = population of a strata

N = population

Sample Distribution Table

Respondents	Proportion	
Nestle Nigeria Plc	65/319x177	36
Cadbury Nigeria Plc	68/319x177	37
Nigeria Breweries Plc,	54/319x177	30
Guinness Nigeria Plc	73/319x177	40
Floor Mill Nigeria Plc	63/319x177	34
Total		177

Source: Researcher's Computation, (2026).

3.5 Sources of Data Collection

This study used the primary source of data. Primary data is more accurate and reliable because it comes from a direct source. It's faster and easier to collect primary data than secondary data, which can take weeks or even months to collect.

3.6 Method of Data Collection

A total of 177 questionnaires were distributed among management staff of selected manufacturing firms in South- South Nigeria. In this study, the researcher adopted the use of questionnaire. Questionnaires was designed to collect data from a group of people coming under the purview of the study.

3.7 Research Instrument

The questionnaire consisted of two sections. Section A measure the participants' demographic details which included race, age, gender, tenure and job level. Section B will consist of the strategic alternative and sustainable performance. Questionnaire which will be a virtually self-administering survey and consists of 20 statements measuring the three dimensions of onboarding namely and effective performance. The statements of the questionnaire were configured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1, strongly

disagree, to 5, strongly agree. The ethical clearance to conduct the research in the organization was granted by the management of the department and research institution. An invitation to participate voluntarily in the study will be send to the employees.

3.8 Validation of Instrument

The face validity and content validity of the research instrument was determined after thorough evaluation by the supervisor of this project and other experts in the field of management. Their suggestions and recommendations for improvement were use to review and improve on the research instrument, by so doing, the validity of the instrument was assured.

3.9 Reliability of the Research Instrument

The internal consistency of the items in the research instrument was tested by using Cronbach's Alpha statistical tool. The reliability estimates obtained; Cronbach Alpha statistics was used to calculate and to measure the reliability of the instrument; the value of the alpha coefficient as presented by Tavakol and Dennick (2011).

Table 3.3: The Reliability Indexes of Cronbach Alpha.

Variable Items		Cronbach Alpha	Test- retest		Internal consistency
Clarification	5	.83	.81		Good
Culture	5	.88	.71		Acceptable
EmployeeEngagement	5	.92	.90		Excellent
Cluster 15	Mean	.82	.81		Good

Source: Researcher's computation (2026)

The result on Table 3.3 shows the alpha coefficient of each variable and the overall clustered mean, indicating that the instrument will be reliable for used.

3.8 Empirical Model Specification

The model used was premised on the main objectives and anchored on the sub-objective. The following mathematical model was developed to analyse the influence of onboarding on employee engagement in manufacturing firms using compliance, communication, clarification culture, connection as the explanatory variables to see how it influence employee engagement which is the dependent variable.

The model was adapted from the study of Olapegba, *et al* (2022) model is $QS = f(KA, KS, KT)$. Hence the model for the study was anchored on the objective.

The regression model is expressed below:

$$y = X_i + X_{ii} + X_{iii} + X_{iv} + X_v + \varepsilon \quad \text{Equation 3.2}$$

Simple Regression Model Specification for Objective One

$$EE = f(O) \quad \text{Equation 3.3}$$

This equation is transformed into Econometric form as:

$$EG = \beta_0 + \beta_1 C + \varepsilon \quad \text{Equation 3.4}$$

Whereby

EE = Dependent variable (Employee Engagement),

β_0 = Beta Coefficient

C = Clarification

β_1 , = coefficients of determination

ε = error term.

Simple Regression Model Specification for Objective Two

$$EE = f(O) \quad \text{Equation 3.5}$$

This equation is transformed into Econometric form as:

$$EE = \beta_0 + \beta_1 C + \varepsilon \quad \text{Equation 3.6}$$

Whereby;

EE = Dependent variable (Employee Engagement),

β_0 = Beta Coefficient

C = Culture

β_1 , = coefficients of determination

ε = error term.

3.10 Method of Data Analysis

The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistical tools such as frequencies and percentages. Also, inferential statistical tool such as simple linear models was used for testing the hypotheses one to five and multiple regression was used to test hypothesis six. The Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) would be used as the statistical software package.

DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 Data Presentation

This section is basically designed to present, analyzed and interpret the primary data obtained via the questionnaire which was purposively administered to the respondents in media house.

