

‘An investigation into the employee experience of participating in an induction program and its impact on the employee turnover, commitment and engagement in an Irish software company’

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Abstract

This research dissertation was undertaken to examine the impact induction programs have on participants in terms of employee turnover, employee commitment and employee engagement. The research methodology was carried out using a quantitative research method in the form of survey questionnaires. The author was eager to investigate if participating in an induction program had an impact on the level of commitment, engagement and willingness to leave the workforce. From the findings, it was concluded that the current induction program is not effective as previous research suggests. The author gave recommendations to rectify the problems of the current induction programs and an implication of costings.

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Chapter one: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

This chapter will provide a brief background on induction programs and the current induction program in the organization under investigation. A rationale for the research will also be presented highlighting the main aims, objectives, questions and significance of this research before concluding on the main research questions and hypothesis.

The aim of this research is to examine the experience of participating in an induction program and its impact on employee turnover, employee commitment and employee engagement. An induction program is a Human Resource Management Practice carried out by an organization to support employees as they transition into new roles and responsibilities. The induction program is primarily an established framework that encourages “employee involvement, good equal opportunities and effective training and development” (Davis, 1994, p.25). This process ensures employee integrate into the work environment and acquire the appropriate organizational skills and knowledge to perform in their role. This program is regarded as one of the first encounters the employer and employee will have so it is important that the process is carried out effectively to drive a strong employee experience Meighan (2000).

1.2 Background of the study

The induction phase is a period where employees adapt and familiarize themselves with their new work environment. It initially starts on the first day of work and can last for one day or a few months depending on the job and industry. In today’s business world, employees are considered the most important asset. From the moment, an employee is employed by the company the firm must work hard to retain the employee. The induction program is an important training activity the companies facilitate to enhance engagement and the motivation of new employees in turn increase productivity and efficiency of new employees. Furthermore, the Induction prepares a new employee for what’s ahead of them, without this type of training there would be a great amount of independence on colleagues which can be a problem especially if it interferes with the colleague’s work.

1.3 Background of the Company

The focus of the research is on the employee experience of an induction program in an Irish software company with the aid of results formatted from a qualitative study analyzed and interpreted into information. The company picked to focus the research on was chosen because of personal connections to the business. Using this company was both convenient and it helped reduce research associated costs. The company is a fast-growing software company located in Ireland. Each week new employees join and leave the company, this means both recruitment and turnover rates are increasing as the company continues to grow. The current induction program in place for new hires has remained the same process for several years. It involves training on the first day carried out by a member of human resource and then a tour of the office where the employee is met by their hiring manager and team members. The hiring manager will then ensure IT have all the equipment set up and the new employees are ready to start work. The first week involves a variety of induction training sessions that will ensure new employees gain knowledge about the product and work process. After the first week, new employees are then left to their own devices. While another new group of employees arrives and the weekly induction process starts again.

1.4 Purpose of the research

The purpose of this research is to identify the quality and effectiveness of an induction program in areas such as employee turnover, employee engagement and employee commitment. The main aim of this research is to explore the induction process and the impact this program has on an employee's commitment, engagement and their willingness to leave. By exploring the effectiveness of the employer's induction program, it is hoped that a set of standards and recommendations will be established to improve the current induction program within the organisation.

1.5 Significance of study

The researcher found this topic interesting and felt it did have potential with the help of further research and the development of a research question. This motivation stemmed from the researcher's personal exposure to a variety of induction processes throughout various roles they have occupied to date. This research focuses on examining the effectiveness of induction programs for employees. This has an important significance as it will outline in detail the outcome of the induction on employees and whether this positively or negatively impacts their perceived commitment towards their job, engagement levels while at work and the impact on their decision to leave.

1.6 Research questions

The questions are based on the induction and its impact on employees who participate in this program. The research is based on an Irish company's induction program and the effect it has on its employees the employee turnover, employee commitment, employee engagement and their willingness to leave. The research questions seek to understand what the outcome is for the employee from participating in the induction.

The areas are as follows:

1. To explore the different experience of induction among employees.
2. To examine the link between employee experience of induction and engagement.
3. To Highlight any improvement that could be implemented into the current induction program.

1.7 Research question

'An investigation into the employee experience of participating in an induction program and its impact on the employee turnover, commitment and engagement in an Irish software company'.

1.8 Structure of the Dissertation

Chapter One (1) the introduction presents the reader with a background to the research highlighting the main aims and objectives of the study and significance of research and logic of the research.

Chapter two (2) the literature review covers the area of the topic of interest and what academics say about this topic. The literature Review provides an understanding of some of the generalities of the topic of interest the induction process, the induction training, employee turnover, employee commitment and employee engagement. This chapter presents the reader with information derived from available academic literature and includes definitions, theories, the importance of the topic, advantages and disadvantages before concluding on links between each area.

Chapter three (3) the research aims and objectives will give an overview of the main aims and objectives of the study.

Chapter four (4) the methodology section focuses on how the researcher plans on undertaken the research and who this research will focus on. It will also give a broad description of instruments and materials used as part of this research. The last section of this chapter will focus on the research procedure and how the research was undertaken.

Chapter five (5) the finding and results section will present the reader with a variety of results taken from the methods section.

Chapter six (6) the discussion will finalise this research project with a discussion based on results, methods.

Chapter seven (7) this final chapter presents the conclusion, recommendations, implication for findings and the authors personal learning statement.

Chapter two: Literature Review

2.1 Defining Induction

(Armstrong, 2006, p. 471) defined induction as a “process of receiving and welcoming employee’s when the first join a company and to give them the basic information they need to settle down quickly and happily and to start work”

(Davis, 1994, p25) stated ‘Effective induction is concerned with motivating people to become productive in the shortest time and to stay with your organisation’

Furthermore, (Snell, 2006) concludes induction or ‘onboarding process enables new team members to gain access to information, tools and materials needed to perform their function more quickly’.

2.2 The Induction Process

The induction or onboarding process is terms both used to describe a procedure taken by an organisation to gradually improve the effectiveness of a new employee (SHRM). (Carberry and Cross, 2013, p.59) outlined induction as “the whole process whereby new employees in an organisation adjust to their new roles and responsibilities within a new working environment”. This proactive approach of onboarding new hires is profoundly associated with the success of a new employee and higher productivity, engagement and lower retention levels (Aberdeen Group, 2013). According to (Marchington and Wilkinson, 2012), this period is an important time for employees to gain an understanding of company’s strategic goals and objectives. An article by Forbes (2015) found that companies who facilitate an induction process are far more likely to retain employees especially in the first few months in a new job. A study by Wynhurst Group (2007) as cited in Forbes (2015) found that 58% of new employees were more likely to remain with the company for more than three years. This could be one of the many reasons why many companies continue to carry out an induction process on new employees each year. Or perhaps because of its ability to help new employees understand their new role within the company (Hendricks and Louw- Potgieter, 2012).

Why is this induction process so important? Wanous (1992) stated that starting a new job can be a stressful experience especially when it means taking on new responsibilities within a new environment and, the need to memorize new terminology and company procedures. To ease this pressure, the induction process works in a way to welcome new employees, ensuring that they are settled into their new roles and to verify that new employee is receiving the appropriate knowledge and support from the company to successfully perform CIPD (2016). Similarly, (Conrad and Lashley, 2002) mentioned that induction can lessen feelings of stress and anxiety related to starting a new job. (Antonacopoulou and Guttel, 2010) highlighted the benefits of the induction programs and that was to reform ‘stability’ and ‘continuity’ in the workplace by influencing and enforcing the values of the company and the main objectives of the company in early stages of employment. Likewise, CIPD (2016) stated that this practice is found to improve engagement, commitment and retention within the workforce. For successful induction, (SHRM, 2010) suggested there are four levels of onboarding new employees these are as follows: 1) Compliance, 2) Clarification, 3) Culture and 4) Connection. Compliance refers to the teaching of company rules and procedures. Clarification is concerned with ensuring new employees fully understand their role and

company expectations. Culture includes the understanding of company norms and values. Finally, connection focuses on the building of social networks and introducing to colleagues. The extent to which each of these levels is implemented will depend on the overall success of the induction process (SHRM, 2010).

To conclude, induction is normally the first encounter an individual has with an organisation. This first encounter and experience of the organisation are important in terms of making a good first impression on the new employee Meighan (2000). (Carberry and Cross, 2013) pointed out that first impressions do count and highly influence an individual's perception of the company as well as their commitment and work ethic. Furthermore, (Cable, Gino and Staats, 2013) expressed that induction is an opportunity to effectively influence new employees from day one by prompting new employees to be proud of their job and positively impacting their intention to stay with the company.

2.3 The Induction Training

The induction training is a type of training or orientation that is part of the overall induction process (SHRM, 2010).

Icims (2017) outlined the requirements of an induction training. They are as follows:

- The induction program must promote clear levels of communication.
- It must make learning possible for every level of the workforce.
- It must ensure new employees are orientated towards the company strategies.
- Encourage new employees to work towards set objectives to enhance personal success.
- Deliver important information that is easily understood.
- Promote the company culture and employment brand.
- Ensure the new employee receives a standardized induction as well as individualized induction.

Induction training applies to all members of the workforce regardless of age, qualification or role within the company. In usual circumstances, training is focused on new employees, however, those returning after breaks such as maternity leave, short illness and study leave are also entitled to take part in the induction. The structure of the induction training is unique to each company; with no universal format Meighan (2000). The duration of the training can last as little as one day or even a few a month's (SHRM, 2010). The process can vary depending on the size of the business, the industry and recruited role CIPD (2016).

