

## **Realistic Job Preview (RJP): It's Efficiency in Recruitment in Pharmaceutical Industry of Pakistan**

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### **Abstract**

*This research explores the efficiency of realistic job preview (RJP) in Pharmaceutical Industry of Pakistan. The role of pharmaceutical industry in the economy of Pakistan is very important. The industry faces high rate of employees' turnover, competition and talent management issues. Professional, competent, qualified and talented employees are the key asset for the industry. Realistic Job Preview (RJPs) is a component of hiring process in which job candidates are oriented with all negative and positive aspects of the position. Candidates have a choice to accept or reject the job offer. The main objective of conducting RJPs is to retain talent, reduce employees' turnover and to save various costs associated with hiring of employees. In this qualitative research, data was obtained through semi-structured interviews. The study was built on the theoretical framework of social exchange theory. The study explores the contextual account of nature of realistic job preview as recruitment tool. The research design was qualitative and interpretivist approach was used. Population included all HR professionals working in pharmaceutical processing units located in Lahore, Pakistan. Convenient non-probability sampling method was used. Thematic analysis was conducted to analyze and explore the qualitative data to capture various themes. The research study concluded that effective RJP produces motivated, well mannered and productive employees. Motivated employees react in positive ways. Motivated employees exercise mature, socially responsible and can-do attitude. Effective RJP provides role definition and clarity, helps new job candidates, reduce turnover rate and increases job satisfaction.*

**Keywords:** Realistic Job Preview (RJP), Retention of Employees, Employee's Turnover, Quality People, Potential Employees, Socially responsible, Motivated employees

Realistic Job Preview (RJP) is a component of recruitment process. Positive and negative points of a position are discussed with job candidates to avoid micromanagement. RJP is used to attract and retain quality people. Recruitment of qualified and skilled people is now more

important than ever due to the current competitive business environment. Organizations need effective, efficient and innovative recruitment and hiring procedures to attract talented and professionally matured people. RJP clarify a position and increases job satisfaction at each level. Recruitment of qualified people is an important job (House & Hoffman, 2001). Well-maintained positions attract job candidates (Barber, 1998).

Applicants prefer attractive and well explained jobs (Barber, 1998). Talented and culturally developed employees play critical role in the success of organizations (Muhammad Umair Abbasi, 2010). He has further stated that innovative HR practices are emerging in Pakistan. Irshad and Shams-ur-Rehman (2008) has concluded that organizations face leadership crises due to traditional and conventional recruitment practices. Proper matching method of RJP increases the efficiency of recruitment process (Jean M. Phillips, 1996 & Colarelli, 1984). There was a need to investigate and explore efficient recruitment methods in Pharmaceutical Industry of Pakistan. Method of RJP and motivation of employees affect its efficiency. This paper is guided by the insights from the social exchange theory. Social exchange theory provides the theoretical lens by which the phenomenon of realistic job preview has been explored in pharmaceutical industry of Pakistan.

This research has investigated the perception of HR professionals regarding RJP, its methods and the benefits of a good RJP process in pharmaceutical industry of Pakistan. Qualitative research was conducted involving 15 HR professionals from pharmaceutical industry of Pakistan. Literature on importance and new recruitment concepts has been included in this article. Next we discuss our methodology before examining the findings. Our discussions focus on how the efficiency of realistic job preview can be enhanced. Finally, we concluded our paper and outline its limitations and the future research agenda.

## **Literature Review**

### ***RJP in Management***

Realistic Job Preview (RJP) is a component of recruitment and hiring process in which all information related to a position is provided to job candidates. RJP is an important process (Breaugh, 1983). Employees play important role in the success of organizations (Safdar Rehman, 2012). Taylor & Collins (2000) studied that efficient management of recruitment process is critical for the corporate success. Organizations should implement innovative practices to overcome the economic, technological, legal and other business challenges (Safdar Rehman et al., 2010). Realistic job preview provides more realistic job expectations (Wanous, 1973). Organizations should use motivational

tools to attract prospective employees (Farida Saleem, 2010). Motivated employees are a strategic tool in achieving organizational goals. Motivated employees produce delighted customers. Motivated employees lead to more positive organizational outcomes. Job applicants take interest in their needs that will be met by the organization (Gardner, Reithel, Foley, Cogliser, & Walumbwa, 2009). Realistic job preview is a process which enhances the motivational level of job applicants. Various aspects of RJP are considerable (Phillips, 1998) such as the timing, methodology and the medium we used. Settings, timing and medium of realistic job preview are the considerable factors (Wanous, 1973, Wanous & Colella, 1989). RJP is persuasive communication (Popovich & Wanous, 1982). If the communication process is effective the feedback will be positive. Effective communications with newly hired employees motivate them which are a prime tool for organizational success. Productive communication is a life blood for any organization. New talent management concepts are emerging at workplaces.

