

Effects of the Realistic Job Previews on Employees Job Satisfaction and Met Expectations

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Abstract

Realistic job preview (RJP) is the presentation of information both positive and negative given to the prospective employee about the job and the organization. The information provided is aimed to give the realistic image of the organization. The role of the information flow is to arrive at a stage where the expectations of the employee and the applicant match. It is being argued that employees who are given RJP's during the recruitment and selection process have higher job satisfaction. Thus, the aim of this study is to identify the relationships between realistic job previews and employee job satisfaction in the organizations. Job satisfaction has been conceptualized with the expectations of an employee. The survey was conducted by using closed-end structured questionnaires from the employees working in telecommunication and banking sectors in Pakistan. A total of 224 questionnaires were received. Correlation and ANOVA were used to determine the relationship between the variables. The outcome indicates that there is a significant positive relationship between the realistic information provided to the employees at the time of recruitment and job satisfaction.

Keywords: employee selection, job satisfaction, job met expectation, realistic job preview, recruitment

1. Introduction

It is assumed that the employees who are given Realistic Job Previews (RJP) during the recruitment and selection process have a higher job satisfaction. RJP's set the pre-hiring expectations of an employee about the organization and the job. After induction in the organization, if employee's pre-hiring job expectations are apprehended with the post-hiring job experience then the employee's job satisfaction is achieved. Job satisfaction is referred as the assurance which a job provides to an employee. It is also referred as a state of positive emotional feeling which results from the job. A high rate of job satisfaction among the employees is considered as a sign of a productive and profitable organization with the dominant features of efficiency and effectiveness in its product and services. RJP's is a tool to ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of employees while performing their jobs (Kian, Yusoff, & Rajah, 2014).

Realistic job preview is the presentation of information, both positive and negative (Morse, 2007), about the job and the organization to the prospective applicant. The information provided by the organization is aimed at showing a realistic picture of the organization to the applicants. Dale (1999) has described recruitment and selection process as a two-way information process. At one side organization is offering information about itself and other side an applicant is offering info about them. The main purpose of this information flow is to reach a point where the expectations of the employer and the applicant match as it was suggested by Dale (1999) that the exchange of information will improve the quality of the decision made by the employer about the applicant and the hiring or joining the job respectively. This is expected that the best match will ensure a productive relationship between the employer and the employee when an employee joins an organization to evaluate the alignment between the internal value systems with the organization's value system. If there is a match between the two, then it ensures that there won't be any dire consequences, in the form of turnover, inefficiency, unproductivity or grievances, faced either by the employee or the organization. As a result, RJP is an important tool to implement a smooth working pattern between an organization and its employee.

RJP is one of the ways to provide accurate information about the organization and the job by the employer (Dale,

1999). RJPs are the part of recruitment and selection process and are considered useful in attracting the best applicants. In today's competitive world, it is very much important for the organizations to attract and retain the high-quality, productive employees (Morse, 2007). The attraction and retention of the best employees through RJPs are considered as the competitive edge for the organizations in the long run (Mustafa, 2009) and retention of the best workforce is positively related to the job satisfaction of the employees. The satisfaction of the employees is considered to stem from the perception of employees about the openness and honesty of the organization which they provided in the message of RJPs (Dugoni & Ilgen, 1981). Job satisfaction is based on the fulfillment of an individual's value while performing his/her job (Locke, 1976). Job satisfaction has two components as effective (Locke, 1976) and cognitive (Organ & Konovsky, 1989). The effect of the emotional component of job satisfaction is based on the positive feeling of an individual towards the job while the cognitive component of job satisfaction is based on the extent of an employee satisfaction with certain aspects and features of their job (Kian et al., 2014).