The execution of the program will also depend on the function of the job, the industry, the culture of the workforce and the geographic demographics of the company Icims (2017)

Discussion and lectures are tools used to encourage participation among new employees as well as computer based systems. Alternatively, online induction training can also be used as a method of training new employees to get up to speed with the company (SHRM, 2010).

However, (IES, 2009) found some risks associated with online training. The risks are as follows: online training was found to not suit every learner, the requirement for higher rates of self-discipline to complete the training and lower rates of interaction, which impacted the opportunity for new employees to create social networks and professional relationships.

2.4 Outcome of the Induction

Induction programs have many benefits and drawbacks. Advantages identified by the CIPD (2016) include improving the motivation among new employees, improve the overall job satisfaction in the work environment, decrease the rate of employee absenteeism, and save time for managers and supervisors. A good induction program will benefit both the employee and employer as it can improve retention by improving employee satisfaction Snell (2006) and reduce turnover by retaining more satisfied employees (Conrad & Lashley, 2002). (Acas, 2015) mentioned that an induction program 'makes business sense' and highlighted some of the benefits including adjusting into the company quicker, co-operating and responding to training more effectively and lower rates of employee turnover. Another benefit is its ability to improve the employee experience and communication between employee and peers Snell (2006). Furthermore, Meighan (2000) implied that a good induction can ultimately cut costs of recruitment and lower rates of turnover. In addition, (SHRM, 2010) found that when employees are supported by well-managed induction program this can lead to higher levels of employee performance, commitment, satisfaction and lower levels of stress and retention.

In contrast, a badly managed or ineffective induction program can have the opposite effect as originally planned. CIPD (2016) outlined certain factors that a company should avoid, these are as follows: 'overselling the job' and 'information overload'. When a company oversells a job, the employee's perception of the company will soon change when job expectations are not reached. Another important factor for companies to consider is information overload in induction training. Providing a wealth information can lead to stress and anxiety on an employee's first day. As mentioned before by (Conrad and Lashley, 2002), one of the benefits induction has on new employees is easing the stressful experience of starting a new job, however, if the induction is filled with too much information this can have an opposite effect

by enhancing feelings of stress and anxiety. Furthermore, irrelevant information is also a common problem. It is important that the induction is designed for everyone, but it should not focus on aspects of the company that has no relevance to the new employee. Lastly, it can negatively affect the employer brand which can lead to low levels of productivity and increasing levels of turnover Ciphir (2016).

2.5 Employee Turnover

Employee turnover is a term used to describe ‘‘the proportion of employees who leave an organisation over a set period (often on a year-on-year basis), expressed as a percentage of total workforce numbers’’ (CIPD, 2016). Armstrong (2010, p.198) defined employee turnover as the ‘‘rate of which people leave an organisation’’. Similarly, Gunnigle (2011 p. 278) referred to this concept as 'labour turnover' or 'natural waste' and mentioned that it represents the number of people who will inevitably leave the organisation and who will need to be replaced to maintain production or service. Terms such as labour turnover, wastage and attrition are used interchangeably to describe employee turnover Armstrong (2010).

When and why does it occur? According to G&A Partners (2017), up to 20% of employee turnover can occur in the first 90 days. This is known as the ‘‘induction crisis’’ by Hill & Trist (1955) or ‘‘early leaver’’ by Fowler (1994) as cited in Cornelius (2001). Reasons for this state include unmet or unrealistic expectations, conflict in the workplace, lack of sufficient training, and an unwelcomed feeling within the company. To maintain talent, companies need to understand why employees choose to leave their job. Research by Taylor (2010) found four explanations for employee turnover. These include 1) push factors, 2) pull factors, 3) unavoidable causes, and 4) involuntary turnover Taylor (2010, p. 334). Push factors cause a person to leave their job because they are no longer satisfied with their company. Normally, these types of employees find themselves in this situation from clashes with coworkers or disapproval of new work systems and structures. In contrast, a pull factor causes a person to leave their job because of better alternative opportunities elsewhere. Pull factors do not evolve from dissatisfaction but merely due to better career opportunities, benefit packages and rates of pay another job can provide. Unavoidable causes are those out of the control of both the company and employee, such as death or retirement. Lastly, involuntary turnover is controlled by the company and includes departures such as redundancies or other dismissals. Other reasons why people leave include failed expectations CIPD (2016), bad recruitment decisions and poorly managed induction processes (IDS,

2005). In contrast, (Hana and Lucie, 2011) found that an individual is more likely to leave due to remuneration and job security factors, followed by dissatisfaction with colleagues and the business's style of communication.

2.6 Effects of Employee Turnover on a Company

It is important to note that employee turnover is not always a negative outcome as it is originally thought. Employee turnover can be beneficial. Taylor (2002) explained that employee turnover can be beneficial as it can replace poor performers with new talent. Additionally, Taylor (2002) demonstrated three key benefits of employee turnover, including new recruits, new opportunities and replacing underperforming staff. New recruits bring new ideas, enthusiasm, idealism, motivation, creativity that other staff may have lost over the years. Opportunity for career promotion means employees at junior levels within the company have an opportunity to fill vacant positions and get a promotion and replacing underperformers with talented recruits Taylor (2002).

Despite the above literature, employee turnover's negative impacts on companies are more profound than the positive impacts. The view that employee turnover is negative for business derives from the costs that are associated with replacing people. This becomes problematic when there is a high rate of people leaving at the same period and it begins to disrupt the working environment, thus increasing costs for the business Armstrong (2012). Similarly, Bryant (2013) stated that employee turnover can be a 'costly' and 'disruptive' process for any business. Employee turnover has direct and indirect costs on a company Bryant (2013). Direct costs are those associated with replacing the employee. This direct cost can cost up to 100% of the annual salary of a vacant position Bryant (2013). Financially replacing an employee can be an expensive process considering recruitment, selection and training a new employee. In contrast, the indirect costs associated with employee turnover can be more disruptive than financially Bryant (2013). These indirect costs include loss of productivity, organisation culture, memorability, strategic focus, customer service, customer loyalty Bryant (2013). Likewise, (O'Connell and Kung, 2007) stated that regardless of the reason why an employee left a job, employee turnover is a costly problem that all companies will face. Employee turnover will impact on cost including recruitment cost, cost of loss of productivity, cost of damage to employee morale (O'Connell & Kung, 2007). Other consequences of employee turnover include low morale and commitment from remaining staff, a poor reputation for retaining staff, impact on customer loyalty Taylor (2002). In a

survey undertaken by (Hana and Lucie, 2011) found employee turnover to be a loss of knowledge, as an individual leaves the company taking the knowledge with them. In total 73% of respondents in a survey perceived this loss of critical knowledge as a threat (Hana and Lucie, 2011).

2.7 Employee Turnover link to Induction

Through a review of available literature, there is an obvious association between employee turnover and induction programs. As mentioned previously employee turnover can be a factor relating to poor induction processes or bad recruitment decisions Ciphir (2016). Poor induction can also result in a new employee never really understanding their role or the organisation which can lead low morale, poor integration, and even resignation or dismissal CIPD (2016). Organisations must continually assess their onboarding process to ensure it is in aligned with the company strategies and culture. If it is not aligned the risk of the employee never fully converting over to the way of doing things or adapting the company culture will be high (O'Connell & Kung, 2007) and as result the firm is at risk of following the 'early leavers' as mentioned previously by Fowler (1994) cited in Cornelius (2001). To avoid employees resigning early (O'Connell and Kung, 2007) suggested the company must develop an effective introductory phase to sustain newly recruited talent. Gunnigle (2006, p. 123) agreed with (O'Connell and Kung, 2007) and suggested a way to avoid turnover during the 'induction crisis' is to implement an effective induction program. (Carberry and Cross, 2013) mentioned that it is only during this phase that companies can tap into new employee's energies and positivity, in turn, encourage them be productive from the start.

The above literature is in support of Hill and Trist's (1955) 'Survival Curve' model. This model demonstrated the risk of new employees resigning soon after joining a new job. The Survival Curve comprises of three phases an employee generally goes through when starting a new job mentioned already, is the 'induction crisis', phase two is the 'differential transit' and phase three is the 'settled connection'. This curve can determine the likelihood of a new employee leaving.

Stage one is known as the 'induction crisis', and is the stage where employees are most likely to leave an organisation. The induction crisis highlights the number of people that leave an organisation within the first few weeks of joining (Lashley and Best, 2002). Another concept linked to the Survival Curve is 'organisational fit' (Hill & Trist, 1955). During this stage, the employee may leave an organisation as they are having difficulty adjusting to the new environment due to a difference in personal values/ethics compared to those of the

organisation. This stage occurs again in the early stages and can have an impact on increased levels of turnover.

The second stage is known as the 'Differential Transit' stage (Hill & Trist, 1955) and is the stage where an employee begins to settle into an organisation. A level of comfort with new job roles and responsibilities is established. During this period, the risk of resignation is reduced greatly. According to (Hill & Trist, 1955) this stage occurs in the first few months and (Carberry and Cross, 2013, p.59) ‘‘highlights the effectiveness of the induction program’’ on the new employee.