Properly matching method of RJP process ensures more positive outcomes (Jean M. Phillips, 1996, Colarelli 1984). RJP enhances the adaptation capabilities of employees (Pitt and Ramaseshan, 1995). RJP survive organizations.

### ***Pharmaceutical industry of Pakistan***

Pharmaceutical industry plays important role in the economy of Pakistan. The industry comprises of more than 40 manufacturing units all over the country. Pharmaceutical sector is sophisticated and more hi-tech in nature. Major manufacturing units are located in Karachi, Lahore, Peshawar, Rawalpindi & Islamabad. Pakistan Pharmaceutical Manufacturing Association (PPMA, 2007) has reported that a remarkable growth has been observed in the industry during the recent years due to modern technology, skilled human resource, research & development and new innovative manufacturing procedures. According to the report, the industry is still young in the global market.

Multinational corporations (MNCs) are operating in pharma sector. The value of pharmaceuticals sold in 2007 exceeded US\$1.4bn, which equates to per capita consumption of less than US\$ 10 per year and value of medicines sold is expected to exceed US\$2.3 billion by 2012 ( PPMA Website: <http://www.ppma.org.pk>.)

Research and development (R&D) is needed to reach the level of self-reliance and to cater the local demand. According to A. Waseem Khan (2011), the industry has a remarkable contribution in the economic growth of Pakistan. The industry is MNCs dominant. Implementation of management practices which benefit the industry is need of the day.

Human resource management practices in Pakistan are influenced by the labor policy, labor laws and international regulatory organizations. Compliance with international labor and quality standards are mandatory to stay in the business. According to M. Abbasi et al (2010), talent management will provide strategic edge to the industry. He has concluded that talent management at each level is critical to pharmaceutical industry of Pakistan. Wanous (1977) has concluded that two match-ups occur when a new person is hired. The organization matches the job requirements with the person's qualifications. The person matches his/her human needs with the organizational culture. The first match is related with the performance while the second match is related with satisfaction and tenure.

The culture of pharmaceutical industry is innovative in nature. Safdar Rehman (2012) has concluded that success of organizations depends upon the employees. Employees make the culture. A careful attitude is required while hiring potential employees for future strategic need. Responsibility of human resource department increases during recruitment and hiring of professional employees.

### ***RJP & Performance***

RJP magnifies the performance, attitude, commitment and job satisfaction of employees. Delery and Doty (1996) has concluded that job clarity to potential candidates is more important. They suggested result oriented management practices to attract talent. Phillips (1998) stated that orientation of newly hired employees has a positive impact on their performance and attitude. Job definition is a good management tool (Delery and Doty, 1996). Effective RJP leads to increased performance (Phillips, 1998). RJP increases commitment (Wanous, 1992). Poor RJP affect compatibility (Pitt and Ramaseshan, 1995).

Organizations cannot operate without people. Organizations need people and people need organizations. People are important (Khatri (1999). People need development. Organizations must implement employees' development strategies to cope with the global competition. Organizations should develop realistic job previews programs (Mustafa, 2010). RJP is a source of trust (Lui & Standing, 1989). RJP helps to attract competitive workforce (Thorsteinson, Palmer, Wulff & Anderson, 2004).

RJP process decreases turnover. RJP develop behaviors (Popovich and Wanous, 1982). Breugh (1983) have stated that job satisfaction is a better measure of RJP. RJP is an expectation lowering process. Bhutta (2012) highlighted the consequences of poor recruitment

and selection practices. Poor selection procedures along with poorly designed induction programs (like poor design of RJP) cause employees' turnover. High expectations of employees during the recruitment process also cause employees' turnover. Human resource persons should focus on long term suitability of the candidates. Structure is an important aspect of any RJP process.