These are shown in the table below:

Table 4.1.1: Copies of Questionnaire Administered and the Response Rate.

S/N		Copies of questionnaire distributed	Copies of questionnaire retrieved useable	Copies of questionnaire Not retrieved	Percentage (%)
1.	Nestle Nigeria Plc	44	35	9	80.0
2.	Cadbury Nigeria Plc	31	26	5	84.0
3.	Nigeria Breweries Plc,	35	31	4	88.5
4.	Guinness Nigeria Plc	40	35	5	87.5
5.	Floor Mill Nigeria Plc	27	23	4	85.1
	Total	177	150	27	85.0

Source: Compiled from questionnaire response, (2026).

From table 4.1.1, Out of the 177 copies of the questionnaire that were sent, 150 had been correctly filled out and returned. This makes up 85.0% of the total copies of the questionnaire and was determined to be useful. 27 copies of the questionnaire were returned incompletely filled, so they were rejected, despite the researcher's best attempts to assure adequate and accurate completion of the questionnaire by self-administering. The responses were then analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

Table 4.1.2: Percentage analysis of Responses on Clarification.

Clarification	Extent of Agreement					
	SA	A	UD	SD	D	Total
My job roles and responsibilities were clearly explained during onboarding.	58 (39%)	67 (45%)	5 (3%)	11 (7%)	9 (6%)	150 (100%)
I clearly understand what is expected of me at work.	63 (42%)	62 (41%)	4 (3%)	12 (8%)	9 (6%)	150 (100%)
My supervisor provides guidance when I need clarification.	52 (35%)	71 (47%)	8 (5%)	4 (3%)	15 (10%)	150 (100%)
The organization provides clear performance expectations.	66 (44%)	61 (41%)	2 (1%)	12 (8%)	9 (6%)	150 (100%)

Source: Field survey (2026)

Table 4.1.9 A) shows that 58 respondents representing 39% strongly agreed, 67 respondents representing 45% agreed, 5 representing 3% were undecided, 11 respondents representing 7% strongly disagreed, 9 respondents representing 6% disagreed that My job roles and responsibilities were clearly explained during onboarding.

B) shows that 63 respondents representing 42% strongly agreed, 62 respondents representing 41% agreed, 4 respondents representing 3% were undecided, 12 respondents representing 8% strongly disagreed, 9 respondents representing 6% disagreed that we clearly understand what is expected of me at work.

C) shows that 52 respondents representing 35% strongly agreed, 71 respondents representing 47% agreed, 8 respondents representing 5% were undecided, 4 respondents representing 3% strongly disagreed, 15 respondents representing 10% disagreed that we supervisor provides guidance when I need clarification.

D) shows that 66 respondents representing 44% strongly agreed, 61 respondents representing 41% agreed, 2 respondents representing 1% were undecided, 12 respondents representing 8% strongly disagreed and 9 respondents representing 6% disagreed that The organization provides clear performance expectations.

Table 4.1.3: Percentage analysis of Responses on Culture.

Culture	Extent of Agreement					
	SA	A	UD	SD	D	Total
The organization introduced me to its core values during onboarding.	52 (35%)	71 (47%)	8 (5%)	4 (3%)	15 (10%)	150 (100%)
I understand the culture of the organization.	66 (44%)	61 (41%)	2 (1%)	12 (8%)	9 (6%)	150 (100%)
The work environment promotes teamwork and cooperation.	62 (41%)	65 (43%)	2 (1%)	9 (6%)	12 (8%)	150 (100%)
Employees are treated with respect in the organization.	57 (38%)	66 (44%)	6 (4%)	11 (7%)	10 (7%)	150 (100%)

Source: Field survey (2026)

Table 4.1.10 A) shows that 52 respondents representing 35% strongly agreed, 71 respondents representing 47% agreed, 8 respondents representing 5% were undecided, 4 respondents representing 3% strongly disagreed, 15 respondents representing 10% disagreed that the organization introduced me to its core values during onboarding.

B) shows that 66 respondents representing 44% strongly agreed, 61 respondents representing 41% agreed, 2 respondents representing 1% were undecided, 12 respondents representing 8%

strongly disagreed and 9 respondents representing 6% disagreed that we understand the culture of the organization.