The survival curve model highlights the significant impact an induction program has on a new employee’s decision to stay or leave and in turn increasing rates of turnover and retention within an organisation. Hill & Trist (1955) stated that there is not much a company can do in terms of changing an employee’s personality however, companies can make the adjustment stage easier and reduce employee turnover by improving the induction process (Hill & Trist, 1968). These findings indicate that induction training does have an impact on a new employee’s decision stay with the company especially in the early stages.

The third and final stage is known as the 'settled connection stage'. During this stage the employee has established themselves, is contributing to the success of the organisation, fully integrated into the organisation and settled in their job. (Hill & Trist, 1955) job satisfaction is also increasingly high at this stage. Job satisfaction is a work attitude that is less favorable when a person resigns (Mowday, Steers and Porter, 1974). Therefore, low levels of job satisfaction are associated with employee turnover. However, during the ‘settled connection stage’, this work attitude is increasingly high which is a strong indication of a committed employee who is more likely going to stay with their company. This affiliation with job satisfaction and the likelihood of an individual staying in their job was outlined in (Mowday, Steers and Porter, 1974) study on organisation commitment, job satisfaction and turnover among a group of Psychiatric Technicians. This study found a strong connection between work attitudes such as commitment and job satisfaction and employee turnover. These attitudes appeared to be less favorable when a person resigns from their job therefore low levels of commitment and job satisfaction is a consequence of employee turnover.

2.8 Commitment and Employee Engagement

Meyer, Herscovitch (2001, p. 299) described commitment as "a force that binds an individual to a course of action". This force generates various mind sets that shape the behavior of the individual (Meyer and Herscovitch, 2001). (Mowday, Steers and Porter, 1974) stated that commitment involves participation and willingness to stay with the company. Regardless of the definition source, employee commitment is commonly recognized as "the strength of an individual's identification with, and involvement in, an organisation" (Armstrong, 2016 p. 202).

Smith (2016) committed employees are generally reliable, proactive and dedicated workers that believe in the vision of the company and that are less likely going to leave for another job opportunity. (Ghosh and Satyawadi, 2013) mentioned commitment is one of the main predictors of employee's intention to stay or leave. Research by (O'Reilly and Chatman, 1986) agreed with this prediction and found a strong correlation between employee commitment and intention to leave. In addition, (Rizwan, Mumir, Iqbal and Hussain, 2014) suggested lack of employee commitment contributes to high rates of intention to leave the workforce.

(Mowday, Steers and Porter, 1974) outlined common characteristics of commitment, including a sense of belief in company values, a willingness to go above and beyond for the firm and a desire to stay with the company for the foreseeable future. Similarly, (O'Reilly & Chapman, 1986) suggested commitment involves going above what is required and voluntarily taken part in activities. Findings from (O'Reilly & Chapman, 1986) research also found high commitment indicated a low level of turnover. This viewpoint was also proposed in (Mowday, Steers and Porter, 1974) study describing commitment as a work attitude that appears to be less favorable when a person resigns, therefore, commitment is affiliated with employee turnover.

2.9 Models of Commitment

Over the year's various academics developed models that can define and measure commitment. Kessler (2013) identified the three widely recognized established models as the calculative approach, the attitudinal approach and the multidimensional approach. The calculative approach was established by Becker (1960) as cited in Kessler (2013). This model found that individuals invest time and effort in exchange for value. They also develop skills and knowledge that are sometimes hard to replace. If a person leaves, this is known as a loss of investment. In order to avoid this, company takes measure in the areas of pay, promotion opportunity and more freedom. In contrast, the attitudinal approach focuses on the 'psychological' or behavioral aspect. Here, commitment is a work attitude which develops when an individual's goals and values are contingent to the those of the organisation. There are three levels to this approach, an acceptance of the organisations' values, a strong feeling of wanting to remain in the organisation and enthusiasm to go above beyond what is required for the organisation.

Lastly, the multidimensional approach formed by (Meyer and Allen, 1984) is the most recognized models of organizational commitment Kessler (2013). In this model, the commitment has two dimensions, affective and continuance later adding normative to the approach. The affective commitment represents the emotional aspect of the employee relationship, reflecting on the emotional ties the individual develops while working in their job. A person with affective commitment enjoys their job and is proud of the company they work for. This, in turn, increases job satisfaction among the workforce and the commitment of employees towards the working environment. Normative commitment is based on the employee's perceived obligation towards their job. This type of commitment occurs most often when a company has invested time and money into the individual resulting in them staying because they feel it is the right thing to do. A person with normative commitment may be unhappy but due to loyalties, they will stay working in their job. Finally, continuance commitment is based on the perceived cost of the leaving the job on a social and economic basis. A person with this type of commitment is typically in a senior role that they have spent years working with the company to get to that point in their career. Years of working for promotions, building relationships and acquiring seniority among employees may seem like a waste of the individual decided to leave and search for employment elsewhere.

2.10 How can a company increase employee commitment?

(Buciuniene and Skudiene, 2008) found that the 'leadership style' had an impact on employee commitment. The 'transformational leadership style' was found to be a determinant of commitment (Buciuniene and Skudiene, 2008). While, (Armstrong, 2003 p. 454) suggested "the first step in achieving commitment is to present the organisation as one that is worth working for and to ensure that this first impression is reinforced during the first weeks of employment". Unlike the other influences mentioned above, Armstrong's (2003) research focused on how the employee perceived the organisation. If the firm presents itself as one that is worth, then an employee is more likely going to stay and be committed for a longer period. Similarly, as previously mentioned by Meighan (2000), the first experience can have a great impact on the employee commitment. This is also supported by Darcy (2013) who explained that the first impression is important as it does impact the individual's perception of a company, their work commitment, and work ethic.

2.11 Employee engagement

Employee engagement is widely seen as "a state of being, both physical, mental and emotional, but many also view it as an encompassing behavior and in particular work effort" (CIPD, 2016). One of the oldest definitions by Kahn (1990) stating employee engagement is "the harnessing of organisation's members, selves to their work roles, in engagement, people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively and emotionally during role performance" (Kahn, 1990, p. 694). While Schaufeli and Bakker (2004) described this concept by referring to a three-dimensional state that includes 'dedication', 'vigor' and 'absorption'. Dedication is concerned with the individual's identification and involvement with their work and inspiring feelings towards their work. Vigor is concerned with individual's energies and efforts invested into their job while absorption refers to the individual's concentration while at work. In the workplace, this concept is known as a 'productive relationship' whereby everyone involved is working to their full potential towards the goals of the organisation (MacLeod & Clarke, 2010). Likewise, (Anitha, 2014, p. 309) suggested "Employee engagement is defined in general as the level of commitment and involvement an employee has towards their organisation and its values"

2.12 Drivers of employee engagement

There are many different drivers of employee engagement, which can vary from sector to sector. Mani (2011) identified four drivers of employee engagement which included empowerment, interpersonal relationships, employee welfare and growth. In contrast, IES (2009) focused on 'feeling valued and involved' as the most important driver of employee engagement. When a company values its employees and allows space for employee opinion this will in turn increase engagement levels. Bedarkar and Pandita (2004) outlined three drivers of employee engagement including 'communication', 'leadership' and 'work life balance'. When these three factors appear to be a priority in a company, the overall business will benefit from increased engagement levels among the workforce. Similar Anitha (2014) who identified five factors (leadership, training, work environment, team and colleagues, career development and compensation) which directly impact and drive employee engagement. On the other hand, (Wellins, Concelman, 2005) stated that one of the most important factors that encourage engagement in the workplace is a quality leader. How the individual perceives their leader will impact how they feel about their work and the effort they contribute to the organisation.

2.13 Engaged employee

(IES, 2009) identified the common traits of an engaged individual; trust in the organisation, aspire to work effectively, organisation knowledge, humble to colleagues, desire to go above and beyond for the organisation. Zarkadakis (2015) shared a similar viewpoint, stating that engagement levels depend on how connected an employee is to certain areas in their organisation including training, development prospects, social environment, company culture, leadership and rewards. Engaged employees are typically found to have a 'can do' attitude Sundaray (2011). This attitude can positively impact the performance of employees, the customer service, the revenue, the commitment of employees while at the same time decrease levels of absenteeism and turnover as well as employee's willingness to quit IBEC (2008). Likewise, (Wellins, Concelman, 2005) found a clear association between engaged employee and lower turnover rates.

The above research suggests that employee engagement is an important factor and can influence the success of a business. In contrast, disengagement is a lack of engagement level in the workplace. (AbuKhalifeh and Som, 2013) noted that disengagement can result in poor performance, high turnover, lack of morale and high absenteeism. This type of an employee is more likely going to be attracted to a job elsewhere, therefore, intention to leave increases.

2.14 Link between commitment and employee engagement

From previous research, it's clear to see that there is an association between employee commitment and employee engagement. IES (2001) described engagement as being 'one step up' from commitment. While Armstrong, (2010) referred to commitment as a component of employee engagement describing committed employees as individuals that are geared towards achieving goals, and as a result engagement takes place. Similarly, Anitha (2014) suggested engagement is a result of involvement and affective commitment to the job. (MacLeod and Clarke, 2010) to be engaged, employees are required to be committed and involved by putting extra effort into their work.

2.15 The Present Study

The aim of the present study is to explore the possible impact participating in an induction has on employee commitment, employee engagement and employee's willingness to leave. Based on the literature, the study predicts the induction program will play an important role in the level of commitment and engagement among employees and their willingness to stay in their job. The main variables are the induction program variable, employee commitment variable, employee engagement variable and willingness to leave variable. Finally, the study will explore the association between the variables and attempt to answer the research project's question, sub questions and hypothesis.