### ***Social exchange theory: A theoretical lens***

The study utilizes a social exchange approach to explore the realistic job preview phenomenon in pharmaceutical industry of Pakistan. Social exchange theory helps to examine job contract phenomenon between employer and an employee. Social exchange theory has made remarkable contributions to the study of realistic job preview. Research has been done on the importance of RJP in business organizations. RJP concept is new to business organizations in Pakistan. No study has been conducted so far to investigate the effective methods and its efficiency in pharmaceutical industry of Pakistan. The method is more important. The social exchange theory could provide possible explanation of the behavioral aspects of job candidates. Muhammad Umair Abbasi (2010) has conducted a study on talent management in pharmaceutical industry of Pakistan. He suggested that organizations should focus on the development of high talented staff to sustain in the dynamic business environment. RJP's process greatly affects talent at each level.

### **Research Methodology**

The trends and gaps in the literature on realistic job preview call for more in-depth study to explore realistic job preview phenomenon in pharmaceutical industry of Pakistan. Recruitment of employees is a challenge (Safdar Rehman, 2012). Employees expect from organizations in which they work is embedded in social exchange theory. A semi structured approach (Bryman & Bell 2007) was used and interviews of 15 HR Managers were conducted to explore the phenomenon. Convenient non-probability sampling method was used. Following sampling recruitment criteria was used.

- 1- HR professionals only from processing pharmaceutical units have been included in the population.
- 2- Pharmaceutical units having established HR departments are included.
- 3- HR Managers having minimum five years' experience were included in the study.

- 4- Both male and female HR Managers were included in the sample to receive rich and heterogeneous views regarding the phenomenon.
- 5- HR Managers from Lahore were included in the study.
- 6- HR Managers having diversified experience were given preference to receive the diversified information on the phenomenon.

Interview schedule was sent to all HR Managers included in the sample before conducting the actual interviews. I recorded all the interviews and allowed them to explore the phenomenon in more detail. Interviews were conducted both in English and Urdu for convenience. During interviews, participants were allowed to convey situations from their own perspective and in their own words.

Thematic analysis was conducted to analyze the qualitative data to capture various themes. According to Braun and Clarke (2006), thematic analysis is to “identify, analyze and report patterns, themes and ideas within data”. My objective in the analysis of data was to explore participants’ understanding regarding the phenomenon. The data was recorded and transcribed. The transcribed data was again sent to the participants for review to improve the authenticity. Data was processed and analyzed carefully to ensure the trustworthiness.

### Findings

Researchers have described the realistic job preview as an exchange-inducing message and a form of communication. In this research study we argue that careful attitude of the human resource persons can affect the behaviour of the employees. Table 1 shows the demographic analysis of 15 HR Managers. It shows that out of 15 participants, 2 (13%) is within the age group of 20-30 years, 3 (20%) belong to the age group of 31-40 years,

Demographic characteristics	Category/ age ranges	Number of HR professionals	% Age
Age	20-30	02	13%
	31-40	03	20%
	41-50	06	40%
	51-60	04	27%
Gender	Male	11	73%
	Female	04	27%
Highest Level of Education	MBA	08	54%
	MS/M. Phil	01	
	Engineering+	02	07%
	MBA		13%

	M.A+ Diploma	02	
	B.A + Diploma	02	13%
			13%
Nature of Job	Operation	11	73%
	Development	04	27%
Income Level in PK (Rs.)	18000-40000	02	13%
	41000-60000	02	13%
	61000-80000	06	40%
	81000-100000	04	27%
	100000-Above	01	07%
Years in Profession	4-10 Years	11	73%
	11-20 Years	03	20%
	21-30 Years	01	07%
Geographical Area	Lahore	15	100%

6 (40%) belong to the age group 41-50 years and 4 (24%) participants/ HR professionals belong to the age group 51-60 years. It shows that management of employees in organizations requires interpersonal, leadership and human skills. These skills may not be acquired in the early age profession. Moreover, human resource management skills are gained after a long professional experience.

The table shows that out of 15 participants 11(73%) were males and 4(27%) were females. It shows that human resource management is still male dominated area. Organizations prefer to hire male HR Managers due to various perceived expectations. Employers perceive that male human resource managers can better perform in a culture like Pakistan. They do not facilitate women to work due to various cultural barriers. Discrimination causes dissatisfaction. Gender discrimination in management is not a good practice and it affects performance. (Qaisar Abbas et al 2011).