RJP provides the opportunity to the organizations to save their recruitment and selection process cost by giving a chance to the job candidate to seek an alignment between his/her affective and cognitive values with the organization. It has been said by Breaugh and Billings (1988) that the benefits of RJPs have not been utilized properly. RJPs are considered as an expectancy lowering procedures (ELP) of the applicants about the job and the organization (Morse, 2007). It is said that lowering the expectation of the employees leads to decrease in the turnover intention of the employees. The RJP information also tends to have a long-lasting impression on the job applicants (Morse, 2007). Thus, the aim of this research paper is to examine the effects of realistic job previews (RJPs) on the job satisfaction of employees in multinational telecom and banking sector organizations operating in Pakistan.

2. Literature Review

Recruitment is a very crucial activity for an organization. It is made useful by using both formal and informal methods. Its usefulness can be assessed if the organization finds workforce, which matches its requirements. Better recruitment methods provide a competitive advantage to the organization (Kecia, & Gail, 1999). One of the salient features of a recruitment process is the ability to affect a candidate (Quinetta, Collins & Oreg, 2005). It communicates sought-after and unattractive aspects of the job to the job applicant before he/she makes a decision to accept the job offer (Champnoise, 2004). Good RJPs provide a complete description of the job (O'Neil et al., 2001). It is aimed to ensure that productive and competent applicants must join the organization with a long-term commitment to the organization (Champnoise, 2004). It is expected that a good job realistic preview can help in reducing the turnover and the hiring cost (O'Neil et al., 2001). RJPs are intended to give "realistic" job information. If the information is too negative, then it would withhold the candidate to join the organization (Quinetta, Collins, & Oreg, 2005). The information provided should be balanced both positive and negative information, and the overly positive information is harmful for an organization (Morse, 2007).

RJPs are provided in various formats and through different methods (Champnoise, 2004). But, it is also important that the RJP information should be both complete and accurate (O'Neil et al., 2001). There are different types of RJP methods which include verbal presentations, job tours, written brochures, and videos. Videos have considered the most effective type of RJP due to its powerful impact and appropriate cost. There should be a balance of positive and negative job information in RJP (Champnoise, 2004). In the process of recruitment and selection, on one hand, the job applicant is to find an organization which matches the cultural and job specific needs and on the other hand, the employer is looking for a candidate who matches the organization's job qualification requirements. The first match effects the employee satisfaction and the second effects employee's job performance (Wanous, 1997). Dugoni and Ilgen (1981) have said that both the organization and employer try to look attractive to each other. This attractiveness attitude will lead to biasness in the information provided.

Breaugh (1983) have said that RJPs can be used to reduce the stress level of the new job in employees. They can also use to enhance the coping ability of employees at their new jobs. Reason suggested for this increased coping ability is that if employees already have an idea, through RJPs, what their new jobs entail. This reduces their stress and enhances their coping mechanisms at their jobs (Breaugh, 1983). RJPs have been also suggested to be associated with increased job satisfaction of new employees. RJPs if given an honest way made new employees feel about the honest attitude of the employer. At the same time if they are not provided in an honest way, then it would increase the dissatisfaction of the employees because they would find that whatever has been told to them by the employer was not true (Meglino et al., 1988). It is suggested that each method of RJP has its advantages and disadvantages (O'Neil et al., 2001).

Dugoni and Ilgen (1981) have said that both the organization and the job candidate need accurate information about each other to reach a decision. The authors did not find any significant relationship between lowering candidates' job expectations through RJPs and employee achieving satisfaction in the job. The authors also compliment the view of Wanous, (1980) that RJPs are not the substitute of good working conditions of an organization. Providing realistic information to job candidates through RJPs is quite challenging. Correct RJPs are expected to lower employee turnover, and incorrect one are expected to increase employee turnover. RJPs are expected to add into the attraction of the organization for the job applicant (David & Ronald, 2011).

RJPs can prove to be very effective in reducing voluntary turnover and at the same time improving employees' attitudes (Breugh & Billings, 1988). Two of the five elements of RJP information defined by Breugh and Billings (1988) are breadth and credibility. According to them, a breadth of RJP information includes a job description, reward system, supervision, coworkers, etc. Breugh and Billings (1988) have emphasized that in order to actually change the attitude of the job applicants it is necessary that the information provided in the RJP should be credible. It is very much important that RJP information must develop credibility in the eyes of the job candidate (Breugh & Billings, 1988).