Chapter three: Research Aims and Objectives

3.1 The aims and objectives of this research study will be examined using a quantitative research approach. The main title of this study is ‘ ‘ The employee experience of an induction program and its impact on the employee turnover and level of employee commitment and engagement in an Irish software company’’. Based on the research explored in the previous literature review, the research aims and objectives seek to attain a deeper insight and understanding of the topic under investigation. It is predicted that the findings, of this research will present a prominent connection between all areas of the research and from the findings a set of recommendations will be developed to rectify any problems that occur along the way. The fundamental reason for carrying out this study is that few previous studies have successfully carried out research in this context.

3.2 Research Questions and Hypothesis

4. To explore the different experience of induction among employees.
5. To examine the link between employee experience of induction and employee commitment and engagement
6. To highlight any improvement that could be implemented into the current induction program.

H1- There is an association between the participation in an induction program and employee engagement.

H2- There is an association between the participation in an induction program and employee commitment.

H3- There is an association between the participating in an induction program and intention to leave.

H4- There is an association between employee engagement and intention to leave.

H5-There is an association between employee commitment and intention to leave.

Chapter four: Methodology

4.1 Introduction

This section presents an overview of the methodology followed with respect to this research. The chapter begins with the research questions, followed by the research hypothesis, the research design, the sample, the materials, the procedure before concluding on the reliability, validity and limitations of the study.

The induction is an important process that can have a positive impact on everyone involved. This training activity is recognized as ‘‘the process of newcomers entering and becoming part of an organisation’’ (Sprogø and Elkjaer, 2010, p.130). This essentially represents a period in which a person transitions into their new role and responsibilities. Companies who invest into induction programs reduce the risk of employee turnover and low retention rates (Cable, Gino, and Staats, 2013). This practice can also positively influence the employee experience Snell (2006) and raise employee commitment and engagement levels (SHRM, 2010). The purpose of this study is to evaluate the current induction program and the impact it has on employee turnover, employee commitment and employee engagement within a chosen company. By doing so, the researcher will get a deep understanding of the effectiveness of the current induction program and its impact on employees. The main objective of this study is to see if there is a link between the experience of induction programs and the employee turnover, commitment and engagement. By evaluating the current induction program the company has in place and its effect on employees the researcher will have a better understanding of the programs strong points and to rectify any problems that might exist.

The aim of the methodology chapter is to examine and assess the research methodologies used in respect to this dissertation. The focus is to first inform the reader how the research was performed and secondly what philosophical assumptions were established Quinlan (2011). It is critical that the chosen research methodology supports the research and enforces the establishment of valuable results. This research will investigate the impact of the induction program and whether it has an impact on the individual’s willingness to stay, the employee commitment levels and engagement levels. To achieve this above, several research techniques were adapted to this study which is outlined in this methodology chapter.

4.2 Research Philosophy

The research philosophy is the beliefs and assumptions that help develop the knowledge Saunders, Lewis, Thornhill (2016). There is a variety of research philosophies, however, there is no superior or greater one as it depends on the type of research undertaken and the desired outcome. A research philosophy can also help to clarify the research design Blumberg, Cooper and Schindler (2005). For this research, a positivism philosophy was selected. Positivism is concerned with developing a hypothesis to collect credible data. A hypothesis is a statement that is tested and confirmed which can lead to further developments in a specific area. This research assumption on hypothesis and deductive will support the positivistic approach.

4.3 Research Design

This study is a cross sectional research study based on descriptive research and with a deductive approach. The research approach is concerned with how the data is collected from the real world to test or explore the theory at hand Lee and Lings (2008). The two general research approaches are deductive and inductive. Deductive is theory driven and focuses on collecting data through a theoretical position. In contrast, inductive is data driven and focused on developing a theoretical explanation Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2016). Following a review of the literature, a deductive approach was selected for this study.

The research design is concerned with developing a framework for data collection, analyzing data and to answer the research question and objectives. The main research designs include descriptive, exploratory and explanatory. Descriptive research enables the study to “gain an accurate profile of events, persons or situation” (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2016, p. 175). For this research, a descriptive research design was selected.

The research strategy is a method used to answer the research question Saunders et al., (2016). The strategy choice depends on the research question, research objectives, resources available and the time in which the study must be completed. There is a variety of strategies that can be adapted to the research including surveys, case study, action research, grounded theory and archival research Saunders et al., (2016). Following a review of the literature, a quantitative survey research strategy was selected.

4.4 Quantitative Vs. Qualitative research methods

Quantitative research and qualitative research are both research methods suitable for various research questions, situations and problems. Newman and Benz (1998) a quantitative approach is concerned with numerical and statistical data. This approach is used when one begins with a theory (or hypothesis) and tests for confirmation or disconfirmation of the hypothesis. In contrast, a qualitative approach is concerned with insights and opinions, and is less probable to make generalisations Elliot and Timbulak (2005). Following a review of the literature, a quantitative approach was selected for this study. The advantages associated with using this method are as follows. The information is gathered numerically facilitating an absolute unit of measurement. Quantitative methods tend to be more objective so the potential risk of bias which can affect the reliability and validity of this study is minimized.

4.5 Sample

This organization was selected due to personal connections with the company. Participants were not obliged to take part if they did not want to or felt uncomfortable. However, prior to the research taking place, the author mentioned it to potential participants who expressed great interest and willingness to take part when the time came around. Convenience sampling was used to recruit participants. The participants were all working professionals in an Irish software company. In total 107 participants responded to the survey. The age range of participants was 18-55 plus years (45= 18-25 years, 41= 26-35 years, 17= 36-45 years, 3= 46-55 years, 1= 56 plus years). The approach of convenient sampling in terms of recruiting participants was adapted to the research as it is a quick and inexpensive method of collecting data. Convenient sampling also enabled the research to gain a broad view of the attitudes and opinions of the population under investigation.

4.6 Materials

An information sheet and consent form found in the appendix was provided to each participant before the study took place. From the paperwork, participants were giving clear details of the study.

4.7 Survey Instrument

The instrument adapted to this research is a survey questionnaire. Surveys are a popular research instrument that is mainly associated with deductive research. The advantages of using this type of instrument are as follows: data gathered is easily analyzed, it's cost effective, a large population of people can be targeted at one time across multiple demographics, the use of modern technology such as email and surveys can also increase the

speed of the overall research process which is beneficial when a deadline date is required and it can easily identify common trends among respondents. This method is also perceived by people as easy to understand which is an important factor when convincing participants to take part in the study. The data was entered into a survey tool called Limescale which generated the questions into a survey. The link to this site was then sent to all participants in the email.

The questionnaire employed a cross sectional design, that considered five sections including demographic factors, employee engagement, employee commitment, the experience of an induction program and willingness to stay in the company.

Section one (1) Demographics

Demographic questions measure the respondent groups in terms of age, gender, marital status, job role and length of service. These questions included the following:

1. Are you male or female?
2. How old are you?
3. What is your marital status?
4. The length of time you have spent with the company?

Section two (2) Employee Engagement

The employee engagement questions developed by Whiteoak & Mohamed (2016) measured the level of employee engagement among the respondents. Respondents indicated on a five point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree, disagree, neither disagree nor agree, agree and strongly agree. One item in this questionnaire had a reverse score which meant it had a negatively phrased score that had to be recoded meaning each item was scored backward and then added together to get a total score for employee engagement. These questions include the following:

1. The work I do in my job is interesting
2. The work I do in my job is challenging
3. I experience a sense of fulfillment from working
4. Generally, my job is boring

Section three (3) Employee Commitment

The employee commitment questions based on Hadjimanolis, Boustras, Economides, Yiannaki and Nicolaides (2015) Organisational commitment measure questionnaire were included in the survey to measure the level of employee commitment among the respondents. Respondents revealed their answers on a five point Likert scale that ranged from strongly disagree, disagree, neither disagree nor agree, agree and strongly agree. These items included the following

1. I would like to work for this firm for the rest of my life.
2. I discuss the firm I work for with others.
3. I feel the problems of the firm as my own problems.
4. The firm I work for is important to me personally.
5. Generally, I am satisfied with the decisions of my firm

Section four (4) Induction Programs

This section contained four items developed by CHS Alliance (2017) which focused on respondent's participation in an induction program. Respondents answered all questions with either a yes or no answer except for the last item which gave the respondent an opportunity to give a recommendation. These questions included the following:

1. Have you taken part in an induction program with your current employer?
2. Did the induction help you understand your role and responsibilities?
3. Was the appropriate policies and procedures explained to you during the training?
4. If there one aspect of the induction that you think could be improved what would it be?

Section five (5) Willingness to leave

The final section within the survey focused on employee's willingness to leave or stay. The four of the items focused on (Emberland and Rundmo, 2010) turnover intentions measure. Items were transcribed into phrase and expressions that correlated with this type of work environment. Respondents answered each question on a five point Likert scale that ranged from never, sometimes, frequently and all the time. These items included the following:

1. I think about quitting my job.
2. I have considered leaving the company for advancement opportunities not available here.
3. I plan to look for a new job during the next year.
4. I think about staying with my current employer.