Analysis further shows that out of 15 participants, 8(54%) have done MBA, 1(07%) participant has done MS/Phil, 2(13%) participants have done MBA with B.Sc Engineering, 2(13%) participants have done one year diploma in HR with Master in Arts and 2(13%) participants have done diploma in HR with Bachelor in Arts. Out of 15 participants, 11(73%) were from HR operation side and 04(27%) participants were involved in human resource development.

Analysis shows that 2(13%) participants were drawing salary within range Rs. 18000-40000. The range of salary of 2(13%) participants was Rs. 41000-60000. Out of 15 participants 6(40%) participants were drawing salary within range from Rs. 61000 to Rs. 80000 which is the highest frequency. Out of 15 participants, 11(73%) have the professional experience within range from 4 to 10 years, 3(20%) participants have the

expertise from 11 to 20 years and 1(07%) participant was within the group of 21-30 years.

Human resource management is a social phenomenon. Human resources professionals are responsible for promoting diversity, innovation, conducive culture, corporate image, performance and global recognition. Cultural diversity is a challenge. Human resource managers are well positioned to play an instrumental role in helping their organizations to achieve its goal of becoming a socially and environmentally responsible firm. Organizations should create a work atmosphere conducive to productivity. Employees react positively in exchange (Popaitoon, P., 2011). Realistic Job Preview (RJP) is an important component of any hiring process. Realistic Job Previews are conducted to hire right people for jobs. Effective and rational HR processes changes employees' perception (Popaitoon, P., 2011). Effective RJP greatly affects the retention and turnover of employees. RJP gives good fit. Consistent with social exchange theory the effective realistic job preview increases the trust between the organization and employees. It also improves good relationship with employees (Gould-Williams & Davies, 2005).

HR professionals have reported a range of reasons of importance of realistic job preview. They described the phenomenon as "the best HR hiring component". It increases the trust of new comers and helps them in understanding the new job, position and all positive and negative points related to the job. It helps to minimize the micromanagement at each level. RJP has a significant impact on reducing early turnover. Commitment, job satisfaction, perceived fairness, and choice variety are the outcomes of effective realistic job preview. People exercise high commitment in the exchange-inducing conditions (Yoav Ganzach, 2002). The quotes below illustrate how HR professionals view the importance of RJP in human resource management. Masooma Khan has described it as follows:

*"Employees exercise a positive attitude with an optimistic approach. RJP enhances power of learning". (Masooma Khan)*

Masooma Khan highlighted that well defined human resources practices enhance learning capabilities of employees. It increases self-esteem. Self-esteem promotes positive culture (Baumeister, Campbell, Krueger, & Vohs, 2003). Employees reciprocate when organizations focus on their self-esteem and development. Findings show that RJP minimizes stress at workplaces. It helps to build rewarding pleasant relationship between organization and employees.



Aliqa Jabbar shared her experience as RJP develop positive culture and promote job satisfaction. Consideration encourages behavior. Sprecher (2001) has applied social exchange concepts to explore satisfaction and commitment.

*“RJPs process can have a significant impact on reducing early turnover.....”(Shahid Chaudhry)*

Shahid Chaudhry highlighted that RJP increases job survival. Moreover, it also reduces hiring and training cost. It is a psychological contract between the organization and the new comer.

Rehan Naseer shared his professional experience by saying that *“RJP brings close the new comers with the company. It helps to minimize the micromanagement at each position level.*

RJPs can be presented in a variety of ways. Examples are employees’ videos, verbal, conference hall presentation and written brochures. Each method has its own advantages and disadvantages. Organizations have to choose the method according to the culture.

Javed Akhtar explained the phenomenon as *“Culture, type of organization, situation, material in RJP, cost, time, employees, delivering method, impacts/aspects, control of the process, compliance and its reliability are important aspects of any RJP process.”*

Javed Akhtar and some other HR Managers have highlighted the essential components of RJP process. They sated that structure of the RJP is important. Effective structures affect the employees’ behavior. Good structure of RJP process adds value to recruitment process. The finding of the study emerged from the ideas given by HR professionals. HR professionals shared their personal experiences. I came to the conclusion that structure of any RJP varies from organization to organization. Recruitment policy influences the structure of any RJP process. The process of recruitment has also changed due to emergence of new management philosophies. Human Resource (HR) has a direct impact on corporate performance. RJP creates a culture of participation and involvement. It minimizes procrastination, unnecessary trouble at workplaces and corporate conflicts. RJP promotes sociability, creativity and helps to establish management-employees relationships, self-respect and healthy working environment.