RJP is an attitude change technique which is used to reduce turnover among newly hired employees. Research suggests that if pre-inflated entry expectations of a newly hired employee are then caused dissatisfaction if they are not. It is suggested that some sources of RJPs have more effect than the other. Fishbein and Ajzen (1972) has presented three components of attitudes which are affected, cognition and behavioural intentions respectively. A person's response to an action is affected; knowledge about an action is considered as cognition, and a person's intention to take an action is called behaviour. RJPs affects a person by providing knowledge in a certain way which then leads to a change in his behaviour and he or she takes an action based on the information provided. Earnest et al. (2011) in a research study has concluded that the prior information about the job is more important for white collar jobs as compared to blue collar jobs. The researchers have further added that realistic job previews and their desired outcomes are more important in white collar jobs. RJPs are considered important because their design influences the information provided and the opportunity to the applicant for self-select.

Popovich and Wanous (1982) said that RJPs helps to deflate new employee's expectations and have also suggested that one way to evaluate the effectiveness of RJPs is through the measurement of employee job satisfaction. Dilla (1987) in his research has provided a comparison between prescriptive and traditional RJPs methods. According to him, the perspective approach can be used to enhance adaptability chances of new employment. On the other hand, traditional approach can be used to give objective information about the job. Most of the RJP research has focused on measurement of effects of RJP's on one or more than one organizational elements, one of it is job satisfaction (Buckley et al., 1997). Quinetta et al. (2005) research results showed that a detailed recruitment message enhances the perceptions of the candidates about the organizational attributes. It also increases the person-organization outfit. Pit and Ramaseshan, (1996) in their research on effects of realistic job previews on the sales workforce turnover intentions, suggest that the accuracy and the quality of the information in the RJPs are more important than the quantity of the information.

Shetzer and Stackman (1991) argued that the career planning and promotion possibilities information must be integrated into a recruitment process of an organization. The researcher also added that the information provided must be present in the organization and is delivered properly in the organization. If the information provided in the recruitment process, regarding career planning, promotions or rewards, is not delivered in the organization, it would lead to the dissatisfaction of the employees because of unfulfilled expectations (Shetzer & Stackman, 1991).

Sutton and Griffin (2004) observed the relationship between pre entry-expectations and post entry-experiences relative to realistic job previews. In their study, they used realistic job previews as moderators who set pre-expectations and if they match with the post job experiences of the employees then it would lead to the satisfaction of employees. Pre-job expectations are positively related to the past job experiences (Sutton & Griffin, 2004). Breugh and Dossett, (1989) have argued that the similarity in the expectations in one's prior job experience and new job experience will help in setting realistic expectations about the job. Saks and Uggerslev (2009) have suggested in their research that information about the job and the organization must be provided at different stages of the process. If a candidate's experience is positive, then the overall effect on the candidate would be positive. The met expectation concept is used to explain how RJPs increase job satisfaction (Dilla, 1987).

Realistic job preview types have been taken as antecedent which is supposed to set expectations of the employees prior to hiring in the organization. Then the same dimensions of the employee's job were evaluated

related to the type of RJP's information (Earnet et al., 2011). It was expected that the type of information provided in RJP's would influence employees' job satisfaction in terms of met expectations. Thus, the framework constructs an idea was adopted from Spreitzer (1995).