4.8 Pilot study

When developing, editing and executing the survey to participants, the researcher had several steps to complete before concluding on the results. Firstly, the questions were uploaded on to an online survey tool known as Limescale. This tool allowed the researcher to upload all questions and split them into sub sections. Secondly, the questions and potential answers were edited so that they made sense and it gave the participant appropriate options to answer the question with using a 5 Likert scale that included strongly disagree, disagree, neither agree nor disagree, agree and strongly agree. Other questions had a Yes or No option. The next step was to analyze and transcribe the data from an excel sheet into SPSS. Finally, the data collected was transcribed into results. Before any data collection could begin, the researcher tested a Pilot study on five volunteers to determine potential errors that could possibly occur. From the volunteer's feedback two spelling mistakes were highlighted and a question that required to be re worded. The question was changed so that it was easy to understand. With this helpful feedback, the researcher logged on to the survey tool and made the relevant changes. The following day the survey was activated and the data collection commenced.

4.9 Survey Development

Participants who agreed to take part received an information sheet detailing the study and participant involvement. A consent form was also given to all participants who agreed to take part. The following day an email with a link attached to it was sent to all participants during lunch time. A survey link via email was used because of its efficiency of collecting the appropriate data for the research. Each participant had access to an email account which made it easier for respondents to complete in their own time. The email outlined what the survey was about and invited participants to take part. Before this, the researcher physically met with potential participants who agree to take part in the study. Prior to this email, interested participants were already aware of what the study consisted of and who they should contact if they had further questions. The survey was sent to all participants during lunch time on Wednesday the 2nd August. It was sent during lunch time to avoid interference with respondents work commitments. The company was already notified and gave permission for the survey to be sent during the work hours. The survey went live for five working days this gave participants enough time to respond and take part in the survey. The survey consisted of five sections divided into sub headings which included Demographics, employee engagement, employee commitment, induction program and intention to stay. Section one demographics had six questions. Section two employee engagement had four questions on a 5 point Likert scale. Section three had five questions on a 5 point Likert scale. Section three was split up into yes/no and recommendations question. Section four consist of four questions with a five point Likert scale option. The responsive rate was fast on the first day and then it went down until the next day. After five days, the survey was deactivated and another email was sent to all participants to thank them for their participation.

4.10 Time Horizon

A time horizon is the actual amount of time the researcher must collect data to prove or disprove the research hypothesis. Cross sectional and longitudinal are both time horizons that are optional for a research project. For this research, a cross sectional time horizon was adapted because of the time constraint and deadline date of the dissertation.

4.11 Reliability and Validity

Reliability refers to the replication of earlier research design and findings. If the research achieves the same finding as previous research, then it is considered reliable. While validity represents the appropriateness of measures, analysis of results and generalisability of findings. For the research to be considered valid the measures must be fit for purpose, the analysis of results must be accurate and the results must be generalisable and have the ability to be applied to other research Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2009).

4.12 Ethical Consideration

Prior to the research process and during the research process, ethical considerations were considered. Firstly, permission was required by the company to carry out the research. When this permission was granted the researched commenced. The author had to ensure no information was released about the company, other than it was a software company with a variety of different departments based in Ireland. This was done to secure the anonymity of the company and to also shield them from potential recruitment problems. For example, if the information was released and the results indicated that employees were not committed or engaged and a majority felt like they wanted to leave the company this would cause future problems when attempting to recruit new employees. Another ethical consideration was the respondents and their anonymity which was also protected. Each participant received an information sheet which stated all answers were to be strictly kept confidential. This made participants more comfortable and willing to take part in the research.

4.13 Limitations of the study

The limitation in a research project is a disadvantage the researcher had to endure while undertaken the research. One of the limitations of this study was the survey tool used to formulate the questionnaire. The Limescale survey tool could only be accessed using a chrome browser. Although it was not a major limitation, it did prevent potential participants from taken part in the study which limited the number of respondents and measurement of results. Another limitation was the use of convenient sampling as a method of recruiting participants. As previously mentioned this method requires permission. This is a limitation as without permission the research could not commence.

Chapter five: Results

5.1 Data analysis

Data analysis was carried out using IBM SPSS Statistical Package. The data analysis was split into two stages these were the reliability of three scales; Relationship between induction programs participation and engagement level, Relationship between induction programs participation and commitment level, Relationship between induction programs participation and intention to leave and the second stage presents the results from exploration of scales in regards to various groupings. Reliability of scales was measured using the Cronbach's Alpha method to calculate the consistency of responses to find the most frequent (Saunders et al., 2009). The correlation coefficient was also used to measure the strength of the relationship between each variable. A positive correlation is represented by the letter r and is determined as a value between +1 and -1 in contrast a negative correlation represents a -1 value which indicated variables are not entirely related (Saunders et al., 2009). Finally, the responses in section two, three and five were rated using a Likert scale which indicates how strongly the respondent agrees or disagrees with a 'statement or serious of statements' (Saunders et al., 2016, p. 457).

5.2 Demographic information

Table 1 lists the respondent's demographic information. The study consisted of males and females between the age range of 18-56 plus years (45= 18 years up to 25 years, 41= 26 years up to 35 years, 17= 36 years up to 45, 3= 46 years up to 55 years and 1=56 plus years).

| Age | Quantity |
|---------|----------|
| 18 - 25 | 45 |
| 26 - 35 | 41 |
| 36 - 45 | 17 |
| 46 - 55 | 3 |
| 56 + | 1 |

Table 1

5.3 Scale Reliability Analysis

Cronbach Alpha analysis was used to assess the reliability of each construct under consideration; Employee Engagement, Employee Commitment and Intention to Leave. The results of the analysis are presented in Tables 2 through to 7. With respect to Employee Engagement, the scale consisted of 4 items, of the 107 responses (cases) 101 were deemed to be valid, with 6 cases being excluded from the analysis due to non-completion of a selection of the 4 items. A Cronbach Alpha of 0.836 was observed for the Employee Engagement scale. Considering the Employee Commitment scale, the scale consisted of 5 items, of the 107 responses (cases) 96 were deemed to be valid, with 11 cases being excluded from the analysis. A Cronbach Alpha of 0.729 was observed for the Employee Commitment scale. With respect to the reliability associated with the Employee Intention to Leave scale, the scale consisted of 4 items, of the 107 responses (cases) 91 were deemed to be valid, with 16 cases being excluded from the analysis. A Cronbach Alpha of 0.836 was observed for the Employee Intention to Leave scale. All scales were deemed to meet the minimum reliability threshold, as their associated Cronbach Alpha scores were above 0.7.

| Case Processing Summary | | |
|-------------------------|------------|--------------|
| Cases | N | % |
| Valid | 101 | 94.4 |
| Excluded | 6 | 5.6 |
| Total | 107 | 100.0 |

Table 2

| Reliability Statistics | |
|------------------------|------------|
| Cronbach's Alpha | N of Items |
| .836 | 4 |

Table 3

| Case Processing Summary | | |
|-------------------------|------------|--------------|
| Cases | N | % |
| Valid | 96 | 89.7 |
| Excluded | 11 | 10.3 |
| Total | 107 | 100.0 |

Table 4

| Reliability Statistics | |
|------------------------|------------|
| Cronbach's Alpha | N of Items |
| .729 | 5 |

Table 5

| Case Processing Summary | | |
|-------------------------|------------|--------------|
| Cases | N | % |
| Valid | 91 | 85.0 |
| Excluded | 16 | 15.0 |
| Total | 107 | 100.0 |

Table 6

| Reliability Statistics | |
|------------------------|------------|
| Cronbach's Alpha | N of Items |
| .836 | 4 |

Table 7

5.4 Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics describe the data features of the study and provides a summary of the sample and measures. The table below shows the results for each variable that was entered into the analysis.

Within the engagement section there is a total of 101 valid responses and 6 incomplete responses. The mean or central tendency is 3.7624. The standard deviation is 0.78133. The range is 3.5 and the Cronbach amount is .836.

Within the commitment section there is a total of 96 valid responses and 11 incomplete responses. The mean or central tendency is 3.4021. The standard deviation is 0.66964. The range is 4 and the Cronbach amount is .729.

Within the intention to leave section there is a total of 91 valid responses and 16 incomplete responses. The mean or central tendency is 2.033. The standard deviation is 0.73994. The range is 3 and the Cronbach amount is .839.

| | # Valid | Missing | Mean | SD | Range | Cronbach |
|------------------------------------|---------|---------|--------|---------|-------|----------|
| Engagement Composite Score | 101 | 6 | 3.7624 | 0.78133 | 3.5 | .836 |
| Commitment Composite Score | 96 | 11 | 3.4021 | 0.66964 | 4 | .729 |
| Intention to Leave Composite Score | 91 | 16 | 2.033 | 0.73994 | 3 | .839 |

Table 8

Composite Scores

Pearson's correlation examining the relationship between each variable. The correlation was used to measure the significant correlation between the independent and dependent variables within each hypothesis of the study.

1. There is an association between participation in induction programs and employee engagement.
2. There is an association between participation in an induction program and employee commitment.
3. There is an association between participation in an induction program employee intention to leave.
4. There is an association between employee engagement and intention to leave.
5. There is an association between employee commitment and intention to leave

Table 9 below detailed the negative correlations that appeared in this study. While Table 10, below shows the positive correlations.