C) shows that 62 respondents representing 41% strongly agreed, 65 respondents representing 43% agreed, 2 respondents representing 1% were undecided, 9 respondents representing 6% strongly disagreed, 12 respondents representing 8% disagreed that they work environment promotes teamwork and cooperation.

D) shows that 57 respondents representing 38% strongly agreed, 66 representing 44% agreed, 6 respondents representing 4% were undecided, 11 respondents representing 7% strongly disagreed, and 10 representing 7% agreed that employees are treated with respect in the organization.

Table 4.1.4: Percentage analysis of Responses on Employee Engagement.

Employee Engagement	Extent of Agreement					
	SA	A	UD	SD	D	Total
I am enthusiastic about my work.	58 (39%)	67 (45%)	5 (3%)	11 (7%)	9 (6%)	150 (100%)
I am willing to go beyond what is expected in my job.	63 (42%)	62 (41%)	4 (3%)	12 (8%)	9 (6%)	150 (100%)
I feel emotionally attached to my organization.	52 (35%)	71 (47%)	8 (5%)	4 (3%)	15 (10%)	150 (100%)
I am proud to work for this organization.	66 (44%)	61 (41%)	2 (1%)	12 (8%)	9 (6%)	150 (100%)

Source: Field survey (2026)

Table 4.1.9 A) shows that 58 respondents representing 39% strongly agreed, 67 respondents representing 45% agreed, 5 representing 3% were undecided, 11 respondents representing 7% strongly disagreed, 9 respondents representing 6% disagreed that we are enthusiastic about my work.

B) shows that 63 respondents representing 42% strongly agreed, 62 respondents representing 41% agreed, 4 respondents representing 3% were undecided, 12 respondents representing 8% strongly disagreed, 9 respondents representing 6% disagreed that we are willing to go beyond what is expected in my job.

C) shows that 52 respondents representing 35% strongly agreed, 71 respondents representing 47% agreed, 8 respondents representing 5% were undecided, 4 respondents representing 3% strongly disagreed, 15 respondents representing 10% disagreed that we feel emotionally attached to my organization.

D) shows that 66 respondents representing 44% strongly agreed, 61 respondents representing 41% agreed, 2 respondents representing 1% were undecided, 12 respondents representing 8% strongly disagreed and 9 respondents representing 6% disagreed that m proud to work for this organization.

4.2 Testing of Hypotheses

H₀₁: Clarification has no significant effect on employee engagement in selected manufacturing firms in South-South Nigeria.

Table 4.2.3 Regression analysis showing result for clarification on employee engagement.

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.882 ^a	.669	.664	.43220

a. Predictors: (Constant), Clarification

ANOVA^a

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	49.445	1	49.445	62.587	.000 ^b
Residual	50.576	149	.790		
Total	100.021	150			

a. Dependent Variable: employee engagement

b. Predictors: (Constant), Clarification

Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	.570	.089		3.430	.000
Clarification	.766	.021	.972	17.127	.000

a. Dependent Variable: employee engagement

The model summary in table 4.2.3 shows an R- value of 0.882. the result shows positive impact of clarification on employee engagement in selected manufacturing firms in South-South Nigeria. The R square- value of 0.664 shows that 66.4% variation in clarification was accounted for by variations in employee engagement. The ANOVA table indicates that the regression model significantly predicts the dependents variable given the F- value of 62.587 and its corresponding P- value of 0.00. This implies a positive impact of clarification on employee engagement. Also, the B-coefficient of 0.766 implies that holding every other thing constant, the model predicts 0.766 unit increase in clarification given a unit increase in employee engagement.

H₀₂: Culture has no significant influence on employee engagement in selected manufacturing firms in South-South Nigeria

Table 4.2.1 Regression analysis culture on employee engagement Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.761 ^a	.615	.611	.44520

a. Predictors: (Constant), culture

ANOVA^a

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	49.445	1	49.445	62.587	.000 ^b
Residual	50.576	149	.790		
Total	100.021	150			

a. Dependent Variable: employee engagement

b. Predictors: (Constant), culture

Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	.470	.089		6.430	.000
culture	.530	.021	.861	10.117	.000

a. Dependent Variable: employee engagement

The model summary in table 4.2.1 shows an R- value of 0.761. The result shows a positive relationship between culture and organizational performance in selected manufacturing firms in South-South Nigeria. The R square- value of 0.611 shows that 61.1% variation in culture was accounted for by variations in organizational performance. The ANOVA table indicates that the regression model significantly predicts the dependents variable given the F- value of 62.587 and its corresponding P- value of 0.00. This implies that there is a positive relationship between culture and organizational performance. Also, the B-coefficient of 0.666 implies that holding every other thing constant, the model predicts 0.530 units increase in culture given a unit increase in organizational performance.