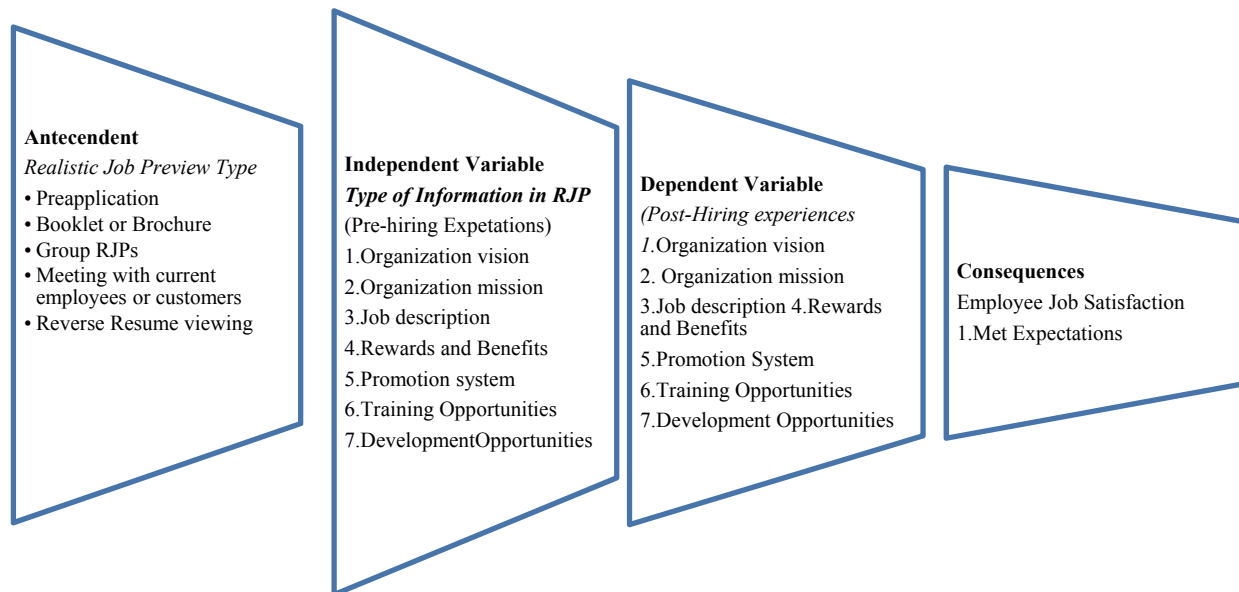


Figure 1. Conceptual framework

Source: Spreitzer (1995).

Therefore, the study aims to find the relationship between pre-hiring expectations and post-hiring experience of an employee using realistic job previews (RJP) during the recruitment and selection process, and post-hiring experiences with the hypothesis:

H₁: There is a positive correlation exists between pre-hiring expectations and post-hiring experiences of an employee.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Sample Selection

The sample was collected using random sampling from the employee working in the telecommunication and banking sector based in Lahore, Islamabad, and Rawalpindi in Pakistan. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire. A total of 224 questionnaires was received with complete information.

3.2 Data Collection, Instruments, and Analysis

Questionnaires used for this study consisted of six sets of questions based on pre-hiring expectations were distributed to the employees during the first week of their job. The second part of the questionnaire was filled using the same sample after seven or eight months depending upon the availability of the respondents. All the respondents in the sample were working on the entry level positions in the customer services department of the organizations. It was also ensured before the distribution of the questionnaires that the respondent must have had been given a minimum of five types of RJP's during their recruitment and selection process. Employees were asked about their level of understanding, which they have developed based on the RJP's provided during the recruitment and selection process, on seven different dimensions. Likert scale using five dimensions was used. They were asked the questions related to their level of understanding which led to the setting of the pre-hiring expectations. These dimensions included the understanding of the newly hired employee related to the vision, mission. The questionnaires were administered personally and were collected during the working days. Personal administration of the questionnaires helped in resolving ambiguities faced by the respondents in survey questions.

Descriptive analysis is used to analyze the socio-demographic profile of the respondents and further, the data were analyzed using correlation and ANOVA to determine the relationships between pre-hiring expectations and post-hiring experiences of an employee.

4. Findings and Discussion

4.1 Socio-Demographic Profile of Respondents

Descriptive analysis was used to analyze the socio-demographic profile of the respondents, which comprised of gender and distribution based on city. Based on Table 1, there were 130 (58%) of male and 94 (42%) were female. Table 2 shows the demographic profile of the respondent based on three different cities, 94 (42%) of the respondent was from Lahore, 74 (31.6%) are from Islamabad and 55 (26.4%) were from Rawalpindi.