Table 9

Presents a negative result for the association between participating in induction programs and employee engagement, employee commitment and intention to leave in the table below.

| | Correlations | Induction Programme |
|------------------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------|
| Engagement Composite Score | Pearson Correlation | -.114 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .278 |
| | N | 92 |
| Commitment Composite Score | Pearson Correlation | -.033 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .755 |
| | N | 92 |
| Intention to Leave Composite Score | Pearson Correlation | .035 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .740 |
| | N | 91 |

Table 10

Presents a positive result for the association between engagement and intention to leave and commitment and intention to leave.

| Correlations | | IntentionToLeaveCompositeScore |
|----------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Engagement Composite Score | Pearson Correlation | -.375 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 |
| | N | 91 |
| Commitment Composite Score | Pearson Correlation | -.432 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 |
| | N | 91 |

Hypothesis one (1) Pearson's correlation coefficient was used to examine the relationship between participation in induction program and employee engagement. Table X below shows a small negative correlation between participation in induction programs and employee engagement ($r = -.114$, $N = 92$, $p = .278$).

Figure 1 presents a non-pattern scatter plot. From this diagram, it is assumed there is no relationship between the X and Y axis as it does not resemble any kind of pattern.

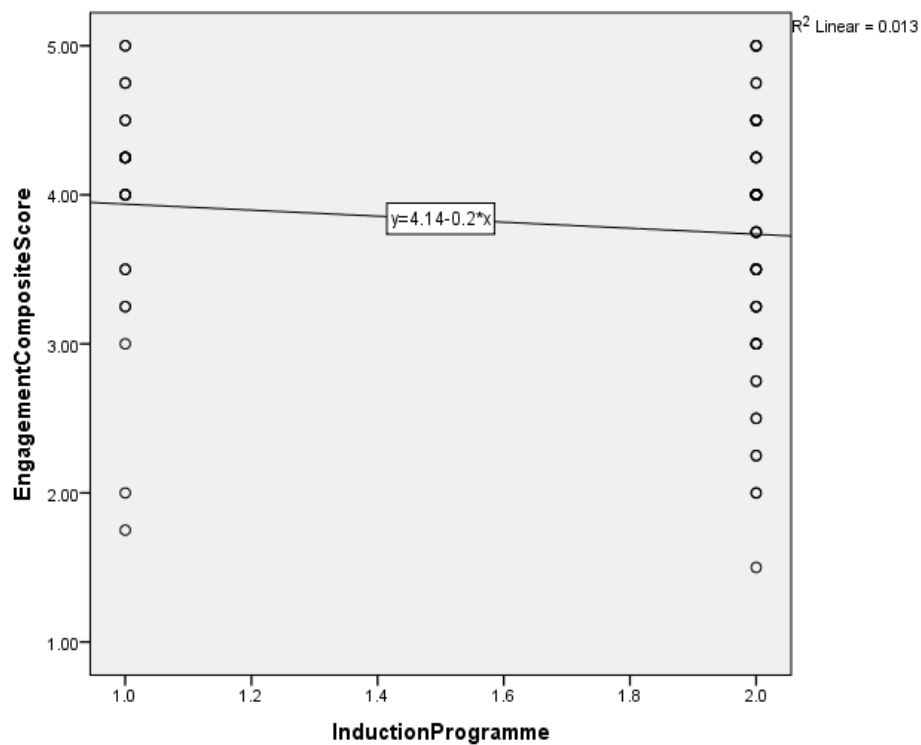


Figure 1. Scatterplot showing relationship between participation in induction programs and employee engagement

Hypothesis two (2) Pearson's correlation coefficient was used to examine the relationship between participation in induction program and employee commitment. Table X below shows a small negative correlation between participation in induction programs and employee engagement ($r = -.033$, $n=92$, $p=.755$).

Figure 2 presents a non-pattern scatter plot. From this diagram, it is assumed there is no relationship between the X and Y axis as it does not resemble any kind of pattern.

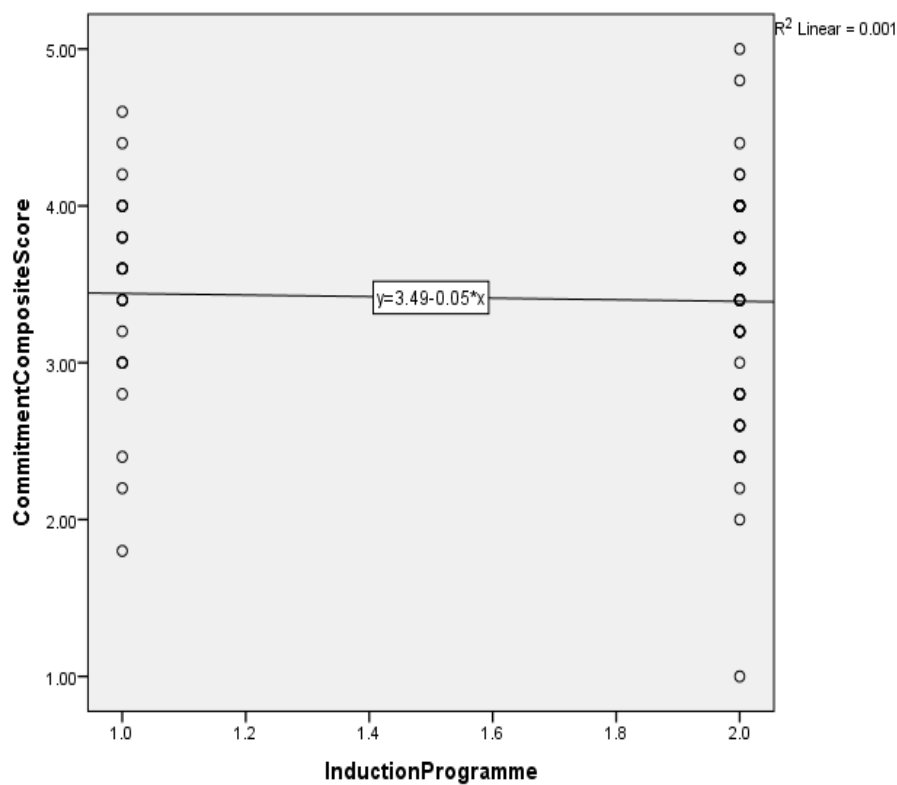


Figure 2. Scatterplot showing relationship between participation in induction programs and employee engagement

Hypothesis three (3) Pearson's correlation coefficient was used to examine the relationship between participation in induction program and intention to leave. Table X below shows a small negative correlation between participation in induction programs and employee engagement ($r = .035$, $n = 91$, $p = .740$).

Figure 3 presents a non-pattern scatter plot. From this diagram, it is assumed there is no relationship between the X and Y axis as it does not resemble any kind of pattern.

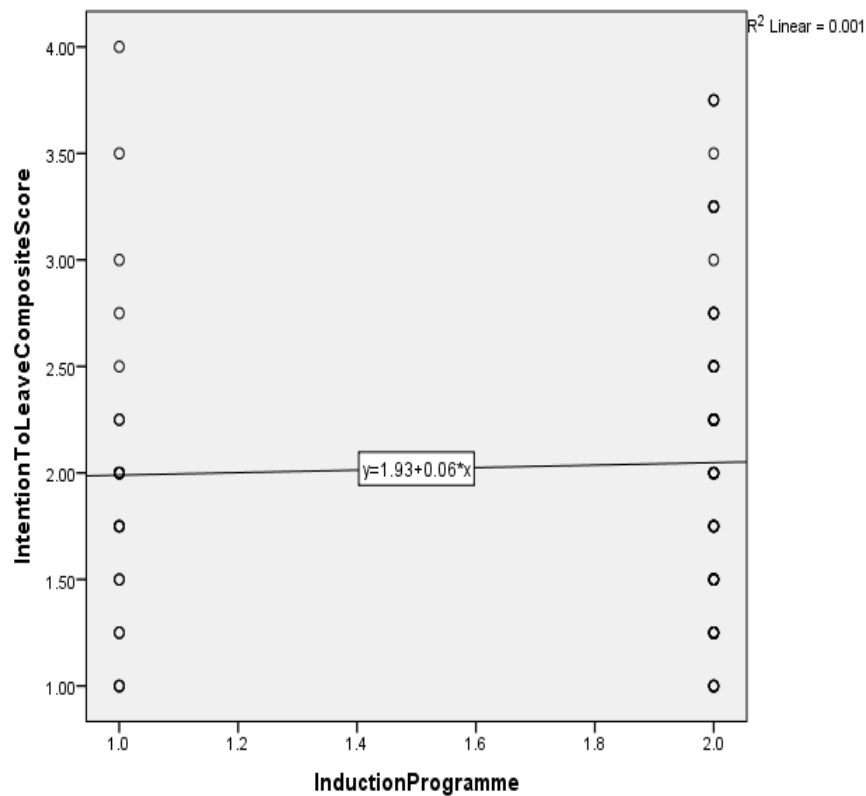


Figure 3. Scatterplot showing relationship between participation in induction programs and employee intention to leave

Hypothesis four (4) Pearson's correlation coefficient was used to examine the relationship between intention to leave and employee engagement. Table X below shows a positive correlation between intention to leave and employee engagement ($r = -.375$, $n = 91$, $p = .000$).

Figure 4 presents a pattern scatter plot. From this diagram, it is assumed there is a relationship between the X and Y axis as it resembles an uphill pattern.

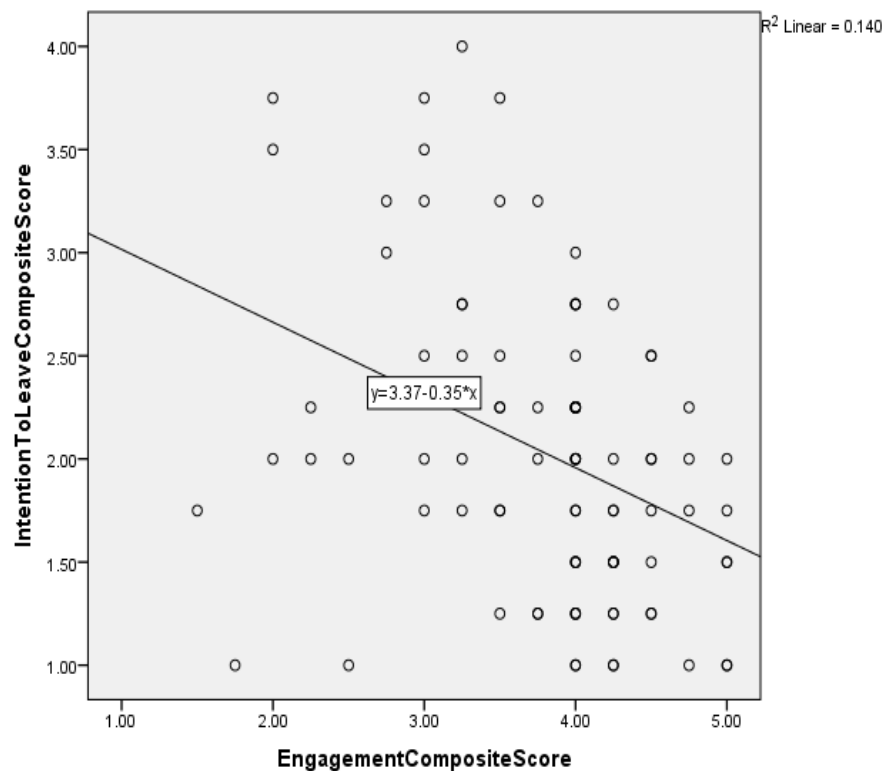


Figure 4. Scatterplot showing relationship between intention to leave and engagement

Hypothesis five (5) Pearson's correlation coefficient was used to examine the relationship between intention to leave and employee commitment. Table X below shows a positive correlation between intention to leave and employee commitment ($r = .432$, $n = 91$, $p = .000$).

Figure 5 presents a pattern scatter plot. From this diagram, it is assumed there is a relationship between the X and Y axis as it does resemble an uphill pattern.

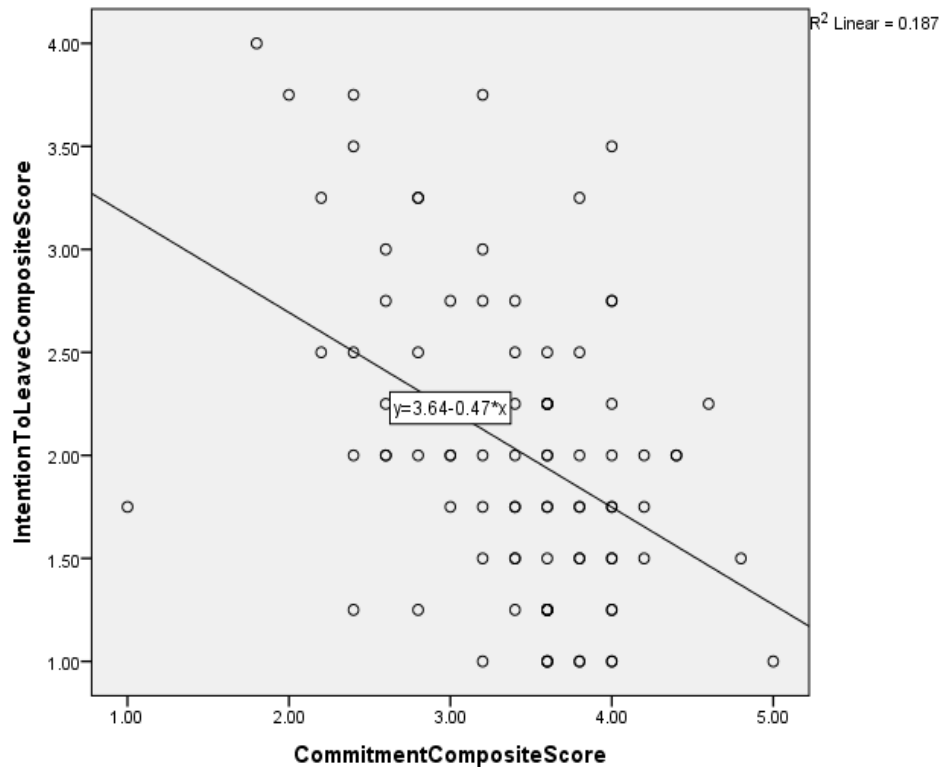


Figure 5. Scatterplot showing relationship between intention to leave and commitment

Chapter 6: Discussion Chapter

6.1 Introduction

The discussion chapter examines the findings in relation to the research that is currently been undertaken. The main aims and objectives of this study will be discussed before a review of each hypothesis. As mentioned previously in the literature review the induction is a process that gradually improves the effectiveness of a new employee and ensures they are settled into their job (SHRM, 2010). It also ensures they receive the appropriate organisational knowledge and support to perform in their new role and responsibilities CIPD (2010). For this reason, induction programs are considered an important practice that must be reviewed from time to time to ensure it is continuous development through employees.

This research aimed to explore the significant impact the employee experience of induction program had on the employee engagement, employee commitment and its impact on intention to leave. The main research questions focused on exploring the different experience of induction among employee, to examine the link between employee experience of induction with commitment and engagement and to highlight any improvements that could be implemented to the current induction program. To examine each hypothesis a variety of tests were carried out using the SPSS software available online. First, a reliability test was carried out on the three scales using Cronbach's Alpha. The three scales had a greater score than value 0.7 which meant they are considered reliable. After the scales tested positive for reliability, a composite scale was developed in SPSS to examine the strength of the correlation between each variable. This process was carried out using Pearson's correlation analysis.

The primary hypothesis proposed that the participation in induction programs has an association with employee engagement. Findings indicated that there is no association between the participation of an induction program and employee engagement. In this test, Pearson correlation was undertaken to ascertain the relationship between participation in an induction program and its association with engagement. Results of this testing found a low value which meant there was no association between the variables. As one variable increases, there is no evidence that other decreases which means there is no significant relationship between the two variables. This result differs from previous research by (Aberdeen Group (2013) (SHRM, 2010) who found a positive correlation between induction programs and employee engagement. Although these results do not agree with previous research, there are

many reasons why for example the current induction may not be as effective on employees within this company. Although research suggests induction programs effectively improve engagement, research also suggests induction can have an undesirable outcome especially when it contains irrelevant information, information overload and overselling the job. Anyone of these factors can contribute to an ineffective induction and could potentially be the reason the induction program had no association with the respondent's engagement levels.

The second hypothesis proposed that the participation in an induction program has an association with employee commitment. This hypothesis was rejected as a relationship between the variables of the study was found to have no association with each other. The results highlighted a low value which means there is no relationship between the variables. This outcome disagrees with previous research by Deloitte (2017) who suggested Induction participation can improve commitment, job satisfaction and performance and SHRM (2010) who insists the support of an induction program can lead to higher levels of employee commitment. Other conflicting research previously mentioned in the literature review by Meighan (2000) and (Carberry and Cross, 2013) who emphasized on the induction program and classify it as the first encounter between the employee and employer which can impact the employee's commitment and work ethic. Although this result is inconsistent with previous research mentioned in the literature there are possible reasons why this confliction occurred. Firstly, there is no available evidence to confirm how effective the actual induction program was on each respondent. There is a possibility that the current induction program is not effective as it is supposed to be or it is badly managed. If this is correct, the organization should focus on the current induction program and observe the current process and implement changes that can make the induction program more effective on its employees.

The third hypothesis, proposed there is an association between participation in an induction program and intention to leave again, a negative relationship was found between both variables after Pearson's correlations applied. This result differs from previous research mentioned in the literature review. This result is inconsistent with Hill & Trist (1955) study previously mentioned. Hill and Trist (1955) study found a strong correlation between induction and willingness and mentioned that the 'induction crisis' represents employees who leave during this time because of a bad induction which increased their intention to leave. Although the results of this hypothesis were found to be negative there are a couple of reasons why this happened, firstly the turnover rate in the company wasn't tested. If the turnover rate was tested, this would have given the results as a percentage of how many

employees are leaving the company because of a bad induction. Another reason, the induction questionnaire briefly asked employees did they take part in an induction and what they thought of the overall experience of the induction program. A different Induction questionnaire that focused on rating the induction and rating each respondent's intention to leave their job potentially could have made a difference to the strength of the correlation and overall result of this hypothesis.

The fourth hypothesis proposed there is an association between employee engagement and intention to leave. This hypothesis was supported by a positive correlation. This finding highlight the notion of one variable increases while the other variable decreases for example as the engagement increases the likelihood of the employee leaving the organization decreases. This result agrees with previous research by IBEC (2010) engaged employees to determine lower levels of turnover and employee willingness to leave. This result is also supported by (Wellins and Concelman, 2005) engaged workforce is more committed, productive, loyal to their organization and lower turnover rates. This research suggested engagement correlates with lower turnover and intention to leave as employees are loyal and the likelihood of them leaving for another job opportunity is lower when engagement is prominent.

The fifth hypothesis proposed there is an association between employee commitment and intention to leave. This hypothesis was supported by a positive correlation, the findings from this hypothesis determine a strong relationship between both variable. As previously mentioned when a positive correlation is presented one variable increases while the other decreases. In this case, commitment increases and the likelihood of the employee leaving the organization decreases. These results are supported by previous research that has found a significant correlation between employee commitment and intention to leave (O'Reilly and Chatman, 1986) results from the researchers determined a strong connection between both variables. Similarly, Rizwan et al., (2014) found the lack of commitment contributed to high intention to leave. Other research by Ghosh (2013) found a prominent link and suggested commitment is a predictor of employees willing to leave. In addition, (Mowday, Steers, Porter, 1974) identified the commitment variables as a desire to remain in a job which effectively impacts the intention to leave. From the research mentioned, it is clear to see the research of this hypothesis agrees with academics.

To conclude, not all the main aims and objectives were achieved as previously anticipated. For example, hypothesis one, two and three found no association between the variables. It was expected that a significant relationship would result from the correlation but unfortunately, this was not the case. However, a valid association was found in hypothesis four and five.

6.2 Limitation

A limitation is an influence that cannot be controlled and might impact the results of the study. With respect to this study, limitations were limited but did impact the results. Firstly, the sample is deemed a limitation as the focus was on one company which limited the research to one sample. If further research on this area was undertaken it would be a good idea to include a variety of samples as this would result in broad view of attitudes and opinions. The second limitation is the unresponsive rate from the questionnaire. In total twenty-one participants did not fully complete the questionnaire which had an impact on the overall response rate. Another limitation is the induction questionnaire. This has proven to be a limitation as it did not get the in-depth information it was expected to find. If further research was done in this area, another questionnaire based on a Likert scale would suffice.

Chapter: Conclusion and Recommendations

7.1 Conclusion

This present study was carried out to investigate the impact the induction program has on an employee and its effect on employee engagement, commitment and intention to stay. As mentioned in the literature review induction programs are typically affiliated with high employee engagement, productivity and retention levels (Aberdeen Group, 2013). The literature also mentioned

However, the results of this present study appear to be mostly conflicting with previous research and indicated the current induction program does not appear to have a significant impact on employees in terms of commitment and engagement or willingness to stay. The overall objective of this study was to investigate if taken part in an induction program had a significant impact on the employee commitment, engagement and turnover. The main research aims explored were the different experience of induction among employees, examining the link between employee experience of induction and engagement and to highlight any improvement that could be implemented to the current induction program. The research was carried out on a sample of employees who had participated in the same induction program when they first joined the company. This sample was made up of male and females ranging from 18 to 56 + years. These participants worked in various departments within the company and each had different job status and tenure. The results from the survey found no significant association between the company's induction program and employee commitment, engagement and willingness to leave however the results did highlight the link between engagement and intention to leave also commitment and intention to leave. From this result, it can be concluded that the current induction program in place does not have a significant impact on employees and it may be worth the organizations time to reevaluate the current induction process to make it more effective on employees.

7.2 Recommendations

“Policy explanation and links”

This recommendation suggests policies were not explained in detail and access to the policy booklet was not provided to the employee.

“It's appropriate for day 1”

This recommendation suggests the induction was not executed on day one of the employment. There is no other evidence to suggest when the induction eventually began but it important that inductions start from day one to ensure new employees adapt well from the beginning.

“Explain the reasoning behind certain processes”

From this recommendation, it can be summarized that the inductee did not give a valid explanation behind some of the company's processes. Ideally, the inductee should be able to give a reasonable explanation to why processes are in place.

“More of an overview of the role, not all points would have been covered”

This recommendation reflects on an overview of personal role instead of the organisation. Ideally, the induction programs should cater for everyone regardless of role.

“Induction was general company induction and not department specific - Policies and procedures not clearly defined for my department”

Similarly, to other recommendations made by respondents, more information on company policy and procedures are required and a clear definition of the job scope.

“Clarity on the company structure in terms of roles”

Again, a clear breakdown of the role and responsibilities are required.

“The Induction Program should extend beyond HR generic training and should include training specific to the wider R&D Team/Department. Especially when the team is so poor at onboarding new hires”

This recommendation suggests, certain departments are not successfully onboarding new employees and ongoing training past the induction period is necessary to improve the employee onboarding experience.

The above recommendations are not an exhaustive list but based on the responses addressed in the results they are the main concerns that can be interpreted. As a recommendation to the company, these concerns must be considered as a matter of urgency and to ensure the induction program carried out by the company is executed more effectively. It would also be a good idea to reevaluate existing program and make relevant changes based on these recommendations.

7.3 Costings

The cost associated with improving the induction program is low as it begins within the organisation. As a recommendation, the responsibility of the induction program should be shared out among the relevant representatives of the company. These representatives include the HR department, the hiring managers, the facilities department and the employee engagement department. This responsibility is internal and undertaken within working hours so there is no need to outsource which can sometimes be costly for the business. However, if management decided they wanted a more formal training option with an external provider a cost may occur to cover the training hours. When redesigning the induction program the company should consider some of the recommendations made by their employees. This is not considered a cost as it was valuable advice the company can benefit from when restructuring the new induction program. Developing and implementing a new induction program can take time and is more than likely going to take up to three months to be phased out. After the three months, the company should evaluate the effectiveness of the induction program and decide to keep it or redesigned another one that fits the needs of the organisation. A way to assess the effectiveness of the new induction program is to send out online surveys to newly hired employees that have participated in the induction recently. This will give an estimate of the effectiveness the new induction program has on new employees. Again, this is another low cost as the survey can be sent out using an online survey tool for example survey monkey.

7.4 Implications of findings

The outcome of this research has highlighted a need for a more effective and robust approach taken by the organization when it comes to developing and executing the induction program. It would be recommended that the organization evaluates its current induction process and implement changes where necessary. This would allow the organization to onboard new employees more efficiently and effectively.

For further research on this area, it would be recommended to use other types of research methods such as qualitative and to use a variety of samples from different organisations. By using another type of research methods this would give an even better understanding of the area under investigation and by using various samples this would give an even broader view of divergent opinions and attitudes across different organisations. Since this research was undertaken the organization has developed and implemented a new induction practice. This newly developed induction process is premature but is already expected to be a success.

7.5 Personal Learning statement

Reflecting on the experiences of this dissertation, it is realised that the author truly enjoyed this process as the writer loves to learn and always seeks to obtain more knowledge. All of the information that was researched during this process was, and is of great value to the author, especially with regards to learning about things that pertain to a future career in the business/human resources sector. What the author felt was most rewarding, was the increased level of self-confidence and the development of skills in areas such as academic writing, Harvard referencing and SPSS software analysis that they will have for the rest of their professional career. Concerning the whole process of the dissertation, it should be noted that overall it was a very intriguing and exciting project to work on.

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Appendix

Information Sheet/Consent Form and Debrief

Purpose of the research study:

In partial fulfillment of the human resource postgraduate degree at National College of Ireland, research is to determine if induction programs have an impact on the employee's commitment, engagement decision to stay within a company.

Invitation into the research:

You are invited to take part in a research study conducted by Terri Geraghty. Please take time to read what the research entails before you consent to take part. If you would like to ask for more information or should there be any issue in taking part in the research, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Is taken part mandatory?

The decision to take part in this research is entirely up to you. If you do decide to take part, you must sign a consent form and answer a questionnaire provided by the author. Please remember, if you would like to withdraw at any time during the study you have up until 1st August to do so.

If I agree to take part, what will the study consist of?

If you consent to take part in the study, you will be required to fill out the following:

- Consent form

Are there any risks involved if I take part in this research?

There are no risks involved in taking part in this research, information obtained from the questionnaires are confidential and will not be used by the company.

How will the information be distributed?

Information obtained from the questionnaires will be collected and published as part of a postgraduate research project. Participant information is confidential which means it is impossible for information to be identifiable. Information collected will be retained for a maximum of one year and afterwards will be disposed in an appropriate manner.

Who will review the study?

The study will be reviewed by National College of Ireland.

Who will I contact for further information?

If you have any questions or further queries about the stud, please contact the author (student number x11445722) or their supervisor Mrs. Rebecca Maguire.

Finally, if you wish to take part in this study. Please turnover to the next page and complete the consent form.

Consent Form

Please sign and include the date

I have read and fully understand the terms and conditions of the information sheet.

- I am aware that my participation is voluntarily and I have the option to withdraw at any time before the date outlined in the information sheet.
- I acknowledge all the information collected is confidential and at no point will my identification be exposed.
- I give my consent to take part in this study.

Participant Signature

Date Signed

Researcher's Signature

Date Signed

Debrief:

The author of this research study would like to take time out to thank all participants who cooperated and took part in the research study.

The aim of this research study is to explore induction programs and the impact they have on employee turnover and commitment. Please remember all data collected during this research study will be kept strictly confidential. Lastly, if you wish to withdraw from this study you can do so, all information will then be destroyed.

If you have any further questions, please contact the author (student number x11445722) or the supervisor Mrs. Rebecca Maguire.

Many thanks,

Terri Geraghty