### **Discussion and Conclusion**

RJP phenomenon was investigated and explored through social exchange lens. Employees' selection is now a critical and challenging job. Innovative and values based human resource procedures should be developed to enhance the efficiency of employees. Hiring of employees is a complex process. Dynamic HR practices are emerging (David E. Bowen, 1991). Management of employees in a diversified culture is now a complex issue. We need dynamic management practices at workplaces. Conventional selection and management procedures rarely consider all aspects of a position. RJP should be developed in ways which guide the new employees. According to David E. (1991), human resource is an emerging process and the new concepts of human resource management are also affecting all components of a business organization. Another finding is the acquisition of talent. Talented employees are strategic asset. Talent acquisition system and procedures increases performance of organizations (Muhammad Umair Abbasi et al 2010). Pharmaceutical industry of Pakistan is MNCs dominated sector. Multinational Corporations (MNCs) believe in talent. Analysis and evidence shows that human resources are crucial to organizational success. Human resources may offer the best return on investment for sustainable competitive advantage.

Realistic Job Preview (RJP) can be used to avoid unrealistic expectations of newly hired employees. Favorable and unfavorable information should be provided to a job candidate (Templer et al., 2006). Human resource people should develop a proper RJP system while hiring professionals in the current business environment. Pharmaceutical industry is playing a vibrant role in the economy of Pakistan. The industry is unfocused by the government (A. Waseem Khan 2011). Findings show that a proper, well designed and culturally specific realistic job preview system will greatly help to hire winning professionals.

RJP is a motivation process. Motivation enhances employability (Farida Saleem 2010). Organizations need motivated employees for survival (Smith, 1994). Finding shows that motivated employees are more productive. Motivated employees react in positive ways. Motivated employees exercise mature, socially responsible and have can-do attitude. Effective RJP produce motivated, well mannered and productive employees and we receive sensible and mature behavior in return which is a social exchange phenomenon.

Findings of this research show that well-managed RJP system reduces employees' turnover. Implementation of RJP system, however, requires time and training to avoid the negative results. Sustaining of the system is also important.

Structure of RJP depends upon the culture, time, recruitment policy, expectations and corporate objectives. Expensive process of RJP is difficult to sustain. The findings of the study suggest that composition, structure and the context are the important aspects of the process because our pharmaceutical industry is still young. A care is required during the composition and development of the RJP process. The context and the psychological processes which mediate effectiveness both are considerable aspects (Reilly et al 1981). The mediating factors must be controlled to make the RJP more effective.

### **Conclusion**

In this study, we have investigated and explored the efficiency of realistic job preview in pharmaceutical industry of Pakistan. A social exchange perspective did help in this exploration. Pharmaceutical industry contributes a lot in the economy of Pakistan and its role is vibrant. Moreover, the industry is MNCs dominant. The industry needs innovative, employees-oriented and competitive management and human resource policies and practices are to stay in the market and to meet the need of the country. We have concluded that realistic job preview (RJP) is a motivation process. Motivated employees exercise positive and can-do behavior in exchange. Structure of any RJP process is more important. Structure should be linked with the organizational culture, HR & hiring policy, time and corporate objectives. Well-managed RJP process helps to reduce employees' turnover, procrastination and micromanagement, increases job satisfaction and clarifies job descriptions. Sustainability of the RJP process is also important. RJP increases willingness, determination, honesty and trust. It regulates behaviors. It establishes valued and trusting relationships. It promotes collective achievements. Further, this has been concluded that HR management is still male dominated area.

### **Limitation and Future Research Directions**

This research was conducted to explore the efficiency of realistic job preview in pharmaceutical industry of Pakistan. Findings of this study are limited by its focus and scale. Its findings cannot be generalized to all industries in Pakistan. The findings reflect the views from Lahore area. Further research should extend the study to cover other industries and geographical areas.

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