Table 1. Socio-demographic profile of respondents

Gender	No. of Respondents	% age
Male	130	58%
Female	94	42%
Total	224	

Table 2. City based socio-demographic profile of respondents

Gender	No. of Respondents from Lahore	% age	No. of Respondents from Islamabad	% age	No. of Respondents from Rawalpindi	% age	Total
Male	55	42.31	45	34.62	30	23.07	
Female	40	42.55	29	30.85	25	26.60	
Total	95		74		55		224

4.2 Assessment of Reliability

The construct reliability has been established through the measurement of Cronbach alpha. The Cronbach alpha value is 0.757, which meets the reliability of data.

4.3 Normality

The histogram shows that it is a normal symmetrical distribution and is slightly positively skewed. The normal probability chart shows the significance of the relationship. The positive relationship between the variables has been depicted in the following histogram.

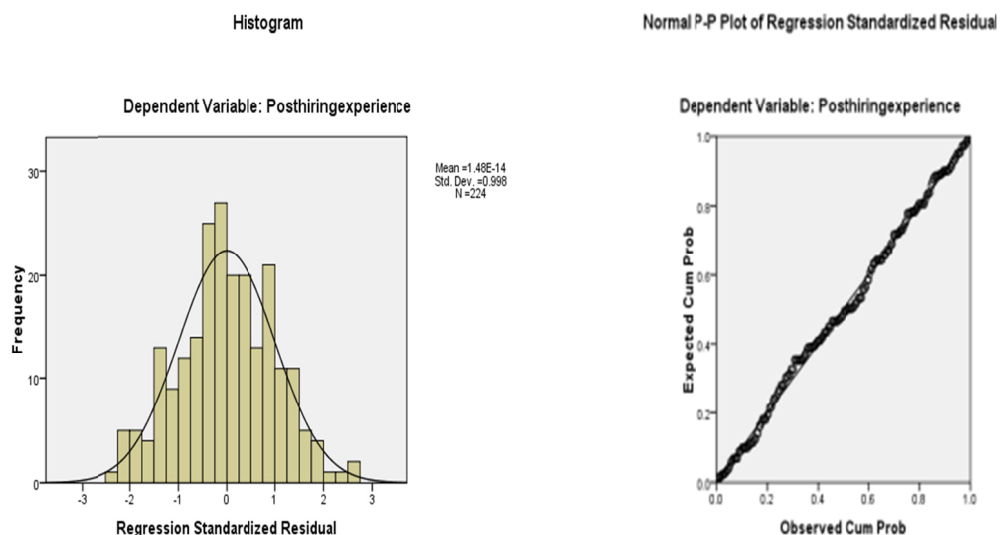


Figure 2. Histogram and P-P plots for normality

Table 3 and 4 show that pre-hiring expectation has a significant effect on post-hiring experiences and is significant with $F(1, 222) = 131.436, p < 0.05$. Which shows a positive relationship between the variables pre-hiring expectations and post-hiring experiences. A positive relationship is when a variable contributes more in the process, the more it would enhance the intensity of the other variable. The results of the analysis provide sufficient support to the research question.

Table 3. ANOVA analysis

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	533.117	1	533.117	131.436	.000 ^a
	Residual	900.454	222	4.056		
	Total	1433.571	223			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Pre-hiring expectation.

b. Dependent Variable: Post-hiring experience.

Table 4. Coefficient value-ANOVA analysis

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Coefficients		
1	(Constant)	10.404	1.156		8.998	.000
	Pre-hiring expectation	.576	.050	.610	11.465	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Post-hiring experience.

The degree to which an event, factor or variable is associated with, related to, or can be predicted from another; the degree to which a linear relationship exists between variables, measured by a correlation coefficient. The correlation coefficient was calculated to measure the relationship between variables and their dimensions. This also provides constructs internal validity. The correlation between and among the variables was also examined using Pearson correlation analysis. The results show that the relationship is significant at $p < 0.01$. The results of the correlation statistics among the variables also support the construct validity.