4.3 Discussion of Findings

The study was carried out to ascertain the influence of onboarding on employee engagement in selected manufacturing firms in South-South Nigeria. The result of the study showed that

there is a significant influence of onboarding dimensions of (clarification, and culture) on employee engagement in selected manufacturing firms in South-South Nigeria. These findings are in agreement with several studies in the literature (Bauer *et al.*, 2024, Albrecht *et al.* 2020, Cooper-Thomas *et al.* 2022 and Klein & Heuser 2023). Among, the variables of onboarding in a joint regression model, strategic resource fluidity showed a high t-test score of 7.830. t-test shows the strength of the causal effect of the variable on the dependent variables.

The first objective of the study which was to ascertain the influence of clarification on employee engagement in selected manufacturing firms in South-South Nigeria. The result shows positive effect of clarification on employee engagement in selected manufacturing firms in South-South Nigeria. The R square- value of 0.664 shows that 66.4% variation in clarification was accounted for by variations in employee engagement. The ANOVA table indicates that the regression model significantly predicts the dependents variable given the F- value of 62.587 and its corresponding P- value of 0.00. This implies a positive impact of clarification on employee engagement. This study is supported by Tairas, Kadir, Muis and Mardiana (2016) investigated “the influence of strategic leadership and core competency through entrepreneurship strategy and operational strategy in improving the competitive advantage of private universities in Jakarta, Indonesia.” The results showed that strategic leadership and core competency had a positive and significant relationship with competitive advantage with respect to private universities in Jakarta.

The second objective of the study which was to examine the influence of culture on employee engagement in selected manufacturing firms in South-South Nigeria. The result shows a positive effect between culture and employee engagement in selected manufacturing firms in South-South Nigeria. The R square- value of 0.611 shows that 61.1% variation in culture was accounted for by variations in organizational performance. The ANOVA table indicates that the regression model significantly predicts the dependents variable given the F- value of 62.587 and its corresponding P- value of 0.00. This implies that there is a positive effect between culture and employee engagement. This is in line with the study of Hamdan et al., (2020) aimed to identify the strategic sensitivity and its impact on enhancing the creative behavior of Palestinian NGOs in Gaza Strip, results were reached that the relative weight of strategic sensitivity was 79.22 (%), and the relative weight of creative behavior that enhances performance was 78.99 (%), a statistically significant relationship between all strategic sensitivity and creative behavior, and the presence of a sensitivity effect.

5.2 CONCLUSIONS

Based on the regression analyses conducted, the study concludes that onboarding dimensions clarification, and culture, have significant positive effects on employee engagement in selected manufacturing firms in South-South Nigeria. The results of the individual regression models show that each variable significantly predicts employee engagement, with p-values less than 0.05, leading to the rejection of all the individual null hypotheses (Ho1–Ho5). The coefficient of determination (R^2) values indicate that a substantial proportion of variation in employee engagement is explained by the onboarding variables, ranging from 55.1% to 67.2% across the models. This suggests that effective onboarding practices play an important role in enhancing employees' level of engagement within the organizations. In summary, the findings demonstrate that effective onboarding practices are critical drivers of employee engagement, and organizations that strengthen these dimensions are more likely to foster a committed and engaged workforce.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings that clarification and culture, significantly influence employee engagement, the following recommendations are made to manufacturing firms in South-South Nigeria:

- 1 Manufacturing firms should clearly define employees' roles, responsibilities, and performance expectations during onboarding and throughout their employment. Job descriptions, task guidelines, and regular supervisory support should be provided to reduce role ambiguity and enhance employees' understanding of their duties, thereby improving engagement.
- 2 Management should develop and maintain a supportive organizational culture that promotes teamwork, fairness, respect, and shared values. When employees feel aligned with the organization's culture and values, they are more likely to develop a stronger emotional attachment and commitment to their work.

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