Table 5. Correlations

		Pre-hiring expectation	Post-hiring experience
Pre-hiring expectation	Pearson Correlation	1	.610**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	224	224
Post-hiring experience	Pearson Correlation	.610**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	224	224

Note. **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

5. Conclusion

Premack and Wanous (1985) have said that information which helps new employees to formulate realistic expectations about the job will result in more job satisfaction of these employees. As per the expectancy theory by Victor Vroom (1964) that an individual decision making is based on person's choices based on estimates that how well the expected behaviour outcomes would match with the desired results. RJP is an extension of this theory. Studies indicate that RJP has a small but a very significant positive effect on the employee's job survival. Realistic job previews are used to filter the applicant pool so that an organization can only have the

most suitable candidates with them.

The process of recruitment and selection has costs associated with them. The cost includes money, human workforce and time. So, it becomes very important for the organizations to ensure that whatever cost is incurred during these processes must give the desired results and outcomes. One way to achieve these desired outcomes and results is through realistic job previews, but RJPs have costs associated with them (Brose, 1999). These are short term costs and help to reduce first term employee attrition (Brose, 1999). In Pakistan the concept of providing realistic job previews is not prevalent in the public sector at all. Even most of the private sector in the country is not following the concept of RJPs in their recruitment and selection process. The organizations which are using them must have considered its usefulness. This research was conducted on the telecom and banking sectors of Pakistan. The research results have provided the evidence that RJPs affected the job satisfaction and met expectation perception of employees. RJPs provide the job candidate the real meaning of the job.

Most of the RJPs are provided either in the form of oral or written previews and include vital information related to the job. These previews change the unrealistic expectations of employees in realistic expectations. The unwritten expectations of employees are toned down and changed into written expectations presented by the organization in the form of RJPs. Organizations avoid using RJPs due to different reasons. The reason can be that the organization wants to keep the image of the best employer and fear to lose good workforce due to this. To keep their competitive edge in the industry organizations also tend to avoid RJPs thinking that they may make them loose competitive employees to their competitors. Newly hired employees set expectations about their job and the organization before joining the organization (Robinson, 1996; Rousseau & Greller, 1994).

Suzko and Bereague (1986) in their research have concluded that although the candidates who are offered RJPs are more likely to turn down the job offer, but they perceive their organizations as honest and are satisfied with their jobs. The researchers have also concluded that these employees cope with the demands of their jobs in a much better way than the other employees and remain for a longer period of time with the organization. Griffeth et al. (1997) said that recruiting sources have a direct effect on post-hire outcomes and the realism in the recruiting sources can be measured through employee job satisfaction and turnover. Schoefer and Diamantopoulos (2008) argued that post-complaint behaviour of employees is an outcome of their perception of an organization's (in) justice. The RJPs presented in this research are accurate and near to the reality that their employees are satisfied, and their perceptions of organizations' honesty have made them satisfied. Wanous et al., (1992) researched on the effect of RJPs on met expectations of employees, found a significant relationship between them and the present research supports this conclusion of the researchers.

This research compliments Saks and Cronshaw (1990) research on the effect of RJPs newcomers at entry level positions have concluded that both oral and written RJPs lowered the expectations of the job candidates by increasing their understanding of expected roles at the jobs. This study, then recommends as per Meglino et al., (1999) who said that organizations should not avoid giving RJPs for the fear of losing best employees and that RJPs do not affect an organization's ability to hire competitive workforce and candidates with prior job exposure are better able to comprehend the various elements of the job.

Thus, the results of this study have found a significant relationship between the realistic information provided by the organization to the employees at the time of recruitment and selection. This information as a consequence significantly and positively effects employees' job satisfaction and their expectations about the job and the organizations are met. The research has been conducted in the telecom and banking sectors only. It is recommended that further research must be conducted in other types of industries also. The research results may vary if there would be a change in the construct items.